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South Hampton educator named New Hampshire's 2022 teacher of the year

CONCORD, NH (Oct. 20, 2021) – Sara Casassa, a language arts teacher at Barnard School in South Hampton, was named New Hampshire's 2022 Teacher of the Year during a surprise visit on Tuesday by representatives from the Teacher of the Year Selection Committee.

"Sara is an ultimate professional in her field. She knows how to create a highly engaging learning environment for students through literacy and technology. She is such an asset to New Hampshire," said Christine Brennan, deputy commissioner of education.

Casassa has been teaching for the past three decades, and began her career at Barnard School in 2009 where she has served as a language arts teacher, technology integrator and webmaster. She has a Master of Arts degree in English and a Bachelor of Arts degree in English/History from Boston College.

"There is no teacher who is more deserving than you," Assistant Superintendent David Hobbs of SAU 21 told Casassa during Tuesday's special announcement. She was selected from more than 70 applicants, 28 nominees and three finalists, and will now serve as an ambassador for all of the exceptionally skilled teachers in New Hampshire.

"Most importantly, Sara loves her students. This is evident in the relationships that she builds with all students and their families," Michelle Witt, principal at Barnard School, said in Casassa's application letter. "Her sense of humor and easy-going personality make her a beloved teacher at Barnard School. She is fair, understanding and treats everyone with respect."

Later this year, the semi-finalists, finalists and Casassa will be invited to a Leadership in Education Banquet to celebrate their accomplishments along with other distinguished educators in the state. Casassa will now be in the running for the National Teacher of the Year program.

"The selection committee was overwhelmed with highly qualified and respected teachers. Sara's commitment to excellence in education should be celebrated and honored, and we are proud to recognize all of her wonderful accomplishments throughout her teaching career," said Frank Edelblut, commissioner of education.

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