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## **Educators of the Year 2007: Elizabeth Semichy, Almaden Country School**

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Walk into Liz Semichy's class at Almaden Country School, reports principal Jean Delwiche, and you'll find 14 five-year olds joyfully partaking of a smorgasbord of learning experiences designed to stimulate intuitiveness, foster creative expression, and guide experiential learning.

Such experiences with Semichy will never be forgotten says Delwiche. "She leaves a permanent mark on their self-worth as she forms the foundation of positive character traits such as kindness, honesty, and respect for others." Semichy has an innate ability to predict children's responses and reactions explains Delwiche, and is on the spot with guidance, words of encouragement, and a "you can do it" spirit. Children are captivated by Semichy's "take-apart" jobs and her amazing collection of live and taxidermy-enhanced animals.

Semichy inspires parents, too. "If I'm worried about how to respond to a behavior, Mrs. Semichy always has the right answer," says parent Maria Larsen. "Her years of experience, along with the answer itself, bring a great clam to me." Parents also appreciate Semichy's attitude about children, reflected in her motto: "All children have a gift, and some simply take longer to open their package."