



## Great Falls Public Schools

### Good Apple Award Recipients

**James Mephram, Band Teacher, Great Falls High School**, was recommended for a Good Apple award by Christine Hinkle, Preschool Teacher, Early Learning Center, because of the following: Mr. Mephram displays his love of teaching music to his students and families. He spends countless hours planning, preparing and implementing performances to delight the audiences that attend. I admire how Mr. Mephram is mindful and very intentional about each piece of music he selects for his performances. Mr. Mephram provides learning opportunities for students at many different levels. I really appreciate how he is very respectful to the integrity of everyone involved. My son Adrian, has been playing the trumpet for over six years. Additionally he has picked up the guitar over the last three years. Mr. Mephram has been very instrumental in helping my son develop his skills and talents to build his confidence and nurture his love of music. The incredible energy and attention to details has given my son inspiration to continue to pursue a career in music. Throughout the last two years, I have attended at least seven of the performances featured at Great Falls High School. The Christmas performance was stunning to the level of organization, presentation, sound quality and timing. The performances featured in the spring concert were carefully articulated and delivered with precision. Mr. Mephram as a stage presence that clearly communicates his deep passion and love for teaching music!

**Ethan and Wyatt, Both Students of Great Falls Public Schools**, were recommended a Good Apple award by Louise Saltz, a retired employee and neighbor, because of the following: GFPS has acquired the property at the corner of 2<sup>nd</sup> Ave So & 20<sup>th</sup> Street. This past Friday the snow started to melt. Since there was no place for the melted snow to go, it backed up about 12 – 15 feet up this sidewalk. Many GFHS students end up with wet shoes before I was able to make a ditch to drain this water from the sidewalk. Of course I started digging a ditch down the curb on 20th Street to make drainage to 1<sup>st</sup> Ave South as the manhole in the alley had been covered with snow and could not drain the sidewalk like it had in the past. Anyway these two young students asked if they could help. Their motto is: that is what neighbors are for. I declined as I needed the exercise. After I had given up for the day and gone to an event that evening; these two young helpers finished digging a path for the water to flow down 20<sup>th</sup> Street and around the corner to head down 1<sup>st</sup> Ave South. Now the students and faculty at GFHS will be able to come to school on Monday without the buildup of water and black ice to slip, fall, or walk thru.

**Heidi Mitchell and Kim Kuntz, Para Educators**, were recommended for a Good Apple award by Cherie Stordahl, Special Education Teacher, Morningside Elementary School because of the following: Heidi and Kim continually go above and beyond for our students. They strive to make sure each student receives what they need and their ability to build relationships with our students is incredible. Each of them cares very deeply for our students and is always eager to help them reach their full potential. Heidi

and Kim are very calm in intense situations, which helps our students work through their emotions and frustrations. They can make necessary changes on the spur of the moment. They have worked very hard to help maintain an atmosphere of high academic achievement for all students. Heidi and Kim are a team players; they offer suggestions and solutions to help students work through any concerns they are faced with. They never hesitate to help students and staff with any task at hand. They are a pleasure to work with and a joy to be around.

**Bowen Trystianson, BSN, RN, Cascade City-County Health Department (CCHD)**, was recommended for a Good Apple award by Erica Harp, Nurse, Paris Education Center, because for the following: Bowen is the Communicable Disease Nurse. Great Falls Public Schools has always had a great relationship with CCHD and every year their staff helps us to practice illness surveillance and health promotion. I would like to acknowledge Bowen for his help in addressing influenza in our schools this year. Bowen helped perform an illness investigation at North Middle Schools after we first noticed an increase in flu-like illness. After the investigation Bowen advised the school nursing department in key symptoms to watch for and helped guide us in further illness surveillance. Bowen has been a great resource for our department and I appreciate his willingness to answer *all* of our questions and help us advocate for the wellness of our students.

**Rebecca Brown, Nurse, North Middle School and Sacajawea Elementary**, was recommended for a Good Apple award by Erica Harp, Nurse, Paris Education Center, because of the following: In January of this year North Middle School started to experience record numbers of absences due to illness. The school was one of the first in our district to be hit by this year's influenza virus. Nurse Becky worked with the Cascade City-County Health Department to complete an illness investigation. After identifying key symptoms that were common with this year's flu virus, Becky worked tirelessly to provide education, promote good health practices, and continue illness surveillance. Becky utilized creative strategies to share messaging and promote wellness. I thank Becky for the leadership and commitment to health that she demonstrated through this process. Becky is also to be acknowledged for the daily work she does as a school nurse when she isn't fighting against influenza. Becky is compassionate and joyful. She has a great relationship with her students and is a wonderful example of school nurse.

**Carol Paul, Student Services Coordinator, District Office Building**, was recommended for a Good Apple award by Ruth Uecker, Assistant Superintendent K-6, District Offices, because of the following: Without hesitation, Carol steps in for Ryan Hart as he continues to work through a difficult medical issue. As challenging as this is, she immediately drops what she is doing and goes into action to provide support and supervision to the students and staff of Sunnyside Elementary. I have always found Carol to be an eager and willing educator who never shies away from a problem or challenge. She selfishly suspends her current responsibilities to help her fellow educators. Because of her willingness to do whatever it takes, I feel Carol emulates the meaning of a Good Apple Award. Please honor Carol Paul for always being willing to Ride for the Brand. Thank you Carol

**Amy Konen, 5<sup>th</sup> Grade Teacher, Mountain View Elementary School**, was recommended for a Good Apple award by Ruth Uecker, Assistant Superintendent K-6, District Offices, because of the following: Without hesitation, Amy stepped up to support the challenging student behaviors at Mountain View. As challenging as this is, she immediately went into action to provide support and supervision to the students and staff of Mountain View Elementary. I have always found Amy to be an eager and willing educator who never shies away from a problem or challenge. She selfishly suspended her current responsibilities to support the students at Mountain View. Amy brings a great deal of knowledge and experience centered on meeting the needs of all students. She also has a gift for deescalating students

and writing customized plans. It is these skills and many more that I would like to have recognized with a Good Apple Award. Please honor Amy Konen for always being willing to Ride for the Brand. Thank you  
Amy