



Texas State Teacher of the Year Program

Nomination Guidelines for the Year 2012

Sponsored by
**Texas Education Agency
State Board of Education**

Texas State Teacher of the Year

Program Overview

Since 1969, the Texas State Teacher of the Year (TOY) Program has honored excellence in classroom education and provided a forum to showcase many outstanding educators whose efforts and example have inspired their students, their colleagues and the communities they serve.

Texas Teacher of the Year is the highest honor that the State of Texas can bestow upon a teacher. Facilitated by the Texas Education Agency, the Texas Teacher of the Year Program annually recognizes and rewards teachers who have demonstrated outstanding leadership and excellence in teaching.

Every fall, the Texas State Teacher of the Year program honors two State Teachers of the Year - one in elementary education and one in secondary education - and 38 Regional Teachers of the Year. These regional teachers represent each of the 20 Education Service Center regions in Texas.

This state program is affiliated with the National Teacher of the Year Program, (http://programs.ccsso.org/projects/national_teacher_of_the_year/) the oldest and most prestigious awards program designed to focus public attention on excellence in teaching. A selection committee representing the major national educational associations selects the National Teacher of the Year from the nominees submitted by the 50 states. Every spring, the National Teacher of the Year is announced by the president during a Rose Garden ceremony at the White House and is honored at special events in the nation's capital. The National Teacher of the Year takes a year's sabbatical from classroom instruction and serves as a roving ambassador for the teaching profession.

Classroom teachers traditionally receive recognition under the program. Librarians and counselors who teach at least four hours a day may be nominated for regional, state, and national honors. Administrators are not eligible. All nominees must be employed by an accredited public school in Texas during the 2010-2011 school year to be eligible for nomination. The nominating district shall be the district in which the teacher worked during the 2010-2011 school year.

Candidates should be skillful, dedicated teachers who plan to actively continue classroom teaching. They should take an active role in their communities as well as their schools, and be professional, poised and articulate. The most important criterion in evaluating nominees is their ability to inspire a love of learning in students of all backgrounds and abilities.

These criteria, provided by the national Council of Chief State School Officers, are used for both the state and national programs. A candidate for National Teacher of the Year should be an exceptionally dedicated, knowledgeable, and skilled teacher in any state-approved or accredited school, prekindergarten through grade twelve, who is planning to continue in an active teaching status (Supervisory and administrative responsibilities should be of secondary consideration).

- inspire students of all backgrounds and abilities to learn
- have the respect and admiration of students, parents, and colleagues
- play an active and useful role in the community as well as in the school
- be poised, articulate, and possess the energy to withstand a taxing schedule.

Duties

The Texas Teachers of the Year serve as traveling ambassadors for public education as they speak for, motivate, and exemplify the contributions of the teaching profession. They set their own schedule of speeches, workshops and presentations, while continuing as classroom teachers. The two State Teachers of the Year typically represent teachers in Texas during the school year following their nomination.

State (2) and Regional Teachers of the Year (38) will:

- Attend the TOY Awards luncheon.
- Receive awards in recognition of their achievements.
- Travel the state and their regions to share their expertise with other teachers, community groups, businesses, government officials and future teachers.
- Help identify and recruit teachers.

Additionally, the Texas State Teacher of the Year (1) will:

- Attend all National Teacher of the Year program activities.
- Be recognized by the State Board of Education, the Texas Legislature, and the Texas Association for School Administrator's (TASA) Midwinter Conference and Education Expo in January.
- Serve on the Educator Leadership Council.
- Represent the program at various state-wide recognition events for education.
- Receive additional technology or scholarship awards from program sponsors.

Texas State Teacher of the Year Nomination Guidelines

The state program recognizes a Teacher of the Year in both elementary and secondary categories at the regional and state levels. **Participating districts and open-enrollment charter schools may nominate two teachers - one in elementary and one in secondary education.** However, districts also may follow a process that selects one overall nominee for recognition.

In most cases, the elementary category consists of early childhood/pre-K through grade 5 and the secondary, grades 6-12. But grade divisions and classroom arrangements may vary from district to district. In general, elementary teachers will instruct the same class throughout the day in what is regarded as a traditional grade-school setting; secondary teachers will conduct classes in subject areas in a class-period or block-time schedule to different groups of students during the school day. Any questions regarding the categories should be referred to the Texas Education Agency.

Application

The 2012 Teacher of the Year Application and Nomination Guidelines for the year are available at <http://www.tea.state.tx.us/toy.html>. The application may be used for multiple entries. All information should be supplied on the application form, or if word-processed, the form should list the same section topic headings, with pages numbered sequentially. The application consists of a cover sheet with the name and information about the nominee, the school and the district, as well as sections that answer several essay questions.

The completed entry, with answers to the essay questions and the cover sheet with original signatures of the applicant, principal and superintendent, is due at the **Regional Education Service Center no later than 5 p.m., Friday, June 24, 2011.** Faxed entries *will not be* accepted. **This is considered the official entry and any failure to meet this deadline will result in disqualification.**

Nominees should answer the entire application form cover sheet and essay questions and not exceed the page limitations. Nominees are urged to be brief and succinct in their written responses, focusing on their most significant experiences and characteristics. Please double check for spelling errors. Candidates who add a personal touch to their applications will also produce a stronger entry, as well as provide contest judges - who have a limited amount of time to evaluate each entry - with an application that is more readable and targets a nominee's strong points.

Please note:

- Application responses should be typed or word-processed, and be double-spaced, with at least one-inch margins and a font size no smaller than 12 point. The essay topics, such as PROFESSIONAL BIOGRAPHY or PHILOSOPHY OF TEACHING, should be at the beginning of each section.
- The completed Candidate Application Form (page 1) is the cover sheet for the entry.
- The Application, on plain white paper, should either be stapled or submitted in a clear plastic folder with a simple, sideways clasp. No notebooks or loose-leaf binders, please.
- Teacher nominees and the districts should retain copies of entry materials as originals cannot be returned.

Texas State Teacher of the Year Selection Process

District-level

Districts and open-enrollment charter schools may establish their own selection process in choosing their Teacher of the Year nominees. These guidelines include some suggestions for establishing a district selection process. However, to be considered for regional and state recognition, candidates must observe the following:

- **They must be nominated by the superintendent of their district, or the district in which they taught during the 2010-2011 school year.**
- **They must answer completely the state application form.** Districts may use their own applications or submitted materials in making their own selections.
- **They must meet all deadlines and fulfill all requirements.**

Regional Education Service Center-level

All district nominees automatically advance to regional competition, which is coordinated by each Education Service Center. A panel of judges in each region, composed primarily of members of various teacher associations, meets to evaluate the written applications and select a Regional Elementary and a Regional Secondary Teacher of the Year (The Texas Education Agency will provide regional coordinators with judging score sheets, if requested).

Regional selections will take place from **June 24 through July 29, 2011**. Once the judging is completed, regional coordinators should **submit electronically** (email) the original applications of the regional winners to TEA's program coordinator by **August 5, 2011** (or sooner, if possible). The TOY applications and photos should be emailed to Educator Initiatives and Performance at EIP@tea.state.tx.us.

Additionally, TEA requires an electronic photo of the regional winner by the end of August 2011. Forty regional winners (one elementary teacher and one secondary teacher for each Education Service Center) automatically become semifinalists in the State Teacher of the Year Contest.

State-level

State-level judging takes place at the Texas Education Agency. Semifinalist judging will take place on Monday, **August 15, 2011**. Two panels of judges (one for elementary and another for secondary) composed primarily of members of teacher associations will meet in Austin to review the applications of the semifinalists and select three finalists for Elementary Teacher of the Year and three finalists for Secondary Teacher of the Year. Finalists' superintendents and the Education Service Centers will be notified, and TEA will distribute a news release announcing the six finalists. School districts are encouraged to do the same.

The final judging is scheduled for Saturday, **September 10, 2011**. The six finalists will be invited to Austin to be interviewed by a panel of judges, which is typically composed of representatives of educational administrator associations, a member of the State Board for Education Certification, a member of the State Board of Education and the previous Texas Teachers of the Year. The panel will choose the two state winners and designate one to represent Texas in the National Teacher of the Year Program. The winners will be announced at the Texas Teacher of the Year Awards Ceremony in October 2011.

The Texas Education Agency will submit Texas' entry for the state's nominee to the National Teacher of the Year Contest on behalf of the winner. The completed National Teacher of the Year packet is due to the Texas Education Agency for signature and submission to the National office. The National Teacher of the Year Contest, conducted by the Council of Chief State School Officers in Washington, D.C., will announce four finalists in January or February of 2012.

2011-2012 Texas Teacher of the Year Program Timeline

Date(s)	Activity
January 2011	Texas Education Agency releases 2011 Teacher of the Year nomination materials and application.
Friday, June 24, 2011	District-nominated Teachers of the Year applications are completed and delivered to the appropriate Regional Education Service Center, by 5:00 p.m. Central Standard Time.
Friday, June 24 – Friday, July 29, 2011	Judging takes place at the Regional Education Service Center. Judging determines the 40 Teacher of the Year semifinalists.
Friday, July 29, 2011	Regional Education Service Center's 2011-2012 Teacher of the Year selection process ends.
Friday, August 5, 2011	Complete applications of the Regional Elementary Teacher of the Year and the Regional Secondary Teacher of the Year are due at the Texas Education Agency by 5:00 p.m. Central Standard Time.
Monday, August 15, 2011	Semifinalist judging takes place at the Texas Education Agency. Judging determines the six Teacher of the Year Finalists.
Saturday, September 10, 2011	Regional TOY finalists are interviewed. Judges select one Elementary and one Secondary Teacher of the Year. One of the two TOY candidates will be chosen as Texas Teacher of the Year.
Thursday, October 13, 2011 (Tentative)	The Regional Teachers of the Year meet in Austin for an evening orientation dinner.
Friday, October 14, 2011 (Tentative)	The Texas Teacher of the Year Awards Ceremony is held in Austin and the Texas Teacher of the Year is announced.
Late October to Early November, 2011	The completed National Texas Teacher of the Year packet is due to the Texas Education Agency for signature and submission to the National office on behalf of the 2012 Texas Teacher of the Year.

Texas State Teacher of the Year Recognition and Sponsorship

Recognition

The State Board of Education honors the two State Teachers of the Year and the Regional Teachers of the Year for 2011-2012 at an awards ceremony and luncheon tentatively scheduled for October 14, 2011. The Texas Education Agency also presents awards to the Teachers of the Year at this ceremony. The accomplishments of the state honorees are featured, and an overview of the program and its purpose in the field of public education is offered. More details on the state ceremony will be announced at a later date.

Districts and the Education Service Centers schedule and coordinate their own awards ceremonies according to their own needs. However, to avoid confusion, it is recommended that district and regional recognition ceremonies take place before the state ceremony in October 2011.

Sponsorship and Support

The Texas Education Agency is the official sponsor of the Texas Teacher of the Year program. Major sponsors include H-E-B, ING, SMART Technologies, Blue Bell Creameries, Inc., the Mike A. Myers Foundation, ClassWorks, LLC, Ergotron, Association of Texas Professional Educators, State Board of Education, Texas Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development, Texas School of Public Relations Association, Texas Association of School Administrators, Texas Business and Education Coalition, Texas State Teachers Association, Texas Association of School Boards, Texas Computer Education Association, Texas Association of School Business Officials, Texas Association for School Nutrition, Texas Congress of Teachers and Parents, Texas Association of Secondary School Principals, Texas Elementary Principals and Supervisors Association, Texas Federation of Teachers, Texas Classroom Teachers Association, and Texas Association of Partners in Education.

Contact information

The state coordinator at TEA will provide guidance in helping promote participation at the grass-roots level and execute a successful program. Regional coordinators (page 10) also are available for technical support for the districts in their areas.

Please direct questions about these procedures and the program to Teacher of the Year coordinators at the Education Service Center in your region, or to the Texas Education Agency:

School Readiness and Partnerships

(512) 463-3070

Texas Education Agency

1701 N. Congress Ave.
Austin, TX 78701

Suggestions for Conducting Teacher of the Year Contest

Project Design

- Start planning early.
- Give the project high priority. Talk to administrators in other districts that already participate. Check with the regional coordinator at your Education Service Center if you do not already know who participates. Contact the state coordinator at the Texas Education Agency for assistance.
- Include teachers in the planning process.
- Make the focus of your program the recognition of local teachers, not the competition for a state-level nominee.
- Recognize more than your teacher nominees as part of any awards program or event to promote the perception of the program as one that recognizes teaching excellence and not one that divides winners and losers.
- Designate one central office staff person to serve as Teacher of the Year coordinator. In many districts the director of public information coordinates the program. Curriculum and personnel directors might also take on this duty.

Nomination and Selection

- Use a democratic process to select your nominee.
- Districts might decide to allow teachers to nominate themselves for the honor. This may work well in smaller districts.
- Principals on each campus might ask teachers to nominate one of their peers to represent their campus in the local district contest. The nomination forms might include supporting statements.
- Alternatively, principals might ask department heads to select a campus nominee. Campus faculty councils or advisory groups might select several nominees, with one campus representative chosen from among the nominees by a vote of all teachers on the campus.
- Another option is to involve parent organizations in selecting campus nominees.
- Once campus representatives are chosen, or if nominations are open to all interested teachers, a district selection committee might be appointed. This committee might include representatives of parent groups, teacher organizations, non-certified personnel, principals, the president of a high school student council, the local newspaper publisher, the Chamber of Commerce president, a school board member, previous Teachers of the Year and others. Existing committees within the district, such as curriculum councils or districtwide faculty councils, might also take part in selections.

Publicity and Sponsorship

- Enlist the help of your local newspaper and/or television station to publicize the selection of your Teacher of the Year. Tell your local news media representatives about the program and this positive story about public education.
- Ask local businesses and organizations to get involved with your program and seek their support for awards and recognition.
- Honor the winners and finalists at special functions and at any annual staff banquet. Ask the Teacher of the Year to represent your district at community functions, and regional, state or national conferences.

Reasons to Participate in the Texas Teacher of the Year Program

Consider nominating candidates now for the Texas Teacher of the Year. Nomination Guidelines and Application Forms are available on the Texas Education Agency web site: <http://www.tea.state.tx.us/toy.html>. The program has many benefits, and the time and effort spent in the nomination process is a worthy investment.

Each Texas Teacher of the Year nomination is . . .

- **memorable for the teacher.** Recognition has the immediate benefits of boosting the teacher's morale and validates the solid perceptions of students, parents and colleagues. The Texas Teacher of the Year Program opens doors to professional opportunities such as serving on various advisory groups, participating in Teacher of the Year Forums and professional organization activities. The acknowledgment expands the influence of teachers whose leadership is recognized.
- **valuable for students.** Students will feel great pride and joy when their teacher, or a teacher they know, is chosen as the Teacher of the Year at the school, district, regional or state level. Students can feel special by association with an exceptional teacher.
- **significant for the school and faculty.** Nominating the Teacher of the Year raises the credibility of a school and its staff in the local community.
- **meaningful for the school district, its leaders and patrons.** The positive effects that a school receives accrue throughout the school district. Enhanced community prestige and community pride are priceless and directly contribute to improved expectations, support for schools and student learning.
- **important for the profession.** Recent studies have indicated that teachers are one of the most vital links to a good education. Nominees for Teacher of the Year are evidence of the inspiring impression teachers have on students and education.
- **good for the community.** A healthy society values education and appreciates the educators who work to ensure future generations are well-educated. A nominee for Teacher of the Year provides the community an opportunity to recognize a representative of the profession and celebrate the importance of teachers.

Texas State Teacher of the Year Coordinators (2011-2012)

Region 1 — Edinburg

1900 West Schunior
Edinburg, TX 78541-2234
Coordinator: *Melissa Ramirez*
Email: maramirez@esc1.net
(956) 984-6100
Fax: (956) 984-6019

Region 2 — Corpus Christi

209 North Water Street
Corpus Christi, TX 78401-2599
Coordinator: *Melissa Morin*
Email: Melissa.morin@esc2.us
(361) 561-8416
Fax: (361) 561-8649

Region 3 — Victoria

1905 Leary Lane
Victoria, TX 77901-2899
Coordinator: *Gayle Parenica*
Email: gparenica@esc3.net
(361) 573-0731, ext. 292
Fax: (361) 576-4804

Region 4 — Houston

7145 West Tidwell
Houston, TX 77092-2096
Coordinator: *Adriana Tamez*
Email: atamez@esc4.net
(713) 744-6829
Fax: (713) 744-2732

Region 5 — Beaumont

3545 Hwy 96 Bypass
Silsbee, TX 77656
Coordinator: *Bertie Standley*
Email: bertie@esc5.net
(409) 838-5555
Fax: (409) 923-5471

Region 6 — Huntsville

3332 Montgomery Road
Huntsville, TX 77340-6499
Coordinator: *Dorothy Yawn*
Email: dyawn@esc6.net
(936) 435-8304
Fax: (936) 435-8465

Region 7 — Kilgore

1909 N. Longview Street
Kilgore, TX 75662-6827
Coordinator: *Katie Chenoweth*
Email: kchenoweth@esc7.net
(903) 988-6778
Fax: (903) 988-6852

Region 8 — Mt. Pleasant

P. O. Box 1894
Mt. Pleasant, TX 75456-1894
Location: 2230 N. Edwards Ave.
Coordinator: *Beverly Hargrave*
Email: bhargrave@reg8.net
(903) 572-8551, ext. 2713
Fax: (903) 575-2712

Region 9 — Wichita Falls

301 Loop 11
Wichita Falls, TX 76306-3706
Coordinator: *Debbie Cummings*
Email: debbie.cummings@esc9.net
(940) 322-6928
Fax: (940) 767-3836

Region 10 — Richardson

P. O. Box 831300
Richardson, TX 75083-1300
Location: 400 E. Spring Valley Rd.
Coordinator: *Ron Simpson*
Email: ron.simpson@region10.org
(972) 348-1040
Fax: (972) 348-1041

Region 11 — Fort Worth

3001 North Freeway
Fort Worth, TX 76106-6596
Coordinator: *Lori Burton*
Email: lburton@esc11.net
(817) 740-3690
Fax: (817) 740-7675

Region 12 — Waco

P. O. Box 23409
Waco, TX 76702-3409
Location: 2101 W. Loop 340
Coordinator: *Charlene Simpson*
Email: csimpson@esc12.net
(254) 297-1106
Fax: (254) 666-0823

Region 13 — Austin

5701 Springdale Road
Austin, TX 78723-3675
Coordinator: *Dr. Lee Rutledge*
Email: lee.rutledge@esc13.txed.net
(512) 919-5452
Fax: (512) 919-5297

Region 14 — Abilene

1850 Highway 351
Abilene, TX 79601-4750
Coordinator: *John Stevens*
Email: jwstevens@esc14.net
(325) 675-8630
Fax: (325) 675-8659

Region 15 — San Angelo

P. O. Box 5199
San Angelo, TX 76902-5199
Location: 612 South Irene St.
Coordinator: *Larry Taylor*
Email: larry.taylor@netxv.net
(325) 658-6571
Fax: (325) 655-4823

Region 16 — Amarillo

5800 Bell Street
Amarillo, TX 79109-6230
Coordinator: *Hollis Parker Grimes*
Email: hollis.parker.grimes@esc16.net
(806) 677-5060
Fax: (806) 677-5001

Region 17 — Lubbock

1111 West Loop 289
Lubbock, TX 79416-5029
Coordinator: *Janie Johnson*
Email: janiej@esc17.net
(806) 792-4000, ext. 852
Fax: (806) 792-1893

Region 18 — Midland

P. O. Box 60580
Midland, TX 79711-0580
Location: 2811 LaForce Blvd.
Coordinator: *John Petree*
Email: jpetree@esc18.net
(432) 561-4385
Fax: (432) 567-3290

Region 19 — El Paso

P. O. Box 971127
El Paso, TX 79997-1127
Location: 6611 Boeing Drive
Coordinator: *Irene Rosales*
Email: irosales@esc19hs.net
(915) 790-4623 or (915) 780-1919
Fax: (915) 594-0164

Region 20 — San Antonio

1314 Hines Avenue
San Antonio, TX 78208-1899
Coordinator: *Jayme Presley*
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(210) 370-5429
Fax: (210) 370-5755