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Top Teacher of the Year to be announced Saturday

Austin – Roll out the red carpet and let the drum roll for the six finalists who anxiously await the announcement of the top Teacher of the Year award. On Saturday, the state's top elementary and secondary teacher will be named at a special ceremony in Austin.

In September, six outstanding Texas educators were selected as finalists for Teacher of the Year. Now, those six teachers, along with the other 34 regional Teachers of the Year, eagerly await the announcement of the Texas Elementary Teacher of the Year and Texas Secondary Teacher of the Year at a luncheon to be held at the Connally Banquet Hall at the University of Texas Etter-Harbin Alumni Center on Nov. 22.

The luncheon will begin at 11:30 a.m. and the recognition program and announcement of the two top teachers of the year will begin about noon.

The secondary education finalists are:

- Christine Gleason, an English teacher at Fabens High School in the Fabens Independent School District, which is near El Paso;
- Iris Hines, an English teacher at the Roosevelt Alternative School in the Mission Consolidated ISD;
- Debbie Perry, who at the time she was named a regional Teacher of the Year, was a mathematics teacher at Travis Junior High in Paris ISD. This fall, Perry began teaching geometry at Midway High School in Waco's Midway ISD.

The elementary school finalists are:

- Beth Dennis, a fifth-grade teacher at Thomas Justiss Elementary in Paris ISD;
- Janet Napoli, a literacy teacher for kindergarten through fifth-grade students at Skaggs Elementary School in Plano ISD;
- Dora Alicia Newell, a third-grade teacher at Thigpen-Zavala Elementary School in McAllen ISD.

The top two teachers will receive a \$5,000 cash prize, a technology package valued at more than \$15,000, and a trophy. Each of the regional winners will receive a \$500 check and a trophy. One of the top winners selected will go forward to be considered for National Teacher of the Year honors.

A regional Elementary Teacher of the Year and a Secondary Teacher of the Year are named for each of the state's 20 education service center regions.

"I congratulate these six outstanding teachers who have made a difference in the lives of thousands of students," said Commissioner of Education Robert Scott. "No matter who wins the ultimate honors, each of these teachers represents the many wonderful educators who dedicate themselves to the students of this state."

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