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Sioux Falls teacher receives \$25,000 Milken Educator Award

NOTE TO EDITORS: Professional photos and video footage from today's event will be available shortly at <http://milkeneducatorawards.org/newsroom/media-kit/>.

Caption for attached photo (l to r): Dr. Jane Foley, LeeAnna Rabine, Dr. Melody Schopp

SIOUX FALLS, S.D. – LeeAnna Rabine, a kindergarten teacher at Hawthorne Elementary School in Sioux Falls, received a \$25,000 surprise today. State Education Secretary Dr. Melody Schopp and Dr. Jane Foley, senior vice president of the Milken Educator Awards, presented Rabine with a Milken Educator Award during a school assembly this morning.

“The Milken Award has been called the Oscar of teaching, and it’s so fun to see a teacher get this red carpet treatment,” said Schopp. “LeeAnna’s classroom is her students’ formal introduction to schooling. She embraces that role, setting the stage for their future academic success and engaging their families as well.”

Rabine has taught at Hawthorne for 10 years. A large proportion of her students are English language learners. She uses American Sign Language and a variety of other strategies to serve these students. To enhance her students’ literary skills, Rabine designed a special pen pal program with high school students in Minnesota. She

actively encourages parents to read to their children and even makes home visits if a parent misses a parent/teacher conference. Outside of the classroom, she mentors new and veteran teachers. She serves on the district curriculum committee and has recorded a presentation for all kindergarten parents, which is shown on district television.

“LeeAnna sees the ‘big picture’ and works to develop lessons that prepare students for academic and social success in school,” said Rabine’s principal, Dr. June Gaston. “She is a role model and leader in raising teacher effectiveness and capacity for teaching as proven by student achievement.”

The Milken Educator Awards were conceived by Lowell Milken to recognize the importance of outstanding educators and encourage talented young people to enter the teaching profession. Since South Dakota joined the Milken Educator Awards program in 2002, a total of \$425,000 has been awarded to 17 South Dakota recipients.

Candidates for the Milken Educator Awards are selected on the following criteria:

- Exceptional educational talent, as evidenced by effective instructional practices and student learning results in the classroom and school
- Exemplary educational accomplishments beyond the classroom that provide models of excellence for the profession
- Individuals whose education contributions are largely unheralded yet worthy of the spotlight
- Early- to mid-career educators who offer strong, long-range potential for professional and policy leadership
- Engaging and inspiring presence that motivates and impacts students, colleagues and the community

To learn more about the Milken Educator Award, visit www.milkeneducatorawards.org.