



# OHIO

## 2025

### THE AMERICAN LEGION EDUCATOR OF THE YEAR NOMINATION FORM

Name: Matt Berman

Address: 4128 Bowen Rd

City, State, Zip: Toledo, Ohio 43613

School: Toledo Whitmer High School

District: Washington Local Schools

School Address: 5601 Clegg Drive

School City, State, Zip: Toledo, Ohio 43613

Principals Name: Mr. Jerry Bell

School Telephone: 419-473-8460

#### Eligibility Requirements

##### THE NOMINEE MUST:

Be an Educator in any grade (K-12) in any public, private, or parochial school or academy in the State of Ohio recognized by the Ohio Department of Education.

Be nominated by a local American Legion Post.

Be endorsed by the Superintendent, and Principal through letters of recommendation to be attached to this Nomination Form.



### Award

The American Legion Educator of the Year will be presented with an award at the American Legion Department Mid-Winter Conference and receive one (1) nights housing.

### Teaching History

1st year began teaching August 2004

Total years taught - 21 years, 2 months

Grade(s) currently taught 10th thru 12th grade

Subject(s) currently taught - Advanced Placement Government & Politics (grades 11-12), American Government (grades 11-12), Current Events (grades 10-12), Economics (grades 11-12).

# **THE AMERICAN LEGION EDUCATOR OF THE YEAR NOMINATION INSTRUCTIONS**

The Educator who best meets the qualifications outlined in the Nomination Application will be selected as the 2025 AMERICAN LEGION EDUCATOR OF THE YEAR by the Department Americanism Commission.

The American Legion Educator of the Year award will be awarded at the upcoming annual Department Mid-Winter Conference.

## **INSTRUCTIONS FOR COMPLETING APPLICATION:**

Applicant and sponsoring American Legion Post should type or print all information. Each section should be completed with as much information as possible. If more space is needed, additional pages may be added.

Section A -Applicant and sponsoring Post should briefly outline the educational career of the nominee.

Section B - List all Education Honors, Awards, Recognitions received by the nominee.

Section C - To be completed by the nominating American Legion Post.

Section D - The applicant and sponsoring Post should list any other education achievements of the nominee to be considered

## **SECTION PROCESS:**

- ✓ Every Post may make a nomination of an exceptional educator.
- ✓ Post nomination must be forwarded to the District Americanism Chairman by **August 1**

- ✓ Each District nomination will be forwarded to the Department Americanism Office no later than **September 15.**
- ✓ The Department Americanism Commission will review each District nomination and select the Department ***“Educator of the Year “***

## Section A

### EDUCATIONAL CAREER (Brief Outline)

Matt Berman has been passionate about Americanism & Government since growing up in Northwest Ohio. In high school, he took an Americanism test and was selected as one of two students to go to Washington D.C. to participate in what was known as Presidential Classroom, which was a gathering of juniors across the United States. This passion led him to aspire to teach future students about US Government and Politics and he went to Eastern Michigan and received his Bachelors Degree in Education in 2004. He has been teaching US Government, Social Studies, Current Events, and Economics at Washington Local School in Toledo Ohio since for over 21 years.

## Section B

### EDUCATION HONORS, AWARDS, RECOGNITIONS

- graduated Summa Cum Laude from Eastern Michigan in 2004
- Selected as Chairman of the Social Studies Department (serving the last 9 years)
- Selected as Co-Advisor of National Honor Society and Junior Student Council
- Chosen by local teacher's union as Building Representative at Whitmer High School (10 years)

## Section C

(For American Legion Post)

### WHAT MAKES THIS EDUCATOR AN EXCEPTIONAL INSTRUCTOR?

Matt has done an extraordinary job enriching students with his passion for Americanism and US Government studies, and has been the primary contact (as the Chairman of the Social Studies Department) for Conn-Weissenberger Post 587 by arranging the annual Americanism test at Whitmer High School where routinely over 200 students participate in taking the exam each year. The past two years, a student from Whitmer has scored extraordinarily well on the exam (and earning trips to Washington DC) with a junior student from last year scoring a 49/50. Matt also coordinates annually a salute to Veterans each year by organizing a Veterans Assembly at Whitmer High School that includes a free breakfast for veterans in attendance. The assembly is attended by a few hundred students, teachers/school administration, the Whitmer High School band playing a medley of each of the Armed Forces songs and the choir singing patriotic songs. Matt also arranges for the families of recent Whitmer graduates to be in attendance and presented "Blue Star" flags from members of our post. A shining example of Matt's passion for veterans is that he has been "leading the charge" for many years in collecting donations from students for the Gifts for Yanks, and has students present checks to our post representative for monies collected. To date, Whitmer High School students have contributed over \$60,000 to Gifts for Yanks since the program was started. Matt also hosts local veterans each year at a Whitmer varsity football game that includes a "tailgate" before the game, t-shirts recognizing veterans, and a walk-on the field before the game. He is an advocate of Buckeye Boys/Girls State and routinely presents qualified young boys/girls to be interviewed each year that participate in each of the respective programs. Matt has also spearheaded the efforts for the annual Social Studies Department scholarship, which has ultimately brought in \$25,000, allowing the department to award over \$2,000 in scholarships each year to graduating seniors to continue their educational journey.

## Section D

(For American Legion Post)

### PLEASE LIST ANY OTHER EDUCATION ACHIEVEMENTS OF THE NOMINEE, WHICH SHOULD WARRANT CONSIDERATION BY THE SELECTION COMMITTEE

Matt has been the Chairman of Whitmer's Social Studies department for nine (9) years, is a co-advisor of the National Honor Society, and advisor for the Social Studies Club and the Junior Class Student Council. He has also been elected as the teacher's union Building Representative at Whitmer for the last 10 years.

ATTACHMENTS:

***THREE REQUIRED LETTERS OF RECOMMENDATION:***

1. School Superintendent 2. American Legion Post 3. School Principal

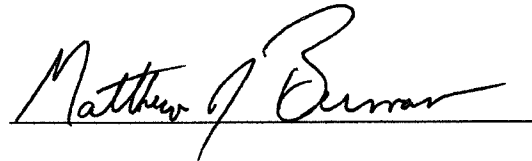
**NOTE:** Additional letters of recommendation may be included with this application.

**AUTHORIZATION**

**Certification by Educator**

I certify to the accuracy of the foregoing facts. If selected, I will be free to travel to The American Legion Department Mid-Winter Conference and participate as the "Educator of the Year," representing The American Legion and my school corporation.

Date: 9/18/2025 Signature of Educator:



**ENDORSEMENTS**

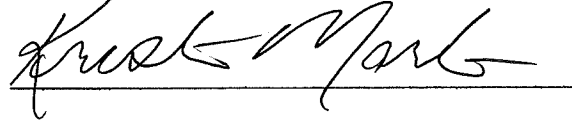
**School Superintendent**

The above named applicant is qualified in every aspect to represent The American Legion and our school corporation and has our recommendation.

Date:

9/19/25

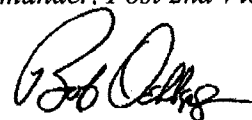
Superintendent:



**American Legion Post**

The above named applicant is approved by Post Number as qualified for nomination of The American Legion "Educator of the Year" - *(Must be signed by a designated representative- Post Commander, Post 1st Vice Commander, Post 2nd Vice Commander, Post Adjutant, or Post Americanism Chairman).*

Date: 9/15/2025 Designated Representative Signature



Title Conn-Weissenberger Post 587 Americanism Chairman

## American Legion State Selection Committee

This attests the above named applicant has been selected by the Americanism Commission of the Ohio American Legion as the Department "Educator of the Year"

Date\_\_\_\_\_ Department Chairman Signature\_\_\_\_\_

**\*\*\*IMPORTANT-DO NOT SEND DIRECTLY TO DEPARTMENT  
HEADQUARTERS\*\*\***

Robert J. (Bob) Oehlers  
3120 Stone Wall Road  
Maumee, Ohio 43537  
Phone: (419)304-4329  
[Westpoint1989@yahoo.com](mailto:Westpoint1989@yahoo.com)

September 15, 2025

Dear Sir/Ma'am:

It is with great honor and pleasure that I recommend Mr. Matt Berman as the Ohio American Legion Educator of the Year. Conn-Weissenberger Post 587 couldn't ask for a better advocate of veterans and the American Legion than Matt. He is passionate in promoting veteran's causes and ensures that students at Toledo Whitmer High School understand the importance of not only the foundation and principles of the United States government but also love and respect for our nation's soldiers and veterans.

As Chairman of the Social Studies department at Whitmer, he arranges for over 200 students each year to take the American Legion's Americanism Test. Whitmer has produced some of the highest scores in our district and has sent students over the past two years to the annual trip to Washington DC for high achievement.

Matt shines brightest each year as he coordinates two veteran's recognition events at Whitmer High School: the annual Veteran's Day Assembly and the Veteran's Tailgate/field march on at a Friday night varsity football game. Matt ensures that each event is done with the highest regard to veterans and makes all who participate that the youth of America still get educated on the value of those who served in the defense of our great nation.

Matt is a strong advocate of the American Legion Buckeye Boys/Girls State program(s) and introduces several fine candidates each year. A recent Whitmer High School Boys State attendee was interviewed to attend Boys Nation and even had a discussion with Governor DeWine.

It is refreshing to see his passion for teaching students about the fundamentals of American Government and how they need to be informed/involved with its functions. He often promotes and attends meetings with the students at Conn-Weissenberger Post 587 for Americanism and Boys/Girls State award ceremonies.

I am absolutely convinced that Matt Berman is the type of individual that epitomizes the credo of "For God and Country" and is very worthy of being chosen as Educator of the Year! My wish is that he is awarded this honor of which he is very deserving!

For God and Country!

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Bob Oehlers", with a stylized, cursive script.

Bob Oehlers  
Americanism Chairman  
Conn-Weissenberger Post 587  
Toledo, Ohio

# Kristine Martin

Superintendent



To Whom It May Concern,

I am honored to write this letter in support of Matthew Berman for the Ohio Educator of the Year. As Superintendent of Washington Local Schools, I have had the privilege of witnessing Matthew Berman's dedication to our students, staff, and the broader educational community. His commitment to excellence in education makes him an outstanding candidate for this role.

With over 20 years of service in our district, he has been a cornerstone of our Social Studies department, serving as Department Chair for the past eight years. In this leadership role, he has been instrumental in shaping curriculum, fostering professional development, and ensuring that students receive a high-quality education. In addition, he serves on the Whitmer Building Leadership Team, where his insight and expertise have impacted our school community.

Additionally, he has served as a Resident Educator Mentor, and has guided new teachers with professionalism and care, helping to build their confidence and instructional skills. His work as a cooperating teacher for pre-service educators from Lourdes University, Bowling Green State University, and the University of Toledo demonstrates his dedication to supporting aspiring teachers in their professional growth.

Beyond his instructional and leadership roles, Matthew has also contributed to the culture of accountability and collaboration within our district. He has been a co-advisory for the national Honor Society, advisor for the Social Studies Club and Junior Class Student Council. As a department chair, he has worked closely with administration to ensure that educators are both supported and held to the highest standards of professionalism. His ability to balance advocacy for teachers with a commitment to student success makes him an invaluable leader in our schools.

Please feel free to contact me if you require any further information. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,



Kristine Martin

**EVERY STUDENT MATTERS; EVERY MOMENT COUNTS.**

## ADDRESS

3505 W. Lincolnshire Blvd  
Toledo, OH 43606

## PHONE

(419) 473-8220

## WEBSITE

[wls4kids.org](http://wls4kids.org)

**Whitmer High School**  
**5701 Clegg Drive**  
**Toledo, OH 43613**



September 15, 2025

To the Esteemed Members of the Selection Committee,

It is with immense pleasure and a deep sense of pride that I recommend Mr. Matt Berman for the distinguished 2025 Ohio American Legion Educator of the Year award. As Principal of Whitmer High School, I have had the privilege of working with Mr. Berman for [Number] years and have consistently been impressed by his unwavering dedication to his students, his profound commitment to fostering American values, and his exceptional ability to bring history to life in the classroom.

Mr. Berman is not simply a history teacher; he is a civic educator who instills in his students a strong sense of patriotism and responsible citizenship. He goes far beyond the textbook, creating an engaging and dynamic learning environment where students can truly connect with our nation's history and its founding principles. He regularly incorporates lessons on the significance of the Constitution, the importance of civic participation, and the sacrifices made by our veterans to secure our freedoms. His students are not just learning facts; they are developing a profound appreciation for the ideals upon which this country was built.

One of the most remarkable examples of his dedication is his leadership of the school's [Name of History Club or a similar club]. Under his guidance, students have undertaken projects to honor local veterans, including [mention a specific project, e.g., organizing a veterans oral history project, creating a memorial display, or participating in a service-learning project with a local American Legion post]. These initiatives have had a tangible impact on both our students and the wider community, fostering a sense of intergenerational respect and understanding.

Mr. Berman's leadership skills extend to his mentorship of colleagues. He is always willing to share his innovative teaching strategies and resources, and he has been instrumental in developing our school's curriculum to better align with the principles of civic responsibility. His passion for education is infectious, and his positive influence is felt throughout our entire faculty.

In conclusion, Matt Berman is a remarkable educator who embodies the values of The American Legion. His passion for history, his commitment to civic education, and his efforts to honor those who have served our country make him an exemplary candidate for this prestigious award. He is a true asset to Whitmer High School and a shining example of what it means to be an American educator. If you have any further questions please feel free to contact me at [gbell@wls4kids.org](mailto:gbell@wls4kids.org).

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Jerry Bell

Principal, Whitmer High School

**Every Student Matters; Every Moment Counts**

Gerald Bell  
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