



# Arkansas Department of Education

Johnny Key, Commissioner

*Transforming Arkansas to lead the nation in student-focused education*

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CONTACT: Kimberly Friedman

PHONE: (501) 683-4788

[kimberly.friedman@arkansas.gov](mailto:kimberly.friedman@arkansas.gov)

## **14 Selected as 2017 Arkansas Teacher of the Year Regional Finalists**

**LITTLE ROCK** — Fourteen teachers from around the state have been named 2017 Arkansas Teacher of the Year Regional Finalists.

Gov. Asa Hutchinson and Arkansas Department of Education Commissioner Johnny Key will recognize the regional finalists at 1:30 p.m. Sept. 28 in the Old Supreme Court room at the Capitol. During the ceremony, the four state semi-finalists will be announced.

“Effective, dynamic teachers are the foundation of a quality education,” Key said. “As we work to transform Arkansas to lead the nation in student-focused education, we must recognize teachers who have demonstrated their commitment to educational excellence and celebrate their accomplishments. I am extremely proud of these finalists and for the example they set for all current and future educators.”

The 14 regional finalists are as follows.

### **Jennifer Andrews**

4th Grade Mathematics and Science  
Walnut Ridge Elementary School  
Lawrence County School District  
Northeast Arkansas Education Service Cooperative

### **Susan Bucher**

Kindergarten-4th Grade Music  
McRae Elementary School  
Searcy School District  
Wilbur D. Mills Education Service Cooperative

### **Heather Carr**

Kindergarten-4th Grade Visual Art  
College Hill Elementary

Texarkana School District  
Southwest Arkansas Education Cooperative

**Anita Cegers-Coleman**

5th-7th Grade Keyboarding and Business Education  
Ruth Doyle Middle School  
Conway School District  
Arch Ford Education Service Cooperative

**Courtney Cochran**

10th-12th Grade Spanish  
Van Buren High School  
Van Buren School District  
Guy Fenter Education Service Cooperative

**Julia Crane**

Kindergarten-5th Grade English as a Second Language  
Monitor Elementary School  
Springdale School District  
Northwest Arkansas Education Service Cooperative

**Adriane Duke**

8th-9th Grade Mathematics  
Annie Camp Junior High  
Jonesboro School District  
Crowley's Ridge Educational Service Cooperative

**Amy Griffin**

Pre-Kindergarten, All Subjects  
Park Avenue Elementary School  
Stuttgart School District  
Arkansas River Education Service Cooperative

**Emily Hemme**

9th-12th Grade Social Studies  
Cotter High School  
Cotter School District  
Ozarks Unlimited Resource Educational Service Cooperative

**Brian Leonard**

11th-12th Grade AP Statistics and AP Calculus  
Lake Hamilton High School  
Lake Hamilton School District  
Dawson Education Cooperative

**Emma Mateo**

Kindergarten-5th Grade Literacy and Mathematics  
Otter Creek Elementary School

Little Rock School District  
Pulaski County

**Cherilyn Minnis**

12th Grade English  
Academies of West Memphis  
West Memphis School District  
Great Rivers Education Service Cooperative

**Denise Phillips**

1st Grade, All Subjects  
East Side Elementary School  
Magnolia School District  
South Central Service Cooperative

**Charre Todd**

7th-8th Grade Science and STEM  
Crossett Middle School  
Crossett School District  
Southeast Arkansas Education Service Cooperative

The Arkansas Teacher of the Year program, which is part of the National Teacher of the Year program, recognizes teachers who demonstrate strong teaching and leadership skills. This year's regional finalists will receive a \$1,000 award, with the Arkansas Teacher of the Year receiving an additional \$14,000. The awards are made possible by a grant provided by the Walton Family Foundation, a long-time supporter of the program.

After the four state semi-finalists are announced at the ceremony Sept. 28, the selection committee will conduct site visits. During the visits, the committee will observe the teacher in the classroom and interview the teacher and school administrators. A surprise notification announcing the 2017 Arkansas Teacher of the Year will be held later this fall.

In addition to the recognition ceremony Sept. 28, a reception for the regional finalists will be held in Room 207 at the Capitol immediately following the ceremony. Several State Board of Education members plan to attend the events, but no official business will be conducted.

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

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