



“Amistad Commission’s Governor’s Exemplary Teacher Award Program 2025-2026” (Revised)

The Amistad Commission’s Governor’s Exemplary Teacher Award Program was codified by the New Jersey Legislature and signed into law by Governor Phil Murphy on August 31, 2021. The Award is designed to promote teaching the Amistad curriculum in New Jersey schools, enhance the social studies literacy of students, and encourage the infusion of African American history into the social studies curriculum.

The intent of the Award is to recognize and celebrate the work of exemplary **New Jersey teachers** who commit to furthering student knowledge of African American history and the contributions of African Americans to our society.

The Commission invites all New Jersey schools (districts, charters, and renaissance) to nominate teachers to be recognized for their efforts based on their development of exemplary lessons, units of study, or courses of study or other contributions that impact their school communities that implement the Amistad curriculum aligned to the New Jersey Student Learning Standards (NJSLS).

From the list of nominees, the Award Committee will select two teachers to receive the Amistad Commission’s Governor’s Exemplary Teacher Award: One teacher representing grades **K-8** and one teacher representing grades **9-12**. The award will be presented at the Amistad Commission’s Summer Institute 2026 at Kean University.

Each award recipient receives **\$2,500** in recognition of his or her extraordinary contributions. In addition, the recipient’s school district will receive **\$2,500**. The funds are for the district’s implementation of the Amistad Mandate.

Eligibility: All K-12 teachers currently under contract of at least 60% in a New Jersey school district, charter school, and or a renaissance school.

THE AWARD PROCESS

STEP 1: Nomination

Principals, teachers, parents, students, or members of the public—may nominate exceptional teachers of the Amistad Mandate in grades K-12. Nominations may be submitted for more than one teacher at each program level (**K-8** and **9-12**). Teachers may also nominate themselves. All submissions must include the teacher’s full name,



telephone number, email address; school and district information, grade level and/or course.

Step 2: Documentation

Each nominee must submit:

Summary of accomplishments within the past two years that provide evidence of infusion of the contributions of Africans and African Americans in the context of American History courses in Social Studies, World History, and other disciplines (Visual or Performing Arts, Language Arts Literacy, Science, World Languages, Math, etc.).

- **Evidentiary documentation** of exemplary lessons promoting the Amistad Curriculum:
 - o Lesson plans
 - o Student projects
 - o Videos
 - o School or district-level student-centered programs, projects, activities, or videos

Please submit all materials electronically to the Amistad Commission Williams Payne Exemplary Teacher Award: [The New Jersey Amistad Commission Exemplary Teacher Award 2025-2026](#). The deadline to submit a nomination form and supporting materials is **June 5, 2026**.

STEP 3: Selection

All applications undergo state-level committee review. After the selection process the winners will be notified and the Committee will recognize each award recipient at the end of the school year.

After the selection process, the Amistad Commission will notify the recipient of the award prior to June 30, 2026. The Amistad Commission will publicly acknowledge the winner of the Amistad Commission's Governor's Exemplary Teacher Award at the 2026 Amistad Commission's Summer Institute at Kean University- Union, New Jersey on July 30, 2026.

Dr. Patrick Lamy

Executive Director
The Amistad Commission
State of New Jersey, Department of Education