

Dear Committee Members,

My name is Marilyn Fox and I was on the Kansas Teacher of the Year Team (KTOY) in 2009. What an honor it was to be nominated by my peers from my school district and then to be selected as the winner of my district was incredible. The staff at KSDE (Kansas State Department of Education) were always professional and had everything in place. We didn't just win an award and go home. We worked together that year giving presentations, visiting each other's districts, addressing the legislature and so much more. I was later on the selection committee and learned about that process as well. I was chosen by former KTOY finalists so I knew they understood what it means to be a teacher in today's world. I was proud to represent the teachers in my district and knew the selection process was fair and well thought out. I do not think legislators have or should have the time to take over this award system. They also might not have the same level of expertise and experience to make the selections. It would be like a group of teachers selecting an "Excellence in Farming" award. I would guess that farmers would rather be chosen by a team of top notch farmers.

There is already a good system in place to reward excellence in teaching through the nationally recognized Kansas Teacher of the Year program that the KSDE oversees. My understanding is that House Bill 2378 would eliminate this program. What a shame that would be. If you want to recognize excellence in teaching, that's great, but eliminating a good program already in place doesn't seem like the best way to accomplish that.

Sincerely,
Marilyn Broadie Fox
Manhattan, Ks
KTOY Team 2009