



*Indiana Teacher of the Year
Program*



Welcome to the Indiana Teacher of the Year Program!

Indiana Teacher of the Year Mission:

The mission of the Indiana Teacher of the Year Program is to develop a community of TOYs who, through the exchange of knowledge, vision, experiences and opportunities grow, promote, and celebrate the teaching profession and educators as leaders.

Indiana Teacher of the Year Goal:

The goal of the Indiana Teacher of the Year Program is to inspire, rejuvenate, and celebrate the teaching profession.

Indiana Teachers of the Year:

The Indiana Teachers of the Year (INTOYs) are the voice of education throughout Indiana and the Nation. The INTOY award is a lifetime role in education, which has many opportunities to celebrate teaching and uplift the teaching profession. INTOYs are comprised of a network of exceptional teachers who are now retired educators, administrators, college professors, and teacher leaders that continually provide support to the education community.

Indiana Teacher of the Year Selection Committee:

The Indiana Teacher of the Year Selection Committee is comprised of INTOYs and yearly selects Indiana's Teacher of the Year through the rigorous application process. The INTOY committee



supports and provides guidance to the selected INTOY during their year of recognition and year of service. This committee also supports and gives feedback to the Indiana Department of Education and CCSSO.

Indiana Teacher of the Year Program

The classroom teacher is the backbone of the American educational system. No one person has a greater impact on the education of a child than does the teacher who creates the primary learning and instructional environment. It is the mission of the Teacher of the Year Program to recognize and honor the contributions of the American classroom teacher. The program is the oldest and most prestigious honors program to focus public attention on excellence in teaching.

The INTOYs have celebrated over fifty years of education excellence in Indiana. The Indiana Teacher of the Year Program is locally sponsored by American Fidelity, CSO architects, Herff Jones, Smart Technologies, Kroger, and many other fine organizations and businesses across the state. In addition, the National Teacher of the Year program is additionally sponsored by Voya Foundation, People to People Ambassador Programs, and is a project of the Council of Chief State School Officers (CCSSO).

Every district may nominate a candidate for Indiana Teacher of the Year. During the year of recognition, the Indiana Teacher of the Year will continue educating in their classrooms, but will be released during various celebrations and conferences across the nation during the school year. The following year is considered the “year of service”, where the Indiana Teacher of the Year is released from classroom duties to focus on their Indiana Teacher of the Year platform and serve as a spokesperson and advocate for the entire teaching profession. The Indiana Teacher of the Year maintains a full schedule of speaking engagements, school visits, and legislative meetings throughout Indiana and the country, before the Indiana State Board of Education, Indiana Department of Education (IDOE), and a variety of schools, business, community, and education groups.

After the Indiana Teacher of the Year is selected, the process does not stop there! Our state candidate will be submitted to the National Teacher of the Year selection committee for nomination into the National Teacher of the Year. We have streamlined our program and selection process to match the National Teacher of the Year requirements. This will help lessen the impact of extra work to be completed by the INTOY for the National Selection Process. The Indiana Teacher of the Year is selected in September/ early October and the National Teacher of the Year portfolio is due at the end of October. The INTOY selection committee and the IDOE will assist the Indiana Teacher of the Year to perfect their portfolio for the National review process with CCSSO.

Finally, the Indiana Teacher of the Year will continue to promote the INTOY Program and be the additional “voice” of the INTOYs. INTOYs continue to participate yearly on the INTOY Selection Committee, celebrate



and promote education in Indiana, work with legislators, higher education institutions, education organizations, and participate in professional development workshops with the IDOE!

The Indiana Teacher of the Year selection committee is excited to learn more about your district candidate and the great accomplishments that are going on in education across our great state of Indiana!

Indiana School District Information

The Indiana Department of Education is committed to continuous improvement of K-12 teacher quality. The Indiana Teacher of the Year program distinguishes outstanding classroom teachers through the selection process that begins in individual schools and culminates in the announcement and celebration of state level award recipients.

For questions or concerns contact:

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Indiana Teacher of the Year Program Coordinator

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Indiana has many school districts that select an Indiana Teacher of the Year candidate annually, but we hope this year all Indiana school districts will decide to participate in the Indiana Teacher of the Year program as an opportunity to recognize excellent teachers! Please consider how your school district's local selection process can become an opportunity to celebrate the many teachers in your district who deserve to be honored for their skill and commitment to education.

Indiana school district's Teacher of the Year celebration process outline

Consistently Celebrate Teachers in your school district - In the process of selecting a district candidate, consider possibilities for identifying and honoring many outstanding teachers in your corporation throughout the year.

- Celebrate the positive qualities that effective teachers possess following observations and/or evaluations
- Consistently identify a teacher of the week or month
- Award certificates for specific qualities such as innovation, collaboration, and communication multiple times throughout the school year
- Recognize teachers selected or considered from each building as part of a year-end event to

celebrate their accomplishments and the impact that they have in their schools and the community.

- Think of other unique and creative recognitions by consistently celebrating the teachers in your school district to uplift the teaching profession and to recognize their accomplishments
- Use social media tools to share teaching celebrations with your community

Suggested process for selecting a Teacher of the Year to represent the school district-

- All nominations should, of course, be void of any type of discrimination.
- **School Building** - School districts can utilize various processes to select a building nominee for their district Teacher of the Year program. The following are appropriate methods.
 - Building committee decision
 - Vote by school staff
 - Principal nomination based on staff and parent input
 - Other creative, but fair, methods are accepted
- **District Candidate**- School districts can utilize various processes to select a district nominee for the Indiana Teacher of the Year program. Due to the rigorous portfolio requirements, we suggest limiting the required portfolio sections for your school building candidates if your district has each building Teacher of the Year complete a portfolio for your district. After the district teacher of the Year is selected, they may complete the other required sections **before the July 10th, 2015**.

The following are appropriate methods for selecting a district Teacher of the Year candidate.

 - Partner with higher education institution to select the district nominee
 - School Board voting
 - Family and Community voting
 - District Teacher of the Year Selection Committee decision

Helpful hints & keys to success

- Start planning early and assign a high priority to the program.
- Include teachers and past district Teachers of the Year in the planning process.
- Use the democratic process in selecting your nominee.
- Select your nominee early to allow ample time for preparation of the portfolio.
- Enlist building administrators to participate in and support the program.
- Make local teacher recognition the motivation for the program, not just selection of a state-level nominee.
- Explore appropriate rewards and sponsorships with local businesses and organizations.
- Recognize more than one teacher as part of the local Teacher of the Year recognition program.
- Proofread your district's portfolio application to ensure the document fulfills the requirements with strong consistent evidence before it is submitted.
- Share the good news about great teachers!



Benefits to nominating an educator to the Indiana Teacher of the Year Program

By submitting a district candidate to Indiana's Teacher of the Year Program, your chosen educator will represent the excellence in teaching within your community and our state. This award is not just a singular personal award, but in fact this is an award for the entire community! We believe it takes a team to raise a child, and without this team effort this process would not be possible. We encourage your community to celebrate the teacher of the Year accomplishment during every step of the Teacher of the Year process.

The Indiana Teacher of the Year will work with the Indiana Department of Education's INTOY Coordinator and the network of Indiana Teachers of the year. Through this collaborative process, the Indiana Teacher of the Year will receive professional development from IDOE staff and be a member of the IDOE's INTOY Committee to plan future teacher celebrations.

With this award, your district will be highlighted across Indiana and the Nation. This award will also be celebrated by Indiana legislators within the Statehouse and by the United States President at the Whitehouse! This is a community accomplishment that will be remembered for a lifetime!

The Indiana Teacher of the Year will also have multiple opportunities to speak with local legislators one on one regarding education issues during their year of recognition, year of service, and beyond. This opportunity gives the Indiana Teachers of the Year a chance to promote education initiatives close to their heart and to promote your district's voice in education.

Please help us recognize and celebrate great teaching in Indiana! Nominate a district representative for the Indiana's Teacher of the Year Program by completing the INTOY application by **July 10, 2015**.



Indiana Teachers of the Year attending the 2015 Teacher of the Year Banquet. Left, Steve Perkins (2014), Molly Seward (2005), Melanie Park (2012), Superintendent of Public Instruction Glenda Ritz, Kathy Nimmer (2015), Louisa LaGrotto (2006), Suzanne Whitton (2013), Stacy McCormack (2011), Mark Weaver (2004), and Daniel Kuznik (2008).



Representatives Shelia Klinker and Representative Randy Truitt presenting the Sagamore of the Wabash award to Kathy Nimmer, Indiana's 2015 Teacher of the Year.



Public Relations for the District Teacher of the Year Program

The celebration of great teachers within our schools directly reflects on school districts and our communities! We strongly encourage celebrating great educators and elevating the teaching profession by utilizing communication tools to reach everyone in your community. Each school district's Teacher of the Year is a representative of their local community.

Help us celebrate your community by utilizing the following celebration methods-

- 🍎 The Indiana Teacher of the Year program is a wonderful opportunity to raise awareness in your community of the importance of quality teachers in our schools and to recognize those outstanding teachers serving the students and families in the local community.
- 🍎 Utilize your district Teacher of the Year during your opening year celebration events to celebrate your staff.
- 🍎 When your corporation is ready to announce your local Teacher of the Year, be sure to contact your media sources. This is an advantageous time to not only honor the teacher you have selected, but also communicate the importance of supporting all of your teachers and your school community as a whole.
- 🍎 Create a page on your districts website to house celebrations for your teachers and to showcase your district Teachers of the Year. Keep a list of all your past district Teachers of the Year on this page as well. We want to keep celebrating these accomplishments year after year.
- 🍎 During **each** phase of the selection process, please notify the media if you have a Teacher of the Year finalist. We want your district to celebrate during each step of the selection process.
- 🍎 Utilize social networking to share the good news about your district candidate!
 - Facebook
 - Twitter
 - District Website
 - Press Releases
 - Local Newspaper
 - Local Media News Stations (T.V and/or Radio)

The Indiana Teacher of the Year Coordinator and the Indiana Department of Education's communication department will be happy to assist you if you have any questions or need help brainstorming ideas to celebrate your district candidate.