

H-E-B announces 2017 Excellence in Education School District and Early Childhood Finalists and recognizes outstanding Public School Boards

MEDIA CONTACT: Jill Reynolds, H-E-B, (512) 589-9842

(SAN ANTONIO) — H-E-B announced today that eight school districts and five early childhood facilities have been selected as finalists for the retailer's 16th annual 2017 Excellence in Education Awards program. For the third year in a row, H-E-B is recognizing five public school boards to highlight the importance of strong leadership at the board level.

Since the program's inception, H-E-B has awarded more than \$8.5 million in funding to benefit outstanding Texas public schools. This year, H-E-B will award a total of \$85,000 to the finalists and school boards, who will go on to compete for even greater cash prizes at the statewide level. Each finalist in the large district and early childhood categories, as well as the five recognized school boards, will receive \$5,000; the three finalists in the small district category will receive \$2,500.

To determine overall statewide winners, a panel of judges visits each district, early childhood facility and school board, tours campuses and talks with administration, staff, parents and community members.

Winners will be announced at the H-E-B Excellence in Education Awards ceremony on May 7 at the Hilton Hotel in Austin. The winning large district will receive \$100,000; the winning small district \$50,000. An early childhood facility will receive \$25,000. If selected, one or more school boards will receive up to a total of \$25,000.

Forty teacher and principal finalists will be announced in February and March during a series of surprise visits to schools and classrooms across Texas.

The 2017 school district and early childhood finalists, as well as recognized school boards, are as follows:

LARGE SCHOOL DISTRICTS

- * Allen ISD — Allen, Texas
- * Brownsville ISD — Brownsville, Texas
- * Grand Prairie ISD — Grand Prairie, Texas
- * Northwest ISD — Fort Worth, Texas
- * Socorro ISD — El Paso, Texas

SMALL SCHOOL DISTRICTS

- * Alamo Heights ISD — San Antonio, Texas
- * Hutto ISD — Hutto, Texas

- * Lake Travis ISD - Austin, Texas

EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION FACILITIES

- * Vogel Alcove— Dallas, Texas
- * Dalton Early Childhood Center - Uvalde, Texas
- * Victoria ISD - Victoria, Texas
- * John H. Cherry - Bay City, Texas
- * Pre-K 4 San Antonio Education Center - San Antonio, Texas

PUBLIC SCHOOL BOARDS

- * Harlingen ISD - Harlingen, Texas
- * Dripping Springs ISD — Dripping Springs, Texas
- * Fort Bend ISD — Sugar Land, Texas
- * Hurst-Euless-Bedford ISD - Bedford, Texas
- * Schertz-Cibolo-Universal City - Schertz, Texas

About the H-E-B Excellence in Education Awards

H-E-B launched the Excellence in Education Awards program in cooperation with the Texas Association of School Administrators in 2002 as a positive way to support public education in Texas. It has become the largest monetary program for educators in the state, spotlighting best practices and celebrating the passion and creativity of Texas educators.

H-E-B asks customers, Partners (employees) and community members to nominate teachers, principals, districts, early childhood facilities and school boards in Texas. Each nominee is sent an invitation to complete an application online and is asked about their professional experiences, educational philosophies and achievements both in and out of the classroom.

A team of judges reviews the applications, narrowing the field to semi-finalists. From that pool, five regional judging panels comprised of former winners, administrators, and university and community leaders not affiliated with H-E-B select 40 teacher and principal finalists. Finalists and their schools receive a cash prize of \$1,000 to \$2,500, depending on category.

Three separate panels select eight school districts and five early childhood facilities as finalists, awarding \$2,500 to \$5,000 in cash prizes. Up to five school boards may also be recognized, and awarded \$5,000 towards the district they serve. Additionally, one or more school boards may receive a special judge's award totaling up to \$25,000. Site visits are conducted to determine winners.

Teacher and principal finalists are invited to Austin, May 6, 2017 to compete on a statewide level for larger cash prizes totaling more than \$400,000. A statewide panel of judges, not affiliated with H-E-B, conducts a personal interview with each finalist to select winners.

Eight winners — two principals and six teachers — will be announced along with two school districts, one large and one small, a public school board and an Early Childhood Facility, at a celebratory dinner on May 7, 2017.

Each winning principal—one elementary school and one high school—will each receive \$10,000 in cash for themselves and a \$25,000 grant for their schools. The winning large school district will receive a \$100,000 cash prize and the winning small school district will receive \$50,000. The winning Early Childhood Facility will receive \$25,000 and a school board could be awarded up to \$25,000.

The six winning teachers will include one elementary and one secondary teacher in each of three categories:

The Rising Star Award — honors exceptionally promising teachers with less than 10 years of experience. These winners will each receive a \$5,000 check for themselves and a \$5,000 grant for their schools.

The Leadership Award — honors teachers with 10 to 20 years in the classroom. These winners will each receive a \$10,000 check for themselves and a \$10,000 grant for their schools.

The Lifetime Achievement Award — salutes teachers with more than 20 years of experience. These teachers will each receive \$25,000 in cash for themselves and a \$25,000 grant for their schools.

About H-E-B

H-E-B, with sales of more than \$23 billion, operates more than 380 stores in Texas and Mexico. Known for its innovation and community service, H-E-B celebrated its 110th anniversary in 2015. Recognized for its fresh food, quality products, convenient services, and a commitment to environmental responsibility and sustainability, H-E-B strives to provide the best customer experience at everyday low prices. Based in San Antonio, H-E-B employs more than 96,000 Partners in Texas and Mexico and serves millions of customers in more than 300 communities. For more information, visit heb.com<redir.aspx?