

NEWS RELEASE

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20 Gwinnett educators take step closer to Gwinnett Teacher of the Year title

The list of **Gwinnett County Public Schools (GCPS)** teachers vying for the Teacher of the Year (TOTY) county title has been narrowed to 20 semifinalists. The 2009 Gwinnett County Teacher of the Year will be announced at a banquet on Thursday, November 6.

This year's semifinalists, selected from a field of 112 local school honorees, are:

Lorraine Mack of Berkeley Lake Elementary, 4th Grade Teacher
Jodi Sanchez of Bethesda Elementary, Science Specials Teacher (Grades K-5)
LeAnn B. Hedrick of Brookwood High, Gifted Language Arts Teacher (Grade 9)
Ken Leach of Collins Hill High, Biology & Oceanography Teacher (Grades 9-12)
Jamie Nobles of Corley Elementary, Media Specialist (Grades K-5)
Frank Folds of Alton C. Crews Middle, Band Teacher (Grades 6-8)
Monica Grace of Five Forks Middle, Science Teacher (Grade 6)
Kimberly Sharp of Ivy Creek Elementary, Media Specialist (Grades K-5)
Elena Diaz of Lovin Elementary, Literacy Coach (Grades K-5)
Sue Tavernier of Mulberry Elementary, Reading Specialist (Grades K-5)
Mike Reilly of North Gwinnett High, Computer Science Teacher (Grades 9-12)
J. Dawn Smith of Oakland Meadow School, Special Education
(Severe Emotional & Behavioral Disorder - Grade 5)
Todd Shultz of Phoenix High, Social Studies Teacher (Grades 9-12)
Maya M. Kirk of Louise Radloff Middle, Language Arts Teacher (Grade 7)
Jennifer Herrod of Rock Springs Elementary, 5th Grade Teacher
Vicki Evans King of Rockbridge Elementary, Reading Specialist (Grades K-5)
Alan Hochbaum of Susan Stripling Elementary, Gifted Education Teacher
(Grades K-5)
Beverly Klein of K.E. Taylor Elementary, Science Specialist (Grades K-5)
Aimee Burgamy of Trickum Middle, Art Teacher (Grades 6-8)
Monica Ball of Margaret Winn Holt Elementary, Special Education Teacher
(Interrelated Resource - Grades 3-5)

A selection committee - made up of teachers, central office personnel, and administrators - will now consider the semifinalists' applications and answers to a set of additional questions in order to determine six finalists. Committee members will then make site visits to the classrooms of the six finalists and conduct thorough interviews with each educator.

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During the classroom visit, the committee members will look for original teaching methods, study the teacher's teaching philosophy, and review any special class projects the teacher has initiated. They also will review each teacher's educational degrees and civic activities.

Based on their findings, committee members will select an elementary, middle, and a high school Teacher of the Year from the field of six finalists. One of the three "level winners" will be named Gwinnett's 2009 Teacher of the Year and will be eligible to compete for the state TOTY title.

The names of the six TOTY finalists will be announced the week of October 13.