

President's School Board Report

February 25, 2019

Tonight I am pleased to start the evening off two Extra Mile Award presentations.

Chrissa Sullivan

Our first Extra Mile Award recipient is Mrs. Chrissa Sullivan, Family and Consumer Science teacher at Jefferson Middle School. According to her nomination letter submitted by her Principal Kelly Szessterniak, Mrs. Sullivan's passion for her subject area, for her students, and for social emotional health for staff and students are unparalleled.

Mrs. Szessterniak goes on to say, " Chrissa's enthusiasm, positive outlook, and relentless work ethic have allowed her to have a significant and lasting impact on the staff and students of JMS.

Chrissa has become a leader within the district level Social Emotional Learning committee, constantly searching to new learn new strategies and read new research about the benefits of SEL. She has attended numerous conferences and workshops on this topic. She incorporates SEL skills into her curriculum so that students have the knowledge and skills to manage their emotions, make responsible decisions, and have empathy for others. Chrissa also voluntarily presents at faculty meetings, SEL committee meetings and in-service days, in order to build knowledge and capacity within the MTLSD organization. In addition, she walks the walk, practicing mindfulness as a model for others.

In addition to all of her work in SEL, Chrissa is also a risk-taker in the classroom. She is truly a life-long learner, and has adopted many new instructional approaches and instructional technology into her classroom. She leads by example in the truest sense of the word. In recent years, she has developed a passion for entrepreneurship and has launched a project in her FCS enrichment class that will give students the experience of being "kidpreneurs." This year, her FCS enrichment class had 9 startup companies. These companies pitched ideas, Shark Tank style, and earned investment from venture capitalists. Businesses then launched into the production and sales phase of the entrepreneurship process. They are responsible for everything from customer service, to production, to financial reporting. This authentic learning experience has taught students about strategic planning, creative thinking, teamwork, and more. Students are highly motivated and extremely proud of their products. They were so motivated to succeed, they were asking to stay after school and come in during evening hours to work on their company and products! Mrs. Sullivan facilitates this entire learning

experience, handing the control over to each CEO to make decisions and to learn from them. She takes countless trips to the store to buy supplies for the companies, spends many additional evenings supporting the production and sales of products, and much more. She truly goes above and beyond to make this learning experience valuable and memorable for her students.”

I would like to ask Mrs. Sullivan to step forward to receive the Extra Mile Award.

Mark Kernion

Mr. Mark Kernion is our second Extra Mile Award recipient. In January, I received an email from a high school parent who wrote: “My daughter has taken Chemistry class the last two years under Mr. Kernion. She won Mr. Kernion’s “Knights of the Periodic Table” annual award in 2017 and his teaching style, practice, and enthusiasm has been infectious to her and other students in his classes. I am so impressed with what she has accomplished under his tutelage – namely her love of chemistry and the sciences. As you are aware, Mr. Kernion is retiring at years end and with this start of this new year, I think it would be fitting for the school district to honor not only his 30+ years in teaching, but for his teaching practices that have helped and continue to help children and to foster a love of education. Kudos to Mr. Kernion!”

I echo the sentiments concerning Mr. Kernion and his infectious teaching style. I too am fully aware of his pedagogical teaching abilities as my older daughter Rebecca had him for AP Chemistry. She has a passion for chemistry, and in fact had taken all of the chemistry classes that were offered in our high school. Her love of chemistry continued on into college and then into medical school. She is now a physician because of Mr. Kernion and many other teachers.

It is my distinct pleasure to present Mark Kernion with the Extra Mile Award.