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Kaltsulas selected as 2017 South Dakota Teacher of the Year



PIERRE, S.D. – Beth Kaltsulas (kelt-SUE-less), a math teacher at Yankton Middle School, has been selected as the 2017 South Dakota Teacher of the Year. The announcement was made this evening at a banquet at the Cedar Shore Conference Center in Oacoma.

“Every day, teachers make an impact in students’ lives,” said Secretary of Education Dr. Melody Schopp. “The Teacher of the Year award is a thank you that recognizes the work of one teacher in particular, but also the profession

as a whole. I congratulate Beth on this honor. It is well-deserved, and over the coming year, she will be a strong advocate for the profession in this important role.”

Kaltsulas has taught in the Yankton School District for 30 years. She considers mentoring a vital component of the profession and has served as a cooperating teacher for 13 student teachers. She runs a daily math academy, an opportunity for students to receive math tutoring before and after school. Several years ago, she piloted a math class that seeks to keep students who qualify for special education services in the general education setting.

A statewide panel of educators selected Kaltsulas from among five regional finalists. The other finalists were Tina England, Stanley County School District; Cindy Gerlach, Mitchell School District; Velda Schneider, Chester Area School District; and Aimee Wagner, Leola School District. Julie Hatling with the Belle Fourche School District was also a regional finalist, but has since taken a non-teaching position as a curriculum director and therefore did not participate in the South Dakota Teacher of the Year selection process.

As recipient of the honor, Kaltsulas receives prizes including a \$5,000 cash award 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.

In addition, Kaltsulas 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 2017 National Teacher of the Year will be announced during a ceremony in Washington, D.C., in the spring.

