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To: All District Staff

From: Dr. Rydell Harrison, Superintendent of Schools

Re: Teacher of the Year Announcement

Date: May 3, 2019

Watertown Public Schools is pleased to announce that Maria Teixeira, Special Education teacher at Swift Middle School, has been named the 2019-20 District Teacher of the Year. Ms. Teixeira is in her third year of teaching overall, and has worked at Swift Middle School for those three years. She earned a Bachelor of Science degree, *summa cum laude*, in Special Education from the University of Saint Joseph in 2017, and she is currently enrolled in a Master of Science degree program in Literacy and Language Arts. Ms. Teixeira completed her student teaching at Swift Middle School and Polk School, and she holds dual certification in Special Education and Elementary Education. Ms. Teixeira noted, "I dedicate myself to the success of my students by planning individually for each of them, in order to foster their success in and out of the classroom." The Teacher of the Year selection committee, comprised of administrators and teachers from across the district, was impressed by the depth and sincerity of Ms. Teixeira's responses during the interview process. Ms. Teixeira is a frequent contributor to school-wide events and activities, including revitalizing the Swift Homework Club and volunteering at the yearly Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics Night. Principal Marylu Lerz emphasized Ms. Teixeira's "compassion for students and her hard work throughout the school day. All of Maria's decisions are based upon what is in the very best interest of her students."

We would also like to congratulate the other nominees for 2019-2020 Watertown Teacher of the Year:

Hannah Collier, Grade 2 teacher, John Trumbull Primary School
Nicholas Tirozzi, Grade 4 teacher, Judson School

The Teacher of the Year Program allows us to honor the efforts of all of our classroom teachers by selecting one representative of our district's excellent teaching staff. We congratulate all of the 2019-20 nominees, as well as Ms. Teixeira, for their diligent work on behalf of our learners.

Ms. Teixeira will now enter the statewide competition for Connecticut Teacher of the Year, and we wish her the best of luck in that process.