



## **WV Chamber Foundation Partners with WV Dept. of Education to Launch “Champions of Learning” Education Recognition**

*Event expands annual teacher and service personnel celebrations*

**Charleston, W.Va.** — The West Virginia Department of Education and the West Virginia Chamber Foundation are excited to announce the *Champions of Learning* awards, which will replace the Excellence in Education Celebration. The West Virginia Department of Education will continue to manage the application and selection process, supporting the West Virginia Chamber’s new vision and structure.

*Champions of Learning* will include a formal gala on September 8, 2026, in Charleston. The event will continue to honor the state’s annual Teacher of the Year and Service Personnel of the Year, while expanding the celebration to include the Counselor of the Year, Principal of the Year and regional businesses that demonstrate exceptional commitment to education. Organizers will highlight the collective effort and important role businesses, educators and staff play in supporting student success.

Applications opened March 2, 2026, and county superintendents have been informed how to submit candidates. County candidates will be invited to participate in the September event.

"Public education is the cornerstone of progress. The business community is eager to support the success of our students and those who work tirelessly to help them achieve their goals. We look forward to working with the entire community to help students succeed," said West Virginia Chamber President Steve Roberts.

"The *Champions of Learning* celebration represents an exciting evolution of a longstanding tradition," said State Superintendent of Schools Michele L. Blatt. "By broadening the recognition to include more education professionals, we are showcasing additional team members who support learning and academic achievement in the Mountain State. We have said that it takes all of us to support our public schools. Including the business community is an important part of the celebration of education. I am truly grateful to the West Virginia Chamber Foundation for taking up this worthy cause."

For sponsorship information and opportunities, please reach out to Elizabeth House of the West Virginia Chamber Foundation. She can be reached at [ehouse@wvchamber.com](mailto:ehouse@wvchamber.com).

Updated information about *Champions of Learning* will be shared as it becomes available in the coming months.

*The West Virginia Chamber Foundation is a 501(c)(3) charitable organization that strives to make a positive impact in the lives of West Virginians through education, workforce and economic development. Programs such as Jobs for West Virginia’s Graduates, the WV Civics Bee and Workforce Unifiers provide direct education, mentoring and connections to pathways that increase student success. The West Virginia Chamber Foundation is honored to recognize the profound impact our school personnel and businesses have on our youth and future through the Champions of Learning Gala.*