



## NEWS RELEASE

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### LINCOLN HIGH SCHOOL TEACHER NAMED NEBRASKA TEACHER OF THE YEAR

Sydney Jensen, a 9<sup>th</sup> grade English teacher at Lincoln High School in Lincoln, was named Nebraska 2019 Teacher of the Year during a surprise award presentation.

Nebraska Commissioner of Education Matt Blomstedt presented the award.

Jensen was one of two finalists for Nebraska Teacher of the Year. Scott Wilson of Omaha Central High School in Omaha was also a finalist and will be recognized as an Award of Excellence winner.

Jensen started her teaching career as a 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grade English teacher at Dawes Middle School in Lincoln before taking on 9<sup>th</sup> grade English at Lincoln high where she has taught since 2014.

In addition to her classroom experience, Jensen is also an Instructional Coach and certified Trainer of Trainers for the Classroom Instruction that Works model. She is also an Instructional Team Leader for the English PLC. Jensen has also been awarded a Golden Telephone Award from Lincoln High and the 2018 LPS Inspire Educator Award.

Jensen wrote in her Teacher of the Year application that teaching is a passion built out of curiosity, discovery, and the desire to never stop learning.

"I tell my students that I am a teacher because it is what my soul craves," Jensen wrote. "As a teacher I want my students to happen upon moments of curiosity and discovery. I believe that students learn when presented with authentic opportunities to discuss and process new concepts in a way that provides academic content in partnership with development of soft skills like social awareness, empathy, and communication. We absolutely must push ourselves to try new strategies, no matter how far outside of our comfort zones. This is the same message we want for our students—live and learn courageously."

Jensen has been a teacher for 5 years and earned a Bachelor's Degree from the University of Georgia and a Master's Degree from Doane University.

A panel of Nebraska educators selected Jensen as the 2019 Nebraska Teacher of the Year. The Teacher of the Year program recognizes the contributions of classroom teachers who are exceptionally dedicated, knowledgeable and skilled and who have the ability to inspire students of all backgrounds and abilities to learn.

Jensen and Wilson will be honored by the State Board of Education at a November luncheon.

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

**Editor's Note: Photos of the Nebraska Teacher of the Year and Awards of Excellence winners are available using the following link.**

<https://drive.google.com/open?id=1lsuOl43UApoJNv6fbFjTRvR39iNhaK1L>

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