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Celebrating Teacher Appreciation Week and announcing Regional Teachers of the Year

PIERRE, S.D. – May 2-6 is Teacher Appreciation Week. “We’ve recently had several schools and individual teachers recognized for their excellence in education. You make South Dakota proud, and not just for these accomplishments,” Governor Kristi Noem said. “We are proud because our teachers are giving their all to help the next generation reach higher and dream bigger.”

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: Alyssa Cassels, 5-12 band instructor, Deuel School District
- Region #2: Deb Jensen, kindergarten, Viborg-Hurley School District
- Region #3: Loretta Knodel, third grade, Avon School District
- Region #4: Jennifer Weishaar, first grade, Aberdeen School District
- Region #5: Jennifer Macziewski, K-1 Primary, Rapid City Area Schools

A statewide panel of educators will select one of these regional finalists to represent the state as the 2023 South Dakota Teacher of the Year. The 2023 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 2023 National Teacher of the Year will be announced during a ceremony in Washington, D.C., in spring 2023.

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