Below is a selection of the answers we received that did not appear in Edutopia magazine.

If there were to be a monument to teachers on the Mall in Washington, DC, what should it be?

I nominate a monumental two cents. This would symbolize not only ideas but also teachers' salaries.
Tom Cooke
Media/library specialist
Maryland School for the Deaf, Columbia campus
Columbia, Maryland

There already is a monument to teachers on the Mall. Every structure has a solid foundation that strongly supports the symbols of our democracy. Without such a solid foundation, the democracy would fail.
Eric Garner
Pembroke Pines, Florida

It should be a huge open book or books with children of various ages emerging from it or surrounding it, because books contain the knowledge of the ages and children are taught with the knowledge found within.
Patricia Johnson
Media specialist
Opal Hamilton Middle School
Cypress, Texas

A smiling child holding a globe, because teachers have the power to give their students the world.
Kim Olsovsky
High school English teacher
Lamar High School
Lamar, South Carolina

A series of statues of adults, each lifting up a child and putting that child on a pedestal.
Ted Hill
Principal
Erie High School
Erie, Kansas
I envision a parklike area where people enter and are challenged to think and will have fun. There could be riddles, scavenger hunts, problems to solve, hands-on activities, and so on, in all the subjects. I think you would need something for those in every walk of life here in the United States. It could very well be another Exploratorium, but not just science based.

Bob Bachmeier  
Math specialist  
Yolo County Office of Education  
Woodland, California

What it would be is a colossal waste of taxpayer money!
Jean Horack  
Special education teacher  
Waubun High School  
Waubun, Minnesota

It should be something simple like a caterpillar morphing into a butterfly. It should also include a place where people could drop money to support the teachers of the United States.
Melissa Desmarais  
Family day care provider  
Germantown, Maryland

I would have a nicely dressed man and a woman jumping over hurdles. The hurdles would be made of all the obstacles teachers have to jump over to help their students succeed in their school careers.
Vicki M. Krueger  
Kindergarten teacher  
Two Rivers Community School  
Boone, North Carolina

I think that a perfect monument would be many hands holding Earth to symbolize that we give our students a world of knowledge, hope, and inspiration every day. Earth could be surrounded by the solar system to show that we want students to keep reaching for things that they may not be able to understand now but could grasp in the future.
Marlene Silverman  
Teacher  
Haverstraw Middle School  
Haverstraw, New York

A figure of a child lifting up a giant apple made of many colors!
Doreen Jupp  
Sixth-grade teacher  
Parkwood School  
Streamwood, Illinois

It should consist of an apple, children, a book, a globe, a brain, and a little red schoolhouse. It may sound typical, but it represents what educators are all about.
Etta Alston  
Acute-services teacher  
John Umstead Hospital  
Butner, North Carolina
It should recognize the broad range of people who fulfill this role: the classroom teacher, the religious instructor, parents and the extended family, famous teachers, and your common man. The design could be in the round so that it would reflect the village that it takes to educate a child, with the student in the center. Appropriate quotes by teachers and/or students could complete the structure. Official recognition of the importance of instructors in the creation of our citizens is a tremendous idea, long past due.

Cheryl Connolly
Teacher instructor, former K-5 science resource teacher
Santa Clara County Office of Education
San Jose, California

Our work is about the students more than about us. Therefore, I think an appropriate monument would be a mural that starts on the bottom with our youngest students and builds to include progressively older students (all engaged in a variety of activities). The mural would end at the top with adult men and women representing a variety of ethnicities and professions. The plaque at the bottom (or a phrase printed across the bottom) would read, "Teachers make it all possible."

Nicole Naditz
PAR/BTSA consulting teacher (mentor)
San Juan Unified School District
Sacramento, California

A simple bronze plaque in the center of the Mall with the words "Were it not for teachers, none of what you see around you would exist."

David P. Zimmerman
Associate Professor Emeritus of Library Science & Educational Media
James Madison University
Harrisonburg, Virginia

It should be a butterfly. The butterfly represents a metamorphosis -- a change from larva to pupa to cocoon to the adult insect. And so it is with the educational process. Teachers accept children where they find them (the levels of performance and of proficiency), and they nurture and support their maturational, developmental, and academic growth until the children develop into strong, confident, beautiful creatures who are able to fly independently.

Butterflies are diverse in their appearance, and they communicate beauty and wonder. So it is with teachers, and so it is with children.

Elizabeth Allen
Principal
Midtown Academy
Baltimore, Maryland

I think a model of Earth would be an adequate representation for teachers. Without teachers, there would be no doctors, scientists, lawyers, police officers, and so on. When I entered the teaching profession, I knew I couldn't change the world on my own, but I knew I could change it one child at a time. Teaching is often described as a noble profession -- we often teach for the sense of moral goodness and satisfaction that we are able to facilitate the awakening and acquisition of knowledge that will allow students to enter the world as productive and responsible citizens.

Barbara McGrath
Educational diagnostician
Southampton County Schools
Courtland, Virginia
A memorial to teachers would require a multifaceted structure with bronze inlaid reliefs that would depict events in teaching that demonstrate learning; sharing knowledge, encouraging investigation, discovering new information, sharing a story, and being that happy face a child sees each day. Beneath the reliefs could be statements on what it is to teach, such as planting the seed of inquiry, sharing the world through books, and turning on the light of discovery.

Racie McKee  
Project director  
Omak Community Schools  
Omak, Washington

Save the money that would be spent on the monument and give it directly to schools or teachers. Why have a monument when the nation does not demonstrate in other ways the respect teachers deserve?

Donna Blanchard  
Roosevelt Middle School  
San Francisco, California

I would suggest a field of black granite with a large rectangular gray granite pillar at its center. This pillar is emblazoned with gold icons representing the various fields of learning. Around it are hundreds of smaller pillars of various sizes spread out over the field. A flame ignites at the top of the tallest pillar. Then each pillar nearest the tallest pillar ignites with a flame at the top, and this spreads outward from the teacher pillar until the entire field of pillars is ignited with the flame of knowledge. All flames should extinguish slowly.

Ron Ofman  
Fifth-grade math and science teacher  
United School District  
Armagh, Pennsylvania

I suggest one of two things: either a blank pedestal, no monument -- an indicator of the attention and action that politicians actually give to education and teachers -- or a figure overloaded by a huge burden of social ills, an indicator of how often education is looked to for the solution for the government's, our society's, and the family's shortcomings.

Ed Jenson  
Principal  
Ogden High School  
Ogden, Utah

The monument should be that of a teacher looking down toward a student, with a look of contentment on the face of the teacher and one of enlightenment on the face of the student, as they are engaged in the learning/teaching process.

Anna Garcia Berlanga  
Assistant Principal  
John F. Kennedy High School  
Chicago, Illinois

Every American is who they are in part because of the teachers who taught them. How about soliciting Americans for comments about the teachers who impacted their lives and displaying those comments in a running banner that spirals around a sculpture made of light, because what the best teachers do is illuminate.

Wanda E. Rader  
Professional-development/grants manager  
School Board of Levy County  
Bronson, Florida
Krista McAuliffe said it best, if I remember her words correctly: "I touch the future. I teach." There are so many teacher heroes for me, but none who spoke to me so succinctly as McAuliffe. She taught from her heart until the day she died -- she lived, and she died, teaching! What greater tribute to teachers could we have than someone who taught on Earth and from the heavens?

Sara E. Wood
Business- and technology-education teacher
Memorial High School
Elkhart, Indiana

The monument to teachers could be a bronze statue of an overseer telling a brick maker to make more bricks with less straw. The monument would not be gold or silver, because our society's expectation is only bronze. The bricks represent the young learners our society encourages teachers to form, and the whole scenario suggests a reference to history, which is a subject the general public tends to miss.

Scott Dodd
Fifth-grade teacher
Wilmington, North Carolina

A statue of a teacher and child looking at a book together would symbolize the beauty of teacher.

Katherine Law
Teacher
Orca Elementary School
Seattle, Washington

It should be a small child sitting and playing with a teacher. Then, next to the child should be an older child doing some educational activity. Next to that child should be an older child doing another educational activity. Then another older child, until there are about twelve grade levels. The kids should be in a circle, and the last student should be right next to the teacher. The idea is that the educated children will come around and teach others.

David Christmas
Second-grade teacher
Little Butte School
Eagle Point, Oregon

Two individuals, one a woman and the other a man, and two children of different ages and socioeconomic and ethnic groups. Each teacher should be helping the child by putting a hand on the child's shoulder in support of the child's learning. Each teacher could have a hand open to what one child is doing as if to take the information from the child. One child could have a book, and the other could have a small laptop. The other arms of the teachers should be reaching for the stars, which would symbolize the future. Along the bottom of the monument could be the inscription "Teachers help others reach for the future" or "Teachers help others create the future."

Trudy Bantle
Social studies teacher
Fairport High School
Fairport, New York

I think that the monument should be dedicated to those teachers who have lost their lives in their career setting. It is tough enough to think about something treacherous happening at the safe havens our schools are supposed to be, but to know that some of my peers have lost their lives and their families have lost them is devastating.

Tammi S. Barker
Career and Technical Education Department
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