Introduction
The New Jersey Department of Education is pleased to announce the next iteration of the Governor's Educator of the Year Program. This celebratory program integrates the Teacher of the Year Program with the Governor’s Teacher/Educational Services Professional Recognition Program to continue to recognize our state’s best teachers and educational services professionals.

Levels of Recognition
The selection process begins at the school level. Every New Jersey Principal is encouraged to recognize one Effective or Highly-Effective teacher and educational services professional. Your two recipients will be recognized by the County Office of Education, and your teacher nominee can vie for the chance to compete for county, state and national recognition. Note: In order to streamline and improve the selection process for the county-level award, there is no longer a district-level competition.

The School-Level Selection Process
To select your two school-level award winners, principals should:

1. Solicit nominations from the school community for teacher and educational services professional awardees using the required nomination form (see Appendix A for the Nomination Form) and ensuring nominations are made without regard to race, color, religion, sex national origin, age or handicap. Note: Please specify a deadline on the nomination form for them to be returned to allow enough time for the panel to meet & score the candidates prior to the deadline. If you followed this process in the spring of 2015 and selected your 2015-16 eligible recipients, please consider registering them in the GEOY online form by the specified deadline so that they may receive an official state certificate.

2. Verify that nominees are eligible (see eligibility criteria listed on next page)

3. Form a selection committee: Principals should form a committee that consists of at least four people who represent a cross-section of administrators, teachers, staff, parents and local education association representatives; Note: The School Improvement Panel (ScIP) may be used as the selection committee if it's membership meets the above criteria

4. Have the selection committee score nominees and select the highest scoring teacher and educational services professional using the required scoring form (see Appendix B for Scoring Form)

5. Register two school-level award winners in the online form on or before January 8, 2016
   - Obtain a school-level user account from Homeroom Administrator (formerly WUA)
   - Click on GEOY on NJDOE’s Homeroom website at http://homeroom.state.nj.us/
   - Use school-level account information to log-on to the GEOY online form and then enter the required information into the form and then hit the "submit" button
   - For the teacher award winner only: Print the page with the GEOY ID Code and share with your teacher award winner; they will need this info to compete for county-level award
   - Note: GEOY online form will automatically generate a state awards certificate for your two school-level winners, which will be given out by the County Office of Education

6. Encourage your teacher award winner to submit a county-level application to the district superintendent on or before 4pm on January 29, 2016:
   - Provide the teacher with a completed School Information Form (see Appendix C for School Information Form)
   - Ask the teacher to submit the School Information Form and 1 original plus 5 copies of the completed County Teacher of the Year Application (see Appendix D for the application) to the District Superintendent for verification for completeness before signing and submitting to county office by February 19, 2016.
Eligibility Criteria

Any educators nominated for this award must meet all of the following requirements:

- Be a licensed classroom teacher (pre-K through grade 12) or educational services professional (see below for list of eligible certification areas) in a public or charter school
- Must have achieved a 2014-15 summative rating of at least Effective; If the teacher or educational services professional has not received a 2014-15 summative rating at the time of application, then their practice rating should be at least Effective or the equivalent;
- Be a dedicated and skilled teacher leader who anticipates actively continuing in his/her teaching career for at least five (5) more years
- Inspire students of all backgrounds and abilities to learn
- Demonstrate strong ability to foster excellence in education as evidenced by ongoing contributions to the improvement of student learning and the learning environment
- Demonstrate leadership in educational activities at the school, district, and/or state and national level that take place both within or outside the school setting
- Have the respect and admiration of students, parents, and colleagues
- Demonstrate poise, eloquence, and the ability to maintain a demanding schedule
- Have not earned the title of Teacher of the Year for the past five (5) years
- Teacher nominees only: Have teaching as their primary responsibility rather than administrative or supervisory responsibilities

Eligible Certification Areas for Educational Services Professionals and Others as Listed

In order to compete for the Governor’s Educational Services Professional of the Year nominees must be classified as:

- Associate School Library Media Specialist
- Behavior Specialist
- Bullying Specialist
- Cooperative Education Coordinator
- Cooperative Education Coordinator / Hazardous Occupations
- Director of School Counseling Services / Child Study Team
- Educational Interpreter (Cued Speech Transliteration, Oral Interpreting, Sign Language Interpreting)
- Learning Disabilities Teacher-Consultant
- Mathematics Specialist / Mathematics Coach
- Paraprofessional
- Reading Specialist / Reading Coach
- School Athletic Trainer
- School Counselor
- School Library Media Specialist
- School Nurse (Instructional and Non-Instructional)
- School Occupational Therapist
- School Physical Therapist
- School Psychologist
- School Social Worker
- Speech-Language Specialist
- Student Assistance Coordinator

Next Steps and Dates to Remember (see Appendix E for Program Timeline)

- Now until Early January: Principals solicit nominations, form selection committee and select two school-level winners (one teacher and one educational services professional)
- By January 8, 2016: Principals register winners online
- By 4 pm on January 29, 2016: Governor’s Teacher of the Year submits County Teacher of the Year application (1 original plus 5 copies) and School Information Form to District Superintendent
- By 4 pm on February 19, 2016: District Superintendents mails one district packet (county applications and School Information Forms) to County Office of Education after verification process is complete
- By May 1, 2016: NJDOE will provide certificates to County Offices of Education for distribution
- May 6, 2016: All county-level applicants notified their status
- May 9, 2016: County winners invited to compete for state-level award
- June 3, 2016: County winners submit video to compete for state-level award
- August 16, 2016: County winners attend Orientation Awards Ceremony
- October 5, 2016: State winner announced and invited to apply for National Teacher of the Year

Questions and Additional Information

- Electronic copies of all forms and instructions can be found at: http://www.state.nj.us/education/educators/rpr/recognition/educators/geoy/
- If you have any questions please reach out to Nancy Besant, Recognition Programs Coordinator at the New Jersey Department of Education, at nancy.besant@doe.state.nj.us