PATRICIA M. LARSON AWARD FOR EXCELLENCE IN ELEMENTARY EDUCATION NOMINATION FORM-2026

Nominations and letters of support are due April 1st, 2026 and should be sent to the Brookings Foundation, 1028 7th Avenue, Brookings, SD 57006.

Contact information of individual submitting this nomination:

Name_____ Address_____ Phone#_____ email

Relationshipto nominee _____

Nominee_____

School_____

How many years has this nominee taught in an elementary school? _____

Is this nominee a licensed teacher in the State of SD? _____Yes _____No

Please list the community activities this nominee has been involved in- (may include volunteer time, church or civic boards, projects and activities this nominee is, or has been involved with.)

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Nomination Essay- 250-500 words- please refer to items a-d on the "Nomination Process" description

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Please attach the two letters of support: one from an employee within the Brookings School District; the other from a parent or student (current or former).

Submit all material by **April 1st, 2026** to Kurt Osborne, Brookings Foundation, 1028 7th Ave, Brookings, SD 57006

If you have any questions, please call Kurt @ 605 940-7524, or email kurt@koolbeanscoffee.net.

PATRICIA M. LARSON AWARD FOR EXCELLENCE IN ELEMENTARY EDUCATION

AWARD PROCESS OVERVIEW

The Brookings School District is fortunate to have many exemplary teachers. The Patricia M. Larson Award for Excellence seeks to select the best representative of the many outstanding teachers in K-5 education. This award honors an individual as a teacher/mentor having a great impact on children.

The Patricia M. Larson Fund provides an annual award of $2,000 to a Brookings k-5 Elementary Teacher and a $2,000 award to the school where the award winner is employed. This award is intended as a sign of appreciation and encouragement for ongoing teaching and learning. The use of funds is unrestricted.

The Patricia M. Larson award is an on-going tribute in memory of Patricia M. Larson, who dedicated her life to children's education through her activities as a parent, educator, volunteer and philanthropist. After earning her degree in Elementary Education from the College of St. Benedict, Patricia began her teaching career in Austin, Minnesota. In 1964, Patricia and her husband Dale, moved to Brookings where she spent 2 years teaching at Hillcrest Elementary. Among her many volunteer activities, Patricia was a member of PEO and taught catechism at St. Thomas More Catholic Church. She was also President of the Larson Foundation which founded the Children's Museum of South Dakota and has granted funding to numerous statewide projects focusing on childhood learning.

AWARD PROCESS CRITERIA:

- Demonstrates exemplary enthusiasm and professional commitment towards children's learning
- Exhibits a genuine love of children and advocates for the best interest of students, addressing their emotional and developmental needs
- Creates a positive, supportive, respectful atmosphere for personal and academic achievement to flourish
- Respects and appreciates each student as an individual with unique abilities • Employs a wide range of educational and scientific research in teaching-pulling the best out of each student.

NOMINATION PROCESS:

- Any Brookings colleague, school administrator, student, parent, or community member may make the nomination
- The completed nomination packet shall include:
  - The Nomination Form which lists the following:
    - The name of the nominated teacher
    - The affiliated school
    - The name, address and phone number of the person submitting the nomination and their relationship to the nominee
    - A list of community involvement beyond their regular teaching duties

  - An essay of 250-500 words describing:
    a) The reason for the nomination
    b) The nominee's strengths in relation to the award criteria
    c) The nominee's best practices in teaching
    d) The nominee's commitment to children's education

  - **Two** letters of support which share personal observations of how the nominee demonstrates a commitment to excellence in teaching. **One** letter should be from an employee of the Brookings School District. and **one** letter from a parent or student (current or former).