Name: Jessica Duff, Executive Director of Communications

District: Pulaski County Special School District

Address: 925 E. Dixon
Little Rock, AR 72206

Email: jduff@pcssd.org

Entry Category: Gold Medallion Award: Special Communication Project/Campaign

Number of Communication Staff: 5 full time, 1 part time

Size/Type of District: Public school district; approximately 12,000 students and 2,000 employees
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SYNOPSIS

The Arkansas Department of Education (ADE) began its annual Teacher of the Year recognition program in 1962. Since its inception, Pulaski County Special School District (PCSSD) had not participated in the program until the 2020-2021 school year. The communications department within PCSSD took on the task of initiating this annual event with the goal of 100% participation from its 26 schools. The District not only wanted to be involved in this program, it wanted to be competitive and showcase the amazing teachers in PCSSD.

The communications department established a committee made up of three elementary principals, a middle school principal and a high school principal as well as six members from the District office’s administrative team. This committee reviewed the rules provided by ADE for the statewide competition and implemented them into the application process for the District level selection. Each of the District’s schools selected a teacher to represent their school and, ultimately, compete for a chance to be selected as the PCSSD Teacher of the Year. In less than two months, and under COVID-19 precautions, the committee conducted the application process, organized a banquet to honor the 26 employees, and announced the recipient who would represent the District in the statewide competition.

Not only did the District see full participation from all schools, the District nominee advanced as one of the 12 regional finalists for the Arkansas Teacher of the Year award. The committee received positive feedback across the District from teachers, administrators, and the public. As with implementing any new endeavor, the team received some constructive criticism on areas that can be improved as the District continues to participate in the Arkansas Teacher of the Year program.

Though it takes a lot of work to organize and execute an event of this magnitude, it is well worth it in order to honor the amazing teachers of PCSSD.

“Just remember, you can’t win the game if you don’t even play it.”

- Robin Sharma
The ADE launched the Arkansas Teacher of the Year (ATOY) program in 1959 and it became an annual, statewide recognition program in 1962. Since its inception, PCSSD had not participated in the program. While the district has recognized teachers in other ways, it had never participated in this statewide event.

Prior to participation in the ATOY program, PCSSD created the Bobby G. Lester Award which recognized any employee for extraordinary work performance and lasted from 1998-2010. Beginning in 2017, PCSSD began the quarterly Inspiration in Education award, which is open to any District employee and continues to this day. In 2018, PCSSD participated in the Coca-Cola Presents “Stars in Education” program which was a one time event.

Since 2018, a completely new team has taken over the helm of the District communications department. That same year a teacher from the Little Rock School District, PCSSD’s biggest competitor for enrollment, won the ATOY award. Newly minted Executive Director of Communications, Jessica Duff, took notice that a neighboring school was being celebrated, while PCSSD teachers, who were just as deserving, did not receive the same praise. After some additional department turnover, and a worldwide pandemic, the communications department decided it was time to shine a larger light on the work of PCSSD’s hard working teachers.

As PCSSD and other school districts across the country felt the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic, it was apparent that morale was down and teacher recruitment was dropping. Therefore, in the 2020-2021 school year, the communications department decided it was time to shift morale by recognizing its teachers for their accomplishments and create the foundation for PCSSD’s participation in the ATOY program for years to come.

Essentially, the communications department embarked on this project with three main goals:

1. 100% participation from all PCSSD schools
2. Enhance visibility and awareness of PCSSD and its teachers
3. Increase teacher recruitment to entice new teachers to work for PCSSD

The communications department began preliminary research in August 2020 by reaching out to other school districts within ArkaNSPRA that had previously participated in ATOY for their insight and feedback. The Bryant School District and Conway Public Schools provided details related to their timeline, qualifications, and award ceremony.

This information, accompanied by the rules provided by ADE, allowed the communications department to establish the process for PCSSD to participate in the statewide recognition program for the first time since its inception in nearly 60 years.

While teachers were filling out their District Teacher of the Year applications, the communications department began planning an in-person banquet to recognize the school level winners and announce the District winner. Although COVID-19 cases were dropping in the Spring of 2021 in central Arkansas, many venues still had restrictions in place. With this in mind, communications department staff began researching venue options for the event and determined that the Wyndham Riverfront Hilton best fit the program because it could safely accommodate our group of approximately 100 guests, prepare a plated breakfast at a reasonable price, and had audio capabilities.
PLANNING

Since March 2020, the COVID-19 pandemic has placed even more burden and pressure on our teachers than ever before. The communications department saw this as a unique opportunity to take on the task of implementing the Teacher of the Year program in PCSSD in order to raise awareness of the District, enhance recognition of its amazing teachers, and boost teacher morale and recruitment.

Since this was the first year for PCSSD to participate in the ATOY program, the planning started nearly eight months before the state’s application window even opened. After compiling research from area school districts, the communications department consulted with the District leadership team (Superintendent’s cabinet) for approval to move forward with establishing a committee that would be responsible for executing the District’s participation in the ATOY program.

The committee initially included two members of the communications department, six members of cabinet and an additional representative from human resources. Following the first planning meeting, the committee selected five school principals from three elementary schools, a middle school and a high school. The full committee totaled 14 people.

PCSSD TEACHER OF THE YEAR COMMITTEE

Tracy Allen
PRINCIPAL, SYLVAN HILLS HIGH SCHOOL

Yaa Appiah-McNulty
PRINCIPAL, ROBINSON MIDDLE SCHOOL

Dr. Darnell Bell
DIR. OF FEDERAL PROGRAMS & PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Rachel Blackwell
IT / DIGITAL LEARNING FACILITATOR

Stacy Bottoms
PRINCIPAL, CRYSTAL HILL ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

Shawn Burgess
ASSISTANT SUPERINTENDENT OF HUMAN RESOURCES

Masako Christian
PRINCIPAL, DAISEY BATES ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

Jessica Duff
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF COMMUNICATIONS

Dr. Charles McNulty
SUPERINTENDENT

Matthew Mellor
PRINCIPAL, LAWSON ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

Jessica Ray
MARKETING COMMUNICATIONS FACILITATOR

Dr. Alesia Smith
DEPUTY SUPERINTENDENT / LEARNING SERVICES

Darrick Williams
DIRECTOR OF HUMAN RESOURCES

Dr. Yolaundra Williams
DIRECTOR OF EDUCATIONAL ACCOUNTABILITY & SPECIAL PROJECTS
The committee held a total of four virtual meetings where the group met as a whole to discuss various stages of the ATOY planning process.

MEETING #1 - FEBRUARY 17, 2021

In this meeting, the initial committee of nine reviewed the research from the communications department and discussed how the District would implement the ATOY program internally. The committee also decided that it should include principals from schools in the District to add feedback and support in this process.

MEETING #2 - FEBRUARY 24, 2021

In this second meeting, the new members (principals) were invited to attend to represent input from the schools. In this meeting, the committee created a planning document that outlined the timeline, nomination process, qualifications and ideas for an award ceremony. Each committee member was tasked with providing input and feedback on how to best implement the nomination process within the schools.

MEETING #3 - MARCH 4, 2021

During this meeting, the committee created a rough draft of the application that teachers at each school would use to apply for the school level competition. Following the meeting, the communications department created a Google Form with these application questions. The committee had a chance to review once more via email to make any suggestions and final edits. The application was shared with all school administrators to distribute to their teaching staff on March 12, 2021.

MEETING #4 - APRIL 28, 2021

Prior to this final meeting, the full committee had a chance to review the applications submitted thus far. At the time of our meeting, every school submitted a nominee except for two schools. (Note: Eventually those two schools picked someone to represent their school.) During this meeting, the committee reviewed the expectations for reviewing and scoring all applications. The committee agreed to a two-week window to review all 26 applications and have all applications scored by May 7, 2021 at 2 p.m.

Following the committee meetings and creating the planning document, qualifications and nomination processes, all teachers were notified of the District’s plan to participate in the ATOY program. The communication was shared with principals via email on how the application process would work, expectations of participation, and anticipated deadlines.

While the teachers focused on their applications, the communications department began working on how to execute a proper recognition ceremony with concerns around COVID-19 safety. In May 2021, the daily COVID-19 case count in Arkansas dropped significantly which allowed the District to host an in-person event with limited attendance. The committee decided that it was best to allow each school winner to bring one guest in addition to the school principal in order to keep attendance at less than 100 guests for the event.

The venue, the Wyndham Riverfront Hilton, offered space to accommodate the guest count and also provide a plated breakfast for each attendee. Rather than involving the full District ATOY planning committee, the communications department handled all event details. It was decided that the Executive Director of Communications, Jessica Duff, would emcee the event with Superintendent, Dr. Charles McNulty, giving a speech in honor of the Teacher of the Year nominees.

The budget for this event was $8,000. Each school level winner received an award plaque and the District Teacher of the Year received an additional, larger plaque. In addition to their plaques, every school teacher received a $100 bonus and the District Teacher of the Year received an additional $500 check. The venue and food totaled $2,200.36; the awards totaled $2,631.26; and the cash prizes totaled $3,100. The total spent was slightly under budget at $7,931.62.

Once the banquet concluded, those in attendance had a chance to take photos and local media in attendance conducted interviews with the District winner.
IMPLEMENTATION

Using the timeline provided by ADE in conjunction with the District’s internal timeline, the committee held virtual meetings to review and modify the nomination and application process.

As mentioned previously, the communications department began researching and gathering information to present to a larger group months prior to creating a committee. Once the full committee was created, the first task was to establish an internal timeline that would coincide with the statewide program. The committee took into account activities, spring break, testing, and other items that might conflict with the nomination, application, and judging process.

In addition to creating an internal timeline for the program, the committee established the qualifications for nominees which included those required by ADE for the ATOY program. The committee chose to also evaluate nominees based on growth data (including student test scores), the teacher’s attendance, and how the teacher exemplifies the District motto of “equity and excellence.” The committee then worked to determine how the nominations would be handled at the school level, including how they would be judged and submitted to the committee for review at the District level.

The original deadline was April 2, 2021 for teachers to submit their applications, but the deadline was pushed back to April 9, 2021 after the committee received feedback from the schools. Despite the additional week, many teachers felt this new deadline was just as difficult to achieve since it fell during the start of the District’s standardized testing window. Therefore it was extended to April 13, 2021 to allow teachers to work on it over the weekend.

Once all applications were submitted, the committee began the reviewing and scoring process. The District’s rubric allowed for whole number scoring with the first several categories worth up to 10 points each and the last three, up to five points each:

1. Biography Information
2. Describe a Lesson or Planning Unit
3. Depict School Culture in a Project/Initiative
4. Student Connections Beyond the Classroom
5. Describe Trends and Issues in Education
6. Describe Your Platform
7. Describe Equity and Excellence in Education
8. Professional Resume
9. Evidence of Student Growth
10. Letters of Recommendation

The teacher with the most points after each member of the committee reviewed the entries was awarded the PCSSD Teacher of the Year.
Once the nominations were reviewed, the communications department emailed the school principals the timeline for how the school level winners would be notified and public announcement would take place. School level winners were told of their selection on April 30, 2021. The school winners were announced in a press release and District social media channels (Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter) as well as on each school's individual Facebook page on May 7, 2021.

The communications department also began nailing down the details for the banquet to recognize the school level winners and announce the District Teacher of the Year. The communications department ordered awards and reserved the Wyndham Riverfront Hilton in North Little Rock, Arkansas. The facility provided ample space for physical distancing and provided a plated breakfast for each attendee. Additionally, the facility provided audio capabilities. Out of an abundance of caution for this in-person event, the committee decided that each honoree would be allowed to bring only one guest as well as their abundance of caution for this in-person event, the facility provided audio capabilities. Out of an abundance of caution for this in-person event, the committee decided that each honoree would be allowed to bring only one guest as well as their principal to keep the total number of attendees around 100. In the days leading up to the event, the final touches were put on the program and script for the event.

The week of celebration began with the school level winners being invited to the Board of Education meeting on May 11, 2021 for a special recognition. Later that week, the school winners were celebrated at an awards breakfast on May 13, 2021. It was at this awards ceremony that the District winner was announced in a public setting outside of internal committee communications. Shannon Hum, an AVID (Advancement Via Individual Determination) teacher at Sylvan Hills Middle School, was the recipient of the first ever PCSSD Teacher of the Year award.

Each teacher could score a possible total of 85 points from their application. There were eight committee members who scored these applications leading to a total possible score of 680 points. Hum received 565 total points with an average score of 71. Shannon Hum was selected as the recipient of the PCSSD Teacher of the Year based on her outstanding accomplishments and performance as an educator. Her letters of recommendation echoed her application responses:

"Mrs. Hum nurtures an atmosphere of respect and compassion for one another. The AVID students know that she will do whatever it takes to help them succeed, including working nights and weekends facilitating study groups." - fellow teacher at Sylvan Hills Middle School

"Her parent communication is like no other teacher that our daughters have had. [But her] most important asset is her ability to build relationships with her students, which is absolutely essential in learning." - Sylvan Hills Middle School parent of former student

"Her ability and impact as a teacher and a leader in our school are overshadowed by her impact as a person. She is just one of those people who goes above and beyond on everything, especially if it benefits our kids." - Sylvan Hills Middle School principal

Following the District level competition, the communications department worked closely with Hum to complete her application for the statewide competition. The deadline for the state competition was less than a month from the District announcement, which meant quick work in a short period of time. Hum had to complete the ADE application, which was used as the base for the District application to ultimately expedite the state application process for the PCSSD winner. In addition to her application, Hum had to submit a 3-5 minute video that followed specific criteria: the first minute showcased the candidate’s story as an educator, while the additional time showcased the candidate’s passion for education. The video had to be recorded with no editing, within the required time, and submitted via Google to the ATOY committee.

Nearly a month after submitting Hum as the PCSSD representative in the ATOY program, she received an email letting her know that she had been selected as one of 12 regional finalists. The email also included an invitation to the Governor’s Mansion for a recognition ceremony on August 5, 2021 at which the top four finalists would be announced. During the event, Hum was honored along with the other regional finalists and received a certificate of recognition as well as a monetary award. Although she was not selected to advance to the next round in the ATOY program, Hum was honored to represent the District.

"Being chosen Teacher of the Year was such a wonderful honor. Doing something I truly love and actually getting rewarded for it was such a bonus. This award has inspired me to give even more to my students and community." - Shannon Hum, 2022 PCSSD Teacher of the Year.
PCSSD’s participation in the ATOY program proved to be a success. Teachers, administrators, and other staff praised the committee for their work in bringing this program to PCSSD. The icing on the cake was to have our District winner advance as a regional finalist in the statewide competition. Although Shanon Hum didn’t make it beyond the top 12, PCSSD is proud of the work she continues to do in representing her school and the District as the inaugural PCSSD Teacher of the Year.

Throughout the process of implementing a Teacher of the Year program within PCSSD, the committee experienced a few challenges. However, the group was able to adapt and make adjustments to accommodate those involved.

The committee received feedback from some teachers as well as administrators on the application process:

The committee’s original plan included school administrators holding their own Teacher of the Year competitions to find the school level winners. But administrators on the committee felt that put an undue burden on multiple teachers to fill out the extensive application. The committee agreed to have principals decide the best course of action to select their Teacher of the Year nominee. This made it easier for the committee to only review one applicant from each school, knowing that the schools chose their school winner on their own.

Teachers did not feel comfortable nominating themselves directly and filling out the application.

The committee will take into consideration other nominating practices for future years.

Teachers felt the application was too long and detailed to fill out.

The committee will consider adjusting the application in the future.

Teachers felt like they didn’t have enough time to complete the application and asked for extensions.

Ultimately, two extensions were given, pushing the process back about two weeks.

While COVID-19 was slowing in central Arkansas at the time, finding a venue to fit our needs and within our budget proved to be a challenge. The committee ultimately found a great venue we hope to use in the future.

Despite the challenges, the District succeeded in achieving its goals set forth at the start of this endeavor.

1. **100% participation from all schools** – each of the District’s 26 schools had a representative nominated as its school winner.

2. **Enhance visibility and awareness of PCSSD and its teachers** – each school winner was announced on its school Facebook page as well as a group post announced on the main District social media channels. The reach and engagement on these posts was incredible, including decent traffic for the web story announcement. The Facebook post with the announcement drew nearly four times the amount of engagement as the average posts for that month.

3. **Increase teacher recruitment to entice new teachers to work for PCSSD** – new teacher recruitment increased for the 2021-2022 school year compared to the previous two school years. This can be partially attributed to the increased visibility of the District in the community through its participation in the ATOY program.

   a. **2019-2020 school year** - 155 new teachers hired
   b. **2020-2021 school year** - 144 new teachers hired
   c. **2021-2022 school year** - 253 new teachers hired
You are invited to a breakfast celebrating PCSSD teachers who went above and beyond this school year.

Thursday, May 13
9:30 am - 11:00 am
Wyndham Riverfront
2 Riverfront Pl.
North Little Rock, AR 72114

Teacher of the Year winners are allowed one guest
Business attire preferred
PCSSD Teacher of the Year Application

Pulaski County Special School District (PCSSD) will participate in the 2023 Arkansas Teacher of the Year (ATOY) award process through the Arkansas Department of Education (ADE). Each PCSSD school will have a teacher of the year recipient who will compete for the district teacher of the year. The district’s teacher of the year will be submitted to the ATOY.

Candidates must meet the following minimum criteria:
- Candidates must be skillful and dedicated teachers in grades pre-kindergarten through 12.
- The ATOY candidate must be engaged directly in instruction in a classroom setting for more than 70 percent of the individual’s contracted time.
- Instructional Facilitators must be engaged directly in instruction with students in a classroom setting for more than 70 percent of the individual’s contracted time to qualify.
- Librarians and Guidance Counselors are eligible to participate in the ATOY.
- Administrators are not eligible.

For complete details on the ATOY process, please review the Commissioner’s Memo issued on March 2, 2023: https://adecm.arkansas.gov/Views/ApprovedMemo.aspx?Id=6687.

The name, email, and photo associated with your Google account will be recorded when you upload files and submit this form.

Candidate’s Full Name

Your answer

Candidate’s School

Choose

Biography Information

Please complete your professional biography in third person. Maximum 250 words.

Your answer

Describe a Lesson or Planning Unit

Describe a lesson or unit that defines you as a teacher. How did you engage all students in the learning? How did that learning influence your students? How are your beliefs about teaching demonstrated in this lesson/unit? Please use a narrative format to describe your lesson. Maximum 750 words.

Your answer

Describe School Culture in a Project/Initiative

Describe a project or initiative you have been involved in that contributed to the improvement of overall school culture. What was your role? How did you involve others? What is happening with the project now? How does it relate to the ongoing impact for the school and students? Maximum 500 words.

Your answer

Student Connections Beyond the Classroom

How do you ensure that education transcends the classroom? Describe specific ways in which you connect with your students and the community. Please include evidence of student impact. Maximum 500 words.

Your answer

Describe Trends and Issues in Education

What do you consider to be a major public education issue today? Why is this important to you? How are you leading from your classroom? Maximum 500 words.

Your answer

Describe Your Platform

As the 2023 Arkansas Teacher of the Year, you serve as a spokesperson and representative for teachers and students. If selected, please describe your proposed platform (message to educators and stakeholders across the state). What will you communicate to your profession and to the public? Please include a personal narrative that reveals why this platform is important to you. Maximum 750 words.

Your answer

Describe Equity and Excellence in Education

Write an essay that describes how your work as an educator in Arkansas exemplifies the district’s mission. Pulaski County Special School District’s mission is to provide equity and excellence for all students through rigorous college and career readiness instructional strategies. (Note: if selected to advance to district teacher of the year selection process, be prepared to create a video that elaborates upon your essay.) Maximum 750 words.

Your answer

15 points possible (5 points per document) if the following items adequately represent the request.

1. Professional Resume - submit a PDF of your resume that includes experience, education, certification, community involvement, etc.
2. Evidence of Student Growth - provide two (2) to four (4) documents of evidence, including an explanation of the student growth evidence submitted.
3. Letters of Recommendation - upload three (3) letters of recommendation; including one each from a parent and colleague.

Required Document Upload

Add file
EMAILS TO PRINCIPALS REGARDING TEACHER OF THE YEAR

Teacher of the Year Application

Duff, Jessica <jduff@pcssd.org>
3/12/2021 11:39 AM
To: PRINCIPALS; ASST PRINCIPALS Cc: Alexis Smith; Charles McNulty; DARNELL BELL; Darrick Williams; Jessica Ray; Rachel Blackwell; SHAWN BURGESS; YOULAINDRA WILLIAMS

Good morning everyone!
It's been a whirlwind week, so let's end on a high note! As I mentioned during the principal and assistant principal meetings this past two weeks, PCSSD will be participating in the Arkansas Teacher of the Year program moving forward.
Thanks to the hard work of a great committee, we created the application for school-level application. This application is to be shared with your staff who are qualified to participate. If you share this with all staff, be sure they know/understand who is qualified to apply/be nominated. You can find those qualifications here.

HERE IS THE APPLICATION

The deadline for teachers at your school to submit their application is Friday, April 2. This gives them three weeks to work on the application. Each school leadership team (principal and assistant principal/instruction coach) will select ONE winner from his/her school. That winner will advance to the district level for review. We will announce the district winner in May and that winner will advance to the Arkansas Teacher of the Year competition-level.

Let me know if you have any questions!
Thank you,
Jessica

Duff, Jessica <jduff@pcssd.org>
EXECUTIVE DIR. OF COMMUNICATIONS, PCSSD
Office: 501-234-2638
Mobile: 501-618-0198
jduff@pcssd.org

Re: Teacher of the Year Application

Duff, Jessica <jduff@pcssd.org>
3/28/2021 11:16 AM
To: PRINCIPALS; ASST PRINCIPALS Cc: Alexis Smith; Charles McNulty; DARNELL BELL; Darrick Williams; Jessica Ray; Rachel Blackwell; SHAWN BURGESS; YOULAINDRA WILLIAMS

Good morning everyone!
Hope you enjoyed your spring break to the fullest! Just a reminder that this is the last week for your teachers to apply for the school-level Teacher of the Year program. Please be sure your school has a nominee that will advance to the district-level competition.

Thanks
Jessica

Teacher of the Year Update

Duff, Jessica <jduff@pcssd.org>
3/31/2021 11:09 AM
To: PRINCIPALS; ASST PRINCIPALS Cc: Darrick Williams; Jessica Ray; CABINET

Good morning all!
Unfortunately, we're not getting many applicants for the Teacher of the Year award process. After discussing with Cabinet yesterday, we decided to make a slight change to the Teacher of the Year nominations. We will be taking the lead on how one of our schools went about this process and moving forward this way:

Each school will ask staff to nominate a fellow teacher he/she feels would best represent the school, the district and, ultimately, the state as Teacher of the Year. Those nominated will then be asked to fill out the application for a chance to become the school's "teacher of the year" representative. From that pool, the school admin team will select ONE winner for their school. Each school winner will be recognized and will be invited to take the next step to apply for the district Teacher of the Year award. This will include an extension of the application he/she has already completed for the school level.

Deadline to accept nominations for your school is Friday, April 2. Deadline for those who are nominated to actually apply is extended to NEXT Friday, April 9.

We are hoping this change will help garner more participation and help us get the best representation possible for our TOY program!

Thank you!!
Jessica
**EVALUATION RUBRIC FORM AND SPREADSHEET**

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<td>Biography Information</td>
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<td>Depict School Culture in a Project/Initiative*</td>
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<td>Describe Trends and Issues in Education*</td>
<td>Describe Your Platform*</td>
<td>Describe Equity and Excellence in Education*</td>
<td>Professional Resume*</td>
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<td>College Station Elementary - Tamara Caston</td>
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<td>Harris Elementary - Erin Nicole Rainey</td>
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<td>Lawson Elementary - April Belcher</td>
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<td>Robinson Elementary - Melissa Elizabeth Atkins</td>
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**PCSSD Teacher of the Year RUBRIC**

Pulaski County Special School District (PCSSD) will participate in the 2023 Arkansas Teacher of the Year (AYO) award process through the Arkansas Department of Education (ADE). Please review the following conditions from each PCSSD school to be submitted as the District's representation in the AYO program.

*Required*

Your email will be recorded when you submit this form.
Teacher of the Year - announcement!

4/30/2021 11:26 AM

To PRINCIPALS

Good morning everyone!

We have officially reviewed and finalized all our applications for the individual school Teacher of the Year process. Now, begins the difficult task for the selection committee to review all the school finalists’ applications to select our District winner.

I’m sharing the list of winners with you, but please do not announce or post anything yet. Here’s how the announcements will roll out:

- **Friday, April 30** - I will reach out to each winner and let them know they were selected as their school Teacher of the Year. At this time, I will request a photo of the teacher.
- **Monday, May 3** - I will submit each school Teacher of the Year to Loman Advertising for a special Teacher Appreciation promotion they’re doing. These teacher’s will get their picture to run on a billboard for the day/location I select!
- **Friday, May 7** - Communication team will post a web story with all school winners. There will be a graphic on the district social media with all the winners. My team will also create a graphic for each school page and handle posting it on the school pages. All social media will push out at 4pm.
- **Thursday, May 13** - The District will host an awards ceremony for all school winners, guest (if of guests is TBD) and building admin to attend. This will likely be about 9:30am – 11:00am. Details to come.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SCHOOL</th>
<th>TEACHER OF THE YEAR</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Baker Elementary</td>
<td>Jamie Garmon</td>
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<td>Calo Elementary</td>
<td>LuAnn Bryan</td>
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<td>Choral Elementary</td>
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<td>College Station Elementary</td>
<td>Tamara Castron</td>
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<td>Crystal Hill Elementary</td>
<td>Erica Jo Zardo</td>
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<td>Daisy Bates Elementary</td>
<td>Larissa C. Nelson</td>
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<td>Harris Elementary</td>
<td>Erika Nicola Rainey</td>
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<td>Landmark Elementary</td>
<td>Johnny Richardson</td>
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<td>Lawson Elementary</td>
<td>April Belcher</td>
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<td>Robinson Elementary</td>
<td>Melissa Elizabeth Atkins</td>
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<td>Oak Grove Elementary</td>
<td>Kelly Espinda</td>
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<td>Oakbrooke Elementary</td>
<td>Trisha Middough</td>
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<td>Pine Forest Elementary</td>
<td>Anna Elizabeth Sands</td>
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<td>Sherwood Elementary</td>
<td>Melody Ann Carson</td>
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<td>Sylvan Hills Elementary</td>
<td>Candace Blackwell</td>
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JESSICA DUFF
EXECUTIVE DIR. OF COMMUNICATIONS, PCSSD
Office: 501-234-2038
Mobile: 501-619-0765
jduff@pcssd.org

PCSSD TEACHERS OF THE YEAR ANNOUNCEMENT FACEBOOK POST

PCSSD is excited to announce our 2020-2021 teacher of the year winners for each school! These 26 amazing educators went above and beyond for their students this year. Congratulations! bit.ly/PCSSD_2021TOY
#pcssdproud #equityandexcellence

Rachel Henderson Blackwell and 139 others 116 Comments 35 Shares

PCSSD TEACHERS OF THE YEAR ANNOUNCEMENT EMAIL FACEBOOK POST

Pulaski County Special School District
***

The Pulaski County Special School District has announced Sylvan Hills Middle School teacher, Mrs. Shannon Hum as the District Teacher of the Year.

https://www.pcssd.org/article/16806/87/teacher-of-the-year

12
The Arkansas Teacher of the Year program is part of the National Teacher of the Year program, which recognizes teachers for their teaching and leadership skills. The four state semi-finalists will be announced at an event August 5 at the Governor’s Mansion. During the event, the four state semi-finalists will be announced.

"After such a challenging school year, it is my honor to recognize some of the best teachers around the state," ADE Secretary Johnny Key said. "The 2020-2021 school year was unprecedented; however, Arkansas’ teachers rose to the occasion. Unlike many other states, schools in Arkansas were open throughout the entire school year. It is because of dedicated teachers, like those recognized today, that our students didn’t miss a day of learning. Congratulations to the regional finalists, and thank you for leading by example both in and out of the classroom."

The regional finalists listed below each will receive a certificate and a $1,000 prize provided by the Walton Family Foundation.

**Brigette Biley-Olatunji**  
Math, Grades 9-12  
Arkansas High School  
Texarkana Arkansas School District  
Southwest Arkansas Education Cooperative

**Rozanna Brown**  
English, Math, Science, Social Studies, Grade 4  
Ballman Elementary School  
Fort Smith School District  
Guy Fenter Education Service Cooperative

**Allison Dolan**  
Social Studies, Grades 9-12  
Don Tyson School of Innovation  
Springdale School District  
Northwest Arkansas Education Service Cooperative

**Amy Farmer**  
Math, Grades 9-10  
Academies of West Memphis

The Arkansas Teacher of the Year program is part of the National Teacher of the Year program, which recognizes teachers for their teaching and leadership skills. The four state semi-finalists that will be announced on August 5 will be selected from among the 12 regional finalists. One of the four state semi-finalists will be named the 2022 Arkansas Teacher of the Year this fall and will apply to become the 2022 National Teacher of the Year. Some State Board of Education members may attend the August 5 event at the Governor’s Mansion, but no official business will be conducted.

To learn more about the ATOY program, visit [https://bit.ly/3hJwC0g](https://bit.ly/3hJwC0g).

Follow us on Twitter @ArkansasEd.  
Like us on Facebook at Arkansas Department of Education.  
Follow us on Instagram at arkansas_ed.
Recognizing Excellence in Education

The Division of Elementary and Secondary Education cordially invites you to attend the 2022 Arkansas Teacher of the Year ceremony on Thursday, August 5, 2021, honoring

Shanon Hum  
Sylvan Hills Middle School  
Pulaski County Special School District

Arkansas Governor’s Mansion  
1800 Center Street  
Little Rock, AR 72206

Breakfast desserts, fruit, and coffee will be served at 10:00 a.m.  
Attire is business casual.

The recognition ceremony begins promptly at 11 a.m.

~Please RSVP by July 27, 2021 with your name and number of guests.~
PCSSD TEACHER OF THE YEAR EVENT PHOTOS
WEBSITE ANALYTICS FOR ANNOUNCEMENT

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Pageviews</th>
<th>Unique Pageviews</th>
<th>Avg. Time on Page</th>
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<tr>
<td>Apr 2021</td>
<td>122</td>
<td>122 (100.00%)</td>
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<tr>
<td>% of Total: 0.04%</td>
<td>(314,532)</td>
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<tr>
<td>May 2021</td>
<td>118</td>
<td>118 (100.00%)</td>
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<td>% of Total: 0.05%</td>
<td>(255,773)</td>
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<td>Avg for View: 00</td>
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e/460587?org=pcssd

SOCIAL MEDIA ANALYTICS

Performance for your post

13,847 People reached
1,514 Reactions, Comments & Shares
346 Likes
200 Comments
3 Shares

1,817 Post Clicks
499 Share clicks
100 Like clicks
1,398 Other clicks

NEGATIVE FEEDBACK
0 People
0 Reports
0 Links
0 Videos
0 Images
0 Posts

The Pulaski County Special School District has announced Byron-nibs Wilde as the District Teacher of the Year. The district’s website analytics for the announcement are as follows:

- **Pageviews**: 122 (100.00%) for April 2021, 118 (100.00%) for May 2021.
- **Unique Pageviews**: 122 (100.00%) for April 2021, 118 (100.00%) for May 2021.
- **Avg. Time on Page**: Not available.

The post reached 13,847 people, with 1,514 reactions, comments, and shares. It received 346 likes, 200 comments, and 3 shares. The post generated 1,817 post clicks, with 499 share clicks, 100 like clicks, and 1,398 other clicks. No negative feedback was reported.

In May 2021, the post reach average was 3,467, compared to 1,748 in April 2021.
Nomination Process Feedback Emails

Ray, Jessica <jray8801@pcssd.org>
3/1/2021 8:37 AM
To: Jessica Duff

A couple of ideas about Teacher of the Year applications:
- Teachers could submit an actual lesson plan in their application.
- In the application packet, have examples of what we want submissions/essays to look like.
- Make sure teachers know the benchmarks ahead of time (We discussed this, and I’m sure this will be included. Just want to make sure people know the expectations ahead of time.)

--

Blackwell, Rachel <rblackwell@pcssd.org>
to me ▼

Great job! Thanks to your team for taking this on!

RJ

Jessica Ray
MARKETING COMMUNITY FACILITATOR, PCSSD
Phone: 501-234-2039
Cell: 501-529-0174
jray8801@pcssd.org

Blackwell, Rachel

Jessica Ray
MARKETING COMMUNITY FACILITATOR, PCSSD
Phone: 501-234-2039
Cell: 501-529-0174
jray8801@pcssd.org

BOTTONS, STACY <sbottoms@pcssd.org>
to me ▼

Looks good! Thanks for your work on this.

Stacy Bottoms
Principal, Crystal Hill Elementary School
office 501-234-4155, fax 501-791-8008
sbottoms@pcssd.org

Christian, Masako <mchristian5480@pcssd.org>
2/24/2021 7:13 PM
To: Jessica Duff

I missed how we are to submit suggestions, comments, recommendations, etc. and maybe this was mentioned; however, I think it’s important for us, as a committee, to look at the press releases for the previous ATOY winners (2016-2020) to determine commonalities. One common thread I’ve noticed is community involvement/enrichment in some form or another. Definitely worth considering adding to our list of criteria.

Masako Christian, BA, MSEd
Principal
Daisy Bates Elementary
Phone: (501) 897-2173
Fax: (501) 897-2128

Appiah-McNulty, Yaa <ymcnulty8711@pcssd.org>
to me, Alesia, Charles, DARNELL, Derrick, Jessica, Masako, Matthew, Rachel, STACY, SHAWN, Tracy, YOLAUNDRA ▼

It does look good! Did you want to leave some of the questions without a punctuation?

Yaa

Yaa D. Appiah-McNulty
Principal, Joe T. Robinson Middle School
Phone: 501-234-1234
ymcnulty8711@pcssd.org