



## NEWS RELEASE

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## BURWELL JR/SR HIGH SCHOOL TEACHER NAMED NEBRASKA TEACHER OF THE YEAR

*Nebraska Teacher of the Year and Awards of Excellence winners photos are available using the following link.*

[https://drive.google.com/open?id=1V9cHBArt5ROS2v5oXy36xm0-SHJNs\\_9t](https://drive.google.com/open?id=1V9cHBArt5ROS2v5oXy36xm0-SHJNs_9t)

Megan Helberg, an English teacher at Burwell Junior/Senior High School in Burwell, was named the Nebraska 2020 Teacher of the Year today during a surprise award presentation.

Nebraska Commissioner of Education Matthew Blomstedt presented the award.

Helberg was one of four finalists for the Nebraska Teacher of the Year award. Mark Gudel of Omaha North High Magnet School in Omaha, Robert Kerr of Hastings High School in Hastings, and Erin Meyer of West Elementary School in Sidney were also finalists and will be recognized as Award of Excellence winners.

Helberg started her teaching career at Papillion-La Vista Public Schools. She currently teaches 8<sup>th</sup>, 11<sup>th</sup>, and 12<sup>th</sup> grade English at Burwell Junior/Senior High School, where she has been since 2010.

In addition to her classroom experience, Helberg has been a Burwell Public School's Leader in Technology Educator, served as a Museum Teacher Fellow in Washington D.C., and received a Fund for Teachers grant where she travelled internationally.

Helberg wrote in her Teacher of the Year application that her goal in teaching is to bring a broader perspective of the world to her students.

"My biggest accomplishment in education has been exposing my students to people, places, and events they would not have access to except through my classroom," Helberg wrote. "The concept that a different way of life even exists is foreign to many of my students. I feel that it is my responsibility to bring the world to my students. I must keep taking steps to accomplish the ultimate goal of reaching the entire community about various races, religions, and ways of life."

Helberg has worked to achieve that goal by creating lessons about the Holocaust and hosting video chats with speakers and classrooms from different countries.

Helberg has been a teacher for 10 years and earned a Bachelor's Degree in Business Administration from Chadron State College. She received her teaching certificate through the Transition to Teach program at the University of Nebraska at Kearney.

A panel of Nebraska educators selected Helberg as the 2020 Nebraska Teacher of the Year. The Teacher of the Year program recognizes the contributions of classroom teachers who are exceptionally dedicated, knowledgeable, skilled, and who have the ability to inspire students of all backgrounds and abilities to learn.

Helberg, Gudgel, Kerr, and Meyer will be honored by the Nebraska State Board of Education at a November luncheon.

Helberg will participate in the National Teacher of the Year competition later this year.

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