MEMORANDUM

February 9, 2015

TO: ALL Principals

FROM: Melanie Evans-Smith
Academic Services – Professional Development Services

SUBJECT: TEACHER OF THE YEAR RECOGNITION – APPLICATION AND INFORMATION

CONTACT: Melanie Evans-Smith, PSD Contact, 713-696-0600

The Houston ISD Teachers of the Year (TOY) Award recognizes teaching excellence across our District, honoring an elementary and a secondary Teacher of the Year for 2014-2015. To ensure teachers receive the recognition they deserve, principals, or designee, are encouraged to fulfill the following responsibilities:

1) Determine which teachers are eligible for nomination according to TEA and HISD criteria
2) Conduct campus Teacher of the Year selection at your school
3) Submit Principal nomination electronically for TOY and BTOY nominee.
   • Principal TOY nomination should be received online by 12:00 p.m., Friday, February 27, 2015.
   • Schools may nominate one campus TOY or two for K-8 or 6-12 campuses; and 1 BTOY (optional).
   • Click here to access the online Nomination form. Refer to the instructions attached as needed. (Due online: February 27, 2015)
4) Assist nominee with preparation of TOY application (Due online: March 13, 2015)
5) Plan a school-level celebration to honor your campus teachers (Campus choice)
6) Purchase 2 tickets for your campus TOY and guest to attend the HISD recognition banquet
   NOTE: TOY finalists and BTOY winners will be provided 2 complimentary tickets
7) Purchase tickets for a campus/community team to attend HISD Recognition banquet and support your campus TOY and/or BTOY winner (Online memo for ticket sells will post by March 30, 2015)

In addition to selecting for the Houston ISD Teacher of the Year finalists and winners, the Central Office and business partner review team will also review applications to select candidates eligible for the following awards:

- Outstanding Beginning Teacher of the Year (Elementary and Secondary)
  Houston ISD recognizes the educational contributions of over six hundred beginning teachers who have provided instruction for many HISD students. These novice educators have grown in their practice over the 2014-2015 induction year and add value to the campus instructional teams. HISD will recognize an outstanding Elementary and Secondary Beginning teacher who have provided exemplary practices throughout the year and offer encouragement for all novice educators. Campuses can submit one nomination per campus, optional.

- Outstanding Young Educator Award
  For more than 30 years, the Outstanding Young Educator Award has recognized an outstanding elementary or secondary school teacher between the ages of 21 and 39. The award is sponsored by the Houston Jaycees, a nonprofit training organization that focuses on developing community leaders. Winners are chosen for their unique teaching strategies and outstanding community involvement.
• Elizabeth Brand Memorial Award
  The Elizabeth Brand Memorial Award is sponsored by the Houston Association of Professional Landmen and is presented to a secondary teacher who has made outstanding contributions to education. For more than 20 years, the Houston Association of Professional Landmen has presented this award in honor of Elizabeth Brand, a former teacher. Recipients of this award have demonstrated outstanding teaching performance and all-around personal development.

• Emily Scott Evans Award
  The Emily Scott Evans Award honors one third-grade teacher who encourages students to get excited about learning and to cultivate respectful relationships with peers and adults. This teacher always inspires her students to be the best that they can be.

The HISD 2015 Celebration of Excellence Recognition banquet will be the culminating event recognizing all TOY campus finalists, Special Award winners, and announcing the District winners (1 elementary and 1 secondary). Information regarding teacher recognition banquet tickets and event is forthcoming.

Included with this memo are several items to assist in your school’s planning and selection:
  • Timeline (Attachment 1)
  • Criteria for Selection (Attachment 2)
  • Application Requirements for Campus TOY (Attachment 3)
  • Application Requirements for Outstanding Beginning Teacher (Attachment 4)
  • Instruction guide for completing the online Principal Nomination form
  • Instruction guide for completing the online Teacher Application

If you have questions, contact information provided below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Teachers of the Year and Special Recognitions Information</th>
<th>Email: <a href="mailto:TOY@houstonisd.org">TOY@houstonisd.org</a></th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Office: 713-696-0600</td>
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<td>TOY site and forms – <a href="http://goo.gl/D5cSrH">http://goo.gl/D5cSrH</a></td>
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<td>Website: <a href="http://www.houstonisdpsd.org">www.houstonisdpsd.org</a></td>
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<th>Event Tickets</th>
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<td>713-556-7200</td>
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Attachments

MES

cc: Daniel Gohl
    Andrew Houlihan
    Shonda Huery
    Chief School Officers
    School Support Officers
    Alan Hooker
    Josephine Rice
    Caleen Allen
Houston ISD  
TIMELINE

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Dates</th>
<th>Activities</th>
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<tr>
<td>Monday, February 9, 2015</td>
<td><strong>Memo</strong>: TOY memo posted online</td>
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| February 10-27, 2015   | Campus TOY selection process  
Principal nomination of BTOY *(optional)*                                                                                                                                                                    |
| **February 27, 2015**  | Campus TOY & BTOY nominations due online  
- The submission information is located on the TOY SharePoint site – [http://goo.gl/D5cSrH](http://goo.gl/D5cSrH)  
- Refer to the Instruction sheet as reference in completing form  
- TOY and BTOY nominees will receive an automatic email with the online application link |
| **March 13, 2015**     | HISD TOY & BTOY Applications due online  
- The application information is located on the TOY SharePoint site – [http://goo.gl/D5cSrH](http://goo.gl/D5cSrH) |
| March 16-20, 2015      | Houston ISD SPRING BREAK                                                                                                                                  |
| March 23, 2015         | **Memo**: Celebration of Excellence event and ticket sell information  
- Event ticket handled by Strategic Partnership (713-556-7200)                                                                                                                                 |
| April 2015             | - Recognition of Administrators of the Year (POY)  
- Post TOY and BTOY finalists on the TOY SharePoint site – [http://goo.gl/D5cSrH](http://goo.gl/D5cSrH)  
- Celebration of Excellence (COE) Tickets sells                                                                                                                                                     |
| April 3, 2015          | Spring Holiday                                                                                                                                                                                                |
| **April 10, 2015**     | COE ticket requests and payment **DUE** to Strategic Partnership                                                                                                                                         |
| April 2015             | **Campus classroom visit and photo/video sessions** for TOY and BTOY finalists                                                                                                                                  |
| **April 13, 2015**     | **TOY Finalists application due online**  
- The application information is located on the TOY SharePoint site – [http://goo.gl/D5cSrH](http://goo.gl/D5cSrH) |
| Week of May 4th        | COE ticket pick-up from Strategic Partnerships at HMW                                                                                                                                                      |
| **May 12, 2015**       | **HISD Celebration of Excellence Banquet Event**  
POY, TOY, BTOY, and EOTM Recognition  
(Location: TBA)                                                                                                                                     |
| May 29, 2015 *(tentative)* | District-nominated TOY applications due to Regional Education Service Center (Region IV)                                                                                                               |
Houston ISD
CRITERIA FOR SELECTION

Criteria established by TEA (based on state and national guidelines):

(1) Candidates should be skillful, dedicated teachers who plan to actively continue classroom teaching. They should take an active role in their communities as well as their schools, and be professional, poised and articulate. The most important criterion in evaluating nominees is their ability to inspire a love of learning in students of all backgrounds and abilities.

(2) Librarians and counselors who teach at least four hours a day may be nominated for regional, state, and national honors. Administrators are not eligible. All nominees must be employed by an accredited public school in Texas during the 2014-2015 school year to be eligible for nomination. The nominating district shall be the district in which the teacher worked during the 2014-2015 school year. A candidate who accepts a position in school administration prior to the selection of the state finalist is not eligible to advance in the state competition.

(3) A candidate for National Teacher of the Year should be an exceptionally dedicated, knowledgeable, and skilled teacher in any state-approved or accredited school, prekindergarten through grade twelve, who is planning to continue in an active teaching status (Supervisory and administrative responsibilities should be of secondary consideration). The candidate should:
- 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 possess the energy to withstand a busy schedule.

(4) Nominees must be poised and articulate and have good public-speaking skills. The nominee must present a professional image and have a well-groomed appearance. The Houston ISD Teacher of the Year may be expected to participate in television talk shows, make public appearances, and make speeches to various civic and community groups.

(5) The nominee must agree to complete the required essays.
   NOTE: In Houston ISD, the initial TOY campus candidates complete selected essays. The TOY finalists shall complete the remaining essays as outlined by the State for District TOY finalist selection.

Additional Houston ISD criteria:

(1) The TOY nominee must be a fully certified teacher. Beginning teacher nominee must be highly qualified.

(2) The TOY nominee cannot be a first-year teacher. Beginning teacher nominee must be a first-year teacher.
**Additional Houston ISD criteria (continued):**

(3) The nominee must demonstrate effective instructional and professional practices throughout the 2014-2015 year. The nominee:
- maintains satisfactory performance in the classroom as aligned with the Appraisal and Development system IP rubric and makes a positive impact on student achievement
- displays on-going professionalism to students, parents, faculty & staff, community and other school stakeholders
- has not been on a growth/intervention plan (i.e. Prescriptive Plan for Assistance) within the current school year
- demonstrates instructional leadership on campus and/or within Houston ISD

(4) The nominee cannot be on suspension at the time of selection. If suspension occurs after selection, the teacher will be disqualified from competition.

(5) All nominations must be without regard to age, sex, race, disability, or religion. Employees of the District shall not discriminate on the basis of or engage in harassment motivated by age, race, color, ancestry, national origin, sex, handicap or disability, marital status, religion, veteran status, political affiliation, sexual orientation, gender identity, and/or gender expression.

(6) A teacher previously chosen as HISD’s Teacher of the Year (not campus-based) is not eligible for nomination.

(7) Campus nominee has to have a **completed Nomination form** *(submitted online by Principal)*, **required essays, and PowerPoint submitted by March 13, 2015.* The submission information is located on the TOY SharePoint site – [http://goo.gl/D5cSrH](http://goo.gl/D5cSrH)
Campus nominee has to have a completed Nomination form (from Principal), required essays, and photographs by March 13, 2015.

Read the essay requirements carefully. Nominees should complete the application essay questions (1-3) in a Word document and save. Applications must be submitted in electronic format on the TOY SharePoint site – http://goo.gl/D5cSrH. Refer to Application Instruction sheet as needed.

Nominees are urged to be brief and succinct in their written responses, focusing on their most significant experiences and characteristics. Candidates who add a personal touch to their applications will also produce a stronger entry. 

NOTE: Once identified, the HISD finalists will be required to complete the four essays found in the Application Requirements for District Finalists section.

Responses should be typed, double-spaced, with at least one-inch margins and a font size no smaller than 12 pt. The essay topic, such as EDUCATIONAL HISTORY or PHILOSOPHY OF TEACHING, should be at the beginning of each section.

1. Educational History and Professional Development (Limit: Two double-spaced pages (5000 characters) or Nominee may submit a resume that includes the below information).

   A. Beginning with the most recent, list colleges/universities and post-graduate studies, with degrees earned and dates attended.
   B. Beginning with the most recent, list teaching employment history, with time periods, grade levels and subject areas.
   C. Beginning with the most recent, list professional association memberships, offices held and other relevant activities.
   D. Beginning with the most recent, list staff development leadership activity and leadership activity in the training of future teachers.
   E. Beginning with the most recent, list awards and other recognition.

2. Philosophy of Teaching (Limit: Two double-spaced pages (5000 characters)).

   Describe your personal feelings and beliefs about teaching, including your own ideas of what makes you an outstanding teacher. Describe the rewards you find in teaching. How are your beliefs about teaching demonstrated in your personal teaching style?
3. **Education Issues and Trends (Limit: Two double-spaced pages (5000 characters)).**

What do you consider to be the most important issues in public education today? Address one in depth, outlining possible causes, effects and solutions.

4. **PowerPoint with Photographs of Instructional Practice (Limit: Three photos plus teacher/principal photo).**

Prepare a PowerPoint at least one (1) and no more than three (3) photographs that represent instructional best practices aligned to the Instructional Practice rubric (refer to [www.houstonisdpsd.org](http://www.houstonisdpsd.org)).

PowerPoint should include:
- Introduction slide with TOY Name, School, Grade/Content, CSO, SSO, Year 2014-2015
- One picture with both Principal and Teacher nominee and Names
- Slides with photographs (1-3) that represent teacher’s instructional best practices aligned to the Instructional Practice rubric and brief explanation per picture

Photos should:
- be of good quality (high-resolution images)
- aligned with the Instructional Practice (IP) rubric
- capture representative actions in the classroom
- be inserted in a PowerPoint
- include captions (1-5 sentences) explaining how the picture represents the practices in your classroom; indicate the IP criterion(a) and effective practice(s)

Photos should **not**:
- be a candid photo of individuals smiling into the camera *(except picture with Principal)*
- include other leadership and involvement roles outside classroom instruction

**Videos will not be accepted.**

**NOTE:** All photos taken and submitted during the TOY process may be utilized in a variety of media promoting and recognizing the *local* Teacher of the Year program. (HISD guidelines will be followed for media use.)
BEGINNING TEACHER OF THE YEAR
APPLICATION REQUIREMENTS FOR BEGINNING TEACHER RECOGNITION
2014-2015

Beginning Teachers (BT) will be required to meet the selection criteria for Teacher of the Year (TOY) and complete ALL sections of the BT recognition application. One nomination per campus can be submitted. Campus nominations for beginning teachers are not required. Campus nominee has to have a completed Nomination form (from Principal), required essays, and PowerPoint submitted by March 13, 2015.

Nominees are urged to be brief and succinct in their written responses, focusing on their most significant experiences and characteristics. Candidates who add a personal touch to their applications will also produce a stronger entry. Responses should be typed, double-spaced, with at least one-inch margins and a font size no smaller than 12 pt. The essay topic, such as EDUCATIONAL HISTORY and PD or PHILOSOPHY OF TEACHING, should be at the beginning of each section.

1. Educational History and Professional Development (Limit Two double-spaced pages (5000 characters) or Nominee may submit a resume that includes the below information).
   A. Beginning with the most recent, list colleges/universities and post-graduate studies, with degrees earned and dates attended.
   B. Beginning with the most recent, list teaching employment history, with time periods, grade levels and subject areas.
   C. Beginning with the most recent, list professional association memberships, offices held and other relevant activities.
   D. Beginning with the most recent, list staff/professional development activities/topics you participated in this year that impacted your teaching.
   E. Beginning with the most recent, list leadership role(s), awards and other recognition (optional).

2. Philosophy of Teaching (Limit: Two double-spaced pages (5000 characters)).
   Describe your personal feelings and beliefs about teaching, including your own ideas of what makes you an outstanding teacher. Describe the rewards you find in teaching. How are your beliefs about teaching demonstrated in your personal teaching style?

Read the essay requirements carefully. Nominees should complete the application essay questions (1-3) in a Word document and save. Applications must be submitted in electronic format on the TOY SharePoint site – http://goo.gl/D5cSrH. Refer to Application Instruction sheet as needed.
3. **BEGINNING TEACHERS Only – Teaching Profession** *(Limit: Two double-spaced pages (5000 characters)).*

Share your motivation and passion for selecting the teaching profession. Share, briefly, your reflection of your induction year - highlighting your teaching successes experienced; and the attributes and/or experiences that contributed to your successes during your induction year.

4. **PowerPoint with Photographs of Instructional Practice** *(Limit: Three photos plus teacher/principal photo).*

Prepare a PowerPoint at least one (1) and no more than three (3) photographs that represent instructional best practices aligned to the Instructional Practice rubric *(refer to [www.houstonisdpsd.org](http://www.houstonisdpsd.org))*.

**PowerPoint should include:**
- Introduction slide with BTOY Name, School, Grade/Content, CSO, SSO, Year 2014-2015
- One picture with both Principal and BTOY nominee, and Names
- Slides with photographs (1-3) that represent teacher’s instructional best practices aligned to the Instructional Practice rubric and brief explanation per picture

**Photos should:**
- be of good quality (high-resolution images)
- aligned with the Instructional Practice (IP) rubric
- capture representative actions in the classroom
- be inserted in a PowerPoint
- include captions (1-5 sentences) explaining how the picture represents the practices in your classroom; indicate the IP criterion(a) and effective practice(s)

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