

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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5 educators selected as 2021 Wisconsin Teachers of the Year

Honorees represent full spectrum of teaching experiences, display excellence in profession

MADISON – State Superintendent Carolyn Stanford Taylor today recognized five exemplary Wisconsin educators for being named the 2021 Wisconsin Teachers of the Year. The group was notified of their selection for the honor by Stanford Taylor earlier today at a virtual gathering.

“Teachers have the incredible responsibility of educating our children and inspiring them to grow,” Stanford Taylor said. “I am honored to recognize these five educators for their dedication and commitment to Wisconsin students and to call them our 2021 Wisconsin Teachers of the Year.”

The 2021 Wisconsin Teachers of the Year are among the 86 educators recognized earlier this year by the Herb Kohl Educational Foundation’s Teacher Fellowship Program, which honors and supports teaching excellence and innovation across Wisconsin. The honorees were selected by a diverse committee to represent voices, contexts, and perspectives as educational leaders throughout Wisconsin.

Herb Kohl, former state senator, philanthropist, and businessman, furthered his commitment to the Wisconsin Teacher of the Year Program by adding a fifth honoree, an increase from the usual four who are recognized annually. The Herb Kohl Educational Foundation will also provide a \$3,000 personal award to each of those selected. Here are the 2021 Wisconsin Teachers of the Year:

- **Koren Jackson**, *Milwaukee Transition High School, Milwaukee Public Schools*: Jackson is a special education teacher for post-expulsion or adjudicated youth and has worked in the district since 1999. She has developed project-based learning curriculum for students in the competency based learning program, which helps students earn credits by completing standards-aligned projects. In her spare time, Jackson volunteers for area organizations, such as the Milwaukee Hunger Task Force and Special Olympics of Wisconsin.
- **Trisha Kilpin**, *Greendale School District*: Kilpin is a school social worker for the district, which she has worked at since 1991. She created a mental health toolkit for caregivers, providing

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- evidence-supported guidance to help youth who are struggling. Kilpin also teaches crisis response and preparedness at the local, state, and national levels. She noted in her application she reaches and engages with students in the district by working to remove barriers and helps them feel connected to all aspects of school.
- **Brooke Kintzle (nee Lederman), *Brodhead Middle School, Brodhead School District***: Kintzle teaches cross-categorical special education at the school, which she has taught at since 2014. She strives to create an inclusive and trauma-sensitive environment in her classroom. Kintzle has also spent time volunteering with groups dedicated to assistive, adaptive, and inclusive practices for children.
 - **Derrick Meyer, *Amery High School, School District of Amery***: Meyer teaches agriscience and driver's education at the school, where he has taught since 2005. He previously served on DPI content writing teams for agriscience instruction and was a finalist for the National Agriscience Teacher of the Year award. Meyer's teaching philosophy involves engaging students to build excitement about learning and finding their respective passions in the process.
 - **Susan Richardson, *Milwaukee German Immersion School, Milwaukee Public Schools***: Richardson teaches third grade German immersion and has taught at the school since 2013. She has been recognized for promoting equity in her instruction and reaching out and building relationships with students to serve their individual needs.

In the fall, the Teacher of the Year Selection Committee will convene to interview each of those selected to be the 2021 Wisconsin Teachers of the Year. Through a collaborative process, one of the five educators will be chosen to represent Wisconsin in the Council of Chief State School Officers' National Teacher of the Year Program. For more information on the Wisconsin Teacher of the Year Program, [visit the DPI's website](#).

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NOTE: For a video of the 2021 Wisconsin Teachers of the Year receiving a surprise notification of their selection from State Superintendent Carolyn Stanford Taylor, visit https://youtu.be/TkSIFvdZ_64. This news release is available electronically at <https://dpi.wi.gov/news/releases/2020/wisconsin-teachers-of-the-year>.