



USD 497 NEWS

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School District Honors 2011 Lawrence Master Teacher

Lawrence Superintendent Rick Doll announced on Thursday that Kendra Metz, Southwest Middle School language arts/reading teacher, is the 2011-12 Lawrence Master Teacher. Lawrence Education Achievement Partner KU Credit Union, which partners with the school district to support its teacher recognition program, presented Metz with a check for \$2,500.

Metz joined the teaching staff at Southwest this fall after having taught sixth-graders at Hillcrest Elementary for the past five years. This is Metz's 20th year as an educator and her 18th year in the Lawrence Public Schools. She started her career teaching seventh-grade core classes part-time at Central, now Liberty Memorial Central, for one year in 1992. Metz then taught fifth- and/or sixth-grade students full-time at Quail Run for one year, Prairie Park for six years and Woodlawn for four years. She moved to Colorado in 2003, but returned to Lawrence in 2006, and joined Hillcrest's staff. She taught at Hillcrest for five years. Metz earned her bachelor's degree at Washburn and master's at Baker University.

Metz was nominated by a sixth-grade teaching colleague at Hillcrest, Jessica Larsen, who also happened to be a student of hers years ago at Quail Run. "Kendra's goal each year is for her students to be successful learners, but her ultimate goal is for all of her students to become independent, healthy and successful adults. In Mrs. Metz's classroom, you not only learn the curriculum – you learn more about yourself," Larsen said. "Mrs. Metz cares about you so much it makes you want to be a better person. This is the epitome of classroom management."

Larsen described Metz as spending countless hours outside of the school day planning, working in her classroom and coordinating school activities. Larsen added that Metz's pet project at Hillcrest was Italian Restaurant Day, which caps a study of ancient Rome. Students write letters of recommendation and resumes, complete job applications, practice interview skills and write to local businesses seeking donations. They make pasta, assume jobs in their "restaurant" and serve parents, staff and other guests.

"The Italian Restaurant unit that Kendra created was an example of her high quality teaching and planned learning activities through an integrated multiple content approach," said Hillcrest principal Tammy Becker. "Students were highly motivated to work on all tasks and were persistent even though many of the tasks were challenging and required higher-level student thinking and collaborative work skills. This activity exemplifies her excellent teaching skills."

Lawrence Public Schools annually select a Lawrence Master Teacher for local recognition. The district also nominates the outstanding educator for the Kansas Master Teacher program sponsored by Emporia State University's Teachers College. ESU will recognize seven Kansas Master Teachers in the spring. Recent Lawrence Master Teachers include: Ann Lounsbury, Kennedy, 2010; Kassie Shook, Sunflower, '09 (**Kansas Master Teacher**); Chuck Law, Free State High, '08; Judy Kettle, Wakarusa Valley, '07; Ron Garvin, South Junior High; '06; Gerry Bukaty, Sunflower, '05; Keri Austin-Janousek, Free State High, '04; Pat Grzenda, districtwide special education (**Kansas Master Teacher**), '03; Pamela Williams, Broken Arrow, '02; Sherry Slade, Free State High, '01; Joe Nyre, districtwide special education, 2000.

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