

Staff Commendations

August 2025

Thank you to the Church at Prairie Creek for their generous donation to the Angel Fund account. Their gift is truly appreciated.

-Linda Wong

Thank you, DeEtta Rosa and AJ Ellingson, for your collaboration (and patience!) in preparing our Spring, 2025 ISASP Parent Reports document for Parent Square. I appreciate the team work to get this task done and to report ISASP scores in a timely manner! Thank you for making this process look so effortless!

-Greg Carenza

Thank you, Cary and Jami, for your leadership of the Administrator Onboarding process for July 1st and 2nd. I am so thankful that our new hires have this opportunity to interact with a mentor during this time and to learn more about their role. Feeling this sort of support is critical in helping retain our staff and help them feel welcome! Thank you!

-Greg Carenza

I would like to recognize Matt Carl for all his help this summer! He has moved countless boxes, toys, and furniture items to various other buildings. Thank you for your help and for doing the heavy lifting! Matt, you are definitely an asset to our team and we are grateful for you!

-Amy Maxfield

*I would like to recognize and commend **April Heitand, Diann Williamson, and Patty Morris** for their amazing support and collaboration. I appreciate their willingness to be available for my crazy questions and how they share valuable resources. Their guidance and feedback reflects their deep commitment to student success. I am grateful for their teamwork and dedication, as this is instrumental as we continue working together to support our students in the best ways possible. Thank you for being such reliable and positive partners in this important work.*

-Deb Cale

*A heartfelt thank you to **Dr. Greg Carenza** for his unwavering support and collaborative spirit. I am incredibly grateful for the way he paused his own work to partner with me and the DCE team in brainstorming creative, student-centered solutions. Greg's ability to think outside the box and strategically map out multiple pathways forward is truly remarkable. His insight and dedication are making a meaningful difference for everyone involved. Thank you, Greg!*

-Deb Cale

I want to celebrate Kelcie Stratton for her incredible support and creative ideas during our summer planning sessions. Her enthusiasm and positive energy have been contagious, and I truly appreciate the thoughtfulness she brings to our work. Kelcie's excitement as we prepare for a new and exciting school year is inspiring, and I'm grateful to be starting this journey alongside her.

-Deb Cale

A big thank you to Shana Olson for her graciousness, thoughtful feedback, and steady support as we prepare for the new school year at DCE and across the DCG preschool program. Your time, insightful ideas, and coaching have been truly appreciated. Thank you for helping set the stage for what's sure to be a great year ahead!

-Deb Cale

*I would like to thank and celebrate our Buildings and Grounds team, **Sean Shatava and Travis Donahue**, for their quick responses to our building needs and for taking the time to come out to the building to talk through renovations and the work still to be completed. We truly appreciate their collaboration, clear communication, and commitment to ensuring our school is safe, functional, and ready for our students and staff. Your hard work and dedication do not go unnoticed—thank you for all you do!*

-Deb Cale

*I'd like to recognize **Megan Klein, Shea Jorgensen, Klaire Jungling, and Kelcie Stratton** for their positivity, innovation, and teamwork as we brainstormed and planned for our new multiage classroom. Their creativity and commitment have been instrumental in supporting our students and families with optimism and care as we embrace a new approach to addressing our enrollment needs. A special shout-out to **Shea** for her inspiring eagerness and consistently positive attitude—her energy sets the tone for the exciting journey ahead! Thank you, Team!!*

-Deb Cale

I want to recognize Kylie Brown, Esthela Perez James, Stephanie Schultes, and Katherine Southmayd for the work they have done all summer on preparing for our Kickstart to Kindergarten process. They have really tried to think through all aspects and are doing so much to make sure we are all prepared for this new process. Working with these littles, they know they can't leave anything to chance and they have put in a lot of extra time for that reason. I appreciate their hard work so very much.

-Patty Morris

Our building looks so AMAZING!! Thanks to Shannon Cummins and his crew for all the hard work to really clean in our building and get it ready for our students.

-Patty Morris

I can't say enough about Sean Shatava and Travis Donahue and how much we appreciate all they have been doing at our building. They have tackled projects all summer and we appreciate their can do attitude. They figure things out and have been getting stuff done. I appreciate how they listen to all the thoughts and then figure out what works and what they are able to do. SO MUCH ACCOMPLISHED in this short time since they have started their specific roles this summer.

-Patty Morris

April Heitland, Deb Cale, Diann Williamson--LOVE how even through the summer-- all summer--you are willing to collaborate, support, and be there to help when needed. I love this team and appreciate that partnership so very much. So much behind the scenes collaboration to give all our DCG elementary students the best experience!

-Patty Morris

Thank you to Rick Hyde for his willingness to help out by getting supplies ready for band parent volunteers even with all his other work to do! He is a truly caring and kind person!

-Danell Duncan

I would like to extend my sincere appreciation to the Buildings & Grounds Team! Thank you for spending countless hours manicuring our grounds, cleaning and polishing the inside of the building, and installing Steve Klehn's memorial at Heritage.

-Heritage Staff

Thank you Amy Maxfield and Abby Crannell for putting in hours over the summer to help organize and plan for the upcoming school year! I couldn't imagine doing this without you!

-Diann Williamson

Thank you, Greg Carenza, for taking time to organize information and documents to create systems for consistency! This is definitely a talent, and I appreciate you sharing it with us to help streamline my role as an administrator.

-Diann Williamson

Thank you, Shana Olson, for working tirelessly to plan meaningful staff development and training for new staff, leaders, and returning staff! I'm not sure how you manage to accomplish so much, but you definitely do it with grace.

-Diann Williamson

I enjoy collaborating and working alongside Patty Morris, April Heitland, and Deb Cale. Each of you possesses individual strengths and talents, which helps to make our team strong! Thank you for always being willing to share your time and talents with me!

-Diann Williamson

I would like to thank Daryl Haynes for all of his work on the landscaping at Heritage! Our grounds look so tidy and well groomed. Thank you, Daryl!

-Amy Maxfield

Thank you Darla, Cody and Mark for all your hard work over the summer getting North Ridge ready. You all did an amazing job!

-Courtney Hixenbaugh

A huge thank you to Darla, Cody and Mark at North Ridge for all that they did to tackle the water that decided to enter the library during the crazy rain we had. I am so thankful for your quick action and care! I also greatly appreciate all of your work to clean and prepare the library for our new school year. It looks fabulous!!!

-Betsy Bejarno

Thank you Stephanie Birmingham for getting all the packets ready for the preschool welcome visits. You are awesome!

-Jennifer Haack

Facilities and Buildings/Grounds department has been hard at work thinking outside the box. Our facilities look amazing so much hard work has been put in over the summer!

-Madison Melchert

Linda Wong has been a tremendous asset to the activities team! There is nothing she can't do. She is a go getter and always answers our calls!

-Madison Melchert

April Heitland: Thank you for all of your guidance and positivity while we prepare for this school year.

-Gena Pierce

Erin Bryant: You are such an amazing person and co-worker. Your assistance and constant support is appreciated.

-Gena Pierce

Thank you to Darla, Cody and Mark for all of the hard work they put in this summer to make the building sparkle and shine!

-April Heitland

Thank you to Deanna Sandegren for her communication. She is thorough and provides wonderful support for our families when they register.

-April Heitland

Thank you to DeEtta Rosa for all she does for our district with Infinite Campus. I appreciate her work and collaboration.

-April Heitland

Thank you to Dakoda Flory, Joanna Hammond, Courtney Hixenbaugh, and Cory Stratton for the work they put in to make sure our schedules are ready to go at the beginning of the year.

-April Heitland

Thank you to Travis Donahue and Sean Shatava for their communication and their sense of urgency to make sure our buildings are ready for the return of our students and staff.

-April Heitland

Thank you to Shana Olson and our Instructional Coaches (Jolie Morgan, Lindsay Kasperbauer, Jim Shutt, Katie Johnson, Kelcie Stratton, Abby Crannell, Heidi Kuberski and Elyse Webb) for their incredible planning, preparation, and delivery of learning for our district PLC Leaders.

From the theme to the activities, it is clear just how much time and effort you put into preparing for this day. The content and connections are so important in starting us off on the right foot!

-Greg Carenza

Thank you to Shana Olson, Cary Justmann, Steven Hopper, Sarah Jenkins, Jami Boege and AJ Ellingson for offering the optional New Teacher Orientation! What a great solution for everyone involved! I know you all have put forth a lot of planning and preparation so that you could maximize the new teachers' time but also make the information meaningful and not overwhelming. Great job!

-Greg Carenza

Thank you to Austin Roy for his support and help with addressing Chronic Absenteeism and Attendance policies and legislative changes...and then building a great system for documenting our attendance reviews. I appreciate Austin's focus on systems thinking and his willingness to help out every time I ask for it! Without Austin's help, we would be as successful in organizing changes to these two areas of work.

-Greg Carenza

Thank you to Deb Cale, Kelcie Stratton, Klaire Jungling, Megan Klein and Shea Jorgensen for their positive and proactive work to brainstorm and support new ideas around enrollment and classes at DCE. I very much enjoyed observing your team working to identify plusses and challenges with all of the ideas you considered and to work together to come to consensus on the best plan moving forward. Thank you for your time and energy to tackle this issue.

-Greg Carenza