



MEDIA CONTACT:
Sonya T. Gordon, APR
Public Information Officer,
Department for
Communications &
Community Engagement
(225) 922-5611 office
(225) 328-4763 cell
sgordon@ebrschools.org

Press Release

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:
May 5, 2010

****PHOTO ATTACHED****
(Left to right) Lux, Whitfield and Facey

District Names Teachers of the Year; One Also Nets Regional Award

Baton Rouge, La. – It's a distinction **only three of a total of more than 3,600 teachers** this year hold, and the brightest, most creative and most resourceful teachers in the **East Baton Rouge Parish School System** were recognized yesterday, May 4, for their ability to think outside the box and reach the unreachable.

At the **district 2011 Teacher of the Year reception**, sponsored in part by **Neighbors Federal Credit Union and Volunteers In Public Schools**, **Earlisha Whitfield of Ryan Elementary School, Deborah Facey of Westdale Middle School and Dana Lux of Tara High School** were named **the school district's 2011 Teachers of the Year** – one for each level.

Before she even knew she had won the district award, **Whitfield already had been named a 2011 Regional Teacher of the Year winner**, as officials found out just prior to the district awards ceremony. Now Whitfield will participate as a **finalist in the 2011 Louisiana Teacher of the Year Awards Program**, co-sponsored by the Louisiana Department of Education and the State Board of Elementary and Secondary Education. The annual event is designed to recognize and honor outstanding elementary, middle, and high school teachers from each local school system throughout the state. The state winners will be decided this summer.

-more-

DISTRICT TEACHERS OF YEAR/2

ELEMENTARY SCHOOL TEACHER OF THE YEAR EARLISHA WHITFIELD – RYAN ELEMENTARY

Jacobe Johnson, one of Whitfield's students, wrote, "I think Mrs. Whitfield should be the teacher of the year because since the second grade I wanted to be in her class. My sister was in her class, and Mrs. Whitfield was her favorite teacher. Now she is my favorite teacher, because her class is so fun." Whitfield said at the end of the school day, many of her students exclaim "It's time to go home already?!" Growing up, she faced many academic struggles and often thought that life was not fair. She knew early on that she wanted to become a teacher to ensure that although life may not be fair, through dedicated and passionate teachers education can be fair. Whitfield has six years of teaching experience.

MIDDLE SCHOOL TEACHER OF THE YEAR DEBORAH FACEY – WESTDALE MIDDLE SCHOOL

Facey said she finally took up the "family business" and became a certified teacher at the age of 40. She feels she has found her calling and knew she was doing something right when a student requested that Facey continue to be her Math teacher right up until the time she graduates from school. Facey believes that her ability to establish a rapport with her students, and create a classroom climate where not just Math but learning in general becomes relevant, is her greatest accomplishment. She demonstrated her commitment to her students when she began to volunteer her time one day after school to tutor students in Math. Due to the program's success, her afterschool tutoring program is still operating today – now at three times a week.

HIGH SCHOOL TEACHER OF THE YEAR DANA TODD LUX - TARA HIGH SCHOOL

With Lux's influence, Tara High School begins each day with one minute of music over the intercom. Lux said that while the music is playing, she notices students smiling. After the music plays, students begin to play the game "Name that Tune." It's a great boost to an early start for teenagers and the morning announcements. Lux is Tara High's Choral Music teacher and believes that music can help motivate students to stay in school because it allows them an escape, a place where they can express themselves in ways that words cannot. Her message to the community regarding education is that flexibility is the key component to accountability. Neither teachers nor students fall into the category of one size fits all, she said. Lux has 17 years of teaching experience.

###