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NEWS RELEASE

Commissioner names Teacher of the Year finalists

Alaska Education Commissioner Roger Sampson has named four finalists for the 2007 Alaska Teacher of the Year honor. They are:

- **Ina Bouker**, a first-grade teacher at Dillingham Elementary School with 17 years of teaching experience.
- **Hal Neace**, an eighth-grade science teacher at Homer Middle School with 31 years of teaching experience.
- **Joseph Nolting**, a language arts teacher at Teeland Middle School in Wasilla with 24 years of teaching experience.
- **Charles Strauss**, a math teacher at South Anchorage High School with 25 years of experience.

A screening committee appointed by Commissioner Sampson recommended the finalists from a field of applicants submitted by school superintendents and school district selection committees. The committees typically consist of parents, school administrators, teachers, students, and business and other community leaders. Any person in the community may submit an application to the committee.

Commissioner Sampson will invite a statewide team consisting of elected presidents of major parent and education associations to select one of the finalists as 2007 Alaska Teacher of the Year and one as Alternate Teacher of the Year. The selection committee will review the applications, view a video of each finalist in an actual classroom-teaching situation, and interview each teacher. The winner will be named in November.

Alaska's 2006 Teacher of the Year is **Arlene Sandberg**, who teaches English as a second language at Mountain View Elementary School in Anchorage.

Commissioner Sampson will forward the name of the Alaska Teacher of the Year to the National Teacher of the Year competition based in Washington, D.C.

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