

**ARKANSAS DIVISION OF ELEMENTARY AND SECONDARY EDUCATION
RULES GOVERNING THE ARKANSAS TEACHER OF THE YEAR PROGRAM
Effective July 3, 2020**

1.00 AUTHORITY

The State Board of Education promulgates these Rules pursuant to Ark. Code Ann. §§ 6-11-105, 6-17-2501 et seq., and 25-11-201 et seq.

2.00 PURPOSE OF RULES

The purpose of these rules is to implement and establish the process governing the Arkansas Teacher of the Year Program.

3.00 DEFINITIONS

3.01 “In residence” means working exclusively with the Division of Elementary and Secondary Education (“Division”) at a location agreed upon between the Division and the Teacher of the Year.

3.02 “School district board of directors” means the local board of directors of a school district, which are duly elected and qualified to hold office pursuant to Ark. Code Ann. § 6-13-608 et seq.

3.03 “Superintendent” means the executive officer of a school district board of directors directing the affairs of the school district and teaching not more than one-half (1/2) of the time in the school day.

3.04 “Teacher” means a person who holds a license under Ark. Code Ann. § 6-17-401 et seq. and is engaged in student contact for more than seventy percent (70%) of the person’s contracted time.

4.00 IMPLEMENTATION

4.01 The Division shall develop a process for selecting the Arkansas Teacher of the Year. This process shall work in conjunction with and in support of the process for selecting a National Teacher of the Year.

4.02 The process shall allow that each Arkansas school district board of directors may submit a single applicant for the Arkansas Teacher of the Year.

4.03 The applicants shall be reduced to sixteen (16) finalists representing one (1) applicant for each of the fifteen (15) education service areas and one (1) applicant for school districts in Pulaski County.

- 4.04 In submitting an application for Arkansas Teacher of the Year, a school district agrees that if its applicant is selected, the district shall place the teacher on paid administrative leave for the school year immediately following his or her selection, as provided in Ark. Code Ann. § 6-17-2504.
- 4.05 While on paid administrative leave, the Arkansas Teacher of the Year shall Work-in-Residence with the Division to:
 - 4.05.1 Create professional development programs for other teachers;
 - 4.05.2 Provide educational technical assistance to students and teachers statewide;
 - 4.05.3 Enhance the Arkansas Teacher of the Year Program; and
 - 4.05.4 Enhance the quality of elementary and secondary education in Arkansas; and
 - 4.05.5 Represent the state in the National Teacher of the Year competition.
- 4.06 During the school year in which a school district's teacher of the year is on paid administrative leave, the Division shall reimburse the school district as provided in Ark. Code Ann. § 6-17-2505.

5.00 SCHOOL DISTRICT'S RESPONSIBILITIES

- 5.01 Any school district whose applicant is selected as Arkansas Teacher of the Year shall place that teacher on paid administrative leave for the school year immediately following the teacher's selection as Arkansas Teacher of the Year for the time period that the teacher actually serves as the Arkansas Teacher of the Year.
- 5.02 The teacher shall be entitled to return to her or his former employment with the school district in the same or similar position with no loss of pay, benefits, and seniority for the school year following the paid administrative leave provided and shall not suffer loss of pay, position, benefits, and seniority simply due to the fact the teacher fulfilled her or his obligations as Arkansas Teacher of the Year.
- 5.03 The school district shall be responsible for providing a replacement teacher or restructuring class loads during the school year in which the teacher selected as Arkansas Teacher of the Year is on administrative leave.
- 5.04 Any school district that employs a substitute teacher to replace a teacher of the year shall not be subject to any earning limitations set in place by law or the Arkansas teacher retirement system.

- 5.05 Each school district teacher contract shall reflect the administrative leave provisions for any teacher selected as Arkansas Teacher of the Year.

6.00 DIVISION'S RESPONSIBILITIES

- 6.01 During the school year in which a school district's teacher of the year is on paid administrative leave, the Division shall reimburse the school district for:

- 6.01.1 The teacher's salary and benefits; and

- 6.01.2 Incidental expenses incurred by a teacher of the year as a result of his or her participation in the teacher of the year program.

- 6.01.3 All incidental expenses shall be approved by the Division.

- 6.02 The Division shall be responsible for the reimbursement of any incidental expenses incurred by the Teacher of the Year during the implementation of the program for the current year.

- 6.03 The Division may receive private donations, grants or other forms of assistance to help fund any aspect of the Arkansas Teacher of the Year Program.

7.00 NON-VOTING MEMBER OF THE STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION

- 7.01 While serving as Arkansas Teacher of the Year, the Teacher of the Year also shall serve in an advisory position as a non-voting member to the Arkansas State Board of Education.

- 7.02 The Arkansas Teacher of the Year shall provide a written advisory report to the State Board of Education on how to better provide teacher professional development and student instruction assistance for Arkansas public school teachers.

- 7.03 The Arkansas Teacher of the Year shall not be entitled to any compensation or per-diem for serving as a non-voting member of the State Board.

- 7.04 As a non-voting member of the state board, the Arkansas Teacher of the Year shall be immune from any liability with regard to any act or omission of the State Board.