



Pennsylvania Department of Education

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
December 8, 2025

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Greene County Educator Named 2026 Pennsylvania Teacher of the Year

Madeline Loring, a fourth-grade teacher at Jefferson-Morgan Elementary School in the Jefferson-Morgan School District, has been named Pennsylvania's Teacher of the Year.

Through the National Teacher of the Year (NTOY) Program, the Pennsylvania Department of Education identifies and honors exemplary teaching and classroom practices across the Commonwealth.

Hershey, PA – Today, **Governor Josh Shapiro** and **Acting Secretary of Education Dr. Carrie Rowe** announced that Madeline Loring, an educator at Jefferson-Morgan School District, has been named the 2026 Pennsylvania Teacher of the Year at this year's SAS Institute convening, the **Pennsylvania Department of Education's (PDE)** annual professional development conference.

"Educators – whether a teacher, a principal, or an administrator – do critical work each and every day to prepare our kids for the future," said **Governor Shapiro**. "A lot of the time, our teachers don't get the credit or support you deserve despite having our students' back every single day. I want Pennsylvania's teachers to know that I have their backs, and will continue to build on the progress we've made together. I'm grateful for moments like today where we get to celebrate the work that teachers do every day."

Madeline Loring is a fourth grade teacher at Jefferson-Morgan Elementary School in the Jefferson-Morgan School District in Greene County. She has 13 years of teaching experience, including fourth grade mathematics, kindergarten, high school learning support, and life skills support. Loring holds a Bachelors in Elementary and Special Education with a Minor in Political Science from Waynesburg University, as well as a Masters in Administrative Leadership and a Library Science certification from California University of Pennsylvania.

An effective instructional leader, Loring creates a classroom environment with high expectations for students who are encouraged to take intellectual risks. She demonstrates genuine warmth and care with each of her students, while simultaneously growing their academic excitement and success. Her dedication to her school and community goes beyond the classroom through her roles as the Drama Club Director, a member of the local Lion's Club, and an active member and leader at St. Marcellus Church. Loring is an advocate for the teaching profession while serving as a Student Teacher Facilitator/Mentor through Penn West University and Waynesburg University. She is a district leader at Jefferson-Morgan School District, providing professional development opportunities with other math department members and intermediate unit specialists. Loring's dedication and passion for her students and school led her to being named the Innovator of the Year at Jefferson-Morgan School District during the 2023-2024 school year.

“Educators have a lifelong impact on the learners they serve, inspiring them to dream big, think critically, and aspire to achieve—and this year’s Teacher of the Year finalists are collectively impacting thousands of young lives across the Commonwealth,” **said Acting Secretary of Education Dr. Carrie Rowe.** “The 2026 Pennsylvania Teacher of the Year, Madeline Loring, exemplifies exceptional dedication, service, and passion, and stands as a role model to her students and peers. The Shapiro Administration commends her on this outstanding achievement and looks forward to her future success.”

Through the National Teacher of the Year (NTOY) Program, the PDE identifies and honors exemplary teaching and classroom practices across the Commonwealth. NTOY annually recognizes a professional who inspires students of all backgrounds and abilities to learn; who has the respect and admiration of students, parents, and colleagues; and who plays an active and useful role in both school and community.

As Pennsylvania’s Teacher of the Year, Loring will travel the state, meet, and collaborate with other educators, and will represent the Commonwealth in the 2027 National Teacher of the Year competition.

The Teacher of the Year program is co-sponsored by the PDE and the Pennsylvania chapter of the National State Teacher of the Year, which was founded in 1995.

Loring was one of 12 finalists, including:

- Whitney Bellomo, Dallastown Area School District, York County
- Nicole Birkbeck, Council Rock School District, Bucks County
- Katherine Blandino-Nienhuis, Pittsburgh Public School District, Allegheny County
- Renee Decker, Central York School District, York County
- Madeline Loring, Jefferson-Morgan School District, Greene County
- Jenna Love, Elizabethtown Area School District, Lancaster County
- Jennifer Nesser, Laurel Highlands School District, Fayette County
- Ashley Oldham, Big Spring School District, Cumberland County
- Andrea Rutledge, Hempfield School District, Lancaster County
- Rachel Sebastian, Governor Mifflin School District, Berks County
- Rebecca Showalter, Mount Lebanon School District, Allegheny County
- Elizabeth Troxell, Penns Valley Area School District, Centre County

This year, 523 nominations were submitted for educators to be named 2026 Teacher of the Year.

The 2025 Pennsylvania Teacher of the Year, named last December at PDE’s SAS Institute, was Leon Smith, a secondary teacher at Haverford High School in the Haverford Township School District in Havertown. He has spent more than two decades at the district, where he teaches 9th grade Honors and Advanced Placement Social Studies, as well as 10th-12th grade African American Studies. Smith will represent the Commonwealth in the 2026 National Teacher of the Year competition.

Earlier this year, the 2024 Pennsylvania Teacher of the Year, Ashlie Crosson, was named the 2025 National Teacher of the Year—the first-ever Pennsylvanian to receive that honor. Crosson teaches Grade 10 English, AP Language, & Composition at Mifflin County High School in the Mifflin County School District in Lewistown.

Learn more about [Pennsylvania’s Teacher of the Year program](#) on PDE’s website.

The 2025-26 enacted state budget delivers on Governor Shapiro's promises to strengthen the Commonwealth's schools and communities, and create more opportunities for our children. The \$50.1 billion budget delivers for families, schools, and communities by providing an overall increase in education funding totaling more than \$900 million, including a \$565 million increase in public school adequacy funding, \$105 million for Basic Education Funding, and a \$40 million increase for Special Education Funding. It also includes a \$125 million investment in school infrastructure and a Pre-K rate increase for teachers. This critical funding helps schools provide learners with the programs, resources, and services they need to succeed.

For more information about Pennsylvania's education policies and programs, please visit the [Department of Education's website](#). Follow PDE on [Facebook](#), [X](#), [YouTube](#), or [Pinterest](#).

Note: Photos and video from this event will be available at www.pacast.com.

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