



ARKANSAS DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

Dr. Tom W. Kimbrell, Commissioner

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Arkansas's Teacher of the Year Finalists Announced

LITTLE ROCK—Each year, Arkansas recognizes a Teacher of the Year. And today, four teachers learned they are state finalists for the coveted state title.

"These extraordinary state finalists are a testament to teachers across our state who are changing lives every day through their dedication, talent and service to our students," Commissioner of Education Dr. Tom Kimbrell said. "We want to congratulate these individuals, and we look forward to recognizing their success and celebrating their work."

The finalists are:

- Marquita Carty, a mathematics teacher at Northside High School in the Fort Smith School District
- Alicia Francis, an English teacher at Conway Junior High School in the Conway School District
- Linda Odle, a fifth-grade teacher at JB Hunt Elementary School in the Springdale School District
- Alexia Weimer, a kindergarten teacher at Avondale Elementary School in the Marion School District

Teachers are selected based on their teaching skills, as well as their dedication to students, parents and colleagues; demonstrated school and community leadership; ability to inspire students of all backgrounds and their commitment to their profession.

Other regional finalists named today are Alice Cooper of Jasper, Asha Foster of West Memphis, Angela Goodding of Monticello, Ashlee Hayes of Stuttgart, Kara Lenfestey of Batesville, Barbara McNeal of Walnut Ridge, Peggy Mills of Texarkana, Debra Nipper of Magnolia, Marybeth Norcross of North Little Rock, Lisa Pemberton of Benton, Cheryl Simmons of Searcy and Katrina Williamson of Ashdown.

"We want to thank and commend these exemplary educators for their accomplishments and for their dedication to our students," Program Coordinator Gloria Stephens said. "We applaud them and look forward to paying tribute to them in November."

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