

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
------------------------------	------	-------	----------

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
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____

LEADERSHIP IN STAFF DEVELOPMENT (Include leadership in the training of future teachers)

Title	Position Held	Dates

AWARDS AND OTHER RECOGNITION OF TEACHING

Title	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?

August 24th, 2020

Dear members of the selection committee:

I am honored to have the opportunity to share with you just a small snapshot of what makes Keri Smith a top candidate for consideration as Oklahoma's next state teacher of the year! I have had the unique privilege of watching Keri grow starting with our very first meeting at the University of Central Oklahoma job fair. That first meeting was followed shortly by a visit to her classroom to announce her selection as the Rookie Teacher of the Year for Yukon Public Schools. Our last in-person meeting was on her front porch, as our district caravan pulled up to her house to award her with our district's highest honor, Yukon Public Schools District Teacher of the Year.

Keri is a fierce advocate for students and for teachers. Through my service on our district's Gifted and Talented Advisory Board, I have gained a tremendous amount of respect for her. We do not always agree on every topic, but there is never any question kids come first. We have even reciprocated a mutual challenge to read two different books that has fostered our own growth and furthered our professional relationship. Keri has lobbied our district leadership team for more support of the Chess Club which she started on her own, a club that has grown exponentially and has other buildings in our district looking for ways to provide the same experience for students in their buildings.

Keri fights for kids through her leadership in the classroom and her continuing development in the field of gifted education. She fights for kids outside of the classroom through her role as the Lead Negotiator for the Yukon Public Educators Association. In my 25 plus years, I have seen negotiations from many different angles and I have witnessed many different results. In my opinion, there is a critical balance that is constantly teetering during negotiations between an administrative team and a bargaining team. If not carefully navigated, agreements and decisions can be made that benefit teachers but prove to be detrimental to students and our number one focus, student achievement. I respect Keri a great deal in her role as the Lead Negotiator. As a young educator, she has proven very effective in her balancing of communicating with our administrative team, facilitating items for consideration from the teachers she represents, and maintaining a balance that keeps student needs as the starting point for decisions.

I have no doubt that we have seen only a glimpse of the legacy Keri Smith will establish during her service as a teacher and an educator. Yet, even with just a glimpse, she has proven she is ready to stand and represent not only Yukon Public Schools, but also the State of Oklahoma as the next teacher of the year!

Sincerely,



Jason D. Brunk

August 25, 2020

To Whom It May Concern:

I have had the pleasure of working with Mrs. Keri Smith for the past six years. She is an extremely dedicated and hard working educator with a passion for helping all children, especially gifted and talented students, reach success. Her focus and drive for excellence is demonstrated on a regular basis through her day-to-day interactions with those around her. Students respond very well to Mrs. Smith and welcome the excitement and enthusiasm she brings to the classroom through hands-on activities and collaborative experiences.

Mrs. Smith is an active member of the faculty at Independence Intermediate and is a great example of what it means to be Yukon's Teacher of the Year. Mrs. Smith is the example of a lifelong learner. She educates herself in her field and stays up to date on latest studies concerning gifted students and how they learn. She works hard to provide training and lessons for classroom teachers to use in order to ensure differentiation is available for all students.

In addition, Mrs. Smith is a lead negotiator for YPEA and is the organization's district secretary. She is instrumental in establishing Yukon's chess team that meets after school on Tuesdays. The success of Yukon's chess team provided the opportunity for Mrs. Smith to apply for Yukon Public Schools to be a site for one of the state chess tournaments. Through all of these endeavors, Mrs. Smith exhibits professionalism and dedication to all students, parents, and colleagues. She is innovative and collaborative and is always willing to give a helping hand to other colleagues; as well as learn from those around her.

As a Teacher of the Year Finalist, I have no doubt Mrs. Smith would be an excellent representative for the Yukon Public School District and the state of Oklahoma. Her genuine care and compassion for children is demonstrated on a daily basis. We are proud to have Mrs. Smith at Yukon Public Schools and are fortunate to benefit from the dedication and focus on growing student learning she brings to our district each day.

Sincerely,

Amy L. Wingard
Gifted and Talented Facilitator

Independence Intermediate School

500 E. Vandament Yukon, Oklahoma 73099 405-265-1352

Mrs. Amy Young, M.Ed., Principal

Mr. Tyler Bodell, M.Ed., Assistant Principal



August 26, 2020

Dear Oklahoma Teacher of the Year Committee,

It is my pleasure to recommend Keri Smith as the next Oklahoma Teacher of the Year. Keri teaches Gifted Education at Independence Intermediate in Yukon. Keri is innovative and collaborative and is the epitome of a professional with her relationships with students, parents, and colleagues.

Keri was named as Yukon's District Teacher of the Year. She earned that honor due to her hard work, her dedication to creating new learning opportunities for all students at Independence, and her collaborative spirit. Keri believes that all children must have a place to fit in at school. Because of this belief, she has created new learning opportunities for our students. She created the Independence Chess Team that grew from 0 to over 100 students in less than a year. Keri thrives on finding a niche for students, creating a program to support those students, engaging students, staff, and parents in the program, and then ensuring the quality of the program. Keri also believes that student choice in learning is the cornerstone of engagement. She provides her students with multiple choices of how they show what they know. Her innovative approach engages students and makes them eager to take on a challenge because they are invested in their own learning.

Keri is a lifelong learner and that is her best quality as a teacher. She models coachability, resilience, and the constant mindset of bettering herself as a teacher and as a human. Keri is the voice of calm, common sense and most importantly, she is solution oriented. She is a leader in our school and in our district and is everything a Teacher of the Year should be. If you need further information, please contact me at amy.young@yukonps.com or by phone at 405-924-3143.

Sincerely,

Amy Young
Principal, Independence Elementary