



OREGON'S
TEACHER of the **YEAR**
Regional Winner

NEWS RELEASE

Rachelle Bell Named LBL ESD Regional Teacher of the Year

Candidate for 2022 Oregon Teacher of the Year

May 20, 2021

The critical role of teachers has become especially evident as schools have responded to the global COVID-19 pandemic. Teachers have stepped up in countless, innovative ways to ensure students are safe, healthy and engaged to reach their full potential, making this a fitting opportunity to recognize the excellence of Regional Teachers of Year throughout the state!

Central Elementary 3rd Grade teacher **Rachelle Bell** was named Linn Benton Lincoln's 2022 Regional Teacher of the Year! Ms. Bell wins a \$500 cash prize and is in the running for [Oregon's 2022 Teacher of the Year](#), to be announced this fall, as one of 16 regional winners.

"Ms. Bell is an exemplary educator who recognizes the immense learning potential of all students regardless of their ability or diverse backgrounds," Central Elementary Principal Julia Bradley said. "She builds relationships with students while engaging them in tasks that are rigorous, engaging, creative, interactive and motivating. Her passion for teaching and dedication to students and their families is unmeasurable. Ms. Bell is truly a candle that sparks life into every student's heart."

In a letter to Ms. Bell, the Director of the Oregon Department of Education Colt Gill said "The Blue Ribbon Panel facilitated by Linn Benton Lincoln ESD (Education Service District) was inspired by your commitment to rigor and creativity in your classroom, and building trust and relationships with all of your students."

Central Elementary Principal Julia Bradley, Superintendent Melissa Goff, Director of Primary Education Sue Luthra, and other staff members, along with School Board Vice Chair Michael Thomson and Director Justin Roach, surprised Ms. Bell with the news in her classroom on Thursday morning.

"I was so surprised; it's honestly not something I've been thinking about because I've been really busy trying to wrap up the school year and get things organized for my kids." Bell said. "It's what every teacher dreams about. Even being nominated is such an honor, and I'm just so



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surprised that I would be in the running to be a Teacher of the Year. If you look at the other people that were nominated they are doing such transformational things in their districts and to even be near them is an honor and privilege.”

Bell, who had forgotten about the award as she was working until 10 p.m. last night on a writing unit for her students, has taught at Central for the last five years and has worked for Greater Albany Public Schools for seven years, starting with the district as a third grade teacher at Sunrise Elementary.

“We are so proud and happy for Rachele to have received this honor,” Superintendent Goff said. “This award recognizes what an outstanding educator Ms. Bell has been for her students and reflects all of the great work our GAPS teachers and staff perform every day.”

Regional Teachers of the Year are nominated by students, colleagues, administrators, friends or family members to apply for the award, and are selected by a diverse panel of regional representatives. Later this fall one of the Regional Teachers of the Year will be named the 2022 Oregon Teacher of the Year.

Thanks to the Oregon Department of Education’s partnership with the Oregon Lottery, the 2022 Oregon Teacher of the Year receives a \$5,000 cash prize (with a matching \$5,000 going to their school!) and serves as a spokesperson and representative for all Oregon teachers. Three finalists will receive \$2,000 with a matching \$2,000 going to their school. Please visit OregonTeacheroftheYear.org for more information.

