



Exemplary Educator Awards presented on May 27, 2014

Thank you to all of our awards nominees for what you do to enrich the educational experience of our gifted and high-ability students.

In the West Side Elementary Exemplary Educator category:

Honorable mentions included:

From Alice Gustafson School—Marcie Lucas, 4th grade teacher

From Grace McWayne School—Susan Palombella, 4th grade teacher and Tammi Lydick, 5th grade teacher

From H.C. Storm School—Kristen O'Brien, Kindergarten teacher, Micheline Ivan, 2nd grade teacher, Karen Mann, 4th grade teacher

Recipient: Congratulations to Susan Sokolinski, 3rd grade teacher at Alice Gustafson Elementary

One of the comments about this year's West Side Elementary Exemplary Educator read:
"When Dr. Sokolinski realized there were a handful of her second graders who excelled at the math content at the beginning of the year she assessed the children and then delivered the curriculum and content for the [third grade math curriculum]. Sue understood what these children needed and moved on with them the following school year to continue the program."

In the East Side Elementary Exemplary Educator category:

Honorable mentions included:

From Louise White School: Karen Sullivan, Kindergarten teacher; Annemarie Barnes, 2nd grade teacher; Ann Burnham, 5th grade teacher

From Hoover Wood School: Shannon Hemmes, 2nd grade teacher; and Todd Swanson, 5th grade teacher

From J. B. Nelson School: Scott Hunter, 3rd grade teacher

Recipient: Congratulations to Colleen Puttin, 1st grade teacher at Louise White School

A comment from one of the nominations for this year's recipient said:

“Mrs. Puttin has the amazing ability to challenge students while nurturing them as young learners. She encourages students to take positive risks in the classroom and she is supportive of school and district activities outside of the classroom. Mrs. Puttin is a teacher representative on the LWS PTO and smile with parents during set up through clean up and all things in between! Students know they can trust Mrs. Puttin to be an excellent role model.”

In the 6th Grade Exemplary Educator Category:

Honorable mentions included:

Kim Oswald and Lynn Swider

Recipient: Congratulations to Deborah Nelson

One of the comments in the nomination for this year’s recipient read:
[Mrs. Nelson] involved classroom students and [their] families in several charitable and community projects that she is involved in. [She] ran a marathon for charity, and coordinated a time to remove [invasive plants] at Nelson Lake. [She] often communicates to parents via e-mail and class website... [and] recently incorporated interactive workbooks and Google Chromebooks into curriculum.”

In the 7th grade Exemplary Educator Category:

Co-recipients: Congratulations to Barbara Buckley and Mary Beth LaClair

Comments about these two educators included the following:

“Ms. Buckley has the right balance of support and challenge that results in students pushing themselves to learn more about the subjects they are studying. Ms. Buckley consistently helps students make the connection between what they are learning in her classroom and its real-life application. She also teaches students about career opportunities related to the subjects they are studying. Queen of the field trip. This is such a vital part of science learning, and Ms. Buckley uses all that Batavia has to offer to involve her students in Science learning...”

“[Ms. LaClair] has so much background knowledge...she is also able to answer all questions asked. She is fun to have a Social-Studies-related conversation with. She promotes teaching [your] parents what was learned that day. She can understand any questions a student asks, even if the student doesn’t understand the question.”

In the 8th grade Exemplary Educator Category:

Recipient: Congratulations to Jill Schulz

She received a perfect score on the nominations questionnaire.

In the high school HASS Exemplary Educator Category:

Recipient: Congratulations to Pamela Spencer, French teacher

Parents and students who nominated Pamela Spencer had this to say about her:

“I cannot list all of the organizations Mrs. Spencer belongs to, I am certain! I can say that she has long been the sponsor of the National French Honor Society and encourages her students to

participate in language competitions sponsored by several organizations. Mrs. Spencer's curriculum is constantly evolving to better meet students' needs. Mrs. Spencer does an outstanding job communicating by e-mail and phone with parents about students' progress in her class. [She] uses a huge variety of teaching techniques to expose students to French language and culture. She incorporates technology utilizing the internet, podcasts, music, and the interactive language lab. Students write papers and produce projects on French-speaking countries, French art and music, and other aspects of French cultures. Always a fan favorite, she has "Food Days" where students bring French foods to class."

In the high school STEM Exemplary Educator Category:

Recipient: Congratulations to Mrs. William Sindewald, physics teacher

One nomination survey contained this comment:

"Mr. Sindewald has the ability to engage and keep students interested throughout the semester by creative situations and scenarios in lab worksheets."

In the Exemplary Educator in an Administrative Position:

Honorable mentions included: Kevin Skomer, Principal at Louise White School and Jocelyn Roos, BPS Assistive Technology Specialist

Recipient: Congratulations to Dr. Pamela Ciway, Gifted Coach at Louise White School and Alice Gustafson School

One nominee had this to say about Dr. Ciway:

"[She] creates lessons that empower students—5th graders created plans for a tornado shelter and presented to district staff; 3rd graders created a plan to make a "Little Free Library" at AGS. [She] fully understands the personality and traits of gifted students. Was able to loan me books and suggest materials and websites to help me better understand my learner. Has met with me on several occasions to help with my students. Has made time to be in meetings with my students' regular classroom teachers and always communicates rapidly with email. All communication from her is positive and professional. Created an inter-school blog for her students to read common books and communicate about them. This blog fostered new friendships and a feeling of community among students at different schools."

Honorable mention for Mrs. Lisa Hatfield, 5th grade Band Director at all Batavia Elementary Schools