

**FARMINGTON PUBLIC SCHOOLS**

*Press Release*

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Released by: Farmington Board of Education/Kathleen C. Greider, Supt.

Release date: August 23, 2017

**FARMINGTON PUBLIC SCHOOLS ANNOUNCES  
2018 TEACHER OF THE YEAR**

(For immediate release: Farmington Public Schools-August 23, 2017)



Kathleen C. Greider, Superintendent of Schools, and the Farmington Board of Education are proud to announce the 2018 Teacher of the Year for the Farmington Public Schools. Ms. Julie Sawyer, K-12 Art Department Chairperson and teacher, has been selected as the 2018 Farmington Teacher of the Year. Ms. Sawyer has served as a dedicated teacher in the Farmington Public Schools for ten years where she has taught Art at the high school and middle school levels and has served as the Art Department Chairperson. During her time in Farmington, she has earned the respect and admiration of her students, colleagues, school principals and the parents of her many students.

Ms. Sawyer is an exceptional educator who works in partnership with her students and colleagues to create an environment of risk-taking, creativity, excellence and joy. Because of her innovative approach to program improvement, Farmington faculty and students have been

honored and awarded distinction from a variety of professional organizations. Ms. Sawyer's unwavering commitment to excellence in teaching and learning consistently results in high levels of student achievement and more importantly fosters a love of the fine and applied arts. Her students and colleagues know Ms. Sawyer as a tireless advocate for their successes. She speaks passionately on behalf of the arts and is regularly invited to present at national conferences. In 2016, she was one of only twenty-five people chosen nationally to be part of the NAEA Leadership Development Task Force. Julie is always in search of the next level of work for herself, her students and her faculty.

Superintendent Greider states, "Ms. Sawyer inspires her students through authentic and highly engaging instruction that enables students to express themselves through their art work. Her passion and joy for the arts is evident in her daily interactions and the energy and pride she expresses when sharing her students' art products. Julie is an expert teacher who motivates her students to take risks and develop their own talents through a combination of high expectations and supportive relationships. Julie is an innovative teacher leader and strong advocate for the arts and most importantly her students and colleagues. Her deep love of the arts permeates throughout our school district and reminds us all of the importance of the arts in our everyday lives."

Board of Education Chair, Christopher Fagan, commented: "Julie Sawyer is an outstanding educator, innovative teacher leader and strong advocate for her students and colleagues. Farmington's premier Fine and Applied Arts programming is a direct result of Julie's leadership, collaboration and commitment to excellence. "

On being recognized as Farmington's Teacher of the Year, Ms. Sawyer said, "It is an honor to be selected as Farmington's Teacher of the Year. I offer my sincerest gratitude to the former Teachers of the Year and the District Leadership Committee for this award. I can't express enough how grateful I am to all my colleagues and administrators who have supported me along the way in this wonderfully collaborative district. It is a privilege to work in such a professional environment with dedicated educators who offer their best to our students and their families every day.

Dr. Bill Silva, Principal Farmington High School, states, "Julie Sawyer is a superb teacher who holds herself and her students to the highest of expectations. Through her instruction, mentoring, and support, Julie's students, whether novice or advanced, see the quality of their work progress over time as their skills and creativity are nurtured and developed. Julie is also a tremendous advocate for the arts and arts education. As Farmington's K-12 Fine and Applied Arts Department Leader and teacher, Julie has brought depth and breadth to the district's arts curriculum and instruction at all grade levels. She has promoted professional development for teachers using the expertise of artists-in-residence and the creative talents of our faculty. Julie has also championed innovative approaches to teaching and learning in the arts through her active participation in professional organizations at both the state and national levels. On top of all of this, Julie still finds time to be a productive artist herself, demonstrating again her commitment, energy, and passion. Julie Sawyer truly represents the very best of the teaching profession."

**Brief Bio:**

Ms. Sawyer is currently enrolled in an Ed.D. program at UMass Lowell. She earned a M.Ed. in Leadership and Administration from Antioch University. She also holds an M.A. in Art History and a B.A. in Studio Art. In addition, she is a certified coach with the National School Reform Faculty.

Julie has worked in a variety of settings in Art Education. Most recently, she has worked with the Arts Standards Review Committee at the CT State Department of Education and has served as the Eastern Region Director for the Middle Level Division for the National Art Education Association. Regionally, Julie presents at the annual CT Art Education Association conference. She also teaches online for UMass Lowell where she was awarded the Haskell Memorial Award for Distinguished Teaching and the Excellence in Teaching Award in 2013 and 2014 respectively. She has presented numerous workshops and teacher professional development sessions serving as a mentor to her colleagues.

In her free time Ms. Sawyer enjoys playing with her granddaughter Zuri.

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