

Staff Commendations

December 2025

I would like to thank the middle school special education team (Sabrina Morua, Sara Jones, Harley Vestal, Emily VanWyk, Dan Easley, and Amy Snowden) for including me in team discussions and for being a supportive group. I love that we share strategies and make plans to help our students be successful. It is a privilege to be a part of this team.

-Holly Foarde

Special shout out to Kelly Verwers, Hannah Klatt, and Staci Bott for all of your help with the bookfair. I wouldn't be able to do it without you!

-Heather Roberts

*A big shout-out to **Sarah Pylkke** for her outstanding support of our students and families. This week she went above and beyond—chasing down a blown-away piece of paper for an overwhelmed parent—showing the kindness, patience, and care that define her work every day. This parent took time to let me know how much she appreciated that kind and heartfelt action. Sarah's warm smiles, steady presence, and unwavering dedication make a meaningful difference for our students, staff, and families. We are grateful for all she does!*

-Deb Cale & Karyl Palmer (sub at DCE)

*A big thank you to **DeEtta Rosa** for all of her incredible support with the countless questions that come her way about Infinite Campus. From managing report card deadlines to helping navigate the unique preschool reporting schedule—and everything else we throw her way—her patience, expertise, and willingness to help are truly appreciated. We are so grateful for all she does!*

-Deb Cale

*I want to celebrate **Kensie Manley** for jumping right in during her first year in DCG Preschool and doing such a fantastic job. She is wonderful with our kids, supportive of staff, and a great teammate. Her passion for early childhood is evident in everything she does. We are so lucky to have her on our team!*

-Deb Cale

*I would like to celebrate **Nejra Vatres** for her dedication and the high expectations she holds for her students. She builds strong, positive relationships with families and staff, and she consistently goes above and beyond with her time and support for others. Her commitment and care make a tremendous difference, and we are grateful for all she contributes.*

-Deb Cale

*I would like to recognize **Cristina Hilmer** for her outstanding contributions to our TAG program. She is exceptionally supportive and collaborative with our teachers, consistently acts in the best interest of students, and builds strong, positive partnerships with families. We are truly lucky to have her as part of our team.*

-Deb Cale

I would like to recognize Mindy Farrell for always being willing to help with walkers after school. She saves the day many times, getting all the kids out to their parents safely. Thank you, Mindy, for being a team player!!

-Kari Traver

I would like to thank Jordan Paup for all she has done for Heritage in the past few months. Jordan, you are amazing with kids and staff alike. I also think you manage everything calmly and with great patience. We are lucky to have you here at Heritage! Thank you for your numerous contributions, hard work, and ability to problem solve.

-Amy Maxfield

I would like to nominate Jim Shutt for all his work to create advisory lesson plans, support Tier 1 team with spreadsheets and organization, and the ESSA team with support as well as organizing our Varsity Tutors and supporting our kids here. He is always coming up with creative ideas to keep our building organized and in a growth mindset! Thank you for all you do!

-Sarah Rose

I would like to take the opportunity to recognize Jacob Lachacz. Jacob has done an amazing job supporting our new team members this year. His knowledge of our curriculum and building resources has been incredibly helpful, not just to new teachers, but to our entire team. He is always looking for ways to improve our systems and make sure our processes truly support what's best for kids. Our team continues to learn and grow, and Jacob has been a major contributing factor. Thank you for everything you do!

-Travis Mateer

I would like to recognize Sherie Ewers for always going above and beyond in my classroom and creating relationships with students that help them feel safe and welcomed. I could not do my job without her!

-Sarah Hinrichs

A huge shout out to Julie Rummans! She comes to work ready to tackle the challenges ahead of her. The challenges are big and she remains patient and calm. South Prairie is lucky to have her on our team!

-Jenny Rants

Thanks to Bobbi Bruns for her positivity and willingness to be flexible throughout the school day. She is impacting her student's life in the very best way every single day!

-Jenny Rants

Thanks to Elyse Webb for keeping the special education team heading in the right direction. We appreciate your time and guidance.

-South Prairie Elementary Sped Team

I would like to commend Ty Peterson. He is self motivated and eager to work with all of our students. He builds great relationships with the kids and they enjoy seeing him each day. Ty frequently thinks ahead and is always trying to learn as much as he can. He has become someone that we know we can depend on. Ty is a joy to work with and we are so lucky to have him at the middle school!

-Emily Van Wyk

I would like to give Elyse Webb a HUGE shoutout and thank you for all she has done to support me this school year! I went to Elyse for help with forming my goal for my personal PD and she has been the biggest help throughout the whole process! She listens to my concerns, wants, and needs, and then goes above and beyond to help me figure things out and gather any additional information I need. Without Elyse's help, I am not sure I would have as much success and growth with my personal/professional goal as I do right now. I couldn't thank Elyse enough for all that she has done, and I hope she realizes how important she is to all of us at South Prairie!

-Logan Wilson

I want to give a shoutout to Kristina Miller for always being a helpful, listening ear! Kristina has so many great ideas and I have really enjoyed collaborating with her on a few students and situations throughout my time at South Prairie! She is always willing to listen to my concerns or ideas, allows me to bounce ideas off of her, and is open to collaborating on how to best support our students. She has been so helpful to me in my role and I can't thank her enough for letting me pick her brain often!

-Logan Wilson

I'd like to give a shoutout to Julie Rummans and Claire Marchant! Julie and Claire have been working with a student this school year who has been coming to school with a lot of big feelings. Julie and Claire have both gone above and beyond on doing what they can to help this student feel heard, seen, and loved while they are at school. They have collaborated with each other, myself, parents, etc. on ways that provide the best, most effective support possible for this student to find success at school. South Prairie is lucky to have teachers like Claire and Julie for our students!

-Logan Wilson

A huge shoutout to Brittany Fetrow for being flexible and moving to a new position during the day....without much notice. She was a rockstar and did amazing things for our special education students. South Prairie Elementary Special Education Teachers

-Jenny Rants

To Kyler Olsen: We would like to recognize and commend Mr. Kyler Olsen for his outstanding support of the Fine Arts at DCG Middle School. Kyler's willingness to consistently share his classroom space for rehearsals and to host both Choir and Band concerts has been an invaluable gift to our programs. His flexibility, collaboration, and commitment to creating a positive environment make a remarkable difference for our students. Because of Kyler, our performers have a welcoming, functional, and reliable space to learn, rehearse, and shine. We are incredibly grateful for his partnership, his generosity, and his unwavering support of ALL in our school community.

-Joy Augustine and Suzi Royer

To Jason Snow: We would like to recognize DCG Middle School Principal Jason Snow for his exceptional leadership and unwavering support of the Fine Arts. Jason's guidance, presence, and encouragement have had a profound impact on our programs and on the more than 400 students involved in our December concerts. His willingness to listen, process, and problem-solve alongside us has strengthened our work and helped ensure that every performance was a success. Jason's leadership creates an environment where students and staff feel supported, valued, and empowered to do their best. We are deeply grateful for all he has brought to DCG Middle School and for the steadfast support he provides to our ensembles and our students. Thank you, Jason, for your remarkable leadership and partnership.

-Joy Augustine and Suzi Royer

To Heidi Steger: I would like to recognize Mrs. Heidi Steger for her outstanding work and leadership as the 7th/8th Grade Oakview Choir Director. Heidi's dedication and artistry were beautifully showcased in two fabulous concerts, where the newly formed Treble and Bass Clef Choirs performed with remarkable confidence and success. Her commitment to helping students understand their specific voice parts and grow as singers has opened meaningful opportunities for musical development at Oakview. The hard work, care, and expertise Heidi pours into her program were evident in every moment of the performances. Bravo, Heidi, on exceptional concerts! Your impact on students and the choral program is truly commendable.

-Joy Augustine

I want to extend a huge thank you to school bus mechanic Brandon Kraklio. He has gone above and beyond for us bus drivers lately. He spent extra time after the Thanksgiving snow storm making sure the buses were ready for us on Monday morning. There have already been multiple occasions when he came early and started all of the buses so they were warm when we got there. In addition, he is patient and calm in explaining everything down to the tires to us less mechanically inclined people. I am thankful we have Brandon working behind the scenes every day, keeping the buses safe and warm for all the kids who ride with us.

-Tom Aman

I want to take a moment to express my gratitude to the associates at Heritage. They are a hard-working bunch of ladies who continue to learn and grow in order to serve students to the best of their abilities. I really appreciate their professionalism and work ethic. They make Heritage a great place to learn!

-Diann Williamson

Sean Burton has been amazing to have in art this term. He remembers the steps of the clay box unit from previous years in Art 1 and is able to work with multiple students at once. He is an expert at knowing the ability levels of different students and how to demonstrate each individual step so his students can then work independently. He is always reassuring students they are capable of the work and finds ways to help them be successful with their unique ideas. Thank you Sean!

-April Busch

Madison Grove, Sarah Hinrichs, Zach Lester and Heidi Washington are problem solvers and solution focused. They work to build strong relationships with their grade level students and families. Thank you for the hard work you put in each day with our 4th grade students.

-April Heitland

Thank you to Paige Herbsleb for always coming to the table with possible areas of improvement and solutions to address them in order to make North Ridge a safe and thriving environment. Here consistent approach and collaboration are vital to our success.

-April Heitland

Dakoda Flory, Joanna Hammond, Courtney Hixenbaugh, and Cory Stratton are a team of dedicated special education teachers that have high expectations for their students. They collaborate with staff to ensure that students are receiving just what they need each day. They are flexible and forward thinking.

-April Heitland

Thank you to Rhonda Neal for her positive attitude and calm demeanor. Rhonda goes above and beyond to build strong relationships with all students. She is consistent and caring.

-April Heitland

If you have been at North Ridge, you know that Mary Deahr is everywhere! Mary supports students, staff and families with a smile, kind heart, and a can do attitude. Mary is vital to the day to day operation at North Ridge!

-April Heitland

Delilah Bonner is vital to the success of the kindergarten students at North Ridge. She works to build routines, structures and relationships that set our students up for success.

-April Heitland

I would like to recognize the DCE/Heritage Encore Team: Heather Roberts, Avery Nabholz, Amy Cory, and Whitney Boaz. While navigating the challenges of supporting multiple schools for DC-G, they are so intentional and thoughtful about their time with students. They collaborate in meaningful ways to make Encore classes a highlight for our students. We are so lucky to have them as a part of our team!

-Mallory DeLacy

The DCG District would like to thank Campbell Dentistry for their generous donation of 100 toothbrushes for the students of DCG. We are very grateful for their support of the students across our district.

-DCG Administration