

AMERICA'S BEST URBAN SCHOOLS AWARD APPLICATION

www.ncust.com



National Center for
Urban School Transformation

Alternative School

National Center for Urban School Transformation America's Best Urban Schools Award Application



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National Center for Urban School Transformation America's Best Urban Schools Award Application



Welcome to the NCUST America's Best Urban Schools Award Program!

*Thanks for considering applying to our 2017-2018 program to recognize some of the best urban schools in the nation! We are pleased to have this opportunity to recognize outstanding educators who create excellent learning opportunities for students. This year, we will award schools in five categories: elementary, middle, high, alternative, and dual-language schools. We look forward to recognizing the nation's very best urban schools in each category. A school may apply for the award in **only one** of the five categories. Districts may submit applications for **no more than five schools in total**. Be sure to choose wisely!*

The application requires the submission of substantial data because we must distinguish among many deserving schools. Please read each question thoroughly and answer completely and accurately. While we acknowledge that this process requires work, we know that many schools find the process worthwhile because they learn more about their strengths and opportunities to improve. We hope the process supports your ongoing improvement efforts.

Sincerely,

Questions?

If you have questions about the application or the application process, please e-mail your questions to megan@mail.sdsu.edu or call 619-594-7905. Please note that NCUST must receive your completed application by 5:00 p.m. Pacific Standard Time on Friday, December 1, 2017 in order to ensure consideration. Application process and submission information is provided on pages IV and V. Additionally, we are requesting that schools submit an Intent-to-Apply form (page VI) by Wednesday, November 1, 2017.

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2018 Award Winner's Recognition Package

Every school that submits an application by Friday, December 1, 2017 and meets all eligibility criteria will be identified as either an honor-roll school or a finalist for the bronze, silver, or gold-level award.

Becoming an Honor-Roll School

By Friday, December 15, 2017, NCUST will announce the honor-roll schools and finalists for the bronze-level award. Every applicant that meets all eligibility criteria will, at least, be recognized as an honor-roll school. Honor-roll schools will receive a certificate acknowledging their accomplishment. Also, NCUST will recognize honor-roll schools on the NCUST website.

Becoming a Bronze-Level Winner

By comparing the applications and video submissions of schools that meet all eligibility criteria, NCUST will select applicants with the strongest evidence of academic strength for all populations of students as finalists for the bronze-level award. Between February and April 2018, all finalists will receive on-site visits from teams of NCUST personnel, former award-winning principals, and other outstanding educators. Each visit team will validate the application data, acquire additional evidence of strength, and study the practices that contribute to the school's success. If the team validates the application and identifies high levels of curricular, instructional, and relational strength (commensurate with previous bronze-level winners), by May 2018, the school will be notified that it is a bronze-level winner.

Becoming Silver-Level Winners

By May 2018, (based upon application and site-visit data), NCUST will announce the schools with the strongest evidence of excellence among the finalists. These schools will be notified that they are at least silver-level winners. (See **Becoming Gold-level Winners**.)

Becoming Gold-Level Winners

The silver-level schools with the strongest evidence of excellence (based upon application and site-visit data) will become our gold-level award winners. The gold-level winners will be announced during the awards ceremony at the October 2018 America's Best Urban Schools Symposium.

The prize packages for each award level include the following:

Prize	Bronze	Silver	Gold
Expense-paid trip to National Symposium in San Diego, CA	For two people	For two people	For two people
Large banner, certificate, bumper stickers	Yes	Yes	Yes
Cash award	\$1,000	\$2,500	\$5,000
Profile on the NCUST website	Yes	Yes	Yes
Opportunity for students to win cash prizes in speech contest	Yes	Yes	Yes
Opportunity to participate in school volunteer recognition program	Yes	Yes	Yes

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Application Process

The application includes three important parts: 1) the intent-to-apply, 2) the written application, and 3) a video submission.

Intent-to-Apply

The **intent-to-apply form** (page VI) provides information that will enable NCUST to anticipate each school's application. By submitting this form, you help ensure that NCUST will receive and review your school's application in a timely manner. If a school does not submit the **intent-to-apply form** by Wednesday, November 1, 2017, it may still apply; however, NCUST cannot guarantee that the application will be received and reviewed.

Written Application

Please do not submit an application if the school does not meet all of the criteria specified. The **cover page** (page 1) provides information that will enable NCUST to contact appropriate persons throughout the application process. The **demographic profile** (page 2) contains information that helps NCUST understand more about the applicant school; however, these data are not used to determine eligibility for the America's Best Urban Schools Award. The application **questions** (pages 3-11) include 16 items that will help determine if a school qualifies to be considered for an NCUST America's Best Urban School Award. Also, these items will be used to help determine which qualifying schools will be selected as finalists for the bronze-level award. The **certification page** (page 12) requires signatures that assure all information submitted in the application is true and accurate.

Video Submission

In addition to the written application, all applicant schools must submit a DVD with video clips of two lessons that are representative of the highest quality instruction that occurs at your school. The **video submission** will let the NCUST evaluation team view examples of excellent instruction to help determine which schools will be finalists for the bronze-level award. The DVD should include at least 10 minutes, but not more than 30 minutes from each lesson and should clearly state the grade level being taught, the subject area being addressed, and the specific student objective(s) for each lesson. To provide strong evidence of the lesson's quality, consider including a few minutes from the start of the lesson, a few minutes mid-lesson, and a few minutes toward the lesson's end. Please send the **DVD** and **the video cover sheet** (page 13) to NCUST along with the paper copy of the application by the due date (12/1/2017).

Photograph Submission

Please provide 15-20 digital photos that give us a sense of what your school is like. Please include teacher-student activities and the signed permission form (page 14) allowing NCUST to use the photos. (You need not provide signed permission from each individual pictured.) **Photos must be in .jpg format with the highest resolution possible on a CD** titled with your school's name and sent to NCUST along with the signed permission form by the due date (12/1/17).

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2018 America's Best Urban Schools Application Submission Instructions

1. Please submit the Intent-to-Apply Form (page VI) by Wednesday, November 1, 2017.
2. Complete applications must be received by 5:00 p.m. Pacific Standard Time on Friday, December 1, 2017 to ensure consideration.
3. We request that you submit your completed application by two methods.
 - A. Please mail a packet including:
 - ___ Cover Sheet
 - ___ Paper copy of the completed application
 - ___ Certification Page with original signatures
 - ___ DVD cover sheet
 - ___ DVD of sample lessons

To:

National Center for Urban School Transformation
San Diego State University
5500 Campanile Drive, EBA 332
San Diego, CA 92182-1165

- B. Please send an electronic file of the completed application as an attachment to:

megan@mail.sdsu.edu

(Please do not attempt to send video clips or photos via e-mail as they may overload the server.)

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2018 America's Best Urban Schools Intent-to-Apply Form

Please submit this one-page form to NCUST by **Wednesday, November 1, 2017**. By submitting this form, you help ensure that NCUST will receive and review your school's application in a timely manner. If a school does not submit the Intent-to-Apply form by November 1st, it may still apply; however, NCUST cannot guarantee that the application will be received and reviewed.

We believe that our school meets the criteria for the 2018 America's Best Urban Schools Award, and we intend to submit an application by Friday, December 1, 2017.

Name of school: _____

Name of school district: _____

City: _____ **State:** _____

Grades served in 2016-17: _____

School's website: _____

School's phone number: _____

Name of contact person: _____

Position of contact person: _____

Email of contact person: _____

Phone number of contact person: _____

Please send a copy of this form via fax to 619-594-0501, or via email to megan@mail.sdsu.edu.

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School Name: _____

District Name: _____

Application Cover Page

NAME OF SCHOOL DISTRICT:	
NAME OF SCHOOL BEING NOMINATED:	
SCHOOL ADDRESS:	
CITY:	
STATE:	
ZIP CODE:	
SCHOOL HOURS OF INSTRUCTION:	
SCHOOL OFFICE HOURS:	
MAIN SCHOOL TELEPHONE:	
NAME AND POSITION OF MAIN CONTACT PERSON:	
CONTACT'S E-MAIL ADDRESS:	
PRINCIPAL'S NAME: (IF OTHER THAN CONTACT PERSON)	
PRINCIPAL'S PHONE:	
PRINCIPAL'S E-MAIL ADDRESS:	
YEAR CURRENT PRINCIPAL BECAME PRINCIPAL AT THIS SCHOOL:	
SUPERINTENDENT'S NAME:	
SUPERINTENDENT'S PHONE:	
SUPERINTENDENT'S EMAIL:	
PRINCIPAL'S SUPERVISOR (IF OTHER THAN SUPT.) NAME AND POSITION:	
PRINCIPAL'S SUPERVISOR PHONE:	
PRINCIPAL'S SUPERVISOR EMAIL:	
COMMUNICATIONS OFFICE PHONE:	
COMMUNICATIONS OFFICE EMAIL:	

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School Name: _____

District Name: _____

Demographic Profile of the Alternative School

1. NAME OF SCHOOL BEING NOMINATED:		
2. APPROXIMATELY HOW MANY STUDENTS ARE ENROLLED THIS YEAR AND WERE SERVED IN EACH OF THE PAST TWO YEARS?		
2015-16:	2016-17:	2017-18:
3. WHAT IS THE AGE RANGE OF STUDENTS ENROLLED THIS YEAR AND IN EACH OF THE PAST TWO YEARS?		
2015-16:	2016-17:	2017-18:
4. CURRENT STUDENT ENROLLMENT BY DEMOGRAPHIC GROUP 2017-18:		
<i>(Please rename, add, or omit categories to fit your district or state.)</i>	NUMBER	PERCENTAGE
ASIAN		
PACIFIC ISLANDER		
BLACK OR AFRICAN AMERICAN		
LATINO OR HISPANIC		
MULTI-RACIAL		
NATIVE AMERICAN		
WHITE OR CAUCASIAN		
OTHER: (PLEASE SPECIFY)		
ENGLISH LANGUAGE LEARNERS		
STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES		
STUDENTS MEETING LOW-INCOME CRITERIA		
5. HOW DID YOU LEARN ABOUT AMERICA'S BEST URBAN SCHOOLS AWARD COMPETITION?		
<input type="checkbox"/> ATTENDANCE AT NCUST SYMPOSIUM	<input type="checkbox"/> LETTER FROM NCUST	
<input type="checkbox"/> NCUST FLYER	<input type="checkbox"/> NCUST WEBSITE	
<input type="checkbox"/> NOMINATION FROM DISTRICT	<input type="checkbox"/> NOMINATION FROM STATE	
<input type="checkbox"/> OTHER: _____		

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School Name: _____

District Name: _____

Application Questions

1. Describe the central purpose (mission) of your school (e.g., credit recovery, dropout preventions, high school diploma, career education/training, independent study, etc.).

2. What path did your current students take to enroll in the school? Please indicate the percentage of students who enrolled by choice, by referral, or by involuntary transfer.

- a. Choice (voluntary, self-select) _____%
- b. Referral by sending school _____%
- c. Involuntary transfer _____%
- d. Other _____%

3. Is the city in which the school is located considered urban?

Is the school located in a metropolitan area with a population greater than 50,000?
(If in doubt, see the U.S. Census Bureau's list of Metropolitan Statistical Areas.)

___ YES ___ NO

If the answer to item 3 is "no" the school does not qualify for this award competition.

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School Name: _____

District Name: _____

4. What is the school's average daily attendance?

- a. What was the average daily percentage of students in attendance in 2016-17? ____%
- b. What was the average daily percentage of students in attendance in 2015-16? ____%
- c. How many days per week and hours per day are students expected to be at school? Days per week _____ Hours per day _____
- d. In 2016-17, what percentage of students missed a total of 15 days or more of school? ____%
- e. What steps does the school take to reduce truancy?

No absolute criteria have been set for this question. Alternative schools will be compared with other alternative school applicants.

5. Do a large percentage of students qualify for free- or reduced-price lunch, or meet other low-income criteria used by your state education agency?

What number/percentage of students meet free- or reduced-price lunch or state low-income criteria?

- a. Based on 2017-18 enrollment data? NUMBER _____ PERCENTAGE ____%
- b. Based on 2016-17 enrollment data? NUMBER _____ PERCENTAGE ____%
- c. Based on 2015-16 enrollment data? NUMBER _____ PERCENTAGE ____%

*Each percentage listed in a, b, and c must be **equal to or greater than 40**. If for any year, the percentage falls under this threshold, the school does not qualify.*

6. What percentage of your 2016-17 graduates completed their K-12 education at the school and what percentage returned to their sending school to graduate?

2016-2017 graduates that completed their K-12 education at your school ____%

2016-2017 graduates that returned to sending school to graduate ____%

7. What percentage of the school's students demonstrating proficiency on state summative (or end-of-course) assessments? ____%

- a. What percent of enrolled students in tested grades participated in the state assessment? ____%
- b. List the official state summative assessments administered to students across the top of Tables A and B (page 5). List the percentage of students performing at the **proficient or advanced levels** for each test. If your state did not administer an assessment in 2016-17, list data from the most recent state assessment.

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School Name: _____

District Name: _____

TABLE A: DISAGGREGATED STATE ASSESSMENT DATA FOR DEMOGRAPHIC GROUPS FOR 2016-17

<i>(Please list state assessments administered to your students.)</i>	TOTAL # TESTED	% PROF. OR ADV. ON	% PROF. OR ADV. ON	% PROF. OR ADV. ON	% PROF. OR ADV. ON	% PROF. OR ADV. ON
ASIAN						
PACIFIC ISLANDER						
BLACK /AFRICAN AMERICAN						
LATINO OR HISPANIC						
MULTI-RACIAL						
NATIVE AMERICAN						
WHITE OR CAUCASIAN						
STUDENTS MEETING LOW-INCOME CRITERIA						
ENGLISH LANGUAGE LEARNERS						
STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES						
OTHER: (PLEASE SPECIFY)						
STATE AVERAGE FOR ALL STUDENTS	NA					

TABLE B: DISAGGREGATED STATE ASSESSMENT DATA FOR DEMOGRAPHIC GROUPS FOR 2015-16

<i>(Please list state assessments administered to your students.)</i>	TOTAL # TESTED	% PROF. OR ADV. ON	% PROF. OR ADV. ON	% PROF. OR ADV. ON	% PROF. OR ADV. ON	% PROF. OR ADV. ON
ASIAN						
PACIFIC ISLANDER						
BLACK /AFRICAN AMERICAN						
LATINO OR HISPANIC						
MULTI-RACIAL						
NATIVE AMERICAN						
WHITE OR CAUCASIAN						
STUDENTS MEETING LOW-INCOME CRITERIA						
ENGLISH LANGUAGE LEARNERS						
STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES						
OTHER: (PLEASE SPECIFY)						
STATE AVERAGE FOR ALL STUDENTS	NA					

Please state the source of your data and the URL: _____

Alternative schools' assessment results will be compared with those of other alternative school applicants.

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School Name: _____

District Name: _____

8. What evidence indicates high and growing achievement among English learners?

- a. Number of English language learners: _____
- b. What percent of English language learners advanced to a higher level of proficiency on the most recent state English language assessment (i.e., ACCESS, CELDT, TELPAS, etc.) _____ %

No absolute criteria have been set for this question. Data from applicants will be compared.

9. Of the students who started the 2016-17 school year as a senior, what percentage graduated before the beginning of the 2017-18 academic year? _____ %

- a. What percentage earned a high school diploma? _____ %
- b. What percentage earned a GED? _____ %

10. Were suspensions rare for each demographic group of students?

Provide the total number of students enrolled in 2016-17 in each demographic group and the total number of day's students in the group did not attend school because of suspensions. For example, if during the year, three students with disabilities were suspended for two days each and one student with disabilities was suspended for five days, the number in Column B for students with disabilities would be 11 [(3x2)+(1x5)].

TABLE H: SUSPENSION AND EXPULSION RATES FOR 2016-17

<i>(Please rename, add, or omit categories below to fit your district or state.)</i>	A. NUMBER OF STUDENTS ENROLLED IN THE SCHOOL	B. TOTAL NUMBER OF DAYS STUDENTS IN THE GROUP DID NOT ATTEND SCHOOL BECAUSE OF SUSPENSIONS
ASIAN		
PACIFIC ISLANDER		
BLACK OR AFRICAN AMERICAN		
LATINO OR HISPANIC		
MULTI-RACIAL		
NATIVE AMERICAN		
WHITE OR CAUCASIAN		
STUDENTS MEETING LOW-INCOME CRITERIA		
ENGLISH LANGUAGE LEARNERS		
STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES		
OTHER: (PLEASE SPECIFY)		

For every demographic group listed with an enrollment greater than 20, if the total number of student days lost to suspensions (Column B) is less than the total number of students enrolled (Column A), the school meets this eligibility requirement.

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School Name: _____

District Name: _____

11. Were rates of teacher absenteeism low?

In 2016-17, what percentage of teachers was absent for more than a total of 10 school days? _____

No absolute criteria have been established for this item. Data from applications will be compared.

12. How do the teachers in the school plan and deliver engaging, effective instruction that leads students to mastery of standards-based content? What structures and/or practices are in place to support the ongoing improvement of teaching and learning?

Please answer in one page or less. Please write out acronyms and describe programs that might not be common to all schools across the nation.

PROVIDING ENGAGING, EFFECTIVE INSTRUCTION OF STANDARDS-BASED CONTENT

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School Name: _____

District Name: _____

13. To what extent is the school a place where all stakeholders (students, teachers, support staff, administrators, parents, and community members) feel cared for, valued, and respected? In what ways does the school promote educators' collective sense of commitment to the success of each student?

Please answer in one page or less. Please write out acronyms and describe programs that might not be common to all schools across the nation.

PROMOTING A POSITIVE, TRANSFORMATIONAL SCHOOL CULTURE

National Center for Urban School Transformation America's Best Urban Schools Award Application



School Name: _____

District Name: _____

14. Do teachers and staff in your school know about student post-secondary interests and aspirations? If so, how do they know? What systematic data are collected on student aspirations? What structures and practices are employed to ensure students are appropriately placed in classes and have opportunities to achieve their goals?

Please answer in one page or less. Please write out acronyms and describe programs that might not be common to all schools across the nation.

ATTENDING TO STUDENTS' POSTSECONDARY INTERESTS AND ASPIRATIONS

National Center for Urban School Transformation America's Best Urban Schools Award Application



School Name: _____

District Name: _____

15. To what extent, and in what ways, is the school ensuring that students are solidifying the academic and work skills they will need for postsecondary and life success? What, if any, additional effort does the school make to ensure that students are successful when they advance to post-secondary education or career?

Please answer in one page or less. Please write out acronyms and describe programs that might not be common to all schools across the nation.

ENSURING POST-SECONDARY SUCCESS

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School Name: _____

District Name: _____

16. What distinctions have been earned by the school?

Provide a bulleted list. Examples might include awards, growth data from state assessments, percentages of students completing rigorous courses of study, awards for teaching excellence, or awards earned for school-wide excellence in academic disciplines, art, music, drama, career and technical education, or physical education.

Please answer in one page or less. Please write out acronyms and describe programs that might not be common to all schools across the nation.

OTHER EVIDENCE OF EXCELLENCE:

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School Name: _____

District Name: _____

Required Forms

America's Best Urban Schools Award Certification Page

(To be submitted with paper application only—please do not scan and submit electronically, because file size may overload server.)

NAME OF SCHOOL BEING NOMINATED:	
NAME OF SCHOOL DISTRICT:	
SCHOOL ADDRESS:	
CITY:	
STATE:	
ZIP CODE:	

Collectively, we, the undersigned, nominate the above-named school for the NCUST America's Best Urban Schools Award. We affirm that, to the best of our knowledge, the school meets all of the required eligibility criteria specified in the application form and all of the information contained in this application is accurate. We believe that this school is transforming teaching and learning in a manner that is leading to excellent results for all of the students served.

PLEASE PROVIDE ORIGINAL SIGNATURES OF THE INDIVIDUALS LISTED BELOW.

Contact person for application:		Date:
Principal:		Date:
Parent organization president:		Date:
Superintendent:		Date:
School board president:		Date:
Teacher:		Date:
Teacher:		Date:
Teacher:		Date:
Parent:		Date:
Parent:		Date:
Parent:		Date:

National Center for Urban School Transformation America's Best Urban Schools Award Application



School Name: _____

District Name: _____

America's Best Urban Schools Award Video Cover Sheet and Release Form

Please print, sign and submit with your paper application and DVD submission.

Please find enclosed a DVD with the required digital video recording from two lessons taught at _____.

I certify that we have acquired and retained written permission from all adults who appear in the video recordings as well as from the parents of students who appear in the recordings.

By signing below I understand that we are giving NCUST full rights to the use of the recordings for the following purposes:

1. During the selection process, NCUST evaluators will view the video recordings to help determine finalists for the America's Best Urban Schools Award.
2. We give NCUST full rights to use the video recordings to help educators transform urban schools and school districts through the Center's website, training materials, events, and in other publications and productions.

These rights are given without any compensation or request for future compensation.

Principal printed name:		
Principal signature:		Date:

SUMMARY OF RECORDED LESSONS

LESSON ONE

Date and time of day:	
Grade level:	
Subject area:	
Specific student objective(s):	
Why this lesson was selected:	

LESSON TWO

Date and time of day:	
Grade level:	
Subject area:	
Specific student objective(s):	
Why this lesson was selected:	

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School Name: _____

District Name: _____

America's Best Urban Schools Award Photograph Permission Form

Please print, sign and submit with your paper application and CD submission.

Please find enclosed a CD with the required 15-20 high-resolution .jpg digital photos taken for _____ School.

I verify that the National Center for Urban School Transformation (NCUST) has permission to use any of the photographs transmitted by our school.

- NCUST may use these pictures on its website, at its national symposium, in promotional materials, or in other ways it deems appropriate and consistent with the Center's mission.
- Parents have given permission for the use of any photographs that include images of their children.
- Adults (including faculty, staff, volunteers, and parents) have given permission for the use of any photographs that include their images.

By signing below, I agree to the above stated criteria.

Principal's printed name:		
Principal's signature:		Date: