



STATE OF ALABAMA
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION



Eric G. Mackey, Ed.D.
State Superintendent of Education

Alabama
State Board
of Education

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
April 9, 2025

Contact: Communication
(334) 694-4686
comm@alsde.edu

ALABAMA TEACHER OF THE YEAR TOP 16 REVEALED

“The Sweet 16 Finalists for 2025-2026 Alabama TOY Award Officially Announced Today – Includes an Exceptional Group of Innovative Educators”

Montgomery, Ala. – The Alabama Teacher of the Year Program salutes outstanding educators for their commitment to student learning and exemplary service in schools. Today, the Alabama State Department of Education recognizes 16 educators who have made a positive difference in the lives of students, served as teacher leaders in their schools and districts, and demonstrated excellence in teaching and learning.

The 2025-2026 Sweet 16 finalists were selected from among 155 educators across the state who were recommended by district superintendents, principals, and colleagues through the rigorous Alabama Teacher of the Year application process.

Each of the following nominees will advance to be considered for selection as Alabama’s 2025-2026 Teacher of the Year. We commend these finalists and their school districts for creating opportunities for all students to succeed.

Each of these nominees excels both in the classroom and in the teaching profession.

Alabama State Department of Education - 2025-2026 District Teachers of the Year

Angela Kirby

Gulf Shores City School System – Gulf Shores Middle School
District I Elementary Teacher of the Year

Kristen Madsen

Gulf Shores City School System – Gulf Shores High School
District I Secondary Teacher of the Year

Amy Garrett

Pike County School System – Center for Advanced Academics and Accelerated Learning
District II Elementary Teacher of the Year

Joshua Wine

Auburn City School System – Auburn Junior High School
District II Secondary Teacher of the Year

Katie Collins

Hoover City School System – Bluff Park Elementary School
District III Elementary Teacher of the Year

–more–

Governor Kay Ivey
President

Jackie Zeigler
District I

Tracie West
District II

Kelly Mooney
District III

Yvette M. Richardson, Ed.D.
District IV

Tonya S. Chestnut, Ed.D.
District V
Vice President

Marie Manning
District VI
President Pro Tem

Allen Long, M.D.
District VII

Wayne Reynolds, Ed.D.
District VIII

Eric G. Mackey, Ed.D.
Secretary and
Executive Officer

2025-2026 Alabama TOY 16 Finalists Announcement

Kristin Bundren

Hoover City School System – Spain Park High School
District III Secondary Teacher of the Year

Dr. Katherine A. Thomas

Homewood City School System – Edgewood Elementary School
District IV Elementary Teacher of the Year

Aubrey Bennett

Birmingham City School System – G.W. Carver High School
District IV Secondary Teacher of the Year

Lindsey Norris

Montgomery County School System – Forest Avenue Elementary School
District V Elementary Teacher of the Year

Roseann Byrd

Mobile County School System – Citronelle High School
District V Secondary Teacher of the Year

Andrea Dade Horn

Blount County School System – Locust Fork Elementary School
District VI Elementary Teacher of the Year

Heather Oden Pettit

Arab City School System – Arab High School
District VI Secondary Teacher of the Year

Deidra Brewer

Muscle Shoals City School System – Highland Park and Webster Elementary Schools
District VII Elementary Teacher of the Year

Andrew Lee Mills

Florence City School System – Florence Middle School
District VII Secondary Teacher of the Year

Catherine Megan Hockey

Madison City School System – Rainbow Elementary School
District VIII Elementary Teacher of the Year

Amanda J. Gudmundsson

Athens City School System – Athens High School
District VIII Secondary Teacher of the Year

The Alabama TOY spends the school year serving as a full-time, official ambassador for both education and the teaching profession. **Alabama's representative is a candidate for National Teacher of the Year** and also conducts professional-level workshops for various groups at both the local and national levels. The Alabama Teacher of the Year Program is one of our state's oldest and most esteemed recognition programs for teachers.

This year's 16 outstanding educators will soon be narrowed down to the final Top Four!

–more–

2025-2026 Alabama TOY 16 Finalists Announcement

The 2025-2026 Alabama Teacher of the Year will be announced by the Alabama State Board of Education and Alabama State Department of Education in May.

Reflecting on her experiences, Alabama's current Teacher of the Year, Deborah Stringfellow, said, "I am proud to extend special congratulations to each of these outstanding educators on behalf of our state's entire education community. It is such an honor to be selected as a finalist for the Alabama Teacher of the Year Award. Each of these nominees is an exceptional education leader and is truly deserving of this honor. We are so excited to see who will be named Alabama's 2025-2026 Teacher of the Year!"

###