



# Arkansas Department of Education

Johnny Key, Commissioner

*Transforming Arkansas to lead the nation in student-focused education*

August 1, 2019

CONTACT: Kimberly Mundell

PHONE: (501) 683-4788

[kimberly.mundell@arkansas.gov](mailto:kimberly.mundell@arkansas.gov)

## **Four Teachers Named 2020 Arkansas Teacher of the Year State Semi-Finalists**

**LITTLE ROCK** — Gov. Asa Hutchinson and Arkansas Department of Education Secretary Johnny Key announced today the four teachers named 2020 Arkansas Teacher of the Year State Semi-Finalists. The semi-finalists were selected among 15 regional finalists and were recognized at an event today at the Governor's Mansion.

"With so many outstanding educators, it can be difficult to pick just four for this honor," Key said.

"Each of these teachers exhibits excellence both in and out of the classroom. I congratulate each for their passion for teaching and their efforts to ensure all students achieve their best."

### **State Semi-Finalists**

#### **Catherine Beckham**

Grades 10-12 Orientation to Teaching I and II and Senior Internships

Mountain Home High School Career Academies

Mountain Home School District

Northcentral Education Service Cooperative

#### **Joel Lookadoo**

Grade 9 Algebra 1

Lakeside Junior High School

Springdale School District

Northwest Arkansas Education Service Cooperative

#### **Melissa Spence**

Grade 1

Theodore Jones Elementary School

Conway School District

Arch Ford Education Service Cooperative

#### **Jeffrey Whitlow**

Grade 5

Don R. Roberts Elementary School

Little Rock School District

Pulaski County

Each semi-finalist received a certificate, medallion, and a \$1,000 award at today's ceremony. The ATOY Selection Committee will conduct site visits, to include classroom observations and interviews, over the next several weeks. The 2020 ATOY will be announced this fall.

To learn more about the ATOY program, visit <https://bit.ly/1iT6bUe>.

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*Pictured (left to right): Secretary Johnny Key, Jeffrey Whitlow, Catherine Beckham, Melissa Spence, Joel Lookadoo, and Governor Asa Hutchinson*

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