



Southwest Allen County Schools

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Governor Pence Honors SACS Teacher with Sagamore of the Wabash *2016 Indiana Teacher of the Year Jean Russell accepts award at Haverhill Elementary.*

FORT WAYNE, IND., Oct. 28, 2015 — Governor Mike Pence visited Haverhill Elementary School on Wednesday to honor Southwest Allen County Schools Educator and 2016 Indiana Teacher of the Year Jean Russell with a Sagamore of the Wabash. The award is the highest honor the Governor of Indiana can bestow upon a civilian.

“With more than 25 years of experience and numerous awards and recognitions to her credit, Jean Russell has dedicated her career to our kids,” Governor Pence said. “I was pleased to learn that she has been named Indiana’s 2016 Teacher of the Year, and I’m honored today to recognize her further with a Sagamore of the Wabash, a tribute to Hoosiers who have rendered distinguished service to the state and contributed greatly to our Hoosier heritage. Like the many dedicated teachers in our state, Jean Russell does Indiana a great service in the classroom each and every day to ensure that our kids get the education they deserve.”

As a literacy specialist at Haverhill, Russell has helped create a “community of readers,” where reading spills into the community through parents, students, teachers and community members. The Governor made reading and writing a big part of his message to Haverhill students on Wednesday. He shared with them one of his favorite children’s books, “Library Mouse,” and encouraged children to write their own stories.

“We are very appreciative of Governor Pence extending our students’ learning by reading to our students and recognizing our own Mrs. Russell,” SACS Superintendent Dr. Philip G. Downs said. “It was certainly a lesson these students will always remember.”

After the presentation, the Governor took time to meet with Haverhill students, teachers and staff.

“What a great experience for our girls and boys,” Principal Jeanine Kleber said. “We were so happy to have Governor Pence here and so proud to share in Mrs. Russell’s honor today. It was a delight to have Governor Pence share the love of reading and writing. He challenged the students to write their own story much like the story his own daughter is writing. The children will truly remember this day and our hope is they will be inspired by this message.”

About Southwest Allen County Schools

Nationally recognized and locally known for its award-winning programs, high-quality staff, and strong parental and community support, [Southwest Allen County Schools](#) is dedicated to a shared mission of preparing today’s learners for tomorrow’s opportunities.

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