# MEMORANDUM

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| **To:** | Members of the Board of Elementary and Secondary Education |
| **From:** | Russell D. Johnston, Acting Commissioner |
| **Date:** | December 10, 2024 |
| **Subject:** | 2025 Massachusetts Teacher of the Year |

At our December 17 meeting, I look forward to introducing you to the 2025 Massachusetts Teacher of the Year, Luisa Sparrow. She teaches fifth and sixth grade students with disabilities at the Oliver Hazard Perry School in South Boston. We announced Ms. Sparrow’s selection at an assembly at her school on December 4th, and her time as Teacher of the Year will begin in January.

Each year, the Massachusetts Teacher of the Year program honors a Massachusetts teacher who exemplifies excellent teaching in the Commonwealth. Beyond celebrating the individual, the program looks at the complex work that is involved in educating all students and affirms the importance of the teacher as the single most important school-based factor in improving student outcomes.

Ms. Sparrow serves on her school’s inclusion planning team and worked with her colleagues to design the school’s inclusive Cooking Club. She is passionate about developing her students’ literacy skills and fostering a classroom community where all students can learn, grow, and feel valued. She holds National Board Certification as an exceptional needs specialist and is a Teach Plus Senior Policy Fellow.

While serving as Teacher of the Year, Ms. Sparrow will continue teaching, attend convenings of teachers of the year from other states, speak at events, and networks with other educators.

This year, we received 134 nominations and 44 completed applications. Panels of DESE staff and previous teachers of the year, with help from The Teacher Collaborative, narrowed the list down to eight semifinalists and then three finalists. We are planning a recognition event for all of our recognized educators at Devens in May. We will notify Board members and hope you will be able to attend the celebration.

I know you will enjoy meeting the 2025 Massachusetts Teacher of the Year. To nominate an educator to be the 2026 Massachusetts Teacher of the Year, please email [educatorrecognition@doe.mass.edu](mailto:educatorrecognition@doe.mass.edu).

Attachment:

[Healey-Driscoll Administration Announces 2025 Massachusetts Teacher of the Year | Mass.gov](https://www.mass.gov/news/healey-driscoll-administration-announces-2025-massachusetts-teacher-of-the-year)