



Great Falls Public Schools

Good Apple Award Recipients

Mr. Tom Hering, Director of Information Technology, Chris Mee, Data Center Lead, Frank Arb, Applications Support Analyst, Brandi Langan, Data Technician, Deb Davila, Student Systems Analyst, Joe Vance, Computer Analyst, Makayla Aufdemberg, Programmer/Operator and Mark Sullivan, Computer Operator, all at District Offices, Annex, Dan Sibert, Technology Lead Technology, Jacob Bily, Tiffany Cascell, Christopher Disalvatore, Mitchell Evans, Jordon Falkenhagen, Glen Kimball, Keillan Johnson, all Technology Support Technicians, Patrick Douglas, Orië Fischer, Michael Ward, Kim Krattiger, Dave Myles, all Technology Core Technicians, were recommended for Good Apple Awards by, Tom Moore, Superintendent, because of the following: I would like to recognize our GFPS Data Center and Technology Team for their stellar work with on the network shut down that we experienced, beginning over the labor day weekend. They have been at work getting our systems restored so we can communicate and access information to do our daily work in the school district. This has required hundreds of additional hours of time and great dedication on their part! Thank you...Our computer technicians, headed up by Dan Sibert have done an incredible job of helping our staff and students get their computers and systems up and running again. You are the best!!

Kathie Sybrant, Administrative Assistant, North Middle School, was recommended for a Good Apple Award by Tara Rosipal, Principal, North Middle School, because of the following: Kathie Sybrant is my right hand and left hand. I am nominating her for a good apple award. She makes my job easier and keeps me focused on the most urgent needs of our building. This summer was quite challenging as we prepared to begin a new school year with many unknowns. It didn't matter the task or the problem solving needed, Kathie always stepped up to the plate with a smile on her face. We had many impromptu meetings where we planned for the first days of school, parent communication, and required training. Kathie ensures that teachers have the materials they need to do their job well. She is an advocate for teachers and students. I have known Kathie for about 26 years now. She is my rock and clearly North Middle School is her second home and her school.

Kurt Shepherd, Math Teacher, North Middle School, was recommended for a Good Apple Award by Tara Rosipal, Principal, North Middle School, because of the following: Kurt Shepherd has been an outstanding member of the North Middle School family. This summer he began his proactive work on remote learning. Kurt kept in contact with me all summer to discuss ideas and move toward a remote platform even while teaching face to face. I have known Kurt for about 14 years. His motivation to teach remote, better than we did last spring, is driving his instructional planning. Kurt developed a TAG Team Parent welcome, recorded lessons on how to turn in work and troubleshoot, as well as developing his own google classroom for all of his math courses. Kurt has teamed with our instruction coach on technology PLCTs and offered help to anyone who wanted to learn a bit

more. Kurt is also mentoring a new teacher in technology. He continues to research and share new tools. I am proud to nominate Kurt Shepherd for a good apple to honor his commitment to education.

Jessica Cape, English Teacher, North Middle School, was recommended for a Good Apple Award by Tara Rosipal, Principal, North Middle School, because of the following: Jessica Cape gets me excited about school and teaching! She is an outstanding member of the North Middle School family. This summer she began her proactive work on remote learning. Jessica and I kept in touch throughout the summer keeping in mind that we had no idea what school might look like in August. Jessica reads articles, studies the latest teaching tools, and shares ideas on a regular basis. When I listen to Jessica, I can feel the passion she has to teach. She celebrates student growth and drives instruction based on everything she knows about a student or group. Jessica has embraced technology. She was the first person to try the promethean panel and set up her google classroom platforms. She practices remote learning while in the face to face environment to ensure students will be ready if or when we aren't in the building. I enjoy watching Jessica in action too. The students are engaged and she is having fun teaching. Jessica is a perfect example of a teacher who guides and listens to her students. She poses questions to trigger their thought process.

Heather Huston, Secretary, Great Falls High School, was recommended for a Good Apple by Tami O'Neill, Associate Principal, Great Falls High School, because of the follow: Over the past several months, Heather Huston has proven herself a dedicated and integral part of the Great Falls High Family. As part of our secretarial staff, Heather has always performed her duties conscientiously and diligently. Since the building closure in March 2020, she has consistently gone above and beyond her assigned role, adjusted to changes, and helped implement systems to ensure that we could continue to educate our students despite many challenges. Heather helped create the system we used to provide instruction from teachers to the 100+ students without access to technology last spring. She assisted the tech department in providing laptops. When there were no more laptops, she taught teachers how to use the Google Drive system to provide instruction, lead the secretarial staff in printing and organizing materials for each student, and made countless phone calls to families, encouraging them to access the resources she and the other secretaries had gathered for them. Then, despite the threat of COVID, Heather was on the frontline when families came to pick up the work for their children. Without Heather, many students would not have had the opportunities to learn. This summer, Heather returned to full time work early so she could help the counseling and administrative team schedule and organize the remote learners. Again, Heather jumped in to organize the resources needed for these families and help the staff tackle this unprecedented challenge. She has become the de facto administrative assistant for this work on top of performing all her other duties at a high level. Even though there have been more questions than answers, Heather is helpful, calm, and compassionate as she answers the phone and interacts with families who are seeking help and making difficult decisions. We have been building this system and meeting challenges around every corner this fall, and Heather continues to contribute creative ideas and her unwavering energy to keep going and meet the vision of the district: all kids engaged in learning today for life tomorrow. In the business of education, we often cannot anticipate what each day will bring, especially in 2020! But one person the administrative team, staff, students, and families at Great Falls High can count on is Heather Huston. We all know she meets the challenges with a positive attitude, a friendly demeanor, and a willingness to learn new things to get the job done. I really cannot count the number of times we have asked, "How would we do this without Heather?" Thank goodness we don't have to!

