



Looking Back and Forward

North Dakota State Teacher of the Year Chapter

While there is no “slow” time of the school year, October can be surprisingly busy. After the hustle and bustle of the beginning of the school year and the establishment of routines, many teachers are shocked to realize that October has come and gone. In addition, adults and students who spend the majority of their days in school might be wondering why they are so tired! A quick look at schedules and planners verifies a multitude of athletic events, meetings, and conferences. In addition, parent-teacher conferences, seasonal changes, shortening days, and family happenings all seem to be scheduled for these precious pre-snow days.

Next month, we will be sharing information about some ways to celebrate our teaching profession and participate in a virtual professional development opportunity. For this month, we decided to take some words of wisdom shared by our members over the past year. We hope you find them inspirational, motivational, and helpful reminders to take care and enjoy these days filled with so much learning.

“I cannot think of a more powerful or positive force than the collaborative efforts of teachers who share a passion for their profession and their students.”

Mary Eldredge Sandbo (Year of Recognition, 2010) January 2022 Educator’s Edge

“Although educational policy was never a passion of mine, the experiences really pushed me to realize that teacher voices need to be heard at all levels of policy.”

Andrea Fox (Year of Recognition, 2013) February 2022 Educator’s Edge

“Protecting and preserving the mental health of educators should be a priority. Legislators and school boards should be making sure that educators are ok. We are the backbone of the school system, and without us, there would be no system.”

Kristi Reinke (Year of Recognition, 2021) April 2022 Educator’s Edge

“Look and observe to see if play is happening in classrooms. What are you observing? What does it look like? Wouldn’t we want our own children, grandchildren, and all children to be engaged in this type of impactful learning? Humans crave the desire to

interact with others all day long. Play that is purposeful helps children shape and form a mindset of advocacy, awareness, sensitivity, and compassion for all.”

Amy Neal (Year of Recognition 2016) and Heather Tomlin Rohr (Year of Recognition 2016 and 2018) June 2022 Educator’s Edge

“[The experience of being NDSTOY] energized me to continue to be a better teacher and gave me courage to share my message of how special teachers are with my colleagues and with the public.”

Bret Dockter (Year of Recognition, 2022) October 2022 Educator’s Edge

“Our why is our students. Every year we welcome students into our classroom with the determination to make their learning successful. It is imperative to know their personal story and find the real individual behind the name no matter what language they speak, knowing your students’ stories will allow you to see the assets they bring to class and every child will learn. And it is our job to pursue different instructional strategies to uncover the unique learning craft for each child.”

2023 ND State Teacher of the Year, Ivona Todorovic, during the NDSTOY Announcement at the State Capitol, September 19, 2022