



Information and Nomination Form for 2018-2019

PART 1 OF 2 – AWARD INFORMATION

Who Was Arlethia Stevenson?

“It takes someone special to teach someone ‘special’.” Arlethia Stevenson was such a person.

Mrs. Stevenson was an exceptionally gifted, dedicated, passionate, and compassionate teacher who unflinchingly excelled in her vocation. She ensured each of her very ‘special’ students were given the best learning experiences possible despite their disability challenges or any socio-economic disadvantages. Mrs. Stevenson was wholeheartedly committed to her students’ academic success. She creatively engaged them, was firm but kind, was an encourager who stretched their boundaries, and was always patient. She set a very high standard for excellence; her dedicated commitment to students and support of parents was simply extraordinary.

Mrs. Stevenson was a devoted and beloved teacher who served the Hampton City Schools (HCS) division for eight years. She was at Bassette Elementary School for most, if not all, of her time with HCS. Dr. Bryce Johnson, the principal at Bassette, shared that she would often say, “Whatever it takes, Dr. Johnson, whatever it takes,” as she consistently arrived early, stayed late, worked through lunch, and tried various instructional strategies to meet each student’s unique needs.

In short, Mrs. Arlethia Stevenson was one phenomenal educator. We are grateful to her family for granting us permission to name this award in honor of her memory and legacy of excellence.

What is the Purpose of the Award?

The Arlethia Stevenson Award for Excellence in Special Education was established to acknowledge and show appreciation for the excellence of educators, instructional aides, and others



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who truly embrace the division's mission "Every Child, Every Day, Whatever It Takes" as they ensure the full acceptance, authentic inclusion, and success of students with disabilities.

The award is a way to thank those who, through their dedication, creativity, patience and determination, help students with exceptional needs experience success. It is also a way for the school division and our community to honor the memory and professional legacy of a very special educator . . . Mrs. Arlethia Stevenson.

Who Can Make Nominations?

A nomination may be submitted by anyone in the Hampton City Schools community, including students, parents, parent associations, school administrators, and colleagues. Nominations may be submitted via e-mail (hcs.seac@gmail.com) (preferred) or by first-class mail.

All submissions must be received by **5:00 p.m., March 29, 2019.**

How are Nominations Made?

Using the nomination format in part 2 of this package, nominations can be submitted either by e-mail (hcs.seac@gmail.com) (preferred), or a paper copy can be mailed to:

Hampton SEAC
c/o Special Education Department
Ruppert Sargent Building
One Franklin Street, 4th Floor
Hampton, VA 22669

What are the Eligibility Criteria?

Eligible persons. Special education teachers, general education teachers who instruct students with disabilities in general education classes, instructional aides, and others within the school division who significantly and positively impact the lives of disabled students during the school year are eligible for nomination.

NOTE: An individual does NOT have to meet all criteria in order to be nominated for this award. Nominees will be considered for selection based on the following criteria:



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- Provides outstanding instruction and support to ensure the success of students with unique educational needs or disabilities.
- Demonstrates a passion for and commitment to students with disabilities, and the field of special education; committed to continuing professional development – with a focus on special education.
- Provides school leadership in developing or carrying out instructional or social practices to promote achievement, authentic inclusion, and participation of students with unique needs.
- Promotes and utilizes exceptional teaching practices in the classroom (special education or general education) which enables achievement and participation of students with special needs, such as:
 - ❖ Classroom organization.
 - ❖ Differentiated instruction.
 - ❖ Instructional accommodations.
 - ❖ Peer assistance strategies.
 - ❖ Social skills development.
 - ❖ Management of behavior.
- Challenges students and engages them in their learning through creative ways.
- Is knowledgeable about various disabilities and possible ‘best’ strategies that could help those students learn.
- Creates a culture of valuing, accepting, sharing and celebrating students with disabilities in the school community.
- Provides support to parents by distributing special education or disability-related information about local support organizations, training programs/opportunities, and school and community events.
- Actively participates in transition planning that promotes independent living and college or career readiness.
- Is respected by students, parents, colleagues, and administrators.



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Instructions and Important Information

1. Again, **nominees do not have to meet all of the listed criteria in order to be nominated for this Award.** However, **nominators must identify at least three (3),** and of the three selected, **one must be: *How does the nominee create a culture of valuing, accepting, sharing, and celebrating students with disabilities in the school community?*** Please give examples.
2. **Nominees should be prepared to state** how instructing or being responsible for students with disabilities has helped them become better teachers, instructional aides, administrators, etc.
3. Along with the nomination form, nomination packages must include:
 - a. A typed or legibly printed, and signed, statement from the nominator of **500 words or less**, that tells why the nominee deserves this special recognition.
 - b. Concise supporting statements from **three (3)** references –one each from (1) a parent or student, (2) a colleague, and (3) an administrator. All must have **personal knowledge** of the nominee. Their statements should be **no longer than one page** and **provide specific details that reflect at least three or more** of the **eligibility criteria** identified herein.
4. Supporting statements from school administrators, business persons, or organizations must be on the **appropriate letterhead and signed.**
5. Individuals may nominate themselves or be nominated by others.
6. **NOTE: INCOMPLETE NOMINATION PACKAGES WILL NOT BE CONSIDERED. PACKAGES SUBMITTED AFTER THE DEADLINE WILL NOT BE CONSIDERED.**

Suggestions to Help Prepare Competitive Nomination Packages

1. ***Don't just say your nominee is outstanding . . . prove it!***
It is important to use specific and concrete examples to illustrate how your nominee meets eligibility and award criteria. Provide examples of how your nominee has demonstrated they are a deserving candidate for this Award. Write concise sentences that give specific details.



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2. **Remember . . . keep it simple!**

Longer does not necessarily mean better. When presenting your nominee, keep your explanations clear and to-the-point while ensuring there is enough information for the review/selection committee to make a decision.

3. **Keep in mind**, we will evaluate nominees' merits based on the information provided to us. That is why only the strongest and most compelling nominations will advance for award consideration. Therefore, your nomination should **not** be:

- an extended curriculum vitae (CV) or resume;
- a list of educational achievements or transcripts;
- a list of appointments, awards or posts; or
- a job description showing what the person has been hired to do.

Weaker nominations often include these things but this just shows us the nominee was 'simply doing their job' and 'does not demonstrate anything exceptional.' Also, stating that a nominee should receive this Award because they prepare for Individualized Education Program (IEP) team meetings by reviewing the student's IEP beforehand is not extraordinary; or that they should receive the Award because they take disabled students on field trips with their classes. Neither of these examples are outstanding; they are, however, reasonable expectations of teachers doing their jobs.

Instead, describe what is outstanding about your nominee's achievements and show memorably and persuasively how and where they have made a difference in the lives of students with disabilities.

4. **Before submitting** your nomination, **double-check** to ensure:

- a. the nomination form is complete;
- b. the nominator answered, citing examples, how the nominee *creates a culture of valuing, accepting, sharing, and celebrating students with disabilities in the school community*;
- c. the nominator's statement is signed;
- d. supporting reference statements are signed and, when proper, are on appropriate letterhead;
- e. statements contain no readily apparent spelling, grammatical, or typographical errors; and
- f. the complete nomination package is submitted by the deadline.



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Who Determines the Recipient of this Award?

This is a Hampton Special Education Advisory Committee (SEAC) award. Nominations will be reviewed by, and the award recipient will be selected by, a SEAC sub-committee comprised of two SEAC members (representing parents), a teacher, and two school administrators.

Awards will be presented during a televised and recorded School Board meeting at the end of the school year.

Questions?

If you have questions, please contact the SEAC Chairperson at **757.274.2699** or hcs.seac@gmail.com.



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The completed nomination package, which includes this form and accompanying recommendation statements, should be sent to SEAC by e-mail (hcs.seac@gmail.com) (preferred), or by first class mail before/by the stipulated deadline to: **Hampton SEAC, c/o Special Education Department, Ruppert Sargent Building, One Franklin Street, 4th Floor, Hampton, VA 22669.**

Nominee's Name

Nominee's Employment Category (Select one)

- Special Education Teacher
- General Education Teacher
- Instructional Assistant
- Administrator
- Other Support Staff. Specify _____

At which Hampton City School or location is the nominee employed?

Nominee's Contact Information:

Phone Number: _____ E-mail Address: _____

Nominator's Information:

Nominator's Name

Phone Number: _____ E-mail Address: _____