Report for Illinois Aviation Academy at DPA

Region: Great Lakes

Below is a summary of scores and feedback from all the usable evaluations which were submitted for you during the 2026 Flight Training Experience Award application period. Many flight training providers receive exceptionally high scores so we also share with you the distribution of the overall aggregate scores for comparison.

1. Eligibility

To be eligible for an award, you needed to receive at least 10 unique evaluations, each at least 80% complete.

A survey response was considered 'usable' if the respondent answered at least 80% of the questions required for scoring.
A Flight School was considered 'eligible' for an award if they received at least 10 unique, usable responses.
Average scores were based on all usable responses received and have been rounded where necessary
Your percentile rank was calculated by comparing your score to scores of all other(nominated/eligible) Flight Schools
Percentile ranks were calculated at both national and regional levels and may have been rounded.
Your performance (percentile rank) compared to all other eligible Flight Schools in your region was one of many factors that informed award decisions.

You received 36 evaluations.

2. Free Responses

At the end of each evaluation, we ask the following open-ended question:

Why should or shouldn't your school win a Flight Training Experience Award?

3. Individual Overall Scores & Responses

Total Score	Student Review
86.00	They are very accommodating in any scheduling and aircraft changes and have a diverse group of instructors that are always able and willing to help.
71.00	Lots of planes
89.00	This flight school should win this award for upstanding training content, upholding FAA standards of aircraft maintenance, and promoting a community that aviation can be proud of.
88.00	They provide top tier flight training for their students. They are committed to safety above all else. The in-house maintenance team is always ready to repair or fix any issue. They are also always helpful when students and instructors have questions about maintenance or an aircraft system. The school is always looking for new ways to improve experience, efficiency, and safety. They never settle for average.
90.00	Illinois aviation academy represents everything the AOPA Flight Training Excellence Awards are meant to celebrate — safety, integrity, and an enduring passion for aviation education. Without question, they deserve to be recognized as one of the top flight schools in the nation.

87.00	This flight school has helped me through every step of my learning. All of the flight instructors are helpful and friendly, and it is nice to know that I have all the resources I need here.
84.00	Large fleet of aircraft, clean and nicely maintained
90.00	Best flight school very considerate.
90.00	International Aviation Academy (IAA) stands out as one of the best flight schools for aspiring pilots because of its strong focus on safety, quality training, and real-world experience. The academy offers a structured and FAA-approved curriculum taught by experienced instructors who are dedicated to helping students master every aspect of flight. IAA's modern fleet and advanced simulators provide hands-on learning that builds confidence and skill from day one. Beyond technical training, IAA fosters a professional environment that prepares students for successful aviation careers—whether in commercial airlines, corporate aviation, or other flight operations. With its combination of state-of-the-art facilities, personalized instruction, and proven track record of producing skilled pilots, IAA is the ideal place to begin your aviation journey.
90.00	They have made CFI a pleasant experience and have helped me grow my experience. They have helped multiple groups like Tuskegee Next to obtain their certificates in least amount of time and money.
86.00	It's a great school did all my training here. Welcoming environment great atmosphere
90.00	This flight values student training and progress over anything else. They go above and beyond to ensure quality instruction and satisfaction.
82.00	This flight school is a home away from home. It's a place where students can call their their place of home. All of the staff are friendly people and love to help you and one another. Veronica Heffron works upfront a lot and she's always smiling and very happy. She's very happy to help others. The instructors are all very knowledgeable and especially and especially Brennan McNee Mike Gore and Ethan MEisenberg. Will ditch was a good cfi and Ben schink was the best CFII.
83.00	Illinois Aviation Academy (IAA) exemplifies excellence in flight training through its strong community, high-quality instruction, friendly staff, and innovative approach. The academy creates a welcoming environment where students feel supported from their first flight through advanced ratings. Instructors provide professional, personalized training that builds both skill and confidence. IAA's staff go above and beyond to ensure every student's success, fostering a culture of encouragement and passion for aviation. With its commitment to modern technology and forward-thinking training methods, IAA continues to set the standard for an exceptional flight training experience.
89.00	NA
83.00	Good instruction good aircraft good availability
81.00	Ilinois Aviation Academy deserves recognition for its structured, high-quality flight training and commitment to student success. As an FAA Part 141-approved school, IAA offers comprehensive programs from private through instructor certifications, supported by a well-maintained fleet and FAA-approved simulators. The academy emphasizes safety, mentorship, and continuous instructor development, creating a professional yet welcoming learning environment. Their community outreach through youth programs like AeroCamp and flexible financing options make aviation training more accessible. While every school has areas to improve, IAA consistently demonstrates dedication to producing skilled, confident, and safety-minded pilots, earning it strong consideration for the Flight Training Experience Award.
86.00	We seek to provide the best training.
80.00	They always care about whats best for the students
87.00	Their commitment to their students and quality of training is second to none.
90.00	Exceptional instructors and aircraft availability.
88.00	I would recommend this flight school because of the fantastic culture and large fleet of aircraft that allows very flexible schedule and instructors that are very easy to work with and caring.
67.00	This school gets you done at a fast rate

90.00	Illinois Aviation Academy represents everything a flight school should strive to be. From the moment you walk through the doors, you're welcomed into a community that truly values safety, professionalism, and a love for aviation. The culture here isn't just about getting students through checkrides — it's about developing knowledgeable, confident, and well-rounded aviators. The instructors at IAA go above and beyond in every aspect of training. They are not only incredibly skilled pilots but also gifted educators who tailor their teaching to each student's learning style. Whether it's a Private Pilot student taking their first discovery flight or a CFI candidate preparing for a checkride, every pilot receives the same level of care, precision, and enthusiasm. IAA's maintenance and aircraft quality are exceptional, ensuring that safety remains the top priority. The fleet is clean, modern, and well-maintained, and the staff's professionalism sets the standard for flight training organizations across the country. What truly sets Illinois Aviation Academy apart, though, is its atmosphere. It's a place where instructors, students, and staff genuinely care about one another's success. There's a sense of belonging — a shared passion for flying — that motivates every student to achieve their goals. In a world where flight training can sometimes feel transactional, IAA stands out as a school that inspires, supports, and empowers future aviators. For its dedication to excellence, student success, and community, Illinois Aviation Academy absolutely deserves a Flight Training Experience Award.
90.00	Illinois Aviation Academy (IAA) deserves to win a Flight Training Experience Award because it represents the best qualities of what a flight school can be: professional, supportive, safety-focused, and genuinely invested in the success of every student. I can say this from every perspective — as a former student, instructor, check instructor, and now Assistant Chief Pilot. I've experienced firsthand the consistency and care that defines IAA's culture at every level. What sets IAA apart is the personal commitment the staff and leadership show to each student's growth. The instructors don't just teach to the test; they mentor pilots to think, lead, and fly with confidence and integrity. Every student — from discovery flight to CFI checkride — receives individualized attention and encouragement. The school's collaborative environment builds both skill and community, which is why so many students choose to stay on as instructors and even professional pilots within the IAA network. Safety and professionalism are core values that guide every operation at IAA. The maintenance team ensures aircraft reliability, the management team promotes continuous improvement, and the instructors uphold a standard of excellence that prepares students for success in all sectors of aviation. Beyond technical proficiency, IAA emphasizes character and leadership, producing pilots who not only fly well but represent the aviation community with pride. IAA is more than a place to learn how to fly — it's a place that changes lives. I've seen students arrive uncertain of their abilities and leave with the confidence and skills to launch professional careers. That transformation is possible because of IAA's supportive, high-quality training environment and the genuine passion every team member brings to aviation education. For all these reasons, I believe Illinois Aviation Academy truly embodies the spirit of the AOPA Flight Training Experience Awards and deserves recognition as Flight School of the Year.
90.00	Illinois aviation provides students with the training needed to succeed as a professional pilot.
86.00	Great instructors and staff always feeling welcome and encouraged to learn and become a better and safer pilot
83.00	Instruction is of a high quality across the board and while the school can be on the pricey side I believe it is worth the cost for the most part.
90.00	Nobody does it like IAA
88.00	Quality of education and size if fleet.
89.00	Thus flight school is well organized, great one on one flight training and always involving students in programs and events. This school makes the aviation community fun and informative.
89.00	Illinois Aviation Academy, LLC is the only school in the region that has full-time mechanics, flight instructors, administrative staff, customer service representatives, safety and quality assurance representatives dedicated solely to flight training. In addition, IAA offers seminars, club for kids, fly-outs and an app that members can communicate on for ideas, activities, concerns or just to share pictures. It is a great aviation community.
85.00	This school should win the award because it has many resources available for students to excel in their courses and exams. It also has a super-professional staff, from the people who work at the front desk to the instructors. The instructors are super-professional and knowledgeable, explaining and teaching you so you can learn in different ways. There are people who learn in different ways.
90.00	they are the best around
86.00	Because we provide adequate training and have dedicated staff to achieve students goals.

81.00	There is an excellent group of instructors and the staff has always been supportive of me in my flight training.

4. Aggregate Overall Score (Range: 0 to 100)

This is the overall score you received from your customers in the 2026 Flight Training Experience Award application period:

Your Score: 86

4.1 Compared to All Nominees (those with at least 1 evaluation)

National Average: 86
Your national percentile ranking: 42%

Regional Average: 87
Your regional percentile ranking: 32%

4.2 Compared to All Eligible Nominees (those with at least 10 evaluations)

National Average: 86
Your national percentile ranking: 41%

Regional Average: 87
Your regional percentile ranking: 42%

5. SubScore Summary for Illinois Aviation Academy at DPA

Region: Great Lakes

The remaining sections summarize your individual subscores (range: 0 to 100) as they apply to each of the four areas from our Flight Training Experience Research: Educational Quality, Customer Focus, Community, and Information Sharing. You will also find national and regional averages, for benchmarking.

Subscore Summary:

	Your Score	National Avg
Educational Quality	98	97
Customer Focus	95	96
Community	98	96
Information Sharing	90	91
NetPromoter Score	92	92
Overall Total	95	94

6. Educational Quality Scale (Range: 0 to 100)

This is the score you received from your customers, derived solely from the questions related to Educational Quality; offering effective training from professional instructors who are dedicated to students' success

Your Score: 98

6.1 Compared to All Nominees (those with at least 1 evaluation)

National Average: 97
Your national percentile ranking: 50%

Regional Average: 99
Your regional percentile ranking: 23%

6.2 Compared to All Eligible Nominees (those with at least 10 evaluations)

National Average: 98
Your national percentile ranking: 51%

Regional Average: 98
Your regional percentile ranking: 25%

6.3 Responses per Question

My school consistently used a training syllabus that I could consult.

Response Choice	Frequency	%
Strongly Agree	34	94.44%
Somewhat Agree	2	5.56%

My school helped me find an instructor who considered my personal strengths and weaknesses when creating lesson plans.

Response Choice	Frequency	%
Strongly Agree	34	94.44%
Somewhat Agree	1	2.78%
Somewhat Disagree	1	2.78%

My school promotes a culture of safety.

Response Choice	Frequency	%
Strongly Agree	32	88.89%
Somewhat Agree	4	11.11%

My instructor at my school regularly suggested what I should study before arriving at the airport for a lesson.

Response Choice	Frequency	%
Strongly Agree	34	94.44%
Somewhat Agree	1	2.78%
Neither agree nor disagree	1	2.78%

7. Customer Focus Scale (Range: 0 to 100)

This is the score you received from your customers, derived solely from the questions related to Customer Focus; adding value by demonstrating professionalism and engagement with students

Your Score: 95

7.1 Compared to All Nominees (those with at least 1 evaluation)

National Average: 96
Your national percentile ranking: 31%

Regional Average: 97
Your regional percentile ranking: 23%

7.2 Compared to All Eligible Nominees (those with at least 10 evaluations)

National Average: 96
Your national percentile ranking: 31%

Regional Average: 97
Your regional percentile ranking: 25%

7.3 Responses per Question

Instructors at my school were never available to answer questions outside of formal lessons.

Response Choice	Frequency	%
Somewhat Disagree	2	5.56%
Strongly Disagree	34	94.44%

I found it easy to reschedule lessons at my school when there were issues, like maintenance or weather.

Response Choice	Frequency	%
Strongly Agree	28	77.78%
Somewhat Agree	6	16.67%
Neither agree nor disagree	1	2.78%
Strongly Disagree	1	2.78%

Staff at my school always treated me with respect.

Response Choice	Frequency	%
Strongly Agree	31	86.11%
Somewhat Agree	5	13.89%

Sometimes I wish I had chosen a different flight school.

Response Choice	Frequency	%
Somewhat Agree	2	5.56%
Neither agree nor disagree	1	2.78%

Somewhat Disagree	8	22.22%
Strongly Disagree	25	69.44%

8. Community Focus Scale (Range: 0 to 100)

This is the score you received from your customers, derived solely from the questions related to Community; emphasizing social connections and accomplishments.

Your Score: 98

8.1 Compared to All Nominees (those with at least 1 evaluation)

National Average: 96
Your national percentile ranking: 65%

Regional Average: 98
Your regional percentile ranking: 45%

8.2 Compared to All Eligible Nominees (those with at least 10 evaluations)

National Average: 96
Your national percentile ranking: 68%

Regional Average: 98
Your regional percentile ranking: 42%

8.3 Responses per Question

After training at my school, I feel like a member of the general aviation community.

Response Choice	Frequency	%
Strongly Agree	32	88.89%
Somewhat Agree	2	5.56%
Neither agree nor disagree	1	2.78%
Strongly Disagree	1	2.78%

Sometimes I felt as if I didn't belong at my school.

Response Choice	Frequency	%
Somewhat Disagree	2	5.56%
Strongly Disagree	34	94.44%

My school provided adequate opportunities to meet students, new pilots, and members of the local aviation community

Response Choice	Frequency	%

Strongly Agree	30	83.33%
Somewhat Agree	6	16.67%

I received regular positive encouragement that made me want to come back for my next lesson at my school.

Response Choice	Frequency	%
Strongly Agree	34	94.44%
Somewhat Agree	2	5.56%

9. Information Sharing Scale (Range: 0 to 100)

This is the score you received from your customers, derived solely from the questions related to Information Sharing; educating and empowering students to make informed decisions about flight training investments.

Your Score: 90

9.1 Compared to All Nominees (those with at least 1 evaluation)

National Average: 91
Your national percentile ranking: 37%

Regional Average: 94
Your regional percentile ranking: 5%

9.2 Compared to All Eligible Nominees (those with at least 10 evaluations)

National Average: 92
Your national percentile ranking: 31%

Regional Average: 93
Your regional percentile ranking: 8%

9.3 Responses per Question

I always understood the steps required to reach my flight training goals at my school.

Response Choice	Frequency	%
Strongly Agree	30	83.33%
Somewhat Agree	6	16.67%

My flight training at my school has required more time and/or money than I expected.

Response Choice	Frequency	%
Strongly Agree	2	5.56%
Somewhat Agree	2	5.56%
Neither agree nor disagree	7	19.44%

Somewhat Disagree	12	33.33%
Strongly Disagree	13	36.11%

My school readily shares information about student success rates (e.g. passing FAA checkride).

Response Choice	Frequency	%
Strongly Agree	23	63.89%
Somewhat Agree	6	16.67%
Neither agree nor disagree	6	16.67%
Strongly Disagree	1	2.78%

I was shown where I could find additional resources, like study guides or practice exams, to supplement my studies in anticipation of written or practical exams.

Response Choice	Frequency	%
Strongly Agree	35	97.22%
Somewhat Agree	1	2.78%

10.Net Promoter Score

10.1 Questionaire Responses

The Net Promoter Score is generated by asking customers how likely they would be to recommend a given product or service - in this case, your services as a flight instructor to another potential customer, on an 11 point scale.

How likely are you to recommend your CFI to someone interested in flight training?

Response Choice	Frequency	%
10	29	80.56%
9	4	11.11%
8	2	5.56%
7	1	2.78%

10.2 NPS Grouping

Responses to this question are then used to sort customers into one of three groups:

Detractor: Less likely to use your services again and may not speak highly of your services to others.

Passive: Generally somewhat satisfied, passive respondents likely won't help or hurt your business in talking to other people.

Promoters: Ideally, all of your customers would be promoters. Promoters would fly with you again in the future and would tell others how great they think you are.

Response Choice	Frequency	%
Promoter	33	91.67%
Passive	3	8.33%

10.3 Standardized Score Calculation

The overall Net Promoter Score is calculated by subtracting the percentage of your customers who are 'detractors' from the percentage of your customers you are 'promoters.' Thus, the overall Net Promoter Score can range from - 100 to 100.

For more information on the Net Promoter Score and how to interpret it, check out: https://www.medallia.com/net-promoter-score

Your Score: 92

10.3.1 Compared to All Nominees (those with at least 1 evaluation)

National Average: 92
Your national percentile ranking: 27%

Regional Average: 92
Your regional percentile ranking: 32%

10.3.2 Compared to All Eligible Nominees (those with at least 10 evaluations)

National Average: 95
Your national percentile ranking: 28%

Regional Average: 96
Your regional percentile ranking: 25%