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Two South Dakota teachers earn profession's top honor

PIERRE, S.D. – Two South Dakota classroom teachers are among the nearly 4,160 elementary and secondary school teachers nationwide to achieve National Board Certification in 2014.

“These teachers are to be commended for their dedication to students and to their own professional growth,” said South Dakota Secretary of Education Dr. Melody Schopp. “The National Board Certification process is rigorous. To achieve certification, teachers must take a comprehensive look at their instructional practice and commit to continual improvement.”

The achievement raises the number of National Board Certified Teachers in South Dakota to 106.

South Dakota's 2014 recipients include:

- Sarah M. Gross, Mathematics/Early Adolescence, Rapid City Area School District
- Jody Neugebauer, Generalist/Early Childhood, Garretson School District

In addition, the following individuals renewed their National Board Certificates:

- Ellen Cooch, Mathematics/Early Adolescence, Spearfish School District
- Vikki Hasche, Generalist/Middle Childhood, Arlington School District
- Nichole Melius, Career and Technical Education/Early Adolescence through Young Adulthood, Faulkton Area School District

National Board Certification is achieved through a rigorous, performance-based, peer-reviewed assessment of a teacher's pedagogical (teaching) skills and content knowledge. The certification process takes one to three years to complete. While licensing standards set the basic requirements to teach in a state, National Board Certified teachers demonstrate advanced teaching knowledge, skills and practices similar to the certifications earned by experts in law and medicine.

To learn more about National Board Certification, call the South Dakota Department of Education at (605) 773-3134 or go to www.doe.sd.gov.