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CONTACT: [Mary Stadick Smith](#), South Dakota Department of Education, 605-773-7228, or [Ruth Raveling](#), South Dakota Department of Education, 605-773-2593

Celebrating Teacher Appreciation Week and announcing Regional Teachers of the Year

PIERRE, S.D. – Gov. Kristi Noem has proclaimed [May 3-7 Teacher Appreciation Week](#) in South Dakota.

“South Dakota teachers have been absolutely phenomenal this school year. While facing the challenges of the pandemic, they jumped in to provide quality education to our students,” said Secretary of Education Tiffany Sanderson. “Our teachers have supported both the academic and social-emotional well-being of their students. They have shown how critical our schools are to South Dakota communities. As a parent, I’m deeply grateful for their efforts.”

The Department of Education will be using #ThankATeacher on social media throughout the week. Members of the public are invited to share a message of thanks for the teachers impacting students across the state and country.

As part of this special week, the South Dakota Department of Education is pleased to announce the following individuals as South Dakota’s Regional Teachers of the Year:

- Region #1: Stephanie Ballard, special education – math, George S. Mickelson Middle School (Brookings)
- Region #2: Kristi Desaulniers, fourth grade, Legacy Elementary (Tea)
- Region #3: Barbara Nicholas, elementary music, Buchanan K-1 Center (Huron)
- Region #4: Jenna Peters, 6-12 English language arts, Britton-Hecla School District
- Region #5: Koreen Hammel, fourth and fifth grade multi-grade classroom, Hot Springs Elementary

A statewide panel of educators will select one of these regional finalists to represent the state as the 2022 South Dakota Teacher of the Year. The 2022 South Dakota Teacher of the Year will be announced this fall. That individual will be South Dakota’s 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 2022 National Teacher of the Year will be announced during a ceremony in Washington, D.C., in spring 2022.

Editor’s Note: Please consider contacting your local school(s) for potential stories about Teacher Appreciation Week celebrations in your community.