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**REQUEST FOR APPLICATIONS**

**Applications Due:** Wednesday, June 19, 2024, by 11:59 pm

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| **2025 COLORADO TEACHER OF THE YEAR** |

**Program Questions:**

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Additional information is available online at the Colorado Teacher of the Year webpage:

[<http://www.cde.state.co.us/cdeawards/teacheroftheyear>](http://www.cde.state.co.us/cdeawards/teacheroftheyear)

**Note:** The following paper version of the application is intended only as a reference document for instructions and application planning purposes. This is a comprehensive document; there is information in this document not available in the online application.

**To Access the Application:**

Each interested applicant is asked to submit their name and contact information via [Smartsheet](https://app.smartsheet.com/b/form/7958b92ea36f4491805762f86aead05e) form.

Once contact information is submitted, applicants will receive login instructions. This will allow applicants to visit the application and save their work before submitting.

Applications will be submitted online through [CDE’s GAINS application system](https://colorado.egrantsmanagement.com). Applicant’s must complete the brief form above for login information.

#### 2025 Colorado Teacher of the Year

#### Applications Due: Wednesday, June 19, 2024, by 11:59 pm

## Background

The Colorado Teacher of the Year Program is our state's oldest and most prestigious honors program which recognizes the contributions of the classroom teacher – the backbone of the American educational system. No one person has a greater impact on the education of a child than does the teacher who creates the primary learning and instructional environment. It is the mission of the National Teacher of the Year Program to honor our nation’s greatest teachers while providing rigorous professional learning for teachers to be leaders and advocates.

## Program Guidelines

The candidate must be a dedicated, knowledgeable, and skilled teacher in any state-approved or accredited school, kindergarten through grade twelve, who is planning to continue in an active teaching status. (Supervisory and administrative responsibilities should be of secondary consideration.)

The Colorado Teacher of the Year candidate must have the respect and admiration of their colleagues and:

1. Is an expert in their field who guides students of all backgrounds and abilities to achieve excellence;
2. Collaborates with colleagues, students, and families to create a school culture of respect and success;
3. Deliberately connects the classroom and key stakeholders to foster a strong community at large;
4. Demonstrates leadership and innovation in and outside of the classroom walls that embodies lifelong learning; and
5. Expresses themselves in an engaging and articulate way.

## Duties and Responsibilities

Being named the Colorado Teacher of the Year is not only an award, but also an honor, and one that comes with an enormous responsibility: representing the entire teaching profession in Colorado.

The Colorado Teacher of the Year acts as:

* A liaison between the teaching community, Colorado Department of Education, school 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; and
* An education leader involved in teacher forums and education reform and activities.

The Colorado Teacher of the Year is also expected to attend national events such as the National Teacher of the Year Ceremony. In addition, the Teacher of the Year serves on the Commissioner’s Teacher Cabinet and attends other education meetings, conferences, and workshops around the state.

Because the Teacher of the Year is invited to attend events and participate in speaking engagements during the year, they must be poised, articulate, and have the energy to make and withstand a busy schedule (approximately 10-15 days out of the classroom throughout the year of recognition). Colorado’s Teacher of the Year is also put forward as Colorado’s nominee for the Council of Chief State School Officers’ (CCSSO) National Teacher of the Year program.

## Selection Process

CDE conducts a rigorous selection process to validate the candidate's knowledge and skills in the classroom, as well as their dedication to the school, district, and community. A selection committee, composed of representatives from education and other organizations across the state, conducts a phased selection process. Overall application strength as well as for coverage of geographic areas, variety of grade levels and content areas will be considered.

The following table details each phase of the state selection process. Applications are due June 19, 2024, and the 2025 Colorado Teacher of the Year will be announced by October 31, 2024.

| **Phase/Timeline** | **Description** |
| --- | --- |
| **I: Application**(June 19, 2024) | Each candidate submits an application containing biographical and professional information, brief essay responses on topics ranging from personal teaching philosophy to the issues facing education, and letters of endorsement. Applications will go through an initial screening process by the Colorado Department of Education staff to check for completeness and compliance with application requirements. |
| **II: Review**(June - August 2024) | Applications are reviewed by a selection subcommittee using the evaluation rubric on pages 8-11. Overall application strength as well as for coverage of geographic areas, variety of grade levels, and content areas will be considered when determining semi-finalists. Applicants will be notified of the status of their application and semi-finalists will be announced following the subcommittee review.  |
| **III: Virtual Interview**(Week of August 12, 2024) | A select pool of candidates is interviewed by the selection committee via web conferencing. |
| **IV: Site Visit**(late August 2024) | Finalists may be visited/observed in their school setting by members of the Selection Committee. |
| **V: Announcement**(October 2024) | The **2025 Colorado Teacher of the Year** will be announced by October 31, 2024. |
| **VI: National Teacher of the Year Application Submitted**(November 1, 2024) | The 2025 National Teacher of the Year Application will be submitted for national award consideration. |

## Application Submission and Format

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| **Applications Due: Wednesday, June 19, 2024, by 11:59 pm****Submit your application at:**<https://colorado.egrantsmanagement.com>  |

The following application questions and scoring rubrics are intended only as a reference document for instructions and application planning purposes.

Applications for the 2025 Colorado Teacher of the Year **must be submitted online at the link below,**

**by 11:59 pm on Wednesday, June 19, 2024.**

**To Access the Application:**

Each interested applicant is asked to submit their name and contact information via [Smartsheet](https://app.smartsheet.com/b/form/7958b92ea36f4491805762f86aead05e) form.

Once contact information is submitted, applicants will receive login instructions. This will allow applicants to visit the application and save their work before submitting.

Applications must be submitted **by 11:59 pm on Wednesday, June 19, 2024**, through [CDE’s GAINS application system](https://colorado.egrantsmanagement.com). Applicants must complete the brief form above for login information.

#### 2025 Colorado Teacher of the Year

#### Applications Due: Friday, June 19, 2024, by 11:59 pm

**\*\*Below is the Candidate Information you will be asked to complete in your online application. You may find it helpful to use this document to plan and compile your responses.**

## Candidate Information

Full Name (Last, First):

Preferred Name:

Personal E-mail:

Personal Telephone:

School E-mail:

Personal Address:

City:

Zip code:

**Social Media** (if applicable)

X (Twitter): @

Instagram: @

Facebook: facebook.com/

Blog:

Website:

Other:

**Professional Association Memberships** (select that apply)

* NEA (including state and local affiliates)
* AFT (including state and local affiliates)
* ASCD
* National Council of Teachers of English
* National Council of Teachers of Mathematics
* National Science Teachers Association
* National Association for Music Education
* Other:

Subject Area:

Grade Level:

Years of Teaching:

Years in current position:

I am a National Board Certified Teacher:

* Yes
* No
* In Progress

Do you speak a language other than English fluently?

* Yes, I speak:
* No

How much time do you spend working directly with students? If less than 100% please elaborate.

**Optional Demographic Information** (answers to this section are optional) \*

**Gender:**

* Woman
* Man
* Non-binary
* Transgender
* Prefer to self-describe
* Decline to answer

**Age:**

* 21-29
* 30-39
* 40-49
* 50-59
* 60 or older

**Race/Ethnicity:**

* Asian/Indian Subcontinent (A person having origins in any of the original peoples of the Far East, Southeast Asia, or the Indian subcontinent including, for example, Cambodia, China, India, Japan, Korea, Malaysia, Pakistan, the Philippine Islands, Thailand, and Vietnam.)
* Black/African American (A person having origins in any of the Black racial groups of Africa.)
* Hispanic or Latino/Latina (A person of Cuban, Mexican, Puerto Rican, South or Central American, or other Spanish culture or origin.)
* Native American/Alaskan Native (A person having origins in any of the original peoples of North and South America [including Central America], and who maintains tribal affiliation or community attachment.)
* Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander (A person having origins in any of the original peoples of Hawaii, Guam, Samoa, or other Pacific Islands.)
* White (A person having origins in any of the original peoples of Europe, the Middle East, or North Africa. Not Hispanic or Latino.)
* Multiple Ethnic/Racial Identities
* Prefer to self-describe
* Decline to Answer

\*The Colorado Teacher of the Year will be selected without regard to race, color, religion, sex, or national origin, and will not be discriminated against on the basis of disability.

## School and District Information

District Name:

School Name:

District Superintendent:

Superintendent Email:

Superintendent Telephone:

Principal Name:

Principal Email:

Principal Telephone:

School Address:

School Telephone:

First day of School for 2024-25:

School Location (select one):

* Urban
* Suburban
* Rural
* Other (please specify):

School Type (select one):

* Traditional Public
* Charter School
* Other (please specify):

Number of Students in Applicant’s:

* District:
* Building:

*You will also be asked to upload a PDF copy of your resume in the Online Application. Resumes should not exceed two pages.*

#### 2025 Colorado Teacher of the Year

## Signatures

**APPLICANT SIGNATURE**

I hereby give my permission that any or all of the attached materials may be shared with persons interested in promoting the Teacher of the Year Program. I also acknowledge that if selected as the Colorado Teacher of the Year, I will be released from classroom responsibilities for 10-15 days during the year of my recognition in order to fulfill the obligations inherent in the honor. If selected as the National Teacher of the Year, I will be released from classroom responsibilities during the year of my recognition in order to fulfill the obligations inherent in the honor.

**Signature of Applicant and Date**

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**SCHOOL/BUILDING PRINCIPAL**

I acknowledge that the applicant submits this application with my approval. If the applicant is selected as the Colorado Teacher of the Year, they will be provided 10-15 release days by the district. If the applicant is selected as the National Teacher of the Year, they will be released from classroom responsibilities during the year of recognition.

**Signature of School Building Principal and Date**

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**SCHOOL DISTRICT SUPERINTENDENT**

I acknowledge that the applicant submits this application with my approval. If the applicant is selected as the Colorado Teacher of the Year, they will be provided 10-15 release days by the district. If the applicant is selected as the National Teacher of the Year, they will be released from classroom responsibilities during the year of recognition.

**Signature of Superintendent and Date**

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**\*\*Upload the completed signatures form in the** [**Online Application**](https://colorado.egrantsmanagement.com)**\*\***

## Application Narrative Questions

When developing your Professional Biography and Response Questions, reference the attached evaluation rubric (pages 8-11) to establish expectations for performance. Please ensure that answers are thoroughly checked for correct grammar and spelling. The following template may be used to plan your responses before entering them into the online application. All provided text boxes will expand as content is entered.

**Professional Biography**
Please complete your professional biography in third person, as this may be used on the CDE website. Please follow the content and style guidelines below. By completing this section, you agree that your biography and headshot can be used in Colorado Teacher of the Year materials.*(maximum 250 words)*

In your bio, please include the following items:

* The grade level and subject you currently teach
* The school in which you currently teach, including city and state
* All degrees you hold, including the institution where they were received (i.e., Bachelor of Science in Finance from the University of Connecticut)

In your bio, please follow the following style guidelines:

* Spell out your degrees (i.e., Bachelor of Arts not BA)
* Only capitalize a subject area when it's a language (i.e., capitalize English but not calculus)
* Use your first and last name in the first reference, but your last name only on second and subsequent references
* Spell out all acronyms the first time they are used

| Click here to enter text. |
| --- |

**Response Questions**
**Respond to the following five questions highlighting your personal story and why you believe you should be the Colorado Teacher of the Year. Do not include external links. Maximum word counts are indicated in parenthesis.**

1. Describe a content lesson or unit that defines you as a teacher. How did you engage students of all backgrounds and abilities in the learning? Show how your deliberate instructional decisions create student learning and reveal your beliefs about teaching and learning. *(maximum 750 words)*

| Click here to enter text. |
| --- |

1. Describe a project or initiative you have been involved in that deliberately creates culture in your classroom or school. Describe how you build and use relationships to collaborate and to teach students of all backgrounds, abilities and identities. What is the status of the project today? *(maximum 750 words)*

| Click here to enter text. |
| --- |

1. Describe specific ways in which you deliberately connect your students with the community. Show how these community connections dissolve classroom walls and are used to impact student learning and success. *(maximum 750 words)*

| Click here to enter text. |
| --- |

1. Describe a time when you grew as a teacher leader and life-long learner as a result of being an advocate in your school, state or beyond. Describe your advocacy, how it helped you grow and how it impacted students.

*(maximum 750 words)*

| Click here to enter text. |
| --- |

1. As the Colorado Teacher of the Year, serving as a spokesperson and representative for teachers and students, you have been asked to give a speech to a large audience of teachers. This speech is being recorded and will be shared broadly with a larger audience. What is your message? What is the talk you give? [You may indicate a specific audience. For example, a “back to school” talk.] *(maximum 750 words)*

| Click here to enter text. |
| --- |

**Video**

Address the question below in a brief video that is **no more than two minutes** long. You may use the platform that works best for you (YouTube, Vimeo, FlipGrid, etc.). Important: please ensure that your video link is not set to “Private”.

**PROMPT:**

* Begin by saying your name and introducing yourself: “My name is \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_. I am a \_\_\_\_\_\_\_grade/subject teacher at \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ School in the \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ school district.”
* In two minutes or less, please describe ***why you teach***.

| **Link to Video:** | Click here to enter text. |
| --- | --- |

## Additional Application Documentation

**\*\*Provide the following information in the** [**online application**](https://colorado.egrantsmanagement.com/)**\*\***

**Résumé**
Submit a résumé (as a PDF file) addressing the following categories. Keep résumé as simple as possible, with a maximum of two pages.

* + 1. Education
		2. Certifications
		3. Experience
		4. Leadership
		5. Awards and Other Recognition

**Letters of Support**
Include three (3) recommendations that support why you should be the **2025 Colorado *and* National Teacher of the Year**. At least one (1) of the letters must be a recommendation from a parent, colleague, administrator, or student, and each letter should not exceed one page in length.

**Publicity Photograph**
Include a publicity photograph of the applicant (5”x7”, portrait orientation, in color, minimum 300 dpi - acceptable file formats are JPG, PNG, or PDF, not to exceed 1 MB in size, no zip files).

**2025 Colorado Teacher of the Year Evaluation Rubric**

**(For CDE use only)**

**Use this rubric only as a reference.**

**The following will be used by selection committee to evaluate applications.**

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| --- |
| **Applicant:**  |

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| --- |
| **Score: /60 points** |

## Response Questions

1. **Describe a content lesson or unit that defines you as a teacher. How did you engage students of all backgrounds and abilities in the learning? Show how your deliberate instructional decisions create student learning and reveal your beliefs about teaching and learning.**

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| 1. **Response:**
* Was inconsistent and may even overlook or omit parts of the question.
* May focus too heavily on the teacher and lack specific student examples.
 | **4- Response:** * Was limited or unclear description of lesson or unit defining them as a teacher.
* Did not address student engagement or impact.
* Does not indicate how student learning and/or teaching beliefs are demonstrated in teaching style.
 | **7- Response:** * Provided adequate description of lesson or unit defining them as a teacher.
* Provided some evidence of student engagement and influence.
* Indicated how student learning and teaching beliefs are demonstrated in teaching style.
 | **10- Response:** * Provided a clear and thorough description of a lesson or unit that defines them as a teacher.
* Provided strong evidence of student engagement and influence.
* Clearly demonstrated how instructional decisions lead to student learning.
* Clearly indicated how beliefs are demonstrated in teaching style.
 |

1. **Describe a project or initiative you have been involved in that deliberately creates culture in your classroom or school. Describe how you build and use relationships to collaborate and to teach students of all backgrounds, abilities and identities. What is the status of the project today?**

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **0-Response:** * Was inconsistent and may even overlook or omit parts of the question.
* May focus too heavily on the teacher and lack specific student examples.
 | **4- Response:** * Limited or unclear description project or initiative.
* Project or initiative did not contribute to school culture.
 | **7- Response:** * Provides an adequate description of how project or initiative contributed to the overall classroom or school culture.
* Provides limited evidence of student impact.
 | **10- Response:** * Provides clear description of project or initiative and their role/involvement in the project.
* Clearly details how project or initiative contributed to the overall classroom or school culture and student impact.
* Provides evidence of on-going nature of project.
 |

1. **Describe specific ways in which you deliberately connect your students with the community. Show how these community connections dissolve classroom walls and are used to impact student learning and success.**

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **0-Response:** * Was inconsistent and may even overlook or omit parts of the question.
* May focus too heavily on the teacher and lack specific student examples.
 | **4- Response:** * Limited or unclear description of how the classroom is connected to the community.
* Does not demonstrate student impact.
 | **7- Response:** * Provides an adequate description of how the classroom is connected to the community.
* Provides limited evidence of student impact.
 | **10- Response:** * Provides a clear and thorough description of how the classroom is connected to the community.
* Clear demonstration of how these connections dissolve classroom walls.
* Includes compelling evidence of student impact.
 |

1. **Describe a time when you grew as a teacher leader and life-long learner as a result of being an advocate in your school, state or beyond. Describe your advocacy, how it helped you grow and how it impacted students.**

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **0-Response:** * Was inconsistent and may even overlook or omit parts of the question.
* May focus too heavily on the teacher and lack specific student examples.
 | **4- Response:** * Outlines an example of when they grew as a teacher leader and life-long learner as a result of being an advocate in their school, state or beyond, but lacks detail.
* Does not address how this impacted students.
 | **7- Response:** * Outlines an example with some detail of when they grew as a teacher leader and life-long learner that is a result of being an advocate in school, state or beyond.
* Provides limited description of the advocacy and how this impacted students.
 | **10- Response:** * Clearly and thoroughly outlines an example of teacher leadership and life-long learning that is a result of being an advocate in school, state or beyond.
* Provides detailed and compelling description of the advocacy, including personal growth and how students were impacted.
 |

1. **As the Colorado Teacher of the Year, serving as a spokesperson and representative for teachers and students, you have been asked to give a speech to a large audience of teachers. This speech is being recorded and will be shared broadly with a larger audience. What is your message? What is the talk you give? [You may indicate a specific audience. For example, a “back to school” talk.]**

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **0-Response:** * Was inconsistent and may even overlook or omit parts of the question.
* May focus too heavily on the teacher and lack specific student examples.
 | **4- Response:** * Does not address relevant issues for the teaching profession.
* Message is vague or unclear to profession and/or public.
 | **7- Response:** * Addresses an issue which is relevant to the teaching profession.
* Message is generally understandable to the profession/general public.
 | **10- Response:** * Message is timely and of importance to the profession and the general public.
* Message is presented in a coherent and convincing manner.
 |

1. **Overall Application including Supplemental Materials: Biography, Résumé, Letters of Recommendation and Video.**
* Reviewers: please create a holistic score for Criteria 6 based on all the essay questions PLUS supplemental materials.

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **0-Response:** * Was inconsistent and may even overlook or omit parts of the question.
* May focus too heavily on the teacher and lack specific student examples.
 | **4- Response:** * While there may be compelling moments in this application, the evidence is not consistent.
* The teacher may use the same example for multiple questions or the description may rely on a surface “telling” without examining the pedagogy underneath.
 | **7- Response:** * While the essays may not be perfect, this teacher undoubtedly inspires possibility and promise in others.
* There is consistent evidence that this teacher’s thoughtful understanding of teaching and learning impacts individuals and/or groups of students. This teacher builds community in the classroom and sometimes outside of the classroom. This teacher is someone others look up to and respect.
 | **10- Response:** * There is consistent and compelling evidence that this teacher’s unique understanding of teaching and learning impacts both individuals and groups of students, alike.
* This teacher understands the nuances of the classroom and builds community both within and outside the classroom walls.
 |

**2025 Colorado Teacher of the Year**

## Submission Checklist

Please use only as a reference, do not include with the application.

| **Does the application include:** | **Yes** | **No** |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Thoroughly answered narrative questions submitted through the online application? |[ ] [ ]
| A video link that is public and with an accessible and legible URL? |[ ] [ ]
| Signatures from applicant, principal, and superintendent? |[ ] [ ]
| A résumé that does not exceed two pages? |[ ] [ ]
| Three recommendations of support? |[ ] [ ]
| A publicity photograph in color, suitable for publicity purposes, in one of the preferred file formats, and within the specified dimension requirements? |[ ] [ ]
| **Has someone other than yourself proofread responses for clarity, grammar, spelling, and typos?** |[ ] [ ]

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