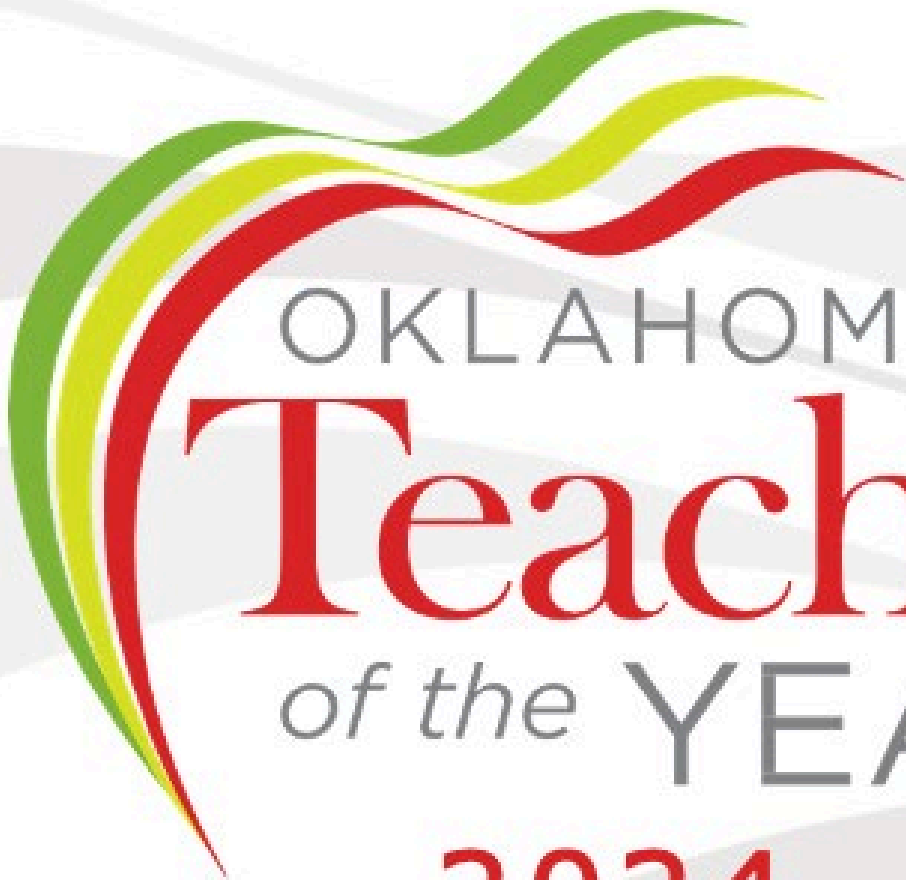


DEADLINE  
DECEMBER 8,  
2023



OKLAHOMA  
**Teacher**  
*of the* YEAR  
**2024**

**APPLICATION PACKET AND  
PROGRAM GUIDE**



OKLAHOMA  
Education

## OKLAHOMA TEACHER OF THE YEAR PROGRAM

The Oklahoma Teacher of the Year (TOY) Program is conducted through the office of the State Superintendent of Public Instruction and is made possible through a partnership with the Masonic Charity Foundation of Oklahoma.

Exceptional Oklahoma teachers challenge, motivate, and inspire their students to do their best. Their classroom environment is exciting, engaging, and learning is continuous. They are respected by their peers, local school officials, parents, and students. Exceptional Oklahoma teachers are caring and creative, seeking to enrich the lives of their students and build a better future for us all.

The enduring success of the program is due to the numerous businesses, associations, organizations, and universities that present tuition waivers, tickets to athletic events, classroom technologies, gift cards, cash awards, organization memberships, and the use of a new automobile.

You can honor classroom teachers at the local level by participating in the Oklahoma Teacher of the Year Program. This packet will guide you through the process.

### LOCAL DISTRICT SELECTION

At the local district level, one teacher of the year winner per district will be allowed to apply for this prestigious award. Each application must be signed by the school principal and district superintendent, and it is their responsibility to make sure every teacher is given the opportunity to participate in the recognition process. It is important to emphasize that the search is not for “the best teacher” but for one who exemplifies the finest in the profession.



**OKLAHOMA**  
Education



**Masonic**  
**Charity Foundation**  
**of Oklahoma**

# OKLAHOMA TEACHER OF THE YEAR APPLICATION PACKET

## CRITERIA

A candidate for Oklahoma Teacher of the Year is a teacher in a state-approved or accredited school, pre-kindergarten through grade twelve, who is planning to continue in an active teaching status. All Oklahoma Teacher of the Year honorees agree to participate in the national program sponsored by the Chief State School Officers (CCSSO).

The Oklahoma Teacher of the Year candidate has the respect and admiration of colleagues.

Characteristics to describe these outstanding teachers include:

1. Models excellence by guiding students of all backgrounds and abilities to achieve excellence.
2. Collaborates with colleagues, students, and families to create a school culture of respect and success.
3. Deliberately connects with the classroom and key stakeholders to foster a strong community at large.
4. Demonstrates leadership and innovation that embodies lifelong learning inside and outside the classroom walls.
5. Communicates in an engaging and articulate way.

## DUTIES

1. Partner with the Oklahoma State Department of Education while serving as an ambassador for Oklahoma educators during a one-year sabbatical from the classroom.
2. Travel around Oklahoma speaking to educators, prospective educators, and community partners at conferences, trainings, and events.
3. Represent Oklahoma in the National Teacher of the Year program, including an in-depth application and out-of-state travel.

## TIMELINE

- ◆ **Friday, December 8, 2023, by 4:00 PM: Application Submission Deadline. Late submissions will not be accepted.**
- ◆ **By January 10, 2024:** Applicants will be notified via phone and email if they have been selected as one of the 12 finalists. Finalists will partner with the OSDE to create a short video at their school that will document highlights of their classroom instructional methods. Additional information regarding videos will be provided in January.
- ◆ **Mid-January 2024 (Date TBD):** Public announcement of the 12 finalists.
- ◆ **April 2024 (Date TBD):** The State Selection Committee will interview the 12 finalists and select the Oklahoma Teacher of the Year.
- ◆ **June 2024 (Date TBD):** The announcement of the Oklahoma Teacher of the Year will take place during a celebration honoring the 12 finalists, past Oklahoma Teachers of the Year, and all District Teachers of the Year. Additional details will be forthcoming.

## APPLICATION INSTRUCTIONS

**Please read and follow these instructions carefully. Applications not completed as requested will not be accepted.**

Teachers may choose one of the following application pathways:

- FULL application to be considered for the Oklahoma Teacher of the Year
- REDUCED application for *recognition only* at the Oklahoma State Teacher of the Year ceremony but not participate in the competitive process.

### Steps for FULL application in the competitive process

1. Complete the OKTOY Application Packet pages 7-22.
  - The **application must be downloaded** and edited on your desktop. Do not attempt to edit the application in the online OKTOY Web App as your changes will not be saved.
  - The application packet includes detailed information from your resume and six essay questions.
  - Essays must be typed within the space provided in the packet. Additional pages will not be accepted.
  - The packet must be signed (digitally or physically) by your principal and superintendent before you upload it to the OKTOY Web App.
  - Application Packet should be titled using the district name and your last name in the following format: District\_LastName\_App.pdf
2. Gather your attachments.
  - Letters of Recommendation
    - i. Three (3) Letters of Recommendation, one (1) of which must be from a student's parent or guardian, colleague, administrator, or student. These letters should address why you should be the Oklahoma Teacher of the Year. Each letter must be typed and no longer than one single-sided page.
    - ii. Recommendation letters can be uploaded separately or combined into one .pdf for upload.
    - iii. These should be submitted as .pdf files and titled using the district name and your last name in the following format: District\_LastName\_Rec.pdf
  - Headshot
    - i. A high-resolution (300 dpi minimum) color digital photo of yourself suitable for publication and press release.
    - ii. This should be submitted as a .jpeg file and titled using the district name and your last name in the following format: District\_LastName\_Photo.jpg
  - Complete the [OKTOY Web App](#) and upload your attachments.
    - i. Packet and attachments
      1. Example:
        - a. Tulsa\_Smith\_App.pdf
        - b. Tulsa\_Smith\_Rec.pdf
        - c. Tulsa\_Smith\_Photo.jpg

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Applications must be submitted through the [OKTOY Web App](#) by 4:00 PM on Friday, December 8, 2023. Late or incomplete submissions will not be accepted. Please do not include additional materials beyond those listed above.

**Steps for REDUCED application for recognition only at the Oklahoma State Teacher of the Year ceremony but not participate in the competitive process.**

1. Complete the [OKTOY Web App](#) only. No other documents need to be uploaded.

If you have questions, please contact us, and we will gladly help you with the submission process.

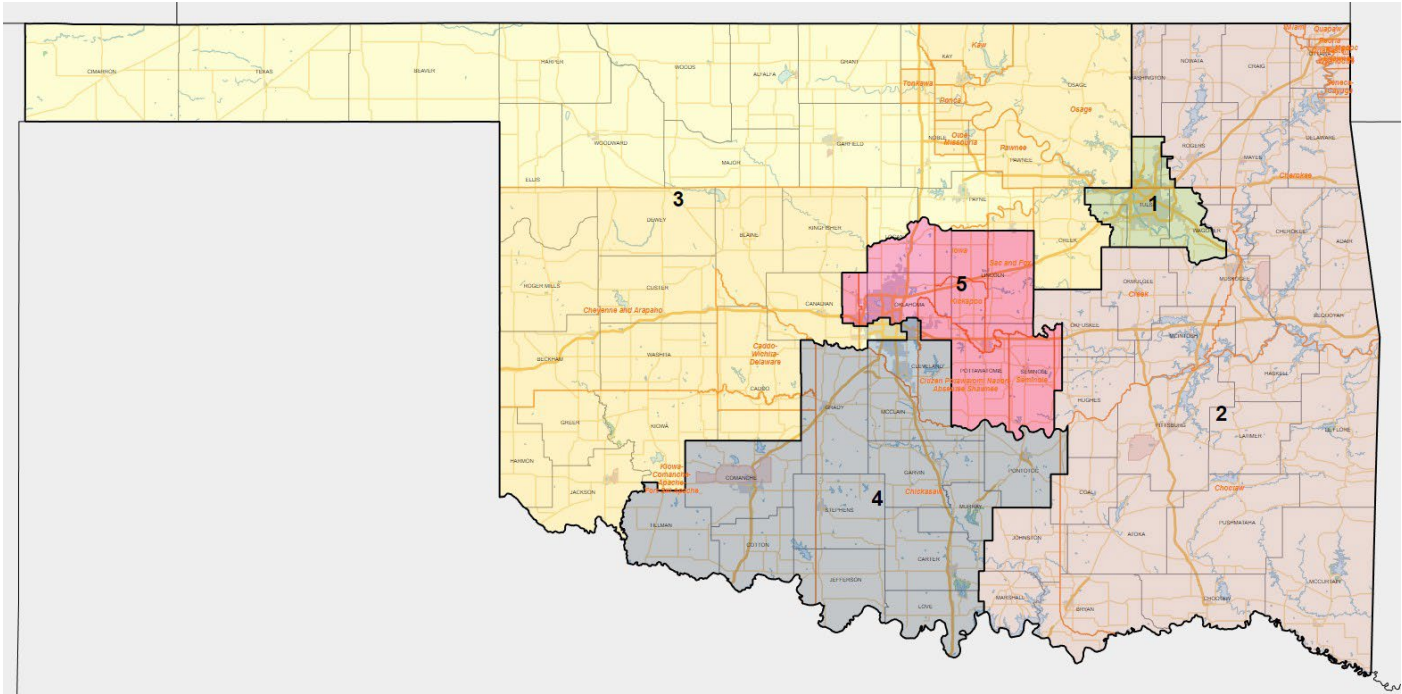
Please contact:

[TeacheroftheYear@sde.ok.gov](mailto:TeacheroftheYear@sde.ok.gov)

FULL Application continues on pages 7-22.

REDUCED Application is completed on the [OKTOY Web App](#).

# CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICTS COUNTY MAP



## CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT 1

Tulsa                      Wagoner                      Washington

## CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT 2

Adair	Craig	LeFlore	Nowata	Rogers
Atoka	Delaware	Marshall	Okfuskee	Sequoyah
Bryan	Haskell	Mayes	Okmulgee	
Cherokee	Hughes	McCurtain	Ottawa	
Choctaw	Johnston	McIntosh	Pittsburg	
Coal	Latimer	Muskogee	Pushmataha	

## CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT 3

Alfalfa	Creek	Harmon	Logan	Texas
Beaver	Custer	Harper	Major	Washita
Beckham	Dewey	Jackson	Noble	Woods
Blaine	Ellis	Kay	Osage	Woodward
Caddo	Garfield	Kingfisher	Pawnee	
Canadian	Grant	Kiowa	Payne	
Cimmaron	Greer	Lincoln	Roger Mills	

## CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT 4

Carter	Cotton	Jefferson	Murray	Tillman
Cleveland	Garvin	Love	Pontotoc	
Comanche	Grady	McClain	Stephens	

## CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT 5

Oklahoma                      Pottawatomie                      Seminole

# APPLICANT INFORMATION FORM

## PERSONAL INFORMATION

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Name

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Current Grade Level(s) Taught

---

Current Subject(s) Taught

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Total Years of Teaching Experience

---

Languages other than English Spoken Fluently

---

Areas of National Board Certification Achieved or In Progress: \_\_\_\_\_

## SCHOOL INFORMATION

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School District

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School Name

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School Size

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District Size

**EDUCATIONAL HISTORY AND PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT**

List all below, with the most recent first.

**EDUCATIONAL PREPARATION**

College or University	Dates Attended	Degree Earned (i.e., B.A. in Math)
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**TEACHING HISTORY**

School District	Position Held	Dates
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**PROFESSIONAL MEMBERSHIPS (Include offices held and/or other relevant activities)**

Membership	Position Held	Dates
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**LEADERSHIP IN PROFESSIONAL LEARNING (Include leadership in the training of future teachers)**

Title	Position Held	Dates
<hr/>		
<hr/>		
<hr/>		
<hr/>		

**AWARDS AND OTHER RECOGNITION OF TEACHING**

Title	Dates
<hr/>	
<hr/>	
<hr/>	
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## ESSAY QUESTIONS

Limit all following responses to the spaces provided.

### PROFESSIONAL BIOGRAPHY

**What were the factors that influenced you to become a teacher?  
Describe what you consider to be your greatest contributions and  
accomplishments in education.**



### **PHILOSOPHY OF TEACHING**

**Describe your personal feelings and beliefs about teaching, including your own ideas of what makes an outstanding teacher. Describe the rewards you find in teaching. How are your beliefs about teaching demonstrated in your personal teaching style?**



**EDUCATION ISSUES AND TRENDS**

**What do you consider to be the major public education issues we face today? Address them in depth, outlining possible causes, effects, and resolutions.**



## **THE TEACHING PROFESSION**

**How have you contributed to strengthening and improving the teaching profession? How do these contributions pave the way for teachers entering the education field?**





**COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT**

Describe your commitment to your community through service-oriented activities, including volunteer work, civic responsibilities, and other group activities.

**OKLAHOMA TEACHER OF THE YEAR**

**As the Teacher of the Year, you will serve as a spokesperson and representative for teachers and students. What is your message? What will you communicate to your profession and to the public?**

**SHARE A LESSON**

**Describe a lesson or unit that defines you as a teacher. How did you engage all students in the learning, and how did that learning influence your students? How are your beliefs about teaching demonstrated in this lesson or unit?**

## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS AND SIGNATURES

### APPLICANT

In submitting this form, I agree to allow the information herein to be used during the selection process for the **2024** Oklahoma Teacher of the Year. The information will only be accessed by necessary Oklahoma State Department of Education staff and selection committee members.

I understand that the information in this application will be held securely and not distributed to third parties. Additionally, information about the person named Oklahoma Teacher of the Year will not be released until after the state has made an official announcement identifying the candidate as the state's Teacher of the Year.

I hereby give my permission that any or all the attached materials (other than home address and phone number) may be shared with persons interested in promoting the Oklahoma Teacher of the Year program.

I also acknowledge that if selected as the **2024** Oklahoma Teacher of the Year, I will be released from classroom responsibilities during the **2024-25** school year to fulfill the obligations of the role.

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Applicant Name

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Applicant Signature

Date

### PRINCIPAL

The above Application Candidate submits this application with my approval.

I acknowledge that if the candidate is selected as the **2024** Oklahoma Teacher of the Year, the school district will release this individual from classroom responsibilities during the **2024-25** school year to fulfill the obligations of the role.

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Principal Name

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Principal Signature

Date

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Principal Email

Principal Phone

## **SUPERINTENDENT**

The above Application Candidate submits this application with my approval.

I acknowledge that if the candidate is selected as the **2024** Oklahoma Teacher of the Year, the school district will release this individual from classroom responsibilities during the **2024-25** school year to fulfill the obligations of the role.

I hereby assure that the above Application Candidate is a full-time classroom teacher without administrative duties who expects to continue in an active teaching position in the above School during the **2024-25** school year.

I understand that if our local teacher of the year is selected to be a finalist, they will be required to submit a video in their classroom.

I understand that if our local teacher of the year is selected to be a finalist, they will be required to attend interview sessions with the Oklahoma Teacher of the Year Selection Committee to be held in Oklahoma City.

In addition, I understand that Oklahoma's Teacher of the Year will also be Oklahoma's Ambassador of Teaching. As Ambassador, the teacher will share their knowledge and resources with educators around the state.

Finally, I understand that the State Legislature has funded the Oklahoma Ambassador of Teaching position to provide for a full-time certified teacher in the classroom of Oklahoma's Teacher of the Year during the year of release.

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Superintendent Name

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Superintendent Signature

Date

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Superintendent Email

Superintendent Phone