

District Innovation in PK-12 HR Award

The District Innovation in PK-12 HR Award is open to all current AASPA members. This award recognizes those who demonstrate innovation and leadership in human resources based upon a theme annually determined by the Recognitions Committee. This award was developed in honor of C.S. Robinson, who served as president of AASPA from 1947-1948, and as executive secretary-treasurer from 1957-1970. Themes will rotate in alignment with the pHCLE Standards.

2026 District Innovation in PK-12 HR Award Theme: "Talent Acquisition"

2027 Theme: "Talent Development"

2028 Theme: "Total Rewards"

Element	Distinguished (3 points)	Satisfactory (2 points)	Minimal (1 points)	No Evidence (0 point)	Score
Leadership: Demonstrates leadership in the field of human resources.	There is an established, dynamic, and on-going plan for the innovation that has been fully implemented to the maximum extent possible.	An implementation plan exists and some innovation within the HR Department has been integrated and more is being actively considered.	A well-articulated implementation plan has been collaboratively designed, yet not implemented.	Has presented an idea of how the innovation should be implemented and supported. There has not been consensus built around the vision nor the development of a concrete implementation plan.	.
Addresses an issue /challenge within the Human Resources Department	Addresses an issue or challenge faced by the school district, demonstrating a direct, positive impact on the annual theme.	Addresses an issue or challenge faced by the HR department or the district on the annual theme.	Addresses an issue or challenge faced by the HR department.	Does not appear to solve an issue or challenge facing the HR department.	
Sustainable: Conditions exist that support long-term implementation of the innovation.	District-wide administrative policies regarding budgeting, personnel, training and structures are consistent with and supportive of a proactive, dynamic vision for innovation.	HR policies, budgets for programs, resources and structures include support for innovation.	Some policies support innovation while others continue to obstruct progress. Inconsistency in the application of policies limits the innovations' implementation.	Structures are perceived to limit the staff's willingness to be innovative. Resources for the innovation are not designated in the budget, but are pulled from other budget lines to support the innovation needs. Administrative support is not apparent.	
Evaluation of program: impact of innovation is measured	A comprehensive evaluation of the innovation exists including a short-term and long-term perspective. A process is in place to accept input from various stakeholders and innovation is adapted in response to evaluation results.	Full administrative support for innovation including an assessment to measure the effectiveness of its impact.	Innovation is assessed on an inconsistent basis.	No evidence of an evaluation of the innovation exists.	
Ease of replication: Serves as a resource to others, design of innovation allows replication.	Active promotion of innovation through articles, at state conferences and at AASPA events. Replication may occur in other schools, departments, or districts without difficulty.	Active promotion of innovation to other districts. Replication may occur in other schools, departments, or districts with little difficulty.	Active promotion of innovation to other departments within the district. Replication may occur in other schools, departments, or districts with some level of difficulty.	Rudimentary ability to communicate changes that were possible through innovation. Does not appear easy to replicate in other schools, departments or districts.	
Innovative ideas: Demonstrates the ongoing ability to re-think current processes and communicate with others.	Able to innovate novel ways to tweak systems and processes. Passionately presents novel new ideas and ways of applying existing ideas and products; Able to inspire others to implement innovation.	Regularly develops novel ways to solve issues or challenges. Able to visualize and communicate applicability to practical problems and situations.	Demonstrates some new ideas to solve issues or challenges. Does not successfully communicate with others.	Demonstrates no new ideas or approaches to addressing issues or challenges.	
Professional Development: Supports the continual improvement of personnel.	Staff are provided access to professional development as needed, in a format suitable to various learning styles. The professional development is financially supported by the district with necessary resources provided. Professional development opportunities are regularly evaluated and revised with innovative input from participants.	Professional development is provided for all, but not based on a needs assessment of the staff, and the modes of delivery may be limited.	Professional development related to innovation is limited in offerings.	No evidence of professional development is provided related to the innovation.	

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TOTAL SCORE:

**The PK-12 HR Communication Award recognizes a school district's personnel or human resources department that demonstrates exemplary use of communication—across digital and non-digital platforms—to inform, engage, and support current and prospective employees. This award honors HR teams that strategically align their messaging with district human capital goals; communicate with clarity, inclusivity, and transparency; and leverage multiple modalities. Submissions should showcase how communication efforts reflect ethical and equitable practices, strengthen district branding, and contribute to meaningful outcomes in accordance with the Human Capital Leaders in Education (HCLE) Standards. Documentation must lead directly to HR-led communication artifacts and demonstrate a cohesive, high-quality approach to PK-12 HR communication.*