



THE WASHINGTON STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION

A high-quality education system that prepares all students for college, career, and life.

Title: Regional Teacher of the Year Kendra Yamamoto		
As related to:	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Goal One: Develop and support policies to close the achievement and opportunity gaps. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Goal Two: Develop comprehensive accountability, recognition, and supports for students, schools, and districts.	<input type="checkbox"/> Goal Three: Ensure that every student has the opportunity to meet career and college ready standards. <input type="checkbox"/> Goal Four: Provide effective oversight of the K-12 system. <input type="checkbox"/> Other
Relevant to Board roles:	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Policy leadership <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> System oversight <input type="checkbox"/> Advocacy	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Communication <input type="checkbox"/> Convening and facilitating
Policy considerations / Key questions:	Ms. Yamamoto is an accomplished preschool teacher and mentor who has experience with young students from non-English speaking homes. Members may consider asking her about: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Her views on opportunity gap• The importance of early childhood education to success in the K-12 system• Her personal educational philosophy	
Relevant to business item:	N/A	
Materials included in packet:	Biography of Ms. Yamamoto	
Synopsis:	ESD 112 Regional Teacher of the Year Kendra Yamamoto has worked for Vancouver Public Schools since 1998 and currently teaches preschool at Martin Luther King Elementary, a position she has held for the past nine years.	



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Presentation and Discussion: Ms. Kendra Yamamoto



“Working with, informing, and connecting with others in the community makes me a stronger teacher, which then directly impacts my students. The power of a connected community is limitless.”

Kendra Yamamoto
ESD 112 Regional Teacher of the Year

Vancouver Public Schools preschool teacher Kendra Yamamoto is the Educational Service District 112 region Teacher of the Year. Yamamoto is one of nine finalists from around the state for the Washington State Teacher of the Year Award.

Yamamoto has worked for Vancouver Public Schools since 1998 and currently teaches preschool at Martin Luther King Elementary, a position she has held for the past nine years. She holds a Bachelor of Arts in Elementary Education from Northwest Christian University and a master’s degree in education from Lesley University.

In addition to serving as a preschool teacher, Yamamoto works in all 21 of VPS’s elementary schools as a mentor for new kindergarten teachers. She is also a member of VPS’s Early Learning Task Force and the coordinator of an award-winning summer program, Jump Start, for incoming kindergarten students. In 2016, the program served 1,055 students.

As a first-year teacher, she discovered that many students spoke Spanish or Russian. Wanting to engage with students and families, she signed up for beginning classes in both languages. She also obtained an English Language Learner endorsement. Yamamoto brings cultural awareness and studies in her classroom, inviting students to share cultural traditions, dress, language and food as part of an “Explore the World” unit of study. Upon learning that many students did not have books at home, she secured grants to create a library where families could check out books in several languages.

In 2008 Yamamoto opened Vancouver Public Schools’ first preschool program to help prepare students for school. When the program reached capacity, Yamamoto sought solutions to reach even more young learners. In order to serve students on the waiting list for preschool, she applied for a grant to offer an evening preschool program at Martin Luther King Elementary with learning activities and dinner for children and families.