South Carolina Teacher of the Year Program
Selection Process

Selecting South Carolina's Teacher of the Year is the combined responsibility of two groups: the Teacher of the Year Screening Committee and the State Selection Committee.

PART ONE: The Initial Screening

The Screening Committee, composed of three sets of judges to include teachers, business leaders, and State Department of Education staff, will evaluate and score District Teacher of the Year applications. Each set of judges will score up to twenty-nine applications. Scoring will be entered via a customized computer program by each judge. The totals will be tallied by computer. Following the tally, twenty-five candidates will be identified for consideration by the Selection Committee.

Applications will be identified by number only. All references to the applicant's name and school district will be removed prior to distribution to the Screening Committee members. Each applicant may earn a 125 point maximum using the point system described in Exhibit A of the Appendix.

Once the initial screening has been finalized, the Teacher of the Year director will send copies of the twenty-five applications receiving the highest total scores to the members of the Teacher of the Year Selection Committee by surface mail. The state Selection Committee will be composed of at least seven judges from the following or related categories:

- Former State Teacher of the Year
- Former Honor Roll teacher
- Teacher Cadet or a Teaching Fellow
- Business or Civic Representative
- Teacher Educator (Dean)
- Business or Civic Representative
- Teacher Educator (Dean)

PART TWO: The State Selection Committee

The State Teacher of the Year will be selected by the State Selection Committee, which will use the same point system described in Exhibit A of the Appendix. Each applicant may earn a 125 point maximum.

Evaluation of Teacher of the Year Application

Using the same scoring system employed in Part One by the State Screening Committee, the State Selection Committee will rate each applicant to select the five finalists for South Carolina Teacher of the Year.

Applications will be identified by number only. All references to the applicant's name and school district will be removed prior to distribution to the State Selection Committee members. The Selection Committee will read and rate each application (125 points maximum) using the described in Exhibit A of the Appendix.

The five candidates with the highest scores will be notified of their selection as finalists by the State Superintendent of Education or his designee.

PART THREE: Classroom Videotaping & Interview Day

The five finalists will participate in a two-step process as part of the final phase of the selection process. This phase will include a videotaping session in each of their classrooms and an interview conducted by the Selection Committee.

Classroom taping

SCDE staff will contact each of the five finalists to arrange a classroom taping session. Five minutes of the session will be shown to the Teacher of the Year Selection Committee to be rated as part of each teacher's final score. Each teacher will select an unedited and uninterrupted five-minute classroom segment. (Additional video also will be taped for use in compiling edited segments to be shown during the award event as well as on the ETV production, *In Our Schools*.)

Interviews

The interviews by the Selection Committee will be held on Interview Day. The schedule for the Interview Day follows:

- 9:00 a.m. Orientation of Selection Committee
- 9:30 a.m. Orientation of five finalists, determination of day's order
- 10:00 a.m. Individual interviews begin with committee
- 10:50 a.m. Break
- 11:00 a.m. Individual interviews continue
- 12:00 a.m. CERRA lunch for finalists and former Teachers of Year
- 1:15 p.m. Individual interviews continue
- 4:30 p.m. Activities conclude

Presentation (3 – 5 minutes)
Based on a random determination of speaking order, each candidate will make a presentation (no notes) before the Selection Committee. Each will have three to five minutes to respond to a question, provided in advance by the State Department of Education, pertaining to current education events.

Each finalist's presentation will be rated by the Selection Committee members. Presentations (30 points maximum) will be rated as follows:

Content (15 points)
- organization of response
- knowledge and command of subject matter
- substance, and
- relevance

Presentation skills (15 points)
- eye contact
- grammar
- projection
- energy level
- enthusiasm, and
- body language

Questions about Classroom DVD
In the next segment, the classroom DVD will be shown in the Selection Committee room, and the finalist will answer individual questions from judges.

Each finalist will enter the Selection Committee room. The Committee will then view the DVD with the finalist present. The Selection Committee members will have ten minutes to ask questions regarding the DVD. Selection Committee members will then rate the DVD (20 point maximum) considering the following:

- Classroom environment
- Command of subject matter
- Communication skills (clarity of directions, use of examples)
- Classroom management skills
- Responsiveness/energy of students
- Enthusiasm
- Creativity

Trends and Issues Question
After a break, each finalist will then be asked one question (20 points maximum overall). That question will be written by the Division of School Effectiveness staff and will be based on the finalist's *Trends and Issues* response in the application. The State Selection Committee will decide who will ask each question. During this period, each finalist will be rated by the Selection Committee member on the following:

- Content (10 points) – Organization of response, knowledge and command of subject matter, substance, and relevance.
- Presentation skills (10 points) – Eye contact, grammar, projection, energy level, enthusiasm, and body language.

Final Q & A Session
Three questions will be developed by the Communications Office and the Division of Educator Quality and Leadership. The Selection Committee will determine which questions will be used and who will ask them.

After the three questions have been asked, each member of the Selection Committee will rate each finalist's responses. The finalist may earn up to 25 points maximum overall during the Q & A session. The breakdown follows:

- Three questions (5 points per question)
- Overall presentation during the answers (10 total points)

The day is expected to conclude by 4:30 p.m.

After the question-and-answer period, the Selection Committee may discuss the finalists with other committee members but scores will not be tallied. The tally sheets will be collected by the Teacher of the Year director and entered by computer for calculations.

Once the total points are tallied, the identity of the next State Teacher of the Year will not be revealed until the evening of the State Teacher of the Year Event.

State Teacher of the Year Selection Committee Scoring System

Part One:

Application 125 points

Part Two:
Day of interviews (Application points do not carry over, points begin at zero)

Presentation	30 points
Video	20 points
Question/ Trends/Issues	20 points
Questions/Answers	25 points
Totals:	**95 points.**

APPENDIX

Exhibit A

1. **Educational History and Professional Development Activities** (10 points with a mandatory 5 points for National Board Certification®)

    - Colleges and universities attended, including post-graduate studies, indicating degrees earned and dates of attendance
    - Teaching employment history indicating time period, grade level, and subject area
    - Professional association memberships and information about offices held and other relevant activities
    - Staff development leadership activity and leadership activity in the training of future teachers
    - Awards and other recognition of teaching accomplishments

2. **Professional Biography** (15 points)

    - Factors that influenced the candidate to become a teacher
    - Description of what the candidate considers to be his or her greatest education contributions and accomplishments

3. **Community Involvement** (10 points)

    - Commitment to the community through service-oriented activities such as volunteer work, civic responsibilities, and other group activities

4. **Philosophy of Teaching** (20 points)

    - Candidate's personal feelings and beliefs about teaching, including ideas about what makes him or her an outstanding teacher
    - Description of how his or her beliefs about teaching is demonstrated in his or her personal teaching style

5. **Trends and Issues** (15 points)

    - Addressing one major education issue in depth, outlining possible causes, effects and resolutions

6. **Teaching Profession** (20 points)

    - Efforts the teacher has taken to strengthen and improve the teaching profession
    - What is and / or should be the basis for accountability in the teaching profession

7. **Student Achievement** (10 points)

    - Candidates' use of performance measures to impact student achievement.

8. **State Teacher of the Year** (15 points)

    - Synopsis of the message the candidate would communicate to members of the profession and to the public as State Teacher of the Year

9. **Letters of Support** (10 points)

    - Three letters of support from any combination of the following: superintendent, principal administrator, colleague, student/former student, parent, or civic leader. The letters should indicate why the teacher is the best choice for State Teacher of the Year award. Letters should be limited to one page in length.

Additional application guidelines

In the case of a tie between candidates when total points are tallied, tie-breaker categories (in order or importance) will be: (1) Teaching Profession, (2) Philosophy of Teaching, and (3) Trends and Issues.