



Southwest Allen County Schools

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PRESS RELEASE:

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SACS Educator Named Finalist for Indiana Teacher of the Year

Haverhill's Jean Russell one of 10 teachers selected by Department of Education.

FORT WAYNE, IND., Sept. 8, 2015 — The Indiana Department of Education has named Southwest Allen County Schools teacher Jean Russell as one of 10 finalists for Indiana Teacher of the Year.

Russell is a literacy specialist at Haverhill Elementary School and has been teaching for 25 years, 21 at them at SACS.

"I am so excited and proud of Mrs. Russell and all the work she had done for the girls and boys in Southwest Allen County Schools," Superintendent Dr. Philip G. Downs says. "She is a great example of the kind of dedicated and talented teachers we have at SACS. She and the other literacy coaches provide so much support to our kids and teachers each and every day."

As a literacy specialist, Russell provides on-going professional development to the entire Haverhill staff in the areas of reading and writing. At Haverhill, she has helped create a community of readers, where reading spills into the community through parents, students, teachers and community members. She also designs trainings,

models in classrooms and provides a wealth of resources for teachers throughout the district.

“Mrs. Russell is an amazing educator with a heart for education that goes unmatched,” Haverhill Principal Jeanine Kleber says. “Her presence in a building not only enhances student’s reading talents but enriches the lives of everyone around her with her passion, commitment, dedication and zeal for life. Southwest Allen County Schools is privileged to have an outstanding educator like Mrs. Russell working daily in our schools. Mostly importantly, students are very fortunate to have Mrs. Russell—a person with the love of education—advocating, teaching and loving them every day.”

Russell said she felt both honored and humbled by the award.

“My philosophy of being an instructional coach begins and ends with having the heart of a servant,” Russell says. “This has created opportunities for me to help both students and teachers learn more about themselves as learners, stretch themselves to learn more than they ever thought they could, and cheer them on to continue momentum.”

The Department of Education will select the State Teacher of the Year this fall. The winner will advance on to the National Teacher of the Year competition.

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.

About the Indiana Teacher of the Year Program

The [Indiana Teacher of the Year](#) program began in 1957 and continues as the oldest, most prestigious state honors program that focuses public attention on excellence in teaching. Its mission is to build and utilize a network of exemplary teachers who are leaders in the improvement of schools, student performance and the teaching profession.

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