

# IAIE 2026 INVITING SCHOOL AWARD APPLICATION PROCEDURES

*Application Deadline for 2026 Award: February 28, 2026*

*Stakeholder Survey Completion Date: April 15, 2026*

Thank you for your interest in the International Alliance for Invitational Education and the Inviting School Award program. We appreciate your interest and encourage you to participate.

In an effort to ensure that schools intending to apply have sufficient time to complete the required work, it is requested that the Application form be submitted by February 28. Schools that cannot administer a survey by April 15 should either request an extension or apply for the 2027 award. The Inviting School Award Program is provided annually and requires sufficient time to work with all stakeholders in implementing inviting initiatives and reflecting on progress.

Each school/district/university applying for the 2026 Inviting School Award will then submit your school's supporting documentation to the Inviting School Award Chair by May 15, 2026 for a June notification. The Inviting School Award Chair is James Botts (james.botts@jessamine.kyschools.us).

## **All Inviting School applicants are required to:**

- Hold a current IAIE Institutional Membership. This provides 5 designated members of your organization with full IAIE member benefits. Join IAIE online at: IAIE Membership. Hong Kong and Mainland China schools please apply through the IAIE HK Center.
- Administer a stakeholder survey and complete the school demographic information form.
- A minimum of 100 survey responses is recommended, including teachers, administrators, staff, students, and parents. The more participants you involve, the more helpful the information you receive will be and will help guide your choice of inviting initiatives.
- Prepare an Inviting School Portfolio with supporting documentation as described below. Your portfolio is due by May 15.
- Schedule and host an assessment visit by IAIE representatives. The visit should be completed by May 31.

## **HOW TO PREPARE THE INVITING SCHOOL PORTFOLIO**

Please display the portfolio contents in a PowerPoint, Google Slides or a PDFcopy of the presentation. Submit the portfolio either through a Dropbox link, by sharing a link to the Google Slides or via email. Limit: no more than 50 slides. Any content that goes beyond the 50 slide limit may not be reviewed. The completed portfolio is to be submitted to the Inviting School Award Chair, James Botts, via email at: james.botts@jessamine.kyschools.us

### **The portfolio should contain, but is not limited to, the following information:**

1. **COVER PAGE:** Name of school/district/university, Type of School (Elementary, Middle, High School, Technical, Junior College, etc.), Contact name, Principal's name, address, phone number, and email address.
2. **LETTER BY THE APPLICANTS:** Statement of why your school/district/university is deserving of The Inviting School Award.
4. **ONE SLIDE INTRODUCTION TO YOUR SCHOOL:** If a person has never seen or heard of it, what would they see, hear, taste, smell, and feel?
5. **MINIMUM OF FIVE SECTIONS:** Within the portfolio, please label sections for the Five P's of Invitational practice: PEOPLE, PLACES, POLICIES, PROGRAMS, and PROCESSES. Within each of these categories, the award applicant will compile samples and descriptions of strategies used within each category to tell its story of the intentional plans implemented to make its organization more inviting.
6. **RESULTS OF THE STAKEHOLDER SURVEY:** Following completion of your survey responses, you should complete a comprehensive analysis of your survey results. Please include reflections about the results in your portfolio and submit a copy of the full report with your portfolio.
7. **LETTER OF RECOMMENDATION** from a current member of IAIE.

**NOTE:** Use your creativity and imagination to tell your story. You may wish to provide additional items for consideration including:

- Your school/district/university's written inviting plan
- Special recognitions
- Awards received
- Training received in Invitational Theory and Practice

## **IMPORTANT INFORMATION FOR THE INVITING SCHOOL AWARDS**

The following guidelines are provided to assist your school in the process of working toward this award:

- Review the results of the Stakeholder Survey to gain information about your school's current inviting school practices. **A minimum of 100 responses is required.** The more responses you collect, the more helpful the survey will be to your school.
- Document initial findings from the survey and other sources of information and determine a baseline of where your school is on your invitational journey.
- Provide stakeholders with copies of introductory IE articles available on the IAIE website or purchase copies of Fundamentals of Invitational Education 2nd Edition for staff to read. The new Invitational Education Toolkit is a helpful professional development tool that will guide you and your school through 12 steps of the Inviting School process over multiple years, to create and sustain your inviting school. Phase I of the Toolkit is most helpful for schools new to IE.
- Provide a statement of invitational goals, objectives and strategies based on your initial findings.
- Explain your plan of action based on your established goals and objectives.
- Provide a timeline outlining an action plan to continue Invitational Education growth.
- Provide a Reflective Statement about insights you may have gained during your process.
- Include site visit(s) and/or training from a specialist in Invitational Education, your state/regional coordinator, member of the IAIE Advisory Board and/or an IAIE Trustee.
- IAIE recommends working with an IAIE leader to guide you through your Inviting School Award journey. We are available to assist you with the Inviting School Award process upon request.

\*Disclaimer: All materials submitted to the IAIE Inviting School Award Committee become the property of IAIE.

## **One Year Follow-Up**

An important component to the Inviting School Award is the One Year Follow-Up. Developing this reflective statement with your staff is a tool for sustaining and maintaining the concepts of Invitational Education in your school. This statement should focus on three areas:

1. Where are we now that we are an “Inviting School”?
2. How we have met our Goals and Objectives?
3. What is our vision for the future of IE at our school?

This process should follow the Helix of Invitational Education as a continuing effort to sustain and maintain your school as an “Inviting School.” Please send your Follow Up statement to the Inviting School Award Chair: James Botts ([james.botts@jessamine.kyschools.us](mailto:james.botts@jessamine.kyschools.us)).

OR

Apply for IAIE Inviting School Fidelity Award in place of the “One Year Follow-Up.”

The complete Inviting School Award Program includes the initial Inviting School Award, followed by 5 additional Fidelity Awards, which may be earned every two years, beginning the year following the Inviting School Award. This 10-year commitment to inviting practices culminates in the Gold Fidelity Award.

We encourage you to continue your inviting school initiatives and reflective practice beyond the first Inviting School Award. The benefits of a multi-year commitment are many. Stay involved and watch your staff and student potential grow!

### **Target Dates to Keep In Mind:**

- February 28: Submit the Inviting School Award Application Form.
- April 15: Complete a Stakeholder Survey and schedule a site visit.
- May 15: Submit Portfolio and Survey Report.
- May 31: Site visit to be completed by May 31.
- June 30: Notification of Award Winners.
- Fall 2026: Inviting School Awards presented at IAIE World Conference.
- Spring, 2027: One Year Follow-up Report or Fidelity Award Application Completed.

Thank you for your interest in The Inviting School Award!