



STATE OF ALABAMA
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION



Eric G. Mackey, Ed.D.
State Superintendent of Education

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
May 11, 2021

Contact: Communication
(334) 694-4686
comm@alsde.edu

Alabama
State Board
of Education

Governor Kay Ivey
President

Jackie Zeigler
District I
Vice President

Tracie West
District II

Stephanie Bell
District III

Yvette M. Richardson, Ed.D.
District IV
President Pro Tem

Tonya S. Chestnut, Ed.D.
District V

Cynthia McCarty, Ph.D.
District VI

Belinda McRae
District VII

Wayne Reynolds, Ed.D.
District VIII

Eric G. Mackey, Ed.D.
Secretary and
Executive Officer

**ALABAMA TEACHER OF THE YEAR
16 FINALISTS OFFICALLY ANNOUNCED TODAY**

“Top Educators Committed to Teaching Excellence and Student Achievement!”

Montgomery, Ala. – Highly skilled educators are essential to our state’s continued success. They inspire achievement, while also preparing our future generations of top professionals.

These 16 outstanding educators, selected as finalists for the Alabama 2021- 2022 Teacher of the Year, personify these qualities and exemplify the teaching profession’s best.

Each excels in the classroom and inspires students through mentorship and by utilizing innovative classroom instruction. This year’s 16 state finalists have emerged from a group of over 138 highly skilled educators who submitted official applications. The Alabama Teacher of the Year Program is one of our state’s oldest and most esteemed awards programs.

Alabama State Department of Education - 2021-2022 District Teachers of the Year

Julie Matranga Neidhardt

Mobile County School System - Hutchens Elementary School
District I Elementary Teacher of the Year

Krista N. Marcum

Gulf Shores City School System - Gulf Shores High School
District I Secondary Teacher of the Year

Sherlita Gilchrist

Phenix City School System – Phenix City Virtual Learning Academy
District II Elementary Teacher of the Year

Kimberly Johnson

Auburn City School System – Auburn Junior High School
District II Secondary Teacher of the Year

Allison C. Phelps

Homewood City School System – Shades Cahaba Elementary School
District III Elementary Teacher of the Year

Pamela McClendon

Hoover City School System – Riverchase Career Connection Center
District III Secondary Teacher of the Year

–more–

ALABAMA'S 16 TEACHER OF THE YEAR FINALISTS OFFICALLY ANNOUNCED TODAY

Sabrina Wright

*Birmingham City School System – Sun Valley Elementary School
District IV Elementary Teacher of the Year*

Leah Hughes

*Tuscaloosa County School System – Hillcrest High School
District IV Secondary Teacher of the Year*

Catherine B. Jackson

*Pike County School System – Banks School
District V Elementary Teacher of the Year*

Lilian U. Zekeri

*Macon County School System – Tuskegee Institute Middle School
District V Secondary Teacher of the Year*

Megan Kreitlein

*Pell City School System – Eden Elementary School
District VI Elementary Teacher of the Year*

Mashell Wehn

*Arab City School System – Arab High School
District VI Secondary Teacher of the Year*

Rachel Graves

*Florence City School System – Weeden Elementary School
District VII Elementary Teacher of the Year*

Jeff Schrupp

*Trussville City School System – Hewitt-Trussville High School
District VII Secondary Teacher of the Year*

Candilyn Renee Holt

*Limestone County School System – Elkmont School
District VIII Elementary Teacher of the Year*

Kierstan Bell

*Huntsville City School System – Hampton Cove Middle School
District VIII Secondary Teacher of the Year*

This pool of outstanding educators will soon be narrowed down to the final Top Four. The 2021-2022 Alabama Teacher of the Year will be officially announced by the Alabama State Board of Education and the Alabama State Department of Education in August.

Alabama's Teacher of the Year spends the majority of the school year serving as a full-time ambassador for education and the teaching profession, as well as presenting workshops to various groups. Alabama's representative is a candidate for National Teacher of the Year.

Reflecting on his experiences as the most recent finalist, and Alabama's current Teacher of the Year, Dr. Andrew Jackson said, "Congratulations to these highly skilled educators, who have been selected to represent their local school systems and our regional education districts. Each of these *Alabama Teacher of the Year 16 Finalists* truly demonstrate outstanding classroom leadership and are elevating our profession to new levels of success."

###