



#268-21

**Commonwealth of Virginia
Virginia Department of Education
Superintendent's Memo #268-21**

DATE: September 17, 2021
TO: Division Superintendents
FROM: James F. Lane, Ed.D., Superintendent of Public Instruction
SUBJECT: **USED RISE Award Nominations Open**

In 2019, Congress passed and the U.S. Department of Education (USED) will now oversee a new recognition award recognizing classified school employees. The [Recognizing Inspiring School Employees \(RISE\) Award](#) intends to honor and promote classified school employees who provide exemplary service to students.

The VDOE has a critical role in implementing this award in conjunction with the Virginia Secretary of Education Atif Qarni. Annually, he may nominate up to two classified school employees to the U.S. Department of Education by Nov. 1. In Virginia, you can nominate someone using a video submission on or before **Oct. 15, 2021**.

While this program recognizes only one individual nationally each year, each state is able to recognize two outstanding candidates for the national award.

Nominees must demonstrate excellence in:

- A. Work performance;
- B. School and community involvement;
- C. Leadership and commitment;
- D. Local support (from co-workers, school administrators, community members, etc., who speak to the nominee's exemplary work); and

E. Enhancement of classified school employees' image in the community and schools.

The USED will recognize the honoree and communicate the single national selectee's story in order to inspire excellence and innovative practices among classified school employees and within schools. We also look forward to honoring the selectees and finalists from Virginia and promoting their good work!

For more information

For more information about the RISE Award, and to nominate someone from your school, [visit the RISE Award page](#) on the Secretary of Education's website. Additional questions can be directed to Dr. John Hendron, Coordinator of Organizational Development and Advancement at the Virginia Department of Education at John.Hendron@doe.virginia.gov or by phone (804) 225-4387.

JFL/JGH