April 4, 2019

**USD 497 Honors 2019 Elementary Teacher of the Year**

Lawrence Superintendent of Schools Dr. Anthony Lewis announced today during an all-school assembly at Sunflower Elementary School that Peter Gipson, music teacher, is the 2019 Lawrence Elementary Teacher of the Year. Truity Credit Union, a Lawrence Education Achievement Partner, presented $1,000 to Gipson.

“Pete has a calling for his life, and that calling is teaching, which he exquisitely balances with his most important roles as a husband and father,” said Sunflower Principal Howard Diacon. “He does not work or serve for awards or accolades, but simply to inspire and impact all of those he comes in contact with each day. As a music teacher, he comes in contact with every child in the building…The kids absolutely love him!”

This is Gipson’s 14th year in Lawrence Public Schools, his tenth at Sunflower. He previously taught music at Kennedy Elementary. Gipson earned his bachelor’s degree at Kansas State University and a master’s at Emporia State University.

In addition to instructing all Sunflower students in music, Gipson directs the Sunflower Choir, which has twice been selected to perform at the Kansas Music Educators Association In-Service Workshop. His choir members also have been invited to perform in the KMEA All-State Elementary Choir.

In the fall, the Northeast District of KMEA recognized Gipson as its Elementary Choral Teacher of the Year. The Lawrence Schools Foundation named him its Elementary Educator of the Year in 2014.

Lawrence Public Schools annually selects an Elementary and a Secondary Teacher of the Year for local recognition and nominates eligible educators to the Kansas State Department of Education’s Kansas Teacher of the Year program. Photos of the honorees are displayed at the district office.

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