AECENL's Annual Early Childhood Educator of the Year Award

About the Award

The Association of Early Childhood Educators of Newfoundland and Labrador (AECENL) is proud to present the *Early Childhood Educator of the Year Award.* This award celebrates an exceptional individual who exemplifies the highest standards of excellence in early childhood education.

This prestigious honour recognizes an Early Childhood Educator (ECE) who demonstrates unwavering dedication to nurturing the holistic development of young children, while fostering inclusive, engaging, and supportive learning environments. The award also highlights those who champion high-quality early learning and act as visionary leaders, innovative practitioners, and trusted partners to families and communities, ECEs who inspire, advocate, and elevate the field through both their daily work and long-term impact.

Award Eligibility

This award is open to Early Childhood Educators who:

- Are a resident of Newfoundland and Labrador.
- Hold a Level I, II, III, or IV provincial Child Care Services Certification
- Are currently employed in the Newfoundland and Labrador early learning and child care sector.
- Have a minimum of two years of continuous experience in the field.
- Open to all ECEs; AECENL membership is not required

Please note: Recipients of this award are not eligible for re-nomination until five years have passed since receiving the award.

What do recipients receive?

Recipients of the award receive the following:

- An award from AECENL
- Free 1-year AECENL membership
- $50 gift card
- Provincial recognition at AECENL's Annual Provincial Early Learning and Child Care Conference and on AECENL's social media platforms, celebrating the recipient's outstanding contributions to early learning and child care.

AECENL's Annual Early Childhood Educator of the Year Award

AECENL's ECE of the Year Award Nomination Application Package

The application package for AECENL's Early Childhood Educator of the Year Award consists of two parts:

Part A: AECENL's ECE of the Year Award Nomination Form to be completed by the nominator on behalf of the person being considered for the award, the form can be found at the end of this document.

Part B: Nominator Award Criteria Response to be completed by the nominator. Information on how to complete this section can also be found at the end of the document.

How to Prepare the Nomination Application Package

Nominators may be any person or group with direct knowledge of the nominee's contribution (ECE, co-worker, parent, Administrator, Licensee etc.). The following nomination methods are strictly prohibited: self-nominations and nominations submitted by immediate family members.

Once you determine the nominee meets the eligibility criteria, you can prepare the nomination package. A complete nomination package consists of two requirements:

- AECENL's ECE of the Year Award Nomination Form
- Nominator response document that outlines how the Nominee meets the 7 award criteria areas.

You can nominate up to three individual Early Childhood Educators, each ECE will require a separate nomination application package.

Failure to provide any one of these requirements may result in your nomination to not being evaluated.

Deadlines, Adjudication, and Presentation of Award

- The deadline for applications is 12:00pm on September 18, 2026. Completed Application Packages are to be submitted to AECENL.
- Applications will be adjudicated by the AECENL Board's ECE of the Year Award Review Committee. To ensure fairness, each application package will be assigned a number, and the review committee will not have access to any identifying information such as name, workplace, address, etc.

- The recipient will be announced at the 34th Annual AECENL Conference that is taking place on October 3rd, 2026, at the Holiday Inn, in St. John's. Recognition will also be given via social media such as Facebook and Instagram.

Submitting The Completed Nomination Application Package:

Before submitting your nomination, please ensure to:

- Print the nomination form
- Complete all required sections of the nomination form ensuring that both the nominee and nominator sign and date the form
- Ensure you have included all required attachments (Part A and Part B) which is the Nominator Award Criteria Response document

E-mail completed package to executivedirector@aecenl.ca

After submitting your nomination, you will receive a confirmation email acknowledging receipt. Please note that AECENL cannot consider incomplete applications. It is your responsibility to ensure that your application is complete. If any document is rejected, you will receive an email explaining the reason. You should submit the corrected document as soon as possible. To avoid missing important communication, please add AECENL to your email contact list as a safe sender.

If you have questions or difficulties, reach out to AECENL at:

Email: executivedirector@aecenl.ca Call: 1-(877) 579-3028

PART B: Nominator Award Criteria Response Guidelines

Nominators are expected to provide thoughtful and detailed responses explaining how the nominee meets each of the award criteria listed below. The selection committee relies solely on these responses in selecting the recipient. The nomination package should clearly illustrate the nominee's outstanding achievements and express why the individual deserves one of the province's highest honours for ECEs. Each response should:

- Be approximately 100–200 words per award criteria question (7 responses total, see list below).
- Include specific examples from the nominee's professional experience.
- Clearly demonstrate alignment with best practices in early childhood education.
- Highlight instances of innovation, leadership, and advocacy, where applicable.

Award Criteria List

Demonstrated Excellence in Educating

Provide examples of how the nominee supports each child's unique strengths, interests, identities, and learning journey; creates a nurturing, inclusive, and engaging environment where children feel a sense of belonging; and fosters children's social-emotional well-being, thinking and learning, physical confidence, and overall growth.

Commitment to Professional Growth

Describe how the nominee pursues ongoing education and training, and shares knowledge with peers through mentoring and/or professional learning.

Positive Impact on Children and Families

Provide examples of how the nominee builds strong relationships with children and their families and encourages family involvement in the learning process.

Leadership and Advocacy

Describe how the nominee advocates for high-quality early childhood education and demonstrates leadership within their program and community.

Innovation and Creativity

Provide examples of how the nominee uses creative approaches to enhance learning experiences and adapts their practice to support the diverse strengths, interests, and needs of all children.

Community Engagement

Describe how the nominee collaborates with community partners or participates in outreach and/or promotes awareness of current trends in early childhood education.

Additional Considerations

Include any additional information that highlights the nominee's contributions to early learning and child care, such as their years of experience, membership in organizations (e.g., AECENL), involvement in initiatives or projects, and any testimonials or letters of support

AECENL's Annual Early Childhood Educator of the Year Award

PART A: AECENL'S ECE OF THE YEAR AWARD NOMINATION FORM

Nominee Information (the person being considered for the award)

Legal Full Name:	
AECENL Certificate Number:	
Certification Level(s):	
Certification Classifications(s):	
AECENL Member:	**YES** **NO**
Current Position Title:	
Current Place of Employment:	
Years of Service:	
Email Address:	
Primary Phone Number:	

Nominee Signature: I, the nominee, hereby affirm that, to the best of my knowledge, all information contained in this nomination package is complete and accurate. By signing this form, I authorize AECENL to verify the information provided in this nomination.

If selected as the recipient of AECENL's Early Childhood Educator of the Year Award, I understand that examples of my work and contributions to early learning and child care may be shared publicly, including through online publication. I grant permission for such use.

I also consent to the use of my photograph(s) by AECENL for promotional purposes, including but not limited to print materials, online platforms, and social media.

Signature of Nominee:

Date (YYYY-MM-DD):

Nominator Information (individual recommending the nominee)

Legal Full Name:	
Relationship with Nominee:	
Email Address:	
Primary Phone Number:	
How long have you known the nominee?	
In what capacity have you worked with or observed the nominee?	

Nominator Signature: I, the nominator, hereby affirm that all the information contained in this nomination package is, to the best of my knowledge, complete and correct and that the nominee upholds the highest standards of the ECE profession.

Signature of Nominator:

Date (YYYY-MM-DD):

This Section – Office Use Only		
Date Received:		
Application Package Complete:	Yes	No
Is Nominee an AECENL Member:	Yes	No
Certification Level/Classification:		