



## GSTA Teacher of the Year

(Award application cycle begins September 9, 2024 and closes on October 18, 2024)

The GSTA Science Teacher of the Year (TOTY) award recognizes a distinguished teacher who exhibits ongoing excellence in the teaching of science and commitment to its improvement. The award is available for elementary school, middle school, high school, and college science teachers with four or more years of classroom experience. Each award includes a check for \$1500 and a complimentary registration to GSTA's annual conference. To be eligible, applicants must meet the [general criteria and guidelines](#).

Recipients of the GSTA Teacher of the Year are required to submit a brief article to be shared in the eObservations newsletter and/or social media by October 1, 2025. Recipients are also encouraged to present at the annual conference (held in January 2025). (Information about the article submission and conference presentation will be provided to award recipients at a later date.)

### Application Process ([Evaluation Rubric](#))

To apply for a GSTA Teacher of the Year, applicants must complete Parts 1 and 2.

**Part 1:** Register for the GSTA Teacher of the Year application submission process [here](#). After completing the registration process, applicants will receive a confirmation email containing a link to the *GSTA Awards & Grants Application*.

**Part 2:** Compose a single document with the information for each section listed below. The information should be in section order following the general criteria and guidelines outlined above. Using the link provided in the registration confirmation email, complete the *GSTA Awards & Grants Application* and upload your document as the last item in the application. All information submitted in the application must be visible without the use of links.

**Section 1: Biographical Information & Photo.** Provide your first and last name with a current photo of yourself. Also include your current employment information: school name, district/system name (if applicable), and grade level with courses/subjects taught. The submitted photo will be used by GSTA in the awards program, eObservations newsletter, social media, and website should you be selected as a GSTA Teacher of the Year.

**Section 2: Lesson Plan.** Provide a lesson plan you developed and implemented based on grade level appropriate science standards that reflects your view of science education. The submitted plan should illustrate how you utilize effective science teaching practices to meet the diverse needs of your students to promote mastery of the science standards. (If the lesson supports a larger unit plan, provide information to establish the context of the lesson.)

**Section 3: Lesson Reflection.** Provide a reflection based on your experience teaching the lesson you described in Section 2. The reflection should include why you felt the lesson was successful, how you

responded to students' needs and any challenges, and how the lesson reflects your view of science education.

**Section 4: Professional Engagement.** This section may include a resume and/or description of how you have continued your education in science to enhance and improve your professional practice. This may include active involvement in professional organizations, attendance and/or presentations at conferences, pursuit of advanced degrees or certifications/endorsements, participation in professional learning outside your school/district, and/or serving in leadership roles.

**Section 5: Letters of Recommendation.** Provide three letters of recommendation—one from a school level administrator (dean, principal or assistant principal), one from a colleague, and one from someone familiar with your work (i.e., former student/parent, professional within the organization of which you are an active member, or district/system level supervisor/coordinator).

# GSTA Teacher of the Year Rubric



**Applicant's Name:**

**Reviewer's Name:**

<b>Application Structure &amp; Grammar</b> (max. 3 points)	<b>Exemplary (3 points)</b>	<b>Proficient (2 points)</b>	<b>Progressing (1 point)</b>	<b>Points Scored</b> (max. 3 points)
	The applicant followed the general guidelines with no spelling or grammatical errors.	The applicant followed the general guidelines with 1-2 spelling or grammatical errors.	The applicant did not follow the general guidelines or made more than 2 spelling or grammatical errors.	
<b>Lesson Plan</b> (max. 12 points)	<b>Exemplary (6 points each)</b>	<b>Proficient (4 points each)</b>	<b>Progressing (2 points each)</b>	<b>Points Scored</b> (max. 12 points)
	Elements of the plan clearly align to multiple science standards and use scientifically accurate and grade appropriate scientific content, phenomena, and representations to support students' three-dimensional learning of science.	Elements of the plan clearly align to at least one specific science standard and use scientifically accurate and grade appropriate scientific content, phenomenon, and representations to support students' three-dimensional learning of science.	Elements of the plan loosely align to specific science standards or do not use scientifically accurate or grade appropriate scientific content, phenomenon, or representations to support students' three-dimensional learning of science.	
	The plan incorporates highly effective teaching practices to meet the diverse needs of students.	The plan incorporates effective teaching practices to meet the diverse needs of students.	The plan does not incorporate effective teaching practices to meet the diverse needs of students.	
<b>Lesson Reflection</b> (max. 12 points)	<b>Exemplary (6 points each)</b>	<b>Proficient (4 points each)</b>	<b>Progressing (2 points each)</b>	<b>Points Scored</b> (max. 12 points)
	The applicant provides an in-depth reflection of the lesson including its successes and how students' needs and any challenges were addressed.	The applicant provides an adequate reflection of the lesson including its successes and how students' needs and any challenges were addressed.	The applicant provides little to no reflection of the lesson including its successes or how students' needs or any challenges were addressed.	
	The applicant provides an in-depth explanation of how the lesson reflects the applicant's philosophy of science education.	The applicant provides an adequate explanation of how the lesson reflects the applicant's philosophy of science education.	The applicant provides little to no explanation of how the lesson reflects the applicant's philosophy of science education.	

(rubric continued on the next page)

<b>Professional Engagement</b> (max. 3 points)	<b>Exemplary (3 points)</b>	<b>Proficient (2 points)</b>	<b>Progressing (1 point)</b>	<b>Points Scored</b> (max. 3 points)
	The applicant provides substantial evidence of continuing education in science to enhance and improve professional practice and involvement in science professional organizations.	The applicant provides adequate evidence of continuing education in science to enhance and improve professional practice or involvement in science professional organizations.	The applicant provides limited evidence of continuing education in science to enhance and improve professional practice or involvement in science professional organizations.	
<b>Recommendations</b> (max. 3 points)	<b>Exemplary (3 points)</b>	<b>Proficient (2 points)</b>	<b>Progressing (1 point)</b>	<b>Points Scored</b> (max. 3 points)
	The applicant demonstrates exceptional performance as a science teacher as indicated by all three letters of recommendation.	The applicant demonstrates exceptional performance as a science teacher as indicated by two letters of recommendation <u>or</u> high quality performance as indicated by all three letters of recommendation.	The applicant demonstrates exceptional performance as a science teacher as indicated by one letter of recommendation <u>or</u> high quality performance as indicated by fewer than three letters of recommendation.	
<b>Total Score (max. 33 points)</b>				