



## Christie Administration Announces New Jersey's State Teacher of the Year for 2014-15

*Hoboken Special Education Teacher Selected From Among 21 County Teachers of the Year and a State Facility Teacher*

**For Immediate Release**

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**Trenton, NJ** – The Christie Administration today announced the selection of Mark Mautone, a special education teacher from Hudson County, as the 2014-2015 State Teacher of the Year. Acting Education Commissioner David Hespe and the State Board of Education honored Mautone and six finalists at a special ceremony today in Trenton.



From Left to Right: Roger Bowley, Principal of Wallace Elementary School, Tom Fitzgibbons, Retired Director of Special Services, Hoboken School District, David C. Hespe, Acting Commissioner of Education, Mark Mautone, 2014-15 New Jersey State Teacher of the Year, Richard Brockel, Interim Superintendent of the Hoboken School District, Monica Tone, Interim Hudson County Executive Superintendent, and Mark Biedron, President, New Jersey State Board of Education.

Mautone teaches preschool children with autism at Wallace Elementary School in Hoboken. An educator for 19 years, he received his bachelor's degree from Kean University and his master's in Applied Behavior Analysis from Caldwell University.

He is an ardent proponent of using technology to enhance instruction of autistic students, and has given presentations from New York City to San Francisco on topics such as using apps to help children with disabilities.

"Mr. Mautone has a deep enthusiasm for helping his students overcome the challenges they face so that they can receive the best experience possible in the classroom. Yet his dedication to the success of disabled students extends far beyond the classroom," said Acting Education Commissioner Hespe. "He is an inspiration to teachers, parents and members of the community."

Actively involved in autism support groups, Mautone also serves as a professional advisory board member within the Archdiocese of Newark to help children with autism attend church services and participate in religious education. He serves on the Autism Task Force of the National Catholic

Partnership for Disability; Hoboken Cares, an organization that provides free workshops that increase understanding and awareness of disabled individuals; and he has organized trainings for teachers, parents and students on autism and bullying.

The New England Center for Children with Autism, one of the most prominent and comprehensive programs in the nation for individuals with Autism Spectrum Disorder, recently asked Mautone to serve as an advisory member for the Autism Curriculum Encyclopedia program, a system for special educators to assess, teach and evaluate the progress of students with autism.

"It is my belief that all children, despite the obstacles, deserve the highest quality of education possible so that they can learn to their maximum potential and lead a productive life as independently as possible," Mautone wrote in his application. "My passion for teaching children with special needs evolved while I worked as an instructional assistant with children with disabilities 19 years ago. I have never looked back since."

Six finalists for State Teacher of the Year, who earned the highest scores on their applications and interview sessions with an independent panel of educators, also attended today's ceremony at the State Board meeting. They include: Stephanie Cardoso, a fifth-grade teacher from Martin Luther King Elementary School in Edison; Peter Davis, a technology teacher from Belhaven Avenue Middle School in Linwood; Cynthia Leatherwood, an English teacher from the Dennis Township Middle School; Salvatore Lima, a science teacher from West Caldwell Tech within the Essex County Vocational School District; Kathryn Tricarico, a kindergarten teacher from Adamsville Primary School in the Bridgewater-Raritan Regional School District; and Coleen Weiss-Magasic, a science teacher from the West Milford Township High School.

### **About the Teacher of the Year Program**

The New Jersey Teacher of the Year Program is administered by the state Department of Education. The program is sponsored by three organizations and companies that provide valuable resources for the recipient teacher.

Educational Testing Service will sponsor a six-month sabbatical from January to June 2015 worth approximately \$60,000. During this time, Mautone will work closely with the Department of Education on special projects. In his role as State Teacher of the Year, he will also give presentations around the state and participate in national activities, including meeting the President of the United States. The New Jersey Education Association will pay for the lease of a car and travel-related expenses for a full year, and SMART Technologies will provide a full SMART Classroom package.

Every year, New Jersey's Teacher of the Year program recognizes many talented teachers. The process begins at the local level, where school and district-level teachers of the year are chosen. District Teachers of the Year have their applications submitted for competition at the county level. Additional information can be found on the NJDOE's [Teacher of the Year web page](#).