

Teacher of Year/Support Staff of Year (TOY/SSOY)

2018 Process Changes FAQ

Below are answers to questions about the updated Teacher of the Year (TOY) and Support Staff of the Year (SSOY) program process. The biggest change to the program is that there will now be building-level honorees, who will advance to determine the district-level recipient. Please see below.

What is the new process?

According to results of a staff survey administered earlier this year, the majority of respondents indicated they preferred a building-level process to select building-level honorees, who would then become district semifinalists. The nomination process will remain the same as previous years. Any student, staff member or parent/guardian can nominate a teacher and/or support staff employee for recognition. After the nomination process closes and the nominees are vetted for eligibility (see below), the building principal will receive a ballot with the eligible nominees for their building's Teacher of the Year and Support Staff of the Year process. The building will then have about a week to vote for each category. Once voting closes, each building will recognize its own building-level TOY and SSOY winners. Each building is responsible for recognizing its winners.

Each building-level honoree is eligible to continue in the process to select the district-level honorees. Each eligible building-level honoree (semifinalist) will be asked to submit paperwork for a district selection committee to review. Using the provided information, the TOY and SSOY committees will select three finalists for the respective honors. As in the past, the three finalists will receive a surprise visit announcing their selection. The three TOY and three SSOY finalists will be interviewed by their respective committees, which will determine the district TOY and SSOY honorees. Prior to being interviewed, each finalist will be photographed for publicity purposes and the District Appreciation Night program. The community relations office will also set up a time to videotape finalists in their classroom/work environment for short videos to be shown at District Appreciation Night.

With this change, there will no longer be a elementary, middle and high school teacher of the year. The TOY finalists can come from any building.

Are there changes to a person's eligibility to participate?

Following input from building principals and staff, some eligibility requirements have changed. All full-time staff members will be eligible to participate, including permanent substitutes and the traveling custodian. In addition, Special School District (SSD) staff members will be eligible to participate in their building-level recognition program. If a building chooses an SSD staff member for its building TOY or SSOY, that person will be recognized at the building level, but will not be eligible to advance for the Pattonville district-level honors because SSD conducts its own awards programs for certified and support staff, and Pattonville cannot nominate an SSD employee for the state Teacher of the Year program.

Any staff member can be nominated for the awards, but only staff who have been at Pattonville for three or more years will be eligible for a building-level honor. Additionally, once a staff member has been chosen for a building-level honor, they will not be eligible for the same building-level award for five years.

What about staff that work at multiple buildings?

Eligible staff who split their time between buildings will be asked to select on which building's ballot they prefer to appear. This is a similar practice used in the past with staff at Remington Traditional School who work with all grades (kindergarten through eighth). This process will also be used for ALPHA teachers.

What about support staff employees not assigned to a school?

Any support staff not assigned to a school, including transportation, maintenance, printing and Learning Center employees will be part of a district services group. One semifinalist will be selected from this group, and all staff from these areas will participate in the voting process.

What about staff members who don't have access to a computer?

Paper ballots will be provided by each building and the district services group to employees who do not have access to a computer. Any completed paper ballots will need to be returned to the community relations office by the advertised deadline to be included in the voting process.

What are the responsibilities of building-level honorees?

All building-level honorees are strongly encourage to advance in the process if they are eligible. They are also asked to attend District Appreciation Night to be recognized (see below). In addition, each building-level honoree will be asked to serve as their building's representative on the following year's district committee to choose that year's district-level honoree.

How will these changes impact District Appreciation Night?

All building-level and district services honorees will be invited on stage during District Appreciation Night to be recognized. The three TOY and SSOY finalists will be introduced and highlighted in brief video features.

How was this new process determined?

Using survey results and examples from other area districts, the community relations office met with building principals to help draft a new process. After a tentative plan was created, it was shared with leadership from the PNEA and PESP and previous district-level honorees, and meetings took place to discuss additional feedback/suggestions regarding the plan. The plan was then finalized.

How will the program changes be evaluated?

At the end of the school year, once the district-level TOY and SSOY are announced, the community relations office will send a post-process survey to attain feedback regarding the changes and to see if anything needs to be updated for the following school year.

I have a question. Who should I contact?

Please direct any questions to Kelly Gordon in the community relations office via email at kgordon@psdr3.org.