



## Great Falls Public Schools Good Apple Award Recipients

**Laurie Ueland, Teacher Aide, Whittier Elementary School**, was recommended for a Good Apple award by Dean Jardee, Librarian, Whittier Elementary School, because of the following: Laurie has worked at Whittier School as an aide and playground supervisor for as long as I can remember. She provides a sense of consistency for our student population. In my four years as a teacher at Whittier, I recall only positive interactions with her. She doesn't talk negatively about others and doesn't complain about her work. Although these are tremendous characteristics for a GFPS employee to possess, the reason I would like to nominate Laurie for this reward is for her remarkable ability to step in as our administrative assistant for nearly a month. We have not had a person in that position since the middle of December. She stepped in to fill this position until we got a new one hired. This position takes someone with incredible organizational skills and the ability to stay calm and deal with lots of different people and situations. Laurie has done all of this with ease and professionalism. The office has continued to operate smoothly through this transition because of Laurie's dedication and hard work. I am proud to work with Laurie and know that I speak for all staff members at Whittier School when I say thank you for keeping things afloat and helping us meet the needs of students each and every day Laurie. You are awesome and a great example of what the Good Apple Award stands for.

**Brenda Lowry, Kathy Van Tighem, Riki Johnson, Roni Pearsall, Dana Freshly, Carie Magers, and Todd Currey, Members of the Crisis Team**, were recommended for a Good Apple award by Rae Smith, Principal, Sacajawea Elementary School because of the following: for dropping everything right before Christmas break and coming to support Sacajawea students and staff during a very difficult time. Thank you for meeting with teachers and kids to process the initial shock of hearing such sad news. Thank you for providing support and resources to the students and staff. Thank you for helping me write the initial script to inform the students of the tragedy, making phone calls to parents, helping write letters home to the entire school, and continuing to check in on students and staff to provide individual support when necessary. Thank you for the resources and handouts to share with my staff as well as families on how to deal with grief and what to look for in your child. Each of you was a vital member of this process and are very good at what you do when dealing with a crisis. You are compassionate, empathetic, caring, and most of all supportive to every individual you came in contact with. I appreciate your time and commitment to the Crisis Team and my school when we needed you. I can't thank you enough for all you did to help us through this difficult time.

**Ruth Uecker, K-6 Assistant Superintendent, Erin Bucher, School Psychologist, Jody Murray, Prevention Specialist, Michelle Meredith, West Elementary Principal, Brian Held, GFHS Associate Principal, Bob Griffith, GFEA President, and Shelli Lavinder-Schwalk, MEA-MFT Representative** were recommended for a Good Apple Award by Rae Smith, Principal, Sacajawea Elementary School because of the following: for dropping everything right before Christmas break and coming to support Sacajawea Elementary students and staff during a very difficult time. You helped make parent phone calls, checked in on staff members to make sure they were doing ok and took over in classrooms when someone needed a break. You supplied my staff with snacks, food and water to make sure their basic needs were being met. Each of you went above and beyond and showed true compassion and empathy for each staff member and student you encountered. You were my support through the entire process and I can't thank you enough for all of your help and kindness.

**Bill Service, Peggy Darragh, and Donella Thompson, Retired staff members of Sacajawea Elementary School,** were recommended for a Good Apple Award by Rae Smith, Principal, Sacajawea Elementary School, because of the following: Thank you for coming to Sacajawea to help me clean out Ms. Pachek's classroom on such short notice. You went through each drawer, closet, and box to help me sort out items owned by the district and items that were Ms. Pachek's. Thank you for putting extra supplies away in the office and for helping me clean and organize the classroom and get it ready for a new teacher. Your help and time was very much appreciated. I never could have done that job alone!

**Shelly Kelly, Elementary Co-Coordinator,** was recommended for a Good Apple Award by Rae Smith, Principal, Sacajawea Elementary School, because of the following: Shelly dropped everything right before Christmas break and came to support Sacajawea Elementary students and staff during a very difficult time. Thank you for meeting with teachers and kids to process the initial shock of hearing such sad news. Thank you for providing support and resources to the students and staff. Thank you for helping me write the initial script to inform the students of the tragedy, making phone calls to parents, helping write letters home to the entire school, and continuing to check in on students and staff to provide individual support when necessary. Thank you for helping me inventory the curriculum, clean and organize the classroom, and get missing pieces of curriculum back into this classroom so it was ready for a new teacher. You went above and beyond and showed true compassion and empathy for each staff member and student you encountered. You were my support through the entire process and I can't thank you enough.