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NASET Announces 2026 Schools of Excellence and Exceptional Charter Schools

Recognition honors 54 private special education schools and 18 public charter schools across the United States for exceptional commitment to students with disabilities

New York, NY, May 20, 2026 -- The National Association of Special Education Teachers (NASET) is proud to announce the 2026 recipients of the Schools of Excellence and Exceptional Charter Schools awards. A total of 72 schools across 23 states have been selected for recognition this year, marking one of the largest classes in the program's history.

Since 2008, the NASET Schools of Excellence Award has been the highest honor a private special education school can achieve through our professional association. The Exceptional Charter Schools designation recognizes charter schools that have demonstrated outstanding dedication to serving students with disabilities. Both awards are bestowed on schools that meet rigorous professional criteria and have demonstrated truly exceptional commitment and achievement in the field of special education.

"Every school on this list represents a team of educators who wake up every day committed to meeting the individual needs of students with disabilities," said the NASET awards committee. "These schools don't just meet the standard, they set it. We are honored to recognize their work and share their stories with our community of over 100,000 special education professionals and families nationwide."

Selected schools receive national recognition across NASET's network, including a dedicated listing in NASET's searchable online directory, a feature in the NASET newsletter reaching over 43,000 subscribers, and inclusion in this national announcement.

2026 Schools of Excellence

- ACCEL, Phoenix, AZ
- ACLD Tillotson School, Pittsburgh, PA
- Adelbrook Academy in Bloomfield, Bloomfield, CT
- Adelbrook Academy in Manchester, Manchester, CT
- Adelbrook Academy of Cromwell, Cromwell, CT
- Advance Learning Academy, St. Marys, GA
- Austin Centers for Exceptional Students (ACES), Phoenix, AZ



- Autism Academy for Education and Development, Tucson Campus, Tucson, AZ
- Barber National Institute, Elizabeth Lee Black School, Erie, PA
- Berryville Day School, Berryville, VA
- Birchtree, Portsmouth, NH
- Bridge Builder Academy, Richardson, TX
- Camperdown Academy, Greenville, SC
- Charles H. Walsh Jr. Academy & Career Tech High School, Niles, IL
- Chesapeake Bay Academy, Virginia Beach, VA
- Children's Unit for Treatment and Evaluation, Binghamton, NY
- Elizabeth Seton Children's School, Yonkers, NY
- Gateway Academy, Phoenix, AZ
- The Gillen Brewer School, New York, NY
- Grafton School, Inc., Richmond Campus, Richmond, VA
- Grafton School, Inc., Ruth Birch Campus, Winchester, VA
- Hayes Day School, Millbrook, NY
- Helping Hand School, Countryside, IL
- Jane Justin School, Fort Worth, TX
- Journeys Lutheran School, Hales Corners, WI
- Julie Billiard Schools, Mayfield Heights, OH
- Kingsway Learning Center, Voorhees, NJ
- Krejci Academy, Warrenville, IL
- Learning Prep School, West Newton, MA
- Miami Learning Experience School, Miami, FL
- New Way Academy, Phoenix, AZ
- Northstar Academy, Glen Allen, VA
- Northwest Essex Therapeutic School and Preschool, Belleville, NJ
- Oak Hill Academy, Dallas, TX
- The Open Doorway Inc, West Palm Beach, FL
- Prime Time for Kids, New City, NY
- Rock Brook School, Skillman, NJ
- The Ryken Educational Center, Brooklyn, NY
- SAIL at Ferncliff Manor, Ardsley, NY
- The Scranton School for Deaf and Hard of Hearing Children, South Abington, PA
- Serendipity Center, Inc., Portland, OR
- Special Needs Schools of Gwinnett, Lawrenceville, GA
- Square Pegs Learning Center, Panama City, FL
- Star Autism Academy, Phoenix, AZ
- St. Michael Special School, New Orleans, LA
- Summit Academy, Getzville, NY
- The Arc of Essex County's Stepping Stones School, Fairfield, NJ
- The Children's Center for Neurodevelopmental Studies, Glendale, AZ
- The Spurwink School, Lincoln, RI
- The Westview School, Houston, TX
- Tiegerman High School, Richmond Hill, NY
- Timber Ridge School, Cross Junction, VA
- Turning Pointe Autism Foundation CN Day School, Naperville, IL



- Western Pennsylvania School For The Deaf, Pittsburgh, PA

2026 Exceptional Charter Schools

- Agora Cyber Charter School, King of Prussia, PA
- California School Of The Arts, San Gabriel Valley, Duarte, CA
- Classical Academy Vista, Oceanside, CA
- Coastal Academy, Oceanside, CA
- Commonwealth Charter Academy, Allentown, PA
- El Rancho Charter School, Anaheim, CA
- Franklin Towne Charter Elementary School, Philadelphia, PA
- Global Village Academy Aurora, Aurora, CO
- Imagine South Lake, Clermont, FL
- Liberty Common School, Fort Collins, CO
- Lindley Academy Charter School, Philadelphia, PA
- Norton Science and Language Academy, San Bernardino, CA
- Orange County School of the Arts, Santa Ana, CA
- Oregon Charter Academy, Mill City, OR
- The Academy of Academic Excellence, Apple Valley, CA
- The Classical Academy, Colorado Springs, CO
- Today's Fresh Start Charter School, Los Angeles, CA
- University Academy Charter School, Kansas City, MO

The full directory of 2026 awardees is available at naset.com/school-awards

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About NASSET

Founded in 2004, the **National Association of Special Education Teachers (NASSET)** provides five board certifications in areas including special education advocacy, IEP development, and paraprofessional support. NASSET serves a community of over **100,000 teachers, administrators, professionals, and families**, offering a weekly newsletter, monthly webinars on critical special education topics such as policy, law, and IEP composition, an active private membership community, and publishing the **Journal of the American Academy of Special Education Professionals (JAASEP)**, a peer-reviewed journal advancing research, policy, and practice.

With certifications, memberships, and advertising opportunities reaching one of the largest and most dedicated audiences in the field, NASSET continues to be the trusted national leader for resources, recognition, and professional growth in special education.

To learn more:

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