

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: Thursday, Oct. 8, 2020

CONTACT: Mary Stadick Smith, South Dakota Department of Education, 605-773-7228, mary.stadicksmith@state.sd.us or Ruth Raveling, South Dakota Department of Education, 605-773-2593, ruth.raveling@state.sd.us

Hargreaves selected as 2021 South Dakota Teacher of the Year

PIERRE, S.D. – Amanda Hargreaves (“HAR-greevz”), a sixth-grade teacher at Mitchell Middle School, has been named the 2021 South Dakota Teacher of the Year. Secretary of Education Ben Jones made the announcement this evening at a special virtual event.

“The Teacher of the Year program shines a light on this honorable profession,” said Secretary of Education Ben Jones. “The importance of great teaching simply cannot be overstated, and we see it in abundance among our state’s educators. Over the coming year, Amanda will serve as a representative of all South Dakota teachers, advocating for them and their students. With her energy and enthusiasm, I know she will be a fantastic State Teacher of the Year.”

Hargreaves has taught in the Mitchell School District since 2011, first at Longfellow Elementary, where she helped establish an anti-bullying program. She has a master’s degree in educational administration. Now at Mitchell Middle School, she serves on the Principal’s Cabinet Leadership team and offers students tutoring help after school. In her science classroom, learning comes to life through activities like the Force and Motion Carnival, in which students design and create carnival games to demonstrate their understanding of Newton’s laws of motion.

A statewide panel of educators selected Hargreaves from among five regional finalists. The other finalists were Lisa Weier (“weer”), Project Lead the Way, George S. Mickelson Middle School (Brookings); Marissa Whipple, second grade, Baltic Elementary; Spencer Cody, science, Edmunds Central Middle and High School; and Luke Erfman, computer/STEAM, rural schools, Meade School District.

As recipient of the honor, Hargreaves 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 the South Dakota Retailers Association and the South Dakota Education Association.

In addition, Hargreaves 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 2021 National Teacher of the Year will be announced during a ceremony in Washington, D.C., in the spring.

