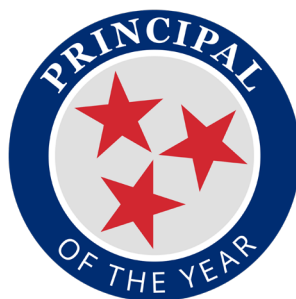


EXCELLENCE IN EDUCATION



TENNESSEE ANNOUNCES 2026–27 **Teacher, Principal, and Supervisor of the Year Regional Finalists**

We are pleased to announce the finalists for the 2026–27 Tennessee Teacher, Principal, and Supervisor of the Year awards. The finalists represent each of the eight Centers of Regional Excellence (CORE) areas in the state, as well as the Shelby County-Municipals area. This year's applicants were incredibly strong and showed the commitment and talents of our educators across the state.



Teacher of the Year Finalists

As selected by the statewide scoring committee, Tennessee's finalists for the 2026–27 Teacher of the Year are:

West Tennessee

CORE Region	Teacher	District	School
Shelby/ Municipals	Jenna Burke	Collierville Schools	Sycamore Elementary School
Southwest	Tabatha DePriest	Lauderdale County Schools	Halls Elementary School
Northwest	Sarah Comuzie	Benton County Schools	Camden Central High School

Middle Tennessee

CORE Region	Teacher	District	School
Mid Cumberland	Amy Jackson	Murfreesboro City Schools	Discovery School
South Central	Blair Clanton	Tullahoma City Schools	West Middle School
Upper Cumberland	Derek Zachary	Putnam County Schools	Northeast Elementary School

East Tennessee

CORE Region	Teacher	District	School
Southeast	Kelly McElhiney	Marion County Schools	Marion County High School
East Tennessee	Kathy Parnell	Knox County Schools	Gibbs Middle School
First Tennessee	Phillip Lewis	Newport City Schools	Newport Grammar School



Principal of the Year Finalists

As selected by the statewide scoring committee, Tennessee's finalists for the 2026–27 Principal of the Year are:

West Tennessee

CORE Region	Principal	District	School
Shelby/ Municipals	Rebecca Scott	University Schools - Memphis	University of Memphis Campus School
Southwest	Brandon Rainey	Henderson County Schools	Lexington High School
Northwest	Amber Ryan	Henry County Schools	Lakewood School

Middle Tennessee

CORE Region	Principal	District	School
Mid Cumberland	Fred Hewitt	Metro Nashville Public Schools	DuPont Tyler Middle School
South Central	Meredith Gilliland	Bedford County Schools	Eakin Elementary School
Upper Cumberland	Heather Tinch	Putnam County Schools	Burks Elementary School

East Tennessee

CORE Region	Principal	District	School
Southeast	Patrick Spangler	Bradley County Schools	Bradley Central High School
East Tennessee	Mitchell Whaley	Sevier County Schools	Sevier County High School
First Tennessee	Lana Luttrell	Greeneville City Schools	Tusculum View Elementary School



Supervisor of the Year Finalists

As selected by the statewide scoring committee, Tennessee's finalists for the 2026–27 Supervisor of the Year are:

West Tennessee

CORE Region	Supervisor	Title	District
Shelby/ Municipals	Makenzie Perkins	District Counseling & Threat Assessment Supervisor	Collierville Schools
Southwest	Melinda Hutcherson	Assistant Superintendent	Lauderdale County Schools
Northwest	Terri Stephenson	Supervisor of Elementary Instruction Pre-K-5	Weakley County Schools

Middle Tennessee

CORE Region	Supervisor	Title	District
Mid Cumberland	Frankie Skinner	Chief Academic Officer	Sumner County Schools
South Central	Wendy Wilkerson	Dir. of Special Education & District Section 504 Coord.	Tullahoma City Schools
Upper Cumberland	Ashley Rust	Supervisor of Technology	White County Schools

East Tennessee

CORE Region	Supervisor	Title	District
Southeast	Elizabeth Kaylor	Elementary Supervisor	Bradley County Schools
East Tennessee	Janice Cook	Executive Director of Whole Child & Family Supports	Knox County Schools
First Tennessee	Travis Thompson	Director of Student Services	Elizabethton City Schools