

## **Good Apple Award Winners 2017-2018**

### **Tracey Pollitt – nominated by Katie Bodak, Amanda Dobler and Melissa Whitney**

We are nominating Tracey Pollitt for a Good Apple award. Tracey is always a thoughtful and considerate co-worker and a remarkable educator. She willingly takes on tasks and often comes up with innovative ideas to implement with our students. Tracey's commitment to our students and her job is undeniable. She takes on new challenges including technology, plans, data collection systems, and schedule changes with a smile on her face and true devotion to the tasks before her. She works tirelessly to make sure that the students she works with have books published, backpacks organized, projects assembled, a smile on their face and a healthy snack to eat. You can feel her love for the children and her job every single day.

Tracey is a pleasure to work with and her dedication is an inspiration to all. Tracey also shares her talents in the kitchen, which of course makes the students and staff at Lyman very happy. Tracey doesn't just think about her students and co-workers while she is at school, she is often picking things up for teachers or materials to supplement a current theme or project for our students while she is out shopping. She does this out of the kindness of her heart, and we here at Lyman are forever grateful for her unending thoughtfulness. From her cheerful smile to her generous heart, Tracey is a gift to the students and staff at John Lyman School.

### **Penny Sawicki – nominated by Carla Muskatallo**

Ms. Penny Sawicki exemplifies the core ethical values, literally "strengthens" the school district and community as well as inspires others through her example. Penny is the district's physical therapist who not only is an advocate for all of her students, but goes above and beyond making sure that her students are integrated to the best of their abilities within their school environment but also their community. Penny educates families on community resources such as Special Olympics, adaptive bowling, therapeutic horseback riding and organizations to buy specialized equipment such as bicycles. Penny is creative with her service delivery ensuring that her students are working hard to achieve their goals and objectives all while having fun. Penny is honest with her students, they respect her and they want to please her. She is very positive and encouraging even with the toughest of challenges, she always strives for her students to be the best they can be. Penny is a holistic therapist that looks at the whole student from head to toe. From her work with the preschool age students through transition academy age young adults, Penny is an amazing therapist who makes an amazing difference in the lives of the students she works with.

### **Patricia Smith – nominated by (1) Anonymous and (2) Susan Michael**

(1) Patty Smith has done so much to strengthen the teaching and learning community in District 13. Her work in the curriculum office has been invaluable this year. She has contributed to the consistency in programming, the meeting of deadlines and the dissemination of materials and information. Patty is wealth of information and if she can't answer a question she finds the answer. Patty is creative and brings that flair into all that she does. Meetings and events

are made more special because of her organization and creative flair. Patty cares deeply for the people she works with and supports. Regional School District 13 is a stronger professional learning community because of Patty Smith.

- (2) Patty Smith has been extremely helpful to Susan Michael as she transitioned to her new role as the elementary science specialist this year. She has gone above and beyond the call of duty to make cost effective purchase choices, process P.O. requests in a timely manner, schedule and reschedule meetings, process paperwork efficiently, and obtain needed information.

Patty always works with her colleagues in a respectful and kindly manner. She has gone out of her way to help Susan and others with projects that helped professional development sessions go more smoothly. She is always willing to lend a helping hand. Her organizational skills are helpful. We are eternally grateful for her professionalism and cooperation. She truly is a gem.

**Rita Van Steenbergen, Catherine Crocker and Gail Foreman – nominated by Strong School staff and submitted by Kathleen Davidson**

Our cafeteria staff deserves the Good Apple award for many reasons. Every day they take their time to make us delicious, balanced and healthy food. They are kind and courteous both to the students and to the staff.

For World Language week they worked with us to have a different international food each day, helping us to celebrate our world cultures even in the cafeteria!

As for many of us, food is a comfort in an otherwise very stressful environment, the lunch ladies help us each day to nourish our tummies and our spirits.

Each year, on the second day of school, I ask my students to share their favorite thing about Strong School. The number one answer is always the food!

Gail makes a killer wrap and her chicken and turkey salads are delicious. To misquote Napoleon, it is not just an army that moves on its belly – it's also a middle school.

They are smiling, willing to help – be it lending out ladles for the Chili Cookoff – pieces of foil or wrap for a science experiment.

I am lactose intolerant, so every time they make cheeseburgers, they make and set aside a hamburger for me.

One of my students suddenly stopped buying lunch. Rita was concerned since she observed that she wasn't bringing lunch from home either. She let me know.

Our cafeteria staff are critical in helping to manage student and staff food allergies. The Strong café ladies go above and beyond to help keep students and staff safe.