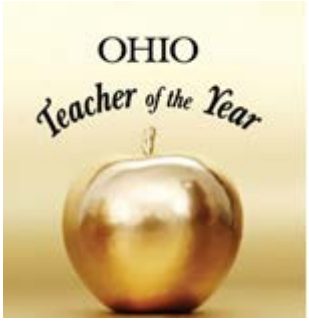

2015
Ohio Teacher of the Year
Program Overview

The Ohio Department of Education (ODE) has administered the Teacher of the Year program since 1969, demonstrating the value it places on quality teaching. It is part of the **National Teacher of the Year** program, administered by the Council of Chief State School Officers in Washington, D.C. The Program is the oldest and most prestigious honors program in the country which focuses attention on excellence in teaching.

Mission

The mission of the **Ohio Teacher of the Year** (OTOY) program is to honor, promote and celebrate excellence in teaching and the teaching profession. ODE will recognize and utilize this network of exemplary teachers as leaders in school improvement initiatives and the recruitment, preparation and retention of quality teachers.

Nominee Qualifications

Each school district, chartered community school, and chartered nonpublic school may submit **one** nomination for consideration to the State Board of Education's Territory Lead in their assigned district. Each OTOY nominee must be currently teaching and hold a valid Ohio teaching license. **Each local district will conduct their own process for selecting their candidate. Only one nominee per local district will be chosen and submitted to the State Board District Territory Lead for consideration. Each State Board of Education Territory Lead will have a selection committee evaluate all the nominees. One candidate will be selected to represent the territory, which will be forwarded to the state level competition. At the state level, five candidates will be chosen. Each of the finalists will be interviewed and the Ohio Teacher of the Year will be chosen from that group.** Each nominee must be a PK-12 classroom teacher who is engaged in the direct teaching of students and plans to continue in an active teaching role. He or she must be an exemplary educator who has demonstrated exceptional dedication and leadership to classroom, school and community activities.

College and university teachers/professors are ineligible, as are school personnel whose major responsibilities are administration, curriculum or supervision.

Ohio | Department of Education

Contact Information: Patty Griffin at OTOY@ode.state.oh.us or 614.995.3735
or contact your State Board of Education Territory Lead

- **Each Teacher of the Year nominee should:**
    - Be exceptionally talented;
    - Knowledgeable;
    - Inspire students of diverse backgrounds and abilities to learn;
    - Have the respect of students, parents and colleagues;
    - Play an active role in the community as well as in the school;
    - Be poised and articulate, with excellent communication skills;
    - Be able to provide presentations and workshops to diverse audiences in his or her area of expertise;
    - Possess a state and national perspective of how current educational issues and practices impact teaching and learning;
    - Use technology as a tool for learning, communication and collaboration; and
    - Possess the energy to withstand a busy schedule as he or she serves as a spokesperson for Ohio teachers.

Program Responsibilities

The Ohio Teacher of the Year serves as a spokesperson for Ohio teachers. Upon request, he or she makes public appearances across the state during the school year while still serving as a classroom teacher. Professional activities include attending state education meetings; providing state or local workshops in his/her area of expertise; making speeches; serving on state committees; and responding to educational issues from education groups, policymakers and the media.
The Teacher of the Year is invited to speak at the Ohio School Boards Association Conference in November, the Buckeye Association of School Administrators Spring Academy and the Ohio Education Association Education Issues Conference.
The school district that employs the Ohio Teacher of the Year will receive funds from ODE to cover the teacher's expenses for the year. At a minimum, these expenses include up to 20 release days, travel, mileage and other meeting costs.

Recent Ohio Teachers of the Year: Click on the names below to view or download their brochures.

- Debra McDonald, 2014 Ohio Teacher of the Year, Wayne County Career Center
- Carole Morbitzer, 2013 Ohio Teacher of the Year, Hamilton Local Schools
- Tim Dove, 2011& 2012 Ohio Teacher of the Year, Worthington City Schools
- Natalie Wester, 2010 Ohio Teacher of the Year, Cleveland Heights-University Heights Schools
- Jennifer Walker, 2009 Ohio Teacher of the Year, Youngstown City Schools
- Deborah Wickerham, 2008 Ohio Teacher of the Year, Findlay City Schools
- George Edge, 2007 Ohio Teacher of the Year, South-Western City Schools
- Eric Combs, 2006 Ohio Teacher of the Year, Fairborn City Schools
- Deepa Ganschinietz, 2005 Ohio Teacher of the Year, Columbus City Schools
- Kathy Rank, 2004 Ohio Teacher of the Year, Piqua City Schools
- Doreen Uhas-Sauer, 2003 Ohio Teacher of the Year, Columbus City

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