

Miami-Dade County Public Schools

2027 Rookie Teacher of the Year

Nomination Packet



2027 M-DCPS/UTD ROOKIE TEACHER OF THE YEAR NOMINATION PROCEDURES

INTRODUCTION

The annual Rookie Teacher of the Year Award is a project which brings much deserved recognition to exemplary new teachers who have demonstrated excellence during their first five years in the classroom. This program is not an attempt to single out any teacher new to the profession as the best teacher but to honor new teachers who are within their first five years in the profession and represent the district's core values and exemplify the characteristics of a superior rookie teacher.

From among the outstanding rookie teachers serving in the school system's instructional staff, four will be selected, one representing each of the three Regions and one finalist from the Office of Postsecondary Career and Technical Education/ Division of Educational Opportunities. One of these will be selected as Miami-Dade's 2027 Rookie Teacher of the Year.

Special centers will compete in the geographic region in which they are located. Special centers are urged to include teachers who are teaching at work sites other than the school to which they are assigned. For example: Satellite Learning Centers, Hospital and Homebound teachers and Neva King Cooper Educational Center, Ruth Owens Krusé Educational Center, Robert Renick Educational Center, etc.

ELIGIBILITY

All candidates nominated for a Rookie Teacher Award must:

1. Be one who is new to teaching and who is in his or her first, second, third, fourth, or fifth year of teaching.
2. Be engaged **within their first five years of teaching** as either a full-time elementary, secondary or post secondary school teacher including all 3100 categories. (The teacher must have started on or after July 1, 2020)
3. Any full-time staff member is eligible who meets the above criteria and whose major responsibility (51% of time) is the direct instruction of students or other teachers, and who carries out his or her duties under a regular, predetermined schedule resulting in teacher service to the same group(s) of individuals throughout the year.
4. The following full-time district educators are eligible for nomination:
 - Classroom teachers – Grades Pre-K through 12
 - Adult Education Teachers
 - Department chairpersons who actively engage in classroom teaching
 - Postsecondary vocational/technical education teachers
 - Guidance counselors
 - Media specialists
 - Speech/language pathologists
 - Special area teachers
 - Other professional educators performing instructional support services with students (e.g. school psychologists, school social workers and instructional coaches)
5. Nominations should be made without regard to race, age, sex, disability, religion, national origin, political or philosophical affiliations or activities.
6. Paraprofessionals and office employees are not eligible to be nominated.
7. Teachers representing UTD on the Joint M-DCPS/UTD Rookie Teacher of the Year District Task Force are ineligible.

SELECTION CRITERIA

Each nominee will be evaluated based upon the following criteria:

- Demonstrates a superior ability to foster excellence in education and contribute to the continuous improvement of student learning and the school environment.
- Displays expertise in content area and ability to effectively use materials relating to the content.
- Utilizes original and/or innovative instructional materials and methods such as cooperative learning and interdisciplinary instruction, uses research-based programs, develops new instructional materials and uses technology to facilitate instruction.
- Maintains a record of superior teaching performance as evidenced by data driven student gains, annual performance assessments and/or recognition of work.
- Actively participates in continued professional development as evidenced by participation in relevant training and/or advanced degrees.
- Displays exemplary interpersonal skills in communicating with students, parents and community members as well as in collaboration with other professionals.
- Utilizes innovating research techniques, such as action research, to enhance the quality of education.
- Engages parents/families in learning process to enhance student achievement.
- Promotes literacy through the use of reading strategies in instruction and/or the implementation of projects intended to enhance student reading skills.
- Demonstrates a strong commitment to creating a climate of caring and respect conducive to effective teaching and learning.
- Evidences dedication to his/her community through active participation in service-oriented projects, volunteer work, etc.
- Demonstrates poise, eloquence and ability to withstand a taxing schedule.

SELECTION PROCEDURES

AT THE SCHOOL SITE

The Teacher of the Year school site nomination committee will serve as the Rookie Teacher of the Year selection committee and will follow the same selection procedures as for the Teacher of the Year nominee, which are as follows:

1. A nominating committee at each school shall be comprised of eight members. Five persons shall be elected by the entire faculty, and three additional members shall include: the designated United Teachers of Dade Building Steward, a parent representative (preferably a PTA member) and the principal. Note: Adult Educational Centers/Technical Colleges may substitute a student for parent.
2. Any member of the instructional, administrative, or school support staff shall be eligible for nominating committee membership. A majority of the nominating committee should be instructional personnel.
3. Nominations for membership on the nominating committee are to come from the floor at a faculty meeting. This faculty meeting should include all voting members.
4. The nominating committee shall submit the names of one to three candidates for the Rookie Teacher of the Year to the faculty, accompanied by a written rationale for each. The written rationale shall be distributed three days prior to the announced election date. At a separate meeting for the election, additional nominations for the Rookie Teacher of the Year may be made from the floor with written rationale.
5. At this same meeting, the Rookie Teacher of the Year for the school or center shall be chosen by secret ballot election in which all salaried personnel in the UTD bargaining unit (teachers, instructional support personnel, student services personnel, paraprofessionals, full-time office employees, security monitors, and 3100s), and administrators are eligible to vote. **ABSENTEE BALLOTS CANNOT BE ACCEPTED.**
6. The school site nominee will be the individual receiving the majority of the votes (50% plus one). If no nominee receives the majority votes on the first ballot, re-balloting will continue until a majority is reached. In situations where there are more than two nominees on the ballot and no one receives a majority of the votes, take the two nominees who received the highest number of votes and vote again until a nominee is selected by a majority.
7. The nominating committee chairperson shall appoint two tellers, neither of whom are members of the nominating committee or themselves Rookie Teacher of the Year nominees, to count the ballots. The results are to be announced immediately.

8. For the sake of uniformity throughout the district, no additional rules can be included at the school site.

PROCEDURES FOR THE SCHOOL'S NOMINATION PACKET

1. Please see the school level checklist for nomination packet contents.
2. The nomination packet shall be sent to the appropriate Region administrator as follows:

North:	Ms. Rachel B. Autler
Central:	Ms. Reva A. Vangates
South:	Mr. John A. Galardi
Office of Postsecondary Career and Technical Education/Division of Educational Opportunities	Dr. Cadian Collman-Perez

3. **Deadline to submit the nomination electronic (PDF) packet from the school site to the Region is Friday, November 21, 2025.**
4. The nominating committee at the school level has provided a letter (no more than one page, single-spaced) signed by the committee chairperson indicating its reasoning for nominating the teacher.
5. A parent within the school community must provide a signed letter no more than one page, single spaced. Note: A letter from a student may be accepted at the adult/vocational levels.
6. A signed letter of support (no more than one page, single-spaced) from the principal must accompany the original packet that is sent to the Region.

SELECTION PROCEDURES

AT THE REGION LEVEL

The established Teacher of the Year Selection Committee shall perform the selection for the Rookie Teacher of the Year. The committee will review all Rookie Teacher of the Year applications and select one nominee to submit to the District Task Force.

A principal who is on the Region Committee shall withdraw from the committee if his/her school site teacher is chosen as a finalist for the region.

The nomination electronic packet of the Region winner must be emailed by 4:00 p.m., on Thursday, December 11, 2025 to Dr. Reginald H. Johnson, rjohnson1@dadeschools.net.

SELECTION PROCEDURES

AT THE DISTRICT LEVEL

The established District Task Force/Rookie Ad Hoc Committee shall perform the selection of the Rookie Teacher of the Year. The committee will review all Rookie Teacher of the Year applications and conduct interviews and observations of finalists.

A principal who has been chosen for the District Committee and whose teacher is a finalist shall recuse himself/herself and a replacement will be chosen.

The entire District Task Force sitting as a total body will conduct **interviews** of each of the four finalists on **Monday, December 15, 2025**.

All members of the District Task Force will also serve as the visitation committee to make an **observation** of each of the four district finalists on **January 7 and 8, 2026**. Finalists will be notified of their specific observation date and time.

The District Task Force shall vote by secret ballot. The chairpersons shall count votes and the district's nominee will be the individual receiving at least the majority of the votes (50% plus one) of the total District Task Force. If no nominee receives the majority votes on the first ballot, re-balloting will continue until a majority is reached.

Following the selection of the district's nominee, the runner-up will be selected following the same voting procedures, from the remaining finalists. **Recognition of the four finalists and announcement of the winner and runner-up will take place at the 2027 Miami-Dade County Teacher of the Year Recognition Ceremony on Tuesday, January 28, 2026.**



2027 ROOKIE TEACHER OF THE YEAR APPLICATION FORM

Name of Nominee:		
Home Address:		
City:		Zip Code:
Employee Number:		
Name of School:		
School Address:		
City:		Zip Code:
Cell Telephone ()	School Telephone ()	Home Telephone ()
Email Address:		
☐ Work ☐ Home		
Total Years Teaching Experience:		Date Began Teaching Career:
Years of Teaching in Miami-Dade:		Number of Years in present position:
Grade Level:		Current Teaching Field:
Personal and family information you wish to share (optional):		
Subject area(s) in which you hold a Florida Teaching Certificate:		
Certificate Type:	Number:	Expiration Date:

In the space below, please provide your teaching schedule as reflected in the school's Master Schedule. This will enable the Rookie Teacher of the Year (RTOY) Task Force to determine the best time for classroom observations. Adult Education finalists should submit the future schedule (trimester starting in January of the current school year).

CURRENT TEACHING SCHEDULE

PERIOD/DAY/TIME **GRADE AND SUBJECT** **LOCATION/ROOM#**

Nominee's Signature:

UTD Building Steward's Signature:

Principal's Signature:

INSTRUCTIONS FOR COMPLETING THE 2027 ROOKIE TEACHER OF THE YEAR APPLICATION

Respond to the following four (4) sections. Responses must be typed utilizing a font no smaller than 11 point. Begin each section on a new page. At the top of the page, specify the section number, title, and page limit information. (A sample header should read as follows: "I. Educational History and Professional Development Activities. Two pages.") If the section allows more than one page for the response, the subsequent pages need only be identified with the section number.

Limit your answers to the number of pages requested in each section. In fairness to all applicants, only the number of pages requested will be reviewed.

I. EDUCATIONAL HISTORY AND PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT ACTIVITIES (Limit response to two (2) double spaced pages.)

1. Beginning with the most recent, list colleges and universities attended including postgraduate studies. Indicate degrees earned and dates of attendance.
2. Beginning with the most recent, list professional association memberships including information regarding offices held and other relevant activities undertaken within the three (3) year period preceding the filing of this application.
3. Beginning with the most recent, list awards and honors in recognition of your teaching abilities.
4. Beginning with the most recent, list staff development leadership activities, training in instructional strategies and/or leadership activities in the training of future teachers undertaken within the three (3) year period preceding the filing of this application.
5. Beginning with the most recent, attach copies of the in-service records from the District Professional Development Menu and Registration System and/or college transcripts indicating evidence of professional development activities that covers the past three (3) years.

II. TEACHING PHILOSOPHY

(Response must be typed and double-spaced utilizing a font no smaller than 11 point. Limit response to two (2) double spaced pages.)

1. Define professionalism and discuss ways you have incorporated professionalism into your development as an educator.
2. Describe your classroom environment and your instructional strategies and goals.
3. Describe your efforts to develop a home—school connection and foster a tangible partnership with parents/guardians to achieve success in your classroom.

III. COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

(Response must be typed and double-spaced utilizing a font no smaller than 11 point. Limit response to two (2) double spaced pages.)

1. Describe your commitment to your school and/or your community through volunteer activities.

IV. NOMINEE'S INITIAL TEACHING EXPERIENCE

(Response must be typed and double-spaced utilizing a font no smaller than 11 point. Limit response to two (2) double spaced pages.)

1. Professional support for beginning teachers is essential for their success. Describe the professional support you received during your initial year or years of teaching. What was the most beneficial? What are your recommendations for additional assistance that would help M-DCPS beginning teachers?

School Level Nomination Packet Checklist

Congratulations on your nomination as Rookie Teacher of the Year. It is a true honor to be selected as the representative from your school. The following information is provided to assist you in preparing your information packet. Please read this information carefully.

This page is provided to help you complete the nomination. It should **not** be submitted with your nomination packet.

- ☐ The application form should be completed and utilized as the cover. It should have signatures of the nominee, union steward and principal.
- ☐ The package must utilize 1" margins (this includes the top, bottom, and the left and right sides of the pages).
- ☐ All responses must be typed utilizing a font no smaller than 11 point.
- ☐ Section I - Educational History (Limit response to two pages).
- ☐ Professional Development Activities (Attach printout from the District Professional Development Menu and Registration System).
- ☐ Section II - Teaching Philosophy Response (Limit response to 2, double-spaced pages).
- ☐ Section III - Community Involvement (Limit response to 2, double-spaced pages).

- ☐ Section IV - Initial Teaching Experience (Limit response to 2, double-spaced pages).
- ☐ The nominating committee at the school level has provided a letter (no more than one page, single-spaced) signed by the committee chairperson indicating its reasoning for nominating the teacher.
- ☐ The school's principal has provided a signed letter (no more than one page, single-spaced) supporting the nomination.
- ☐ A parent (or student at the adult/vocational level) within the school community has provided a signed letter no more than one page, single-spaced.

No supplemental material will be accepted with the nomination packet.

Region Level Nomination Packet Checklist

Congratulations on your nomination as Rookie Teacher of the Year. It is a true honor to be selected as the representative from your school. The following information is provided to assist you in preparing your information packet. Please read this information carefully.

This page is provided to help you complete the nomination. It should **not** be submitted with your nomination packet.

- ☐ The application form should be completed and utilized as the cover. It should have signatures of the nominee, union steward and principal.
- ☐ The packet must utilize 1" margins (this includes the top, bottom, and the left and right sides of the pages).
- ☐ All responses must be typed utilizing a font no smaller than 11 point.
- ☐ Section I - Educational History (Limit response to two pages).
- ☐ Professional Development Activities (Attach printout from the District Professional Development Menu and Registration System).
- ☐ Section II - Teaching Philosophy Response (Limit response to 2, double-spaced pages).
- ☐ Section III - Community Involvement (Limit response to 2, double-spaced pages).
- ☐ Section IV - Initial Teaching Experience (Limit response to 2, double-spaced pages).

- ☐ The nominating committee at the school level has provided a letter (no more than one page, single-spaced) signed by the committee chairperson indicating its reasoning for nominating the teacher.
- ☐ The school's principal has provided a signed letter (no more than one page, single-spaced) supporting the nomination.
- ☐ A parent (or student at the adult/vocational level) within the school community has provided a signed letter no more than one page, single-spaced.
- ☐ Additional one-page, single-spaced letter of recommendation which may be from a colleague, a present or former student, an administrator or a civic/community leader.
- ☐ A parent (or student at the adult/vocational level) within the school community has provided a signed one-page, single-spaced letter.
- ☐ A one-page, single-spaced memorandum of support from the nominating Region Superintendent must accompany the original packet.
- ☐ The list of names and titles of individuals serving on the Region Selection Committee.
- ☐ Submit on disk or as an email attachment a complete list of all the Teacher of the Year nominees from the Region in a **WORD table or EXCEL** spreadsheet format that contains only three fields: 1. PROPER FIRST NAME, 2. PROPER LAST NAME, and 3. PROPER SCHOOL NAME (as it would appear on a certificate, Example: Jane Austin Wesley Matthews Elementary).

No supplemental material will be accepted with the nomination packet.

Procedures for Principals of Rookie Teacher of the Year Finalist

Should your Rookie Teacher of the Year be selected as a finalist, the following information is provided to assist you in preparing for the observation/visit:

- ☐ Finalist Support Panel to consist of the following:
 - ✓ One colleague
 - ✓ One student
 - ✓ One community member
 - ✓ One parent
- ☐ Finalist should not address observation panel.
- ☐ Administration (Principal and/or Assistant Principal) will not be present during the Rookie Teacher of the Year observation.

2027 Rookie Teacher of the Year

Significant Deadline Dates

November 21, 2025	School-site nomination electronic packets due to the appropriate Region
December 11, 2025	Nomination electronic packet from Region must be emailed by 4:00 p.m. to: Dr. Reginald H. Johnson rjohnson1@dadeschools.net
December 15, 2025	Interviews of the four district finalists by the District Rookie Teacher of the Year Task Force
January 7 and 8, 2026	Classroom observations of the four district finalists by the Rookie District Teacher of the Year Task Force
January 28, 2026	District Teacher of the Year Ceremony