

## News Release

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**Whittier's Nancy Olsen named Everett Public Schools' Teacher of the Year**

Twenty-five year veteran Nancy Olsen dreamed of becoming a first-grade teacher even when she was an elementary student at the very same Whittier Elementary School where she now teaches students in that grade.

When introduced to the school board as the district's Teacher of the Year for 2008, Olsen described the paper she wrote when she was a student at Whittier. Noting that her mother still has the paper, Olsen said she wanted to have 20 boys and 20 girls in her first-grade class. She has since adjusted her idea of an ideal class size, but not her early decision to be an important early foundation in the lives of the thousands of students she has influenced over the years.

Executive Director Jim McNally introduced Nancy by emphasizing her ability to connect deeply and meaningfully with her school community. The connections come naturally to her as she was raised in the neighborhood; her immediate family lives nearby, and her own three children have attended Everett Public Schools. "She is a regular walker in the neighborhood, and Nancy gives herself fully to community-minded activities. She is active in her church; she attends all evening school events and is a member of the school's PTA," noted McNally.

Principal Carla Barton called Olsen a "master teacher who puts her heart and soul into work for children. She educates the whole child and is an inspiration to students and adults." Two of the other first-grade teachers working with Olsen were at one time student teachers in her classroom. She instills confidence into everyone she works with," said Barton.

Receiving the award, Olsen expressed her feelings of honor. "I have been surrounded by outstanding and capable teachers. I've been fortunate to be surrounded by the best and to have a job that I love. I am so very humbled by this because there are hundreds in this district who could also be in this position."

Board president Karen Madsen described Olsen as a person who is "good inside and out" and the perfect role model for students.

As the district's Teacher of the Year, Olsen's name will be submitted with others from other regional school districts for consideration as this region's outstanding teacher. The regional honoree is then placed into consideration for the Washington state Teacher of the Year to be named in the fall.

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