

Mexico middle school teacher Lacey Todd a finalist for 2024 Maine Teacher of the Year award

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By Marianne Hutchinson August 22, 2023



Lacey Todd stands in her fifth grade classroom in May at Mountain Valley Middle School in Mexico. The science teacher is one of four finalists for 2024 Maine Teacher of the Year. *Marianne Hutchinson/Rumford Falls Times*

RUMFORD — Mountain Valley Middle School teacher [Lacey Todd](#) is one of four finalists for 2024 Maine Teacher of the Year, Regional School Unit 10 Superintendent Deb Alden told directors Monday at Mountain Valley High School.

The announcement “is so exciting” for the district, Alden said.

She said representatives from the state Department of Education will visit Todd’s classroom in September as part of the selection process.

With 19 years of experience, Todd teaches fifth grade science at the Mexico school. Among other projects, she and other educators there have led fifth grade students’ activities in their Intertidal Ecosystem Investigation Program and their work with the Gulf of Maine Research Institute.

Last fall, Todd’s class went to Wolfe’s Neck Woods State Park in Freeport to study the ecosystem.

“I teach because I want to make a difference,” Todd wrote in her essay as part of the nomination process for Oxford County Teacher of the Year. “I teach because I have a debt to pay forward. It’s a debt of love, hope, and connectedness. It’s my difference and it is both my obligation and honor to pass it on,” she wrote.

The other finalists are second grade teacher Joshua Chard from Cumberland County, sixth grade writing and social studies teacher Edith Berger from Lincoln County and high school science teacher Colleen Maker from Washington County.

Maine Education Commissioner Pender Makin said in a news release that the finalists “are all extraordinary educators who care deeply about their students, schools and communities. They lift up everyone around them, are passionate about their profession, and are true champions of all students and schools in Maine.”

The 2024 Maine Teacher of the Year will be named in October.

In other business, Director of Special Services Clarissa Fish presented information from a School Climate Survey provided free from the National Center for Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports. It was given to students in June 2022 to get their thoughts on subjects such as social support, school safety and order, and discipline.

Fish said the RSU 10 schools’ education and resource teams will study the results “and see what can we do with our practices and our action plan” and listen to students.

Regarding the start of the school year, Sept. 5 is the first day of classes for students in kindergarten through fifth grade and ninth grade from Rumford, Mexico, Hanover and Roxbury. It’s also the first day for students in grades kindergarten through seven and nine in Buckfield, Hartford and Sumner.

Students in grades 10 through 12 will start classes Sept. 6.

Region 9 School of Applied Technology in Mexico begins classes Aug. 30 and any RSU 10 students who attend may contact their high school if they want transportation to the technical school, Alden said.

RSU 10 schools are Hartford-Sumner Elementary in Sumner, Buckfield Junior-Senior High in Buckfield, Meroby Elementary in Mexico, Rumford Elementary in Rumford, Mountain Valley Middle in Mexico, Mountain Valley High and Western Foothills Regional Program, both in Rumford.

Comments are not available on this story.

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