



Salina Unified School District No. 305

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MEDIA RELEASE

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Horizon Teachers Named at Salina USD 305

2019 Elementary Horizon Award – Brooke Hawkins, Heusner Elementary School



Brooke is into her second year as a third grade teacher at Heusner where she serves on the School Improvement Team and has helped with teacher recruitment at the district level. She earned her bachelor's in elementary education from Kansas Wesleyan University.

Building relationships with her students comes naturally for Brooke. But she also has the ability to do this as a part of setting high standards. She provides her students with scaffolding and support; this combination sets her apart.

Brooke has a heart for teaching as well as the skills. She strategizes and makes adjustments to meet students where they are at emotionally and academically. Heusner Principal Lori Munsell added, "Brooke is one of those magical teachers who makes teaching look easy."

An early adopter of one-to-one Chromebooks, she piloted Google Classroom and co-led a staff development session about it for her colleagues. Brooke's friendly, professional manner encourages those around her to reach further. Always prepared to collaborate, she enhances Professional Learning Communities and seeks out feedback from her team and coaches with Heusner students in mind. The wonderful part is that Brooke is just beginning. Congratulations Brooke!

2019 Secondary Horizon Award – Michael Billinger, Lakewood Middle School



Michael is in his second year as computer studies teacher at Lakewood, having served previously as a coach and a paraeducator for USD 305. Currently finishing his Transition to Teaching degree from Fort Hays State University, he earned his bachelor's in business administration from Brown Mackie College.

A natural teacher and coach, Michael builds a good rapport with students with many of them seeking him out for counsel. He has been key to helping establish Google classroom and leading character building lessons during advisory class at Lakewood. His honesty, dependability and work ethic compliment his kind heart and open ear when it comes to his students and coworkers. He is extremely positive and supports students beyond the regular school day by coaching basketball and tennis.

Bonnie Welty, principal at Lakewood Middle School, shares, "The strong relationships Michael has built allows him to leverage his tremendous understanding of technology to benefit both staff and students. He differentiates projects for all student levels and offers technology assistance to fellow teachers." Described by a fellow teacher as honest, dependable and incredibly hard working, Michael is respected by colleagues and his students. He has established a bright future in education. Congratulations Michael!

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Visit Michael and Brooke's classrooms on our @USD305 YouTube channel featuring videos created by Mustang Media students who are on the Salina Central High School broadcast staff including Molly Michaelis, Kamryn Arnold and Miles Denning.