WiRSA (Wisconsin Rural Schools Alliance)

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Heather Fish Named WiRSA CESA Employee of the Year



The Wisconsin Rural Schools Alliance (WiRSA) has named **Heather Fish, Director of School Improvement at Cooperative Educational Service Agency CESA 5**, as the 2025 **CESA Employee of the Year**.

For over a decade, Fish has served as a tireless advocate and leader for rural schools across Wisconsin. In her role at CESA 5, she has empowered educators, strengthened districts, and improved opportunities for students through professional development, grant support, and innovative programming.

Heather has provided critical professional learning opportunities to more than 30 rural schools, enhancing classroom instruction and directly impacting student achievement. She has also guided districts in navigating and securing federal Title grants, ensuring rural schools have access to essential funding for programs, staffing, and instructional resources.

One of Heather's most notable contributions is the creation of the **CESA 5 Mental Health and Behavior Summit**, a two-day professional development event that brings educators together with mental health experts. This summit equips teachers, principals, and administrators with tools to better address student mental health needs, an especially urgent priority in rural communities with limited access to services.

"Heather represents the best of what CESA stands for: collaboration, innovation, and a steadfast commitment to rural schools," said Mike Koltes, CESA 5 Business Director, who nominated her for the award. "She is not only a remarkable professional but also a compassionate and dedicated colleague who inspires those around her."

Through her leadership and collaborative spirit, Heather continues to leave a lasting mark on rural education in Wisconsin. WiRSA is proud to honor her contributions with the 2025 **CESA Employee of the Year Award**.