



## Media Release

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### MANATEE COUNTY EDUCATOR NAMED 2023 FLORIDA TEACHER OF THE YEAR FINALIST

(Bradenton, FL – May 18, 2022) Today, the Florida Department of Education (FDOE) named **Deelah Jackson**, a fourth-grade teacher at **Samoset Elementary School** in Manatee County, as a finalist for the 2023 Florida Teacher of the Year award. The announcement came during a surprise visit to Samoset Elementary School from FDOE Deputy Chancellor for Educator Quality Dr. Paul Burns.

The Florida Teacher of the Year program recognizes excellence in teaching and celebrates outstanding professional educators in schools across the state. Ms. Jackson is one of five finalists vying for the top award. The 2023 Florida Teacher of the Year winner will be announced on July 14th in Orlando.

“One of my favorite things to do is to recognize and celebrate the amazing teachers we have in the state of Florida,” Dr. Burns said. “When we read the information about Ms. Jackson and watched the video about her, we were deeply impressed by all of the hard work she does with her students.”

**Video of Announcement Courtesy of Manatee Schools Television (MSTV)**  
<https://vimeo.com/711230312/4cfe39b16d>

Ms. Jackson was named Manatee County’s Educator of the Year in February at the Excellence in Education Awards. The accolade led to her advancement in the Florida Department of Education Teacher of the Year program.

“I am very proud of Deelah because she is an excellent representative of the quality teachers we have here in Manatee County,” said Superintendent Cynthia Saunders. “The work that she does proves how education can make a difference in the lives of our students.”

Ms. Jackson has been a fourth-grade teacher at Samoset since August 2015. She is also the Site Director for the Extended Day Enrichment Program (EDEP) and helps coach the school’s VEX Robotics competition team.

“The information we provided about her really represents just a fraction of what she does for our school,” said Samoset Principal Maribeth Mason. “This is a wonderful example of someone receiving recognition who really deserves it.

To learn more about the Florida Teacher of the Year program, please visit <https://www.floridateacherslead.org/home>.

For more information about Good News from Manatee County schools, visit <https://www.ManateeSchools.net/GoodNews>.