

APPLICANT INFORMATION FORM

PERSONAL INFORMATION

Name

Current Grade Level(s) Taught

Current Subject(s) Taught

Years in Current Position

Total Years of Teaching Experience

Languages Other than English Spoken Fluently

Areas of National Board Certification Achieved or In Progress:

SCHOOL INFORMATION

School District

School Name

School Size

District Size

School Demographic

EDUCATIONAL HISTORY AND PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

List all below, most recent first.

EDUCATIONAL PREPARATION

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

Name of High School Attended	City	State	ZIP Code
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EMPLOYMENT RECORD OF SERVICE (Include grade level and/or subject area)

School District	Position Held	Dates
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____

PROFESSIONAL MEMBERSHIPS (Include offices held and/or other relevant activities)

Membership	Position Held	Dates
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____

ESSAY QUESTIONS

Limit all following responses to 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

What do you do to strengthen and improve the teaching profession?

What is and/or what should be the basis for accountability in the teaching profession?

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?

**Katherine Mayer Christensen
1393 Snyder Gulch Road
Evergreen, CO 80439**

August 17, 2020

To Whom It May Concern:


It is my great honor and privilege to recommend Michael Patterson as Oklahoma's Teacher of the Year. Mr. Patterson's skill as a classroom teacher, his ability to inspire students, and his belief in the transformational power of education make him an ideal candidate for this honor. In his 42 years of teaching, he has positively influenced generations of students and has singlehandedly built a speech and debate program that inspires students to achieve academic success, develop critical thinking and communication skills, and grow to be the leaders and advocates that today's world so desperately needs.

I grew up in the small town of Guymon, Oklahoma, in a family of ranchers and farmers. I first entered one of Mr. Patterson's classes in 1986 as a freshman in high school and was immediately struck by his dynamic teaching style and the high standards that he set for his students. Mr. Patterson challenged me, both academically and personally, in a way that I had not encountered previously. He asked me to think deeply and creatively, to ground my opinions in thorough and thoughtful research, and to grapple with nuanced and complex issues. He fostered my work ethic and inspired me to set big goals and dedicate myself to achieving them. It was because of his dedication as a teacher and his belief in my potential that I was able to compete successfully at the state and national level during my high school speech and debate career. Upon graduating from high school, I went on to attend Harvard College and Harvard Law School and to become the fourth woman ever to be elected the President of the Harvard Law Review. These accomplishments are a testament to Mr. Patterson's gifts as a teacher and I have no doubt that I would not have achieved them without his mentorship. He helped me discover my potential, find confidence in my voice, and hone the communication, critical thinking, and collaboration skills that have been critical to my success. He has had a lasting and significant impact on my life.

One of the truly outstanding things about Mr. Patterson is that my story is not unique. He has had a similar effect on hundreds, if not thousands, of other students from diverse backgrounds and facing unique challenges. I personally know many students who consider their time in his classroom formative and who use the lessons learned there on a daily basis. His influence has extended beyond the walls of Guymon High School through his work at the state and national level to empower students through speech and debate programs. He has inspired generations of students to pursue higher education, to advocate for their beliefs and pursue their creative passions, to seek success in their careers, and to continue his legacy of providing today's students with a quality education.

I hope that the Oklahoma State Department of Education will seize this opportunity to recognize the dedicated service of Michael Patterson. He is, without a doubt, a stellar example of the professionalism, inspiration, and quality that reflects the very best in education in Oklahoma.

Sincerely,



Katherine Mayer Christensen



May 22, 2020

To Whom It May Concern:

It is my pleasure to recommend Michael Patterson for Oklahoma Teacher of the Year as a teacher of secondary language arts, speech, and theater and in the field of secondary education. As a colleague of Michael's for the past seventeen years, I have witnessed his incredible work ethic and strong skills as an educator, speech and debate coach and leader.

As a coach of forensics, Michael has been a tremendous asset to the speech and debate community. Michael has worked countless hours teaching and training hundreds of students, developing interpretation, cutting scripts, and blocking speech performances. In my 10 years of coaching forensics activities and seventeen years of serving as the Executive Director of the National Speech & Debate Association, I believe Michael Patterson to one of the best in inspiring youth and training them for leadership.

During his coaching career Michael has been honored with tremendous success and accolade due to his outstanding coaching skills and dedication to teaching students. Along with coaching fourteen team championships, ninety individual state champions, and thirty-four qualifiers to the National Tournament, Michael has been honored with several state and national awards, including being named the 1999 OSSAA Speech Teacher of the Year.

Another mark of a great educator is their willingness to serve in leadership roles that directly impact the quality of education occurring. Michael Patterson had truly been a leader in the activity of speech and debate. In the state of Oklahoma, Michael has served as the National Speech & Debate Association District Chair since 2012, has been a member of the OSSAA Speech Advisory Committee since 1994, and has served as the Director of Oklahoma State Speech Tournament since 2007. On a National level, Michael has served as the Chair of the Lincoln-Douglas Debate division of the NSDA National Speech and Debate Tournament for the past two years and as part of its committee since 1996.

The impact that Michael Patterson has had on the activity of speech and debate through his coaching, teaching, and leadership is certainly worthy of praise. He is an innovative teacher, coach, and director committed to educating young people. Furthermore, he is dedicated to teaching students the communication skills necessary for their futures. It is with great pleasure that I affirm my recommendation of Michael Patterson as a worthy candidate for Oklahoma Teacher of the Year.

Sincerely,

J. Scott Wunn
Executive Director

To the Oklahoma Teacher of the Year Selection Committee:

I write to you to ask you to select Michael Patterson as Oklahoma's next Teacher of the Year. As a classroom teacher finishing my 26th year, I don't make this recommendation lightly. In my own educational journey, I have never encountered a teacher with more innate teaching genius than Michael Patterson. He has positively impacted my life more than any person I know, other than my parents.

I have been blessed to have experienced Michael's teaching magic first hand as a high school student where he was my speech teacher. I have been honored to work with him as a cooperating teacher for my student teaching, as a mentor for my first years of teaching, as a member of his staff at a debate institute, and a member of his national tabulation staff. It's fair to say I have seen Michael's teaching ability in nearly every capacity, and he still just amazes me with his ability as an educator.

You will, no doubt, see incredible candidates as you look at this year's applicants for Teacher of the Year. I do not believe you will find a better candidate than Michael. For 41 years, Michael has taught Speech, Debate, and English at Guymon High School. Guymon has become very ethnically and economically diverse, and Michael thrives in this environment. Some teachers slow down or approach the job with less energy and enthusiasm after decades in the classroom, but Michael still pursues excellence from himself and his students with the same vigor I saw from him when I was his student. He is, quite simply, a gifted teacher.

Michael's teaching discipline is teaching and coaching competitive debate and speech, and he is VERY good at his job. He has led his teams to over a dozen OSSAA State Championships, and numerous national tournament appearances. As a speech and debate coach, it is often difficult to separate coaching and teaching; however Michael never loses perspective on his job as an educator first. Michael navigates this difficulty by exhibiting honest care for each of his students. He sees students as people full of potential. His care for students often extends beyond the classroom- even beyond graduation, and many of us still think of him as our teacher well into our adult lives.

Great teachers are really known for the legacy they leave behind in their students. Michael continues to leave an amazing legacy. I am a teacher, and Michael showed me I could be. Four decades of students who are now successful as educators, medical professionals, lawyers, business owners, politicians, and entertainers would tell you Michael Patterson was the teacher who impacted their lives the most.

I ask you to reward this amazing educator with this honor. It is long overdue.

Sincerely,

Russ Tidwell- Garden City High School Debate and Speech Teacher
2018 NSDA Teacher of the Year for Kansas
2012 NFHS Kansas Nominee Outstanding Debate/Speech/Theater Educator
2010 Finney County Crystal Apple Teacher/Kansas Teacher of the Year Nominee