

Education Minnesota

Qorsho Hassan is 2020 Minnesota Teacher of the Year

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ST. PAUL, Minn., Aug. 6, 2020 – Qorsho Hassan, a fourth-grade teacher at Echo Park Elementary in the Rosemount-Apple Valley-Eagan school district, is the 2020 Minnesota Teacher of the Year.

Hassan is the 56th recipient of the prestigious award, and the second from Rosemount-Apple Valley-Eagan Public Schools. An independent selection committee representing Minnesota leaders in education, business and government chooses the Minnesota Teacher of the Year from individuals who are nominated and who then choose to become a candidate.

“Being aware of the lived experiences of my marginalized students and their communities makes me fight harder to ensure they receive a high quality-education,” said Hassan, a Somali-American educator, in an essay submitted to the Minnesota Teacher of the Year judges. “I build strong relationships in order to know every single student as an individual. I challenge systems of oppression such as poverty and racism by demanding more resources for my students and their families. I believe that if students are in a learning space where they feel safe, seen and heard, they will succeed.”

“While we see so much focus in schools on how a teacher’s classroom is performing academically, we rarely see or highlight how a classroom is performing emotionally and socially,” wrote Nicole Jenne, the parent of one of Hassan’s former fourth-grade students, in a letter supporting Hassan’s



nomination. “(Hassan’s) students knew they were cared for, they knew that this was their place, for some it may have been the only place they felt as if they belonged. Each one of these students are going to grow up and go into this world, while we all want them to be prepared academically, we also want them to be prepared to be a positive community member.”

This will be Hassan’s first year in Rosemount-Apple Valley-Eagan. She taught for three years in Burnsville, and before that, three years in Ohio and one year as a teacher in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, as part of a Fulbright Fellowship. She holds a bachelor’s degree from Ohio State University and a bachelor’s plus from Ashland University in Ashland, Ohio.

Education Minnesota, the 86,000-member statewide educators union, organizes and underwrites the Teacher of the Year program. Candidates include pre-kindergarten through 12th-grade teachers, ECFE and ABE teachers from public or private schools. The Minnesota Teacher of the Year Program also receives support from the following organizations: The SMARTer Kids Foundation, the Harvard Club of Minnesota Foundation, United Educators Credit Union, Educators Lifetime Solutions, EFS Advisors and Education Minnesota ESI.

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