



*Our students will lead and shape the future*

## News release

**June 9, 2016**

### **Gateway Middle teacher librarian is district's 2016 *Teacher of the Year***

*Honored by the school board on June 7, Stacy Stephens now to be considered as "Regional Teacher of the Year."*

For the last 17 years, Stacy Stephens, now Gateway's teacher librarian, has sparked interest in reading, technology, research, collaboration, the future, and so much more.

Stephens believes the library is the "hub" of any school. According to Gateway Principal Shelley Petillo, "You can clearly see and *feel* this when you walk into her learning space. From the inviting furniture, to the elaborate displays of new book titles or library activities she has out, Stacy welcomes our students and families into a literacy wonderland."



Stephens understand the importance and benefits of partnering with community businesses. Working with local bookstores, Stephens has enticed well-known authors to piggyback retail store visits with visits to Gateway.

She was a passionate advocate for the district's first districtwide Summer Reading Challenge. She helped select rich and complex texts for students. These ranged from classic literature to the newest released novels. She helped develop Challenge activities and inspired school staff, including administration, to join the reading fun. She kept the library open during summer hours, and invited school families and students to visit each week. As a result, three out of four Gateway students took part in last year's Challenge. She already has ideas for upping that participation rate in this year's Summer Reading Program.

(more)

Students under Stephen's influence also learn about giving back to the world. As the GIVE Club advisor, she has been a catalyst for students to gather relief funds for global and local causes; she has helped students with food, clothing and toy drives for the needy, and modeled *service learning* for students every day. She secures funding for Gateway students to attend the [We Day](#) convention each year, helping students more deeply connect with larger service opportunities across the state.

Stephens is a teacher of teachers – a true “teacher leader.” She supports all other school staff with texts and activities and helps with research strategies and creating rigorous and meaningful learning experiences. Petillo describes Stephens’ “deep commitment to staff and students, regardless of who they are or from where they come. That commitment shines through everything that she does, wherever she goes.”

Petillo refers to Stephens as a “bibliophile” who can’t read enough and consistently gets new books into the hands of students and staff. “She sees teaching as much more than a career – for her, it is truly a vocation; something she is meant to do.”

As Everett Public Schools’ *Teacher of the Year*, Stephens is now among those being considered by this region’s Educational Service District as the *Regional Teacher of the Year*. If she is selected for that honor, she would be among those considered for the honor of *State Teacher of the Year* and potentially the *National Teacher of the Year*.

In Petillo’s mind, it’s no contest. “Stacy exemplifies what it means to be the best of the best in our district, our region, our state and nation.”

**For more information:**

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