

# **Illinois Honors Lisa Patterson with Those Who Excel Award**

by Dan Brannan, Content Director  
February 23 2026 9:20 AM



TROY - A Silver Creek Elementary teacher in the Triad Community Unit School District No. 2, Lisa Patterson, has been selected to receive a 2026 Those Who Excel award from the Illinois State Board of Education.

The school's principal, Michael Speer, said he and Patterson “were thrilled to receive word this week” of the selection. He described the Those Who Excel honor as an “award of special recognition” for educators who are “valued members of their school community” and who have been recognized by “colleagues, students, families, and administrators for the skills, passions, and talents they bring to their school community.”

Speer said Silver Creek Elementary “take pride in teamwork and prioritizing the relationships that we build with our students,” and that Patterson “exemplifies this work ethic” as a teacher. He said her classroom stands out for “the respect and rapport that she has with her students” and for “the culture of learning she has created where her students respect each other.”

As an example, Speer shared a classroom tradition in which visiting “special guest” speakers are invited to spin a “treasure wheel.” He said that when “the wheel number matches the number on the class treasure box,” students receive a surprise, with “a ‘Hersey’s Kiss’” cited as one example. Speer said that when a guest matches the winning number, “it is a first-grade class celebration.”

Speer also said Patterson has held leadership roles at the school, including serving on the social committee and assembly committee. He said she has served as an instructional coach, piloted a new reading curriculum, and advised new teachers in the district’s mentor program.

He also highlighted Patterson’s role in organizing a school parade on the 120th day of attendance, which he said is significant for first graders because “counting to 120 is an assessed skill at this grade level.”

Speer said the parade has a theme each year, including one year when “the first-grade teachers dressed as if they were 120 years old.”

“Receiving this award is quite an honor for her and our school,” Speer said.  
"Congratulations to Mrs. Patterson."