



# ARKANSAS DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

*Dr. Tom W. Kimbrell, Commissioner*

**November 18, 2013**

CONTACT: Kimberly Friedman  
PHONE: (501) 683-4788  
[kimberly.friedman@arkansas.gov](mailto:kimberly.friedman@arkansas.gov)

## **Palestine Wheatley Teacher Named 2014 Arkansas Teacher of the Year**

**LITTLE ROCK** – Jonathan Crossley, an English language arts teacher at Palestine Wheatley High School in St. Francis County, was named the 2014 Arkansas Teacher of the Year today at a surprise notification in Palestine.

Gov. Mike Beebe made the announcement during a school assembly.

"The Teacher of the Year selection committee had a tough decision," Arkansas Department of Education Commissioner Dr. Tom Kimbrell said. "Mr. Crossley stood out because of his impressive student achievement scores and innovative, student-led teaching approach."

In addition to teaching 11th- and 12th-grade English and oral communication, as well as serving as the drama director, Crossley is the literacy coach for grades six through 12. He has been a teacher for four years and also served as the girls basketball coach for grades seven through 12 from 2010 to 2013.

Crossley graduated magna cum laude in 2010 with a Bachelor of Arts degree from the University of South Carolina at Columbia. He is currently working on a Master of Education degree from Arkansas Tech University at Russellville, where he has been named a Walton Leader Scholar and a Lead 21 Scholar.

He also is a member of the College Initiative, Teach for America Community for Struggling Readers and Teach for America Community of English Language Arts. Crossley is a lead teacher for Teacher Publisher, an online resource community.

Crossley initially received a \$1,000 award from the Walton Family Foundation, a long-time supporter of the award, when he was named one of the 16 regional finalists. The foundation presented him with an additional \$14,000 award at today's ceremony.

In addition, SMART Technologies of Canada awarded Crossley the 2014 Teaching Excellence Award, which includes more than \$7,200 in technology products and

services for the classroom. This award also includes a full day of group technology training at the 2014 U.S. National Teacher of the Year Conference, which is scheduled for January 2014.

The ATOY program is part of the National Teacher of the Year program, which began in 1952. The program honors teachers for their excellence in teaching.

Arkansas law provides for the Arkansas Teacher of the Year to take a year of paid administrative leave for professional development purposes and to serve in an advisory position as a non-voting member of the Arkansas State Board of Education.

For more information about the program, go to <http://www.arkansased.org/divisions/communications/teacher-of-the-year>.

# ArkansasEd.org

Arkansas Department of Education | Four Capitol Mall | Little Rock, AR 72201

To ensure that you continue receiving our emails, please add us to your address book or safe list.

[manage](#) your preferences | [opt out](#) using TrueRemove®.

Got this as a forward? [Sign up](#) to receive our future emails.

