



KANSAS TEACHER OF THE YEAR PROGRAM

Mission

The Kansas Teacher of the Year program, sponsored by the Kansas State Department of Education, identifies, recognizes, and utilizes representatives of excellent teaching in the elementary and secondary classrooms of the state. The mission of the Kansas Teacher of the Year program is...

to build and utilize a network of exemplary teachers who are leaders in the improvement of schools, student performance, and the teaching profession.

The Kansas Teacher of the Year and state finalists serve as ambassadors for education in Kansas, making public appearances across the state. The Kansas Teacher of the Year is nominated to represent Kansas in the National Teacher of the Year program sponsored by the Council of Chief State School Officers and Scholastic Inc.



General Qualifications

Each nominee must be a full time classroom teacher in any state-approved or accredited school, pre-kindergarten through grade twelve, who is planning to continue in an active teaching status.

The teacher should be exceptionally skilled, dedicated, and an inspiration to students of all backgrounds and abilities to learn.

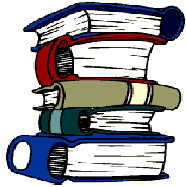
The candidate should have the respect and admiration of students, parents, and colleagues and should play an active and useful role in the community as well as in the school.

The award carries with it a number of public appearances; therefore, the nominee should be poised, articulate, and possess the energy to withstand a busy schedule.

The nominee must be committed to serving as a leader in efforts to improve schools, student performance, and the teaching profession in Kansas.

Support for the Program

The Kansas Teacher of the Year program is made possible by the generous support of many individuals, organizations and businesses, including the R. D. and Joan Dale Hubbard Foundation, The Security Benefit Group of Companies, and former U. S. Senator Nancy Landon Kassebaum. Dozens of businesses and organizations from across the state help make this program possible.



Selection Process

The Kansas Teacher of the Year program consists of local, regional, and state competition. Each school district may nominate one elementary and one secondary classroom teacher. Once selected as the district Teacher of the Year, each nominee completes an extensive application, which affords the applicants an opportunity to reflect upon their teaching career and their philosophies of teaching. Applicants also include reference letters from administrators, colleagues, parents and students. These teachers now enter the regional competition.

The regions correspond to the state's four U. S. congressional districts. The Kansas State Department of Education appoints regional selection committees responsible for selecting six semi-finalists, three elementary teachers and three secondary teachers, for recognition at the regional level. Two regional finalists, one elementary and one secondary teacher, will be chosen from among these six teachers and honored at regional recognition banquets.

Each regional finalist becomes a state finalist for the Kansas Teacher of the Year. Competition continues with taped interviews of each applicant and their students. Selection committee members independently review and evaluate the written nomination forms and videotaped interviews of the finalists. Both the regional and state selection committees will be comprised of individuals representing business and industry, legislators, boards of education, education administrators, teachers, parents, and students.

In November, all candidates participate in a special conference held in Wichita. A highlight of the weekend is the Kansas Teacher of the Year Banquet. The state finalists will be individually introduced at this event. The celebration will culminate in the announcement of the state Kansas Teacher of the Year. All eight finalists serve as the Kansas Teacher of the Year Team.

Opportunities

As exemplary educators, each finalist receives a number of monetary awards and special gifts. They also have many opportunities for personal and professional growth, including---

- serving as an advocate for students
- participating in professional development conferences during the year (such as the Kansas Exemplary Educators Network)
- joining exemplary educators identified through other programs at conferences designed to provide educators with the tools they need to become more effective leaders

- working with state policy makers, business and community leaders, and others who shape public opinion to promote accurate perceptions of the realities of today's classrooms
- having a voice in shaping educational policy at the local and state levels
- serving on state advisory and selection committees, as conference and workshop presenters, and as consultants
- participating in professional development activities designed to provide exemplary educators with needed tools to become more effective leaders
- visiting school districts and meeting teachers and students from across the state
- presenting workshops and meeting with students at Kansas colleges across the state
- speaking to various organizations, such as city advisory groups and community groups, and at special events such as the Governor's Honors Banquet

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