



NEWS RELEASE

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Six educators chosen as finalists for 2022-2023 BCPS Teacher of the Year

Group selected from nominees representing nearly 160 schools

TOWSON, MD. – Six school-based educators from across Baltimore County have been selected as this year’s finalists for the BCPS Teacher of the Year.

The finalists were chosen from among 157 school teacher of the year nominees by a committee composed of BCPS administrators, staff, students, TABCO (Teachers Association of Baltimore County) representation, and current BCPS Teacher of the Year and Maryland Teacher of the Year Brianna Ross.

“Congratulations to our finalists and all those superlative educators who were selected by their schools this year to represent them as teacher of the year,” said BCPS Superintendent Dr. Darryl L. Williams. “Especially in the past year, we have seen once again how important and inspirational a gifted teacher can be to students not only in their own classroom but across a school, a community, a county, or a state. We are fortunate to have so many amazing teachers here in Baltimore County.”

This year’s finalists are:

- **Zack Davis** of Logan Elementary School in Dundalk teaches Grades 4 and 5. Having earned degrees from Cazenovia College and Towson University, he has taught for 13 years at both Hernwood Elementary and, for the past five years, at Logan.
- **Tracey Dowling** is the mathematics department chair at Overlea High School in Overlea. A 17-year veteran teacher, including for five years at Overlea, she is a graduate of Notre

Dame of Maryland University and previously had careers as a buyer for Home Depot and a store manager for Lowes Home Improvement.

- **Brent Driessen** teaches children in Grades 4 and 5 at Deep Creek Elementary School in Essex. Holding degrees from the Community College of Baltimore County, Towson University, Johns Hopkins University, and Walden University, he served eight years in the U.S. Marine Corps before becoming a BCPS educator 13 years ago.
- **Alicia Freeman** of Franklin Elementary School in Reisterstown is an ESOL (English for Speakers of Other Languages) teacher at the school. She taught Spanish and ESOL in Baltimore City and was a director of admissions and a principal before coming to BCPS in 2019 and to Franklin in 2021. She holds degrees from Barnard College of Columbia University and Notre Dame of Maryland University.
- **Muriel Olowokakoko** is Grade 4 teacher at Powhatan Elementary School in Woodlawn. She earned degrees from both Towson University and Grand Canyon University and has taught for more than 16 years, including the last three at Powhatan Elementary.
- **Heather Young** of Charlesmont Elementary School in Dundalk is a reading specialist at the school. A graduate of Towson University, she has taught for 16 years at Charlesmont Elementary School.

The six finalists will be interviewed by the selection panel this month to determine who among them will be named 2022-2023 BCPS Teacher of the Year during a livestreamed April 28 ceremony. The BCPS Teacher of the Year will then go on to represent the school system and its more than 9,000 professional educators in the Maryland state Teacher of the Year program.

(Note: Photographs of each finalist accompany this news release.)

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