**2017 WYOMING TEACHER OF THE YEAR PROGRAM GUIDELINES**

The Wyoming Teacher of the Year Program recognizes the contributions of the classroom teacher. The nominee must be a **Wyoming certified** **classroom teacher** in a state-approved or accredited school, kindergarten through grade twelve, who plans to continue an active teaching career.

The teacher must:

* Inspire students of all backgrounds and abilities to learn.
* Have the respect and admiration of students, parents, and colleagues.
* Play an active and useful role in the community as well as in the school.
* Be poised, articulate, and have the energy to withstand a busy schedule as teacher of the year.
* Demonstrate high levels of academic achievement for their students.

While serving as Wyoming Teacher of the Year, the teacher must maintain his/her current employment position. If the Wyoming Teacher of the Year is selected as the National Teacher of the Year, they will be released from classroom responsibilities during the year of national recognition.

**DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

Being named Wyoming Teacher of the Year comes with significant responsibility--representing the teaching profession in Wyoming.

The Teacher of the Year acts as:

* A liaison between the teaching community, Wyoming Legislature, Wyoming Department of Education, districts and communities.
* An education ambassador to businesses, parents, service organizations, and media.
* A resource on the state of the profession; to be available for workshops and conferences around the state.
* An education leader involved in teacher forums and education reform.

The Wyoming Teacher of the Year is also expected to attend national events such as International Space Camp, National Teacher of the Year Ceremony, and the National Teachers Forum. In addition, they will attend education meetings, conferences and workshops around the state.

Since the Wyoming Teacher of the Year will be requested to attend many events and make speeches during the year, they must be poised, articulate, and have the energy to withstand a busy schedule.

Wyoming’s Teacher of the Year automatically becomes the nominee for the **National Teacher of the Year Program**, which is presented by Voya, a project of the Council of Chief State School Officers.

**SELECTION PROCESS**

**Phase 1: Nomination Process**

Each District Teacher of the Year Committee will determine the nomination process to implement in its district. The nomination process may vary from district to district. Below are several methods to nominate teachers:

1. Have each building nominate a representative for District Teacher of the Year.
2. In large districts, have a representative from the elementary, middle, and high school levels.
3. The following representatives may participate in nominations:
	* + Local school building principal
		+ District superintendent
		+ Local school building faculty
		+ Teacher professional organization
		+ General public
		+ Civic organizations
		+ Students/student organizations
		+ Colleagues
4. Provide a nomination form
	* Include the nominee's name, school, grade and subject taught.
	* Explain why you feel the educator should be the Teacher of the Year.
	* Provide a timeline that will meet necessary deadlines.
5. Recognize all nominees.

**Phase 2: Application**

Each district will determine the applicant to represent its Teacher of the Year. The district committee must complete the District Committee Submission Form and indicate the process used to determine the selection.

District Teacher of the Year Selection Committee may include:

* School district teachers
* School district administrators
* School district board members
* Business leaders
* Parents
* Members of Wyoming legislature who are residents within the school district.

\*To ensure the integrity of this program, anyone related to the candidate should not participate in the selection process.

**Phase 3:** **Submission of Application from District to the Wyoming Department of Education (WDE)**

The deadline for submission of completed District Teacher of the year packets, with signatures and all necessary documents, must be postmarked no later than Friday, May 6, 2016.

Late submissions will be disqualified.

Each participating District Teacher of the Year Committee will submit to the State Teacher of the Year Program Coordinator:

1. An original 2017 Wyoming Teacher of the Year application.
2. Please provide all information requested in the application.
3. Original signatures of:
	* + Candidate,
		+ Candidate’s principal, and
		+ Candidate’s district superintendent.
4. Section I must be submitted on the form provided.
5. Sections II-VII may be produced using your word processing system, adhere to the format established in the application, number the sections and the pages. The submitted application must be a clean and clear copy suitable for duplication.
6. Application should be formatted no less than 10 point font, double-spaced with ½ inch margins.
7. Completed District Committee Submission Form must be included.
8. Please do not use folders, notebooks, plastic page protectors, scrapbooks or report covers.
9. Please do not include examples, lesson plans, press clippings, art work or embellishments to the application. Entries with additional materials will be automatically disqualified.

Awards Provided Through the WDE:

A certificate for the District Teacher of the Year and an award are sent to the district superintendent to present to the District Teacher of the Year.

A monetary award of $1,000 is sent to the District Teacher of the Year.

An additional monetary award of $5,000.00 will be sent to the 2017 Wyoming Teacher of the Year.

Districts Will Be Expected To Provide:

A press release for District’s Teacher of the Year should be completed by the district, and forwarded to local media by the district superintendent’s office. Please tailor the release to match the profile of the District’s Teacher of the Year. If a surprise element is to be maintained, districts should hold the press release until after the announcement of the District Teacher of the Year.

Please note, prior to fall of the school year, WDE may need to contact District Teachers of the Year if they move forward in the process or for missing items for payment.

**Phase 4:** **Wyoming Teacher of the Year Selection Process**

A Selection Committee, comprised of WDE staff, will review applications and determine which District Teachers of the Year will move on to the Wyoming Teacher of the Year finalist review. To be completed by July 5, 2016.

**Finalist Selection**

A Finalists Selection Committee will review the highest scoring Teacher of the Year applicants and determine which candidates will move to the interview phase. To be completed by August 15, 2016.

**Observation and Interview**

The Wyoming Teacher of the Year finalists will be observed and interviewed in person. Only those who are selected as a finalist will be notified of participation in the interview process.

**Finalist Announcement**

The 2017 Wyoming Teacher of the Year will be announced in the fall of 2016.

The District Teacher of the Year application must be postmarked by

**Friday, May 6, 2016.**

Please mail original application and signature to:

Wyoming Department of Education

Attn: Tracy Stibitz

2300 Capitol Avenue

Hathaway Building, 2nd Floor

Cheyenne, WY 82002-2060

For questions regarding the process, please contact Tracy Stibitz at

tracy.stibitz@wyo.gov or 307-777-8979.

**Instructions and the application for the 2017 Wyoming Teacher of the Year Program**

**may be found on the Wyoming Department of Education website:**

[**http://edu.wyoming.gov/educators/teachers/toy/**](http://edu.wyoming.gov/educators/teachers/toy/)**.**