



# NEWS RELEASE

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## **The search begins for Gwinnett's 2012 Teacher of the Year**

Gwinnett County Public Schools (GCPS) has taken its first step in the system's official search for its 2012 Teacher of the Year (TOTY) announcing the names of the 129 educators selected as local school honorees. Named by their colleagues as TOTY for their local schools, these dedicated educators are known for challenging and motivating their students to reach their full learning potential. The school system annually honors the commitment and devotion of its 11,000 teachers by celebrating them during the annual Teacher of the Year recognition process that takes place each fall.

"Teachers have a tremendous job with extremely high expectations and this is our way of recognizing their efforts and highlighting the excellent work that occurs within our classrooms regularly," says **Nikki Mouton**, the school district's executive director of staff development. "Especially in times when budgets are dwindling, it becomes even more critical to recognize those educators who are making great strides despite the increased challenges."

These local school honorees will move into the next phase of the TOTY process as they are considered for the systemwide honor as the 2012 Gwinnett County Teacher of the Year. From this group of more than 100 teachers, the search will be narrowed down to 25 semifinalists who will be chosen later this month. From that group, six finalists will be chosen in mid-October. The annual Teacher of the Year banquet and the announcement of this year's top teacher in Gwinnett County will be held on Thursday, November 3, 2011.

Here's an overview of the selection process:

**Step 1** -- All teachers at each participating Gwinnett school nominate and vote for their local school Teacher of the Year.

**Step 2** -- The applications for all 129 school-level Teachers of the Year are screened and 25 semifinalists for the county-level are selected.

**Step 3** -- The 25 semifinalists' applications are scored to determine the six finalists.

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not to discriminate on the basis of race, color, sex,  
religion, national origin, age, or disability in any  
employment practice, educational program, or  
any other program, activity, or service.

2010 Winner of



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**Step 4 --** A selection committee-- made up of teachers, central office personnel, and administrators-- visits the classrooms of the six finalists and conducts thorough interviews with each educator. The committee looks for original teaching methods, studies the educator's teaching philosophy, considers the influence the teacher has had on the teaching practices of his/her colleagues, and reviews any special class projects the teacher has initiated.

**Step 5 --** From the six finalists, the committee will select a Teacher of the Year for each level-- elementary, middle, and high. One of the level winners will be recognized as GCPS' 2012 Teacher of the Year.

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### 2011-12 Local School Teachers of the Year

<u>School</u>	<u>Name</u>	<u>Grade/Subject</u>
Alcova Elementary	Judy Tarver	Special Education Teacher - Interrelated Resource (Grades K-5)
Alford Elementary	Stephanie Engwall	3rd Grade Teacher
Anderson-Livsey Elementary	Cecilia Anderson	2nd Grade Teacher
Annistown Elementary	Deirdre Gambrell	Science Specialist (Grades K-5)
Arcado Elementary	Dr. Vickie Nash	Literacy Coach (Grades K-5)
Archer High	Pam S. Autrey	Technical Education Teacher (Grades 9-12)
Bay Creek Middle	Carter R. Still	Chorus Teacher (Grades 6-8)
Beaver Ridge Elementary	Nancy Luker	Physical Education Teacher (Grades K-5)
Benefield Elementary	Urike Brown	5th Grade Teacher
Berkeley Lake Elementary	Debbie Richardson	1st Grade Teacher
Berkmar High	Danny Greer	Physics Teacher (Grades 10-11)
Berkmar Middle	Stephanie Bridges	Social Studies Teacher (Grade 8)
Bethesda Elementary	Michael Stanton	4th Grade Teacher
Britt Elementary	Michelle Martinez	4th Grade Teacher
Brookwood Elementary	Sarah Mallow	Reading Specialist (Grades K-5)

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<b>School</b>	<b>Name</b>	<b>Grade/Subject</b>
Brookwood High	Cindy Bazzell	Marketing, Business, and Computer Science Teacher (Grades 9-12)
Buice School	Karen Willingham	Media Specialist
Burnette Elementary	Lisa Moore	1st Grade Teacher
Camp Creek Elementary	Carol Frihart	2nd Grade Teacher
Cedar Hill Elementary	Crystal Willis	Reading and Writing Specialist (Grade 4)
Centerville Elementary	Emily Nelson	Reading Specialist (Grades K-5)
Central Gwinnett High	Lori Wood	Special Education Teacher - Social Studies (Grades 9-12)
Chattahoochee Elementary	Stefani Wood	Special Education Teacher – Autism (Grades 3-5)
Chesney Elementary	Kristen Easterling	5th Grade Teacher
Collins Hill High	Tara Termes	Biology and Forensic Science Teacher (Grades 9-12)
Cooper Elementary	Kelly Fisher	1st Grade Teacher
Corley Elementary	Karyn Graham	1st Grade Teacher
Couch Middle	Cyndi Cioffi	Gifted Language Arts and Social Studies Teacher (Grade 7)
Craig Elementary	Elizabeth “Liz” Hiers	Art Specialist (Grades K-5)
Creekland Middle	Jennifer B. Jankauskas	Language Arts Teacher (Grade 8)
Crews Middle	Charlie Hollingshead	Reading and Writing Specialist (Grades 6-8)
Dacula Elementary	Lisa M. Moore	Reading Specialist and Literacy Coach (Grades K-5)
Dacula High	Christy Belbey	French Teacher (Grades 9-12)
Dacula Middle	Keri Beth Jones	Computer Science and Technology Teacher (Grades 6-8)

<b>School</b>	<b>Name</b>	<b>Grade/Subject</b>
Duluth High	Victoria Dodd	Language Arts Teacher (Grade 12)
Duluth Middle	Neldra Allen	Mathematics Teacher (Grade 8)
Duncan Creek Elementary	Debra Caton	5th Grade Teacher
Dyer Elementary	Lori Rowberry	Kindergarten Teacher
Ferguson Elementary	Sandra Varajic	1st Grade Teacher
Five Forks Middle	Justin Gorun	Special Education Teacher – Severe and Profound Intellectual Disabilities (Grades 6-8)
Fort Daniel Elementary	Betty Roepe	1st Grade Teacher
Freeman’s Mill Elementary	Lois Sebastian	5th Grade Teacher
GIVE Center East	Cindy Long	Language Arts Teacher (Grades 6-8)
GIVE Center West	April Greene	Mathematics Teacher (Grades 9-11)
Grace Snell Middle	Andrew Cox	Physical Science Teacher (Grade 8)
Grayson Elementary	Lisa Frost	4th Grade Teacher
Grayson High	Melissa Thomas	Mathematics Teacher (Grades 9-12)
Gwin Oaks Elementary	Linda Layson	5th Grade Teacher
Gwinnett County Online Campus	Christian Gray	Science Teacher (Grades 9-12)
Gwinnett School of Mathematics, Science, and Technology	Jeff Burmester	Physics Teacher (Grades 11-12)
Harbins Elementary	Michele Devlin	5th Grade Teacher
Harmony Elementary	Derrick Hutchins	5th Grade Teacher
Harris Elementary	Carrie Rice	4th Grade Teacher
Head Elementary	Liz Greene	4th Grade Teacher
Hopkins Elementary	Jessie Kelly	Science Specialist (Grades K-5)
Hull Middle	Dora McKissock	Special Education Teacher – Autism (Grades 7-8)
Ivy Creek Elementary	Kimberly Hardy	1st Grade Teacher
Jackson Elementary	Amy Norris	2nd Grade Teacher
Jenkins Elementary	Nicole Kidwell	5th Grade Teacher
Jones Middle	Susan Oates	Social Studies Teacher (Grade 7)
Kanoheda Elementary	Roslyn Acosta	Art Specialist (Grades K-5)

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<b>School</b>	<b>Name</b>	<b>Grade/Subject</b>
Knight Elementary	Altonise Henfield	Literacy Coach (Grades K-5)
Lanier High	Tamaiko Chappell	Mathematics Teacher (Grades 10-12)
Lanier Middle	Janelle Wilson	Science Teacher (Grade 6)
Lawrenceville Elementary	Brenda M. Jones	Literacy Coach (Grades K-5)
Level Creek Elementary	Theresa Wiist	Special Education Teacher – Autism (Grades 3-5)
Lilburn Elementary	Tifferney Dodd	5th Grade Teacher
Lilburn Middle	Andrew “Drew” Schoen	Social Studies Teacher (Grade 8)
Lovin Elementary	Nancy Streicher	3rd Grade Teacher
Magill Elementary	Judy Peerless	3rd Grade Teacher
Mason Elementary	Jeanne Kosmala	Special Education Teacher - Specific Learning Disabilities (Grade 5)
Maxwell High School of Technology	Scott Wilson	Law and Justice Teacher (Grades 11-12)
McConnell Middle	Lou Reynolds	Mathematics Teacher (Grade 8)
McKendree Elementary	Jason Garner	Science Specialist (Grades K-5)
Meadowcreek Elementary	Julie Elliott	English to Speakers of Other Languages Teacher (Grade 5)
Meadowcreek High	Dr. Karen Dickens	College Prep, Honors, and AP Chemistry Teacher (Grades 10-12)
Mill Creek High	Aundrea Muth	College Prep and AP Government (Grade 12)
Minor Elementary	Shawna Voigt	Kindergarten Teacher
Monarch School	Logan Flint	Special Education Teacher – Autism (ADAPT)
Mountain Park Elementary	Kristen Williams	Kindergarten Teacher
Mountain View High	Debbie White	Biology and Chemistry Teacher (Grades 9-12)

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<b>School</b>	<b>Name</b>	<b>Grade/Subject</b>
Mulberry Elementary	Brittany Palazzo	3rd Grade Teacher
Nesbit Elementary	Lauren C. Evans	Special Education Teacher - Profound Intellectual Disabilities (Grades K-5)
Norcross Elementary	Venice Hinds	1st Grade Teacher
Norcross High	Robin Watson	Mathematics Teacher (Grades 9-12)
North Gwinnett High	James B. Stewart	Media Specialist (Grades 9-12)
North Gwinnett Middle	Sarah Black	Orchestra Teacher (Grades 6-8)
Norton Elementary	Kathy Gosman	Kindergarten Teacher
Oakland Meadow School	Sharon Vargo	Special Education Teacher - Emotional and Behavioral Disorders (Grades 3-5)
Osborne Middle	Peggy Engelman	Special Education Teacher - Interrelated Resource – Language Arts (Grade 6)
Parkview High	Carl Zimmerman	Honors, Gifted, and AP U.S. History Teacher (Grades 9-12)
Parsons Elementary	Dr. Meaghan Wagar	Science Specialist (Grades K-5)
Partee Elementary	Lisa Noel	1st Grade Teacher
Patrick Elementary	Allison Askew	5th Grade Teacher
Peachtree Elementary	Cathy C. Kreimer	5th Grade Teacher
Peachtree Ridge High	Lindsey Cafarella	World History Teacher (Grade 10)
Pharr Elementary	Jennifer Dunn	5th Grade Teacher
Phoenix High	Pasha Souvorin	Digital Media Teacher (Grades 9-12)
Pinckneyville Middle	Robin Faulk	Social Studies Teacher (Grade 6)
Puckett's Mill Elementary	Angie Hoffman	5th Grade Teacher
Radloff Middle	Andrew Whatley	Social Studies Teacher (Grade 7)

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<b>School</b>	<b>Name</b>	<b>Grade/Subject</b>
Richards Middle	Paula Richards-Bell	Language Arts Teacher (Grade 8)
Riverside Elementary	Julie Hipple	Special Education Teacher – Severe and Profound Intellectual Disabilities (Grades K-5)
Roberts Elementary	Susan M. Shumeyko	Kindergarten Teacher
Rock Springs Elementary	Christa U. Webb	4th Grade Teacher
Rockbridge Elementary	Mary Butler	Special Education Teacher – Moderate Autism (Grades K-2)
Rosebud Elementary	Dr. Ashlei Haskell	Kindergarten Teacher
Shiloh Elementary	Candace Swords	1st Grade Teacher
Shiloh High	Kate Hoppenrath	Media Specialist (Grades 9-12)
Shiloh Middle	Traci Head	Special Education Teacher - Specific Learning Disabilities (Grade 8)
Simonton Elementary	Humphrey Fraser	Physical Education Teacher (Grades K-5)
Simpson Elementary	Kathy Russo	Gifted Education, Mathematics Acceleration, and Enrichment Teacher (Grade 5)
Snellville Middle	Michael A. Kelly	Life Science Teacher (Grade 7)
South Gwinnett High	Erica Poole	Spanish Teacher (Grades 9-12)
Starling Elementary	Tisha Williamson	1st Grade Teacher
Stripling Elementary	Kim Renfroe	Special Education Teacher - Moderate Intellectual Disabilities (Grades K-2)
Sugar Hill Elementary	Tammy Smith	Media Specialist (Grades K-5)
Summerour Middle	Rebecca Searles	Special Education Teacher - Interrelated Resource (Grade 7)

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<b>School</b>	<b>Name</b>	<b>Grade/Subject</b>
Suwanee Elementary	Melissa Dienhart	1st Grade Teacher
Sweetwater Middle	Patrick Shannon	Language Arts Teacher (Grade 7)
Sycamore Elementary	Jill Moore	4th Grade Teacher
Taylor Elementary	Suzanne Boyd	Special Education Teacher - Mild Autism (Grades K-3)
Trickum Middle	Aimee Darwazeh	Science Teacher (Grade 6)
Trip Elementary	Debbie Partrick	Science Specialist (Grades K-5)
Twin Rivers Middle	Peg Alton	Mathematics Teacher (Grade 8)
Walnut Grove Elementary	Jaime Lamb	5th Grade Teacher
White Oak Elementary	Nick Boyers	4th Grade Teacher
Winn Holt Elementary	Tracey Rivers	Science Specialist (Grades 3-5)
Woodward Mill Elementary	Jeriann Garris	3rd Grade Teacher