



Doc H's Blog

**Kentucky Education Commissioner
Terry Holliday**



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Recognizing Teachers

Once again this week, the Ashland Teacher of the Year (TOY) program brought together some of Kentucky's best educators for recognition in Frankfort. Our annual tribute to outstanding teachers in Kentucky is the highlight of the year for me. Our Kentucky teachers are by far the most professional and dedicated teachers in the nation, and it is my honor to work with them to help every child succeed.

The TOY program recognizes 24 outstanding teachers from across Kentucky. They are among hundreds of teachers nominated by their peers, students, parents or administrators. A team carefully screens the applications and then visits the teachers' classrooms. A total of nine semifinalists are named – three elementary, three middle and three high school teachers. From these nine, an elementary, middle and high school state teacher of the year is named.

Our middle school teacher of the year is Faye Smith from Campbell County Middle School. Faye has taught mathematics for 27 years. She has coached her school's Governor's Cup team. Her professional affiliations include the Kentucky Association for Academic Competition, Math Counts Foundation, Kentucky Academic League (NKY) and National Council of Teachers of Math.

Our 2015 high school teacher of the year is Joshua Underwood who is a teacher at Mason County High School. Joshua's professional affiliations include the Kentucky Education Association (KEA) and Kentucky Science Teachers Association. Josh is a recipient of the Presidential Award for Excellence in Science and Mathematics teaching.

Finally, our 2015 elementary school teacher of the year and the 2015 Kentucky Teacher of the Year is Sarah Reed, a 3rd grade teacher at Field Elementary in Jefferson County. Sarah is an 18-year veteran and holds National Board certification. Her professional affiliations include Kentucky Council of Teachers of Mathematics, Kentucky Reading Council, Kentucky Reading Project, Jefferson County Teachers Association, KEA and the National Education Association (NEA).

It was great to recognize these excellent teachers who represent more 40,000 outstanding teachers in Kentucky. Governor Beshear congratulated the teachers on their terrific work and the impact they have on children.

I also want to personally thank Ashland, Inc. Chief Executive Officer Jim O'Brien. Through Jim's leadership, the Kentucky Teacher of the Year program has become one of the premier state recognition programs in the nation. Jim will be retiring from Ashland this year and has turned the TOY program over to the President of Valvoline. I know that the future of the TOY program is in good hands and we will continue long into the future to take time to recognize the tremendous contribution that our teachers make to the Commonwealth of Kentucky.

Terry Holliday, Ph.D.
Education Commissioner