**Press Release:** *Council for Exceptional Children’s Division on Autism and Developmental Disabilities* gives award to top Special Education teacher.

(For immediate release)

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The awards committee for *Council for Exceptional Children’s Division on Autism and Developmental Disabilities* announced today that the 2022 Teacher of the Year will be given to Sarah Staley. Ms. Staley, a teacher at Prairie Star Elementary School in Leawood, Kansas, teaches students with autism and intellectual disability. She has worked with the University of Kansas on a project that focuses on systematic problem solving as a means to identify supports for students with developmental disabilities in general education classrooms in order to promote meaningful inclusion opportunities. According to collaborating professor Dr. James R. Thompson, “Sarah’s trailblazing in her school district is building support for more inclusive educational opportunities from the ground up.” Another colleague, Dr. Jennifer Kurth, noted “…her commitment to learning, her passion for social justice and high-quality instruction, collaboration skills, and work ethic. Sarah represents the best of teachers…”

This prestigious award is presented by the *Division on Autism and Developmental Disabilities (DADD),* a special interest association within the *Council for Exceptional Children*, the largest international professional organization in the world dedicated to supporting the needs of students with disabilities. Originating in 1963, *DADD* is a leading voice in the field of education for students with autism, intellectual disability, and other developmental disabilities through research dissemination, active participation in the creation of nationally-recognized professional practice standards, and robust professional networking. The award ceremony will take place at DADD’s annual conference in Clearwater, Florida, in January 2022.

For more information, contact: Dr. Jordan Shurr, DADD Awards Chair: [j.shurr@queensu.ca](mailto:j.shurr@queensu.ca)

Information on the Division on Autism and Developmental Disabilities: <http://www.daddcec.com/>