



Great Falls Public Schools

Good Apple Award Recipients

Ms. Madeleine Saenz, Para Educator, Great Falls High School, was recommended for Good Apple Award by Theresa Swinney, Resource 2 Teacher, Great Falls High School, because of the following: In addition to performing her job at an exemplary level, Madeleine demonstrates an extraordinary commitment to her job as well as to the students and staff she works with as a para in Great Falls High resource rooms. Madeleine takes it upon herself to provide exceptional support and service to the students and staff. She is quick to understand their individual needs and moves efficiently to provide support or direction. Madeleine goes above and beyond when given a task and is sure to make sure she gives it her all. Madeleine is a wonderful asset in assisting students and staff as they navigate the difficult high school setting. Madeleine is helpful, caring, resourceful, and happy to offer service no matter the task often performing above and beyond. She demonstrates punctuality and has great attendance. Her dedication to her job and the kids she works with is commendable. Her skills, knowledge, willingness to help others, and dedication to schools and students make her a great candidate for the Good Apple Award.

Pam Hawk, 6th Grade Teacher, Longfellow, was recommended for a Good Apple Award by Darcy Kuntz, English Teacher, North Middle School, because of the following: Pam is an incredible educator. She truly makes the time to know her students, their families, their struggles and their hopes and dreams. Pam is a master educator and she was a master teacher long and previous colleagues and administrators see/have seen that in her. She shares insight, knowledge, wisdom and passion for learning and education as a whole. She works very hard at her craft and spends countless hours, including weekends and the summer outside of the classroom, to provide the high level of education that she delivers to her students year after year. I have gained great appreciation for elementary teachers and all of the juggling and time management they put in each and every day through Pam. Pam works hard to make learning meaningful and long lasting for her students. With the current year as her retirement year, she has had a challenging year both personally and professionally, but she has handled this with dignity, honesty, grace and professionalism.

Jeri Beck, Math Teacher, North Middle School was recommended for a Good Apple Award by Darcy Kuntz, English Teacher, North Middle School, because of the following: Jeri teaches math lab and has taught both the 7th and 8th grade levels. She is and has been a dedicated and responsible educator for many years. Jeri works hard and what she does isn't always easy. I have seen her over days, weeks, months and years, working with students before and after school, during her prep period and even at times during her lunch. All to support the students' success. Jeri will more than likely not receive an Excellence in Education distinguished educator award, not because she doesn't deserve it, she definitely does many times over, but because the students she teaches struggle in the content/curriculum, they dislike the content and have lower scores than most of their peers. She

meets that push back with a gentle voice, a smile, kindness/compassion for their struggles and a positive attitude encouraging her students. Jeri is a master teacher and a great co-worker, who puts students and their needs first. She is a fabulous asset to North Middle School and the Great Falls District.

Sharon Fox, Science Teacher, North Middle School, was recommended for a Good Apple Award by Brian Dues, Social Studies, North Middle School, because of the following: Aside from being a tremendous Science teacher and team member, Sharon took time from her already busy schedule to write a grant application for the Spartan team at North to travel to the First People's Buffalo jump on an all-day science investigation field trip. Sharon spent many hours outside her normal business day planning and attending to all the logistical needs required for this type of event. The field trip took place on April 26th of this year, and it was one of the best and most productive field trips I have ever taken part in. Students were bussed to the First Peoples Buffalo Jump in Ulm, where they were met by members of the Montana Outdoor Science School (MOSS) who traveled from Bozeman to facilitate the day's learning activities. Students took part in lessons on prairie ecology, medicinal native herbs, and traditional Native American games, just to name a few. The students had a great time and were extremely engaged in an educational experience that many of them will never forget. Even better, we all received free T-Shirts. Sharon has been my teaching partner since I began my teaching career eight years ago. I have always known her to be an exceptionally dedicated and hardworking teacher. She has continually been a source of support and encouragement for me whenever I have been in need. Her dedication to the students and to our Spartans Team continues to inspire me.

Mike West, 2nd Engineer, North Middle School, was recommended for a Good Apple Award by Gladi8or Team, April Wavra, Rhonda Hunter, Jessica Cape, Laurel Ferda, Leslie Whiteman, Kristi Wasson, Jeri Beck and Mary Somefeld, all teachers at North Middle School, because of the following: Mike started at NMS about two weeks ago. He is such a burst of positivity. Mike introduced himself and made it clear that he is here for his teachers and to let him know if we need anything done. He is incredibly friendly and a hard worker. In addition to all these personal traits, our wing has not looked this good in years. He goes the extra mile for our building. Mike, we appreciate you and the wonderful job you do in our wing. North Middle School is lucky to have you.

Trixie Smith, Health Prevention Services Manager, Alluvion Health was recommended for a Good Apple Award by Erica Harp, Nurse, District Office, because of the following: I would like to acknowledge Trixie's tireless efforts ensuring the GFPS staff and students have access to preventive healthcare through vaccination programs. Trixie has a heart for prevention health services and has given countless hours to helping members of our community have access to a wide array of immunizations. During COVID-19 Trixie went above and beyond to ensure everyone had access to COVID-19 vaccines. This included hosting numerous clinics for GFPS students, staff, and community members within our District. Trixie has also continued to collaborate with the GFPS School Nursing Department to develop school-based vaccine clinics offering flu shots and other childhood vaccines. Trixie's passion and dedication is visible in all that she does. Her expertise and knowledge in this area is vast and watching her operate at the mass clinics is inspiring. Trixie is relentless in her pursuit of bringing health prevention services to her community and reducing barriers. She has a great team of nurses, medical assistants, and clerical staff that help make all of these efforts succeed. We thank Trixie and her team for all they have done to help promote health and wellness within GFPS and our community.

Jeff Gray, Great Falls Public Schools School Board President, was recommended for a Good Apple Award by Mark Finnicum, School Board Member, because of the following: Jeff has poured his heart and soul into every building and every soul that has darkened the doors for the last 15 years. He brings a super sense of humor to the job and has certainly earned his massive salary. A very serious task at

hand, that needs every ounce of thought and caring, truly big shoes to fill, now for the rest of us to attempt. After the passing of all of our mentor, Jan Cahill, we all concluded that no one can fill Jan's shoes, But Mr. Gray has done just that!!! He will be missed on many levels, and I wish him the very best as he just might spend more time at the cabin and just stare at the trees and critters.