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STATE OF ALASKA

DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION  
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## Press Release

COMMISSIONER'S OFFICE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

August 22, 2007

### **Finalists named for 2008 Alaska Teacher of the Year**

Alaska Interim Education Commissioner Barbara Thompson has named four finalists for the 2008 Alaska Teacher of the Year honor. They are:

Shelley Heiserman, a fifth-grade teacher at Cottonwood Creek Elementary School in the Mat-Su Borough School District.

Michael Mahoney, a science teacher at Mt. Edgecumbe High School, the statewide boarding high school in Sitka.

J. Dan Sparkman, a radio/TV production and English teacher at King Career Center in the Anchorage School District.

Raymond Voley, a history and technology teacher at Kenny Lake School in the Copper River School District.

A screening committee appointed by Commissioner Thompson 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 Thompson will invite a statewide team of elected presidents of major parent and education associations to select one of the finalists as 2008 Alaska Teacher of the Year and another finalist to serve 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 2007 Teacher of the Year is Ina Bouker, a first-grade teacher at Dillingham Elementary School.

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Commissioner Thompson will forward the name of the Alaska Teacher of the Year to the National Teacher of the Year competition sponsored by the Council of Chief State School Officers based in Washington, D.C.

For more information, contact Helen Mehrkens at 907-465-8730 or Eric Fry at 907-465-2851.

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