

Weydert named Teacher of the Year

Paula Weydert always knew she wanted to be a teacher and she has been living her dream for the past 34 years.

Her hard work and dedication were recently recognized when she was named the Yankton Education Association's 2011-12 Teacher of the Year.

Weydert is currently the fourth grade teacher at Yankton's Beadle Elementary School.

"Before that I taught in Lennox and I spent two years in Bassett, Neb., as a Title I teacher," she said. "I have taught in Yankton for 15 years at Webster (Elementary) and Beadle mainly third or fourth grades, but I have taught anything from first to eighth grade."

Weydert says she loves teaching at any level.

"Every grade level truly has its quirks and its own excitement," she said. "In third grade the students are learning their basic math facts and how to pronounce words. In fourth grade, we expand more on what they know and they start algebra and long division and we really focus on learning how to interpret what they're reading instead of just reading the

words. First grade is great because you get a lot of hugs. The older classes are different because you get a lot of complaining about spelling tests and things.

"I really find that I love whatever grade I'm teaching at the time though. When colleagues are moved to a different grade, I always say, 'Oh, you'll love that grade,' and I really mean it because they all have something to offer," she said.

Weydert said the main areas she stresses to her fourth graders is study habits.

"It's important for them to learn how to study for tests," she said. "That's really the biggest thing in fourth grade."

She also enjoys teaching a unit on South Dakota history in social studies.

"Our community is so rich with history it's very easy to get the kids excited to learn about the place they live," she said. "When they make the connection that some



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