



STATE OF CONNECTICUT
STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION



TO: Superintendents of Schools
Superintendents of Unified School Districts
Directors of Public Charter Schools
Executive Directors, Regional Educational Service Centers
Heads of Schools, Endowed and Incorporated Academies

FROM: Charlene M. Russell-Tucker, Commissioner of Education *CRJ*

DATE: April 29, 2024

SUBJECT: 2025 Connecticut Teacher of the Year Program

The Connecticut State Department of Education is now accepting applications for the 2025 Connecticut Teacher of the Year Program. The program is held annually to recognize the teacher who best represents all the dedicated educators throughout the state. The program recognizes the important role of teachers in Connecticut who support students academically, socially and emotionally.

The process begins with each school district nominating their own District Teacher of the Year. The nominated candidates must then register on the Connecticut Teacher of the Year portal at <https://toy.eastconn.org> to be considered for state and national honors. The deadline to register is Thursday, August 1, 2024, at 11:59 p.m. The 2025 Connecticut Teacher of the Year will also represent the state in the National Teacher of the Year Program.

School districts may follow their own nomination process in selecting their District Teacher of the Year. Among the qualities to consider are: a teacher who is an expert in their field who guides students of all backgrounds and abilities to achieve excellence; a teacher who collaborates with colleagues, students, and families to create a school culture of respect and success; a teacher who connects the classroom and key stakeholders to foster a strong community; a teacher who demonstrates leadership and innovation in and outside the classroom, and a teacher who communicates in an engaging and clear way.

The Connecticut Teachers of the Year and their Superintendents will be recognized at the 2025 Connecticut Teacher of the Year Ceremony on Wednesday, November 6, 2024, at the Bushnell.

If you have any questions, please contact Mary Glassman at mary.a.glassman@ct.gov.

CRT:gv

cc: Sinthia Sone Moyano, Deputy Commissioner
Dr. Shuana K. Tucker, Chief Talent Officer

2025 Connecticut Teacher of the Year

The Connecticut Teacher of the Year Program celebrates teaching excellence by recognizing educators who have inspired a love for learning in their students, and who have distinguished themselves in the profession. The program selects one Connecticut Teacher of the Year who represents all dedicated educators throughout the state for the important role they play in supporting students academically, socially and emotionally.

Timeline for Selection of the Connecticut Teacher of the Year

April 2024	Letter from the Commissioner is delivered to Superintendents of Schools to open the 2025 program in collaboration with the Connecticut Teacher of the Year Council
May 2024	Emails sent to recruit members for the 2025 Selection Committee as readers and for Semifinalist interviews and Finalist school visits
Spring/Summer 2024	District Teachers of the Year prepare their online application and/or register for inclusion in the recognition ceremony only
Thursday, August 1, 2024	Application submitted via online portal by 11:59 p.m.
August 5–August 21, 2024	Selection Committee reviews applications
September 12–13, 2024	Semifinalist interviews held at the Legislative Office Building
Week of September 16, 2024	All Semifinalists are notified if selected as a Finalist. Finalists are provided with school visit dates and procedures.
September 26 and 27, 2024	Site visits take place at Finalists' schools
Late October, 2024	National Teacher of the Year application due to CCSSO National Teacher of the Year Office, Washington, D.C.
Early November, 2024	Commissioner announces the 2025 Connecticut Teacher of the Year during a press conference at the teacher's school
November 6, 2024	Recognition event at The Bushnell in Hartford, CT to honor each district Teacher of the Year, Semifinalists, Finalists, and the 2025 Connecticut Teacher of the Year

Application Procedures

The following requirements must be met for your District Teacher of the Year to apply for the 2025 Connecticut Teacher of the Year Program.

The method and materials used to select the District Teacher of the Year may vary by district. The process must be fair and inclusive. Once selected, the District Teacher of the Year must register electronically by Thursday, August 1, 2024, at 11:59 p.m. via the Connecticut Teacher of the Year portal via the following link: <https://toy.eastconn.org>. Registration is required to participate in the Connecticut Teacher of the Year award ceremony and to be considered for the National Teacher of the Year Program.

District Teachers of the Year must submit biographical and professional information in the portal and answer questions in the following areas:

- Educational history and professional learning activities
- Philosophy of teaching
- Professional practice
- Impact on school culture
- Impact on community
- Education issues and trends
- Teacher of the Year message

Eligibility

The criteria for consideration as the Connecticut Teacher of the Year includes the requirement that the teacher works directly with students at least 50 percent of the time and is currently working under a Connecticut teacher certificate with a teaching endorsement or a vocational teaching endorsement. A district can select a candidate that does not meet these requirements, but the candidate cannot be considered for state or national honors.

Selection committee members will review the application materials to assist in identifying the finalists. Selection committee members may include representatives from:

- the CSDE
- the CT Teacher of the Year Council
- educator professional and service organizations
- higher education faculty
- teachers
- administrators

Award Recognition

The 2025 Connecticut Teacher of the Year, semi-finalists and finalists, and the 2025 District Teachers of the Year along with the 2025 Connecticut Paraeducator of the Year will be honored on November 6, 2024, at The Bushnell Auditorium in Hartford, CT. The awardee will also represent teachers in forums, conferences and National Teacher of the Year programs.

Selection Process

District Teachers of the Year are selected using a district developed process which may vary from district to district. Once selected, the District Teacher of the Year is eligible to apply for the Connecticut Teacher of the Year electronically via the online portal. The application includes biographical and professional information, essays ranging from personal teaching philosophy to the issues facing public education and letters of endorsement.

Each application is reviewed by at least five members of a statewide selection committee coordinated by the Connecticut Teacher of the Year Council representing the state's major educational organizations, former state teachers of the year, and community stakeholders. After a review of applications, a total of 12-15 semifinalists are chosen and invited to make a formal presentation on a pre-assigned topic and respond to questions as part of an interview process.

After the interview process, four finalists are selected for scheduled site visits, where selection committee members observe the teacher's classroom, interview colleagues, administrators, and students as well as support staff, parents, and local board of education members. At the conclusion of the site visits, the selection committee meets and selects the Connecticut Teacher of the Year.

If you have questions, please contact Mary Glassman, Connecticut Teacher of the Year Coordinator by e-mail: mary.a.glassman@ct.gov