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### **Boomsma selected as 2019 South Dakota Teacher of the Year**

SIoux FALLS, S.D. – Erica Boomsma, a fourth grade teacher at the Washington 4-5 Center in the Huron School District, has been named the 2019 South Dakota Teacher of the Year. The announcement was made this evening at a banquet at the Ramkota Hotel and Convention Center in Sioux Falls.

“Through the Teacher of the Year program, we lift up and celebrate this vital profession,” said Mary Stadick Smith, interim secretary of education. “Advocating for teaching and students seems to be second nature to Erica, and in the coming year, I know she will make a strong impact on everyone she meets as State Teacher of the Year.”

Boomsma has taught in the Huron School District since 2002. She is a leader in her school and district, serving as a resource to colleagues seeking guidance on effective instructional strategies for English learners. In recent years, Boomsma has led the development of a highly successful literacy program focused on building fluency and comprehension. As part of this program, students have created a “virtual library,” recording themselves reading books aloud. These audiobooks are then made available for all classrooms in the district.

A statewide panel of educators selected Boomsma from among five regional finalists. The other finalists were Anita Boeck, math, Arlington School District; Sarah Darling, first grade, Brandon Elementary; Lisa Zahn, vocal music, Mobridge-Pollock School District; and Mary Day, business education and computer technology, Belle Fourche High School.

As recipient of the honor, Boomsma receives prizes including a \$5,000 cash award from the West River Foundation and a \$1,000 honorarium from the South Dakota Board of Regents to present a series of professional development seminars to aspiring teachers. Prize packages are made possible through the generosity of private businesses and organizations, including Smart Technologies, the South Dakota Retailers Association and the South Dakota Education Association.

In addition, Boomsma will represent South Dakota as a candidate for the National Teacher of the Year award. The National Teacher of the Year Program began in 1952 and continues as the oldest, most prestigious national honors program that focuses public attention on excellence in teaching. The 2019 National Teacher of the Year will be announced during a ceremony in Washington, D.C., in the spring.

