



STATE OF ALABAMA  
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION



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State Superintendent of Education

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**ALABAMA TEACHER OF THE YEAR ANNOUNCED –  
AIRPORT ROAD INTERMEDIATE SCHOOL’S DEBORAH STRINGFELLOW  
SELECTED 2024-2025 TOP EDUCATOR**

*“Vestavia Hills High School Freshman Campus Secondary Teacher  
Kira Ledbetter Aaron Named Alabama’s Alternate State Teacher of the Year”*

**Montgomery, Ala.** – A special event was held at the *Alabama Shakespeare Festival* in Montgomery this evening. The Alabama State Board of Education announced this year’s Alabama Teacher of the Year and Alternate State Teacher of the Year. This exciting event narrowed the list of 16 finalists announced earlier to our two most outstanding educators.



**Mrs. Deborah Stringfellow** who teaches at **Airport Road Intermediate School** located in the Elmore County School System, has been named the 2024-2025 Alabama Teacher of the Year (TOY). She will serve as the state’s official ambassador for public education and the teaching profession. As an accomplished educator in the Elmore County School System, Mrs. Stringfellow inspires students and families in her community to achieve.

Alabama Teacher of the Year Deborah Stringfellow is a fourth-grade teacher at Airport Road Intermediate School. She is a first-generation high school and college graduate. Because of economic needs, her parents were forced to abandon their own educational dreams. She learned early in her childhood that school was a refuge and personal source of joy.

She embraced every opportunity to teach others and even helped her parents earn their GEDs. Stringfellow believes education is a life-long journey, not a destination. She earned a Bachelor of Elementary Education and Master of Science in Special Education from Troy University.

Later, Stringfellow earned a Specialist’s degree from Lincoln Memorial University in Administration. During her amazing career, while teaching first grade, she became the first person in her school system to complete National Board Certification.

A top school administrator said, “Mrs. Stringfellow is an excellent teacher. She uses a variety of strategies to elevate student learning and masterfully orchestrate classroom discussions. She is thoughtful, reflective, and committed to life-long learning. She believes all members of the education community, school personnel, classroom teachers, and parents have a responsibility to lead. She works every day to promote student-centered, positive, and inspirational learning.”

–more–

*STATE ANNOUNCES 2024-2025 ALABAMA TEACHER OF THE YEAR*

Tonight, **Vestavia High School Freshman Campus Teacher Kira Ledbetter Aaron** was also named Alabama’s Alternate State Teacher of the Year. This great secondary school is located in the Vestavia Hills City School System. The daughter of teachers, Alternate State Teacher of the Year Kira Ledbetter Aaron always knew she wanted to enter the “family business.”



She believes everyone should have rewarding experiences throughout life and encourages great conversations regarding literature and the self-expression brought through the English Language Arts.

A graduate of Dadeville High School, State Alternate Teacher of the Year Kira Ledbetter Aaron earned a Secondary English Language Arts degree from Auburn University, a Master of Science from Troy University, and an Education Specialist degree in Leadership from The University of Alabama.

She also earned National Board Certification and is currently a doctoral candidate. Aaron has had the great pleasure to teach school in Smith Station, Elba, Troy, and Vestavia Hills communities. Since book talks are one of her favorite methods to build creativity and positive relationships with students, she started a monthly reading enrichment program to promote additional reading among students in her area.

A top administrator in her local school system said, “I am thankful for Mrs. Aaron’s leadership. She works tirelessly to make sure our school provides the best experience for students, and this commitment does not end at her classroom door. Every student in our school is a beneficiary of her great leadership. She brings students and families into a positive community of caring, learning, and support.”

***Additional Information***

After being selected, the Alabama Teacher of the Year spends most of the school year serving as an official spokesperson for education.

The Alabama Teacher of the Year presents professional workshops to various groups throughout the state and nation. Additionally, our state Teacher of the Year is also our official candidate for the National Teacher of the Year Award.

*Dr. Eric G. Mackey, State Superintendent of Education*, said it is exciting to recognize these excellent educators. “Alabama Teacher of the Year Deborah Stringfellow and Alternate State Teacher of the Year Kira Ledbetter Aaron clearly represent the high level of professionalism that exists in our education community,” said Mackey. “Both are outstanding educators. They exemplify classroom excellence, and we are proud of their continued commitment to advancing student achievement and academic growth.”

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