



HSD Employees of the Year 2021-2022



As Superintendent, it is truly an honor to announce that our District has selected Allie Ritchie as Teacher of the Year, Denise Herman as Classified Employee of the year and Robin Wynn for Business & Operations Employee of the year for the 2021-2022 school year. Below are the nomination recommendations from their administrators.

Congratulations Allie, Denise and Robin!

~Mark Anderson, Superintendent

Submitted by HJH Principal Don Strother: Ms. Ritchie has been with the Highland School District for three years. Her first two years of teaching aligned with our two COVID years, and she became a leader in many areas of our school. Most importantly, Ms. Ritchie is an advocate for her students and ensures special education rules and laws are followed. She has become a leader in our school, for students and staff. She serves on the Highland Junior High leadership team and our academic Response to Intervention team.

Ms. Ritchie's skills as an educator are very strong. This year she has transitioned to a Math AND English/Language Arts teacher in the special education classes she teaches, after spending her first two years as a Math teacher. This year she also is a co-teacher in general education Math and English/Language Arts classes.

Ms. Ritchie provides a rigorous education to students with disabilities in an inclusive and empowering way! She dove into the newer philosophy of inclusion and style of teaching with a high level of focus, depth of knowledge and most importantly - passion. She is building the capacity of not only students, but her fellow teachers in her building and outside of it. The co-instruction Allie is part of is AMAZING, as she is gaining understanding of core content and the specially designed instruction each individual learner needs.

Submitted by Direct of Student Services Kirsten Lenz: Allie joined other Highland staff on the ground floor of researching the inclusion model which included the co-plan/co-teach model when Highland began this inclusion work three years ago. Allie has become a model and an advocate of inclusion across the district. Allie Ritchie has embraced the "Co-Teach/Co-plan" model of serving selected students with Individualized Educational programs (IEPs) in the general education setting with their same-aged peers. Allie co-plans weekly with some teachers at Highland Junior High to ensure that students with an IEP are getting the strategies and scaffolding they need to be successful in the general education classroom. Allie also co-teaches with teachers at the Junior High being a partner teacher in the general education classroom. One teacher that Allie co-teaches with has shared that "Allie has been my rock this year. She keeps me grounded and reminds me to breath. Allie is amazing and I appreciate every opportunity I get to collaborate with her." Another colleague that Allie co-teaches with also shared that Allie displays Highland's core values each and every day that she comes to work. "She solves her problems when needed and will also help other students solve theirs." Allie is a very positive person and displays this positivity with students, staff and families. Allie goes above and beyond every day to meet the needs of her students and the staff that she works with. Allie Ritchie is very deserving of Highland's Certified Employee of the Year award.



Submitted by MWC Principal Andrea Wickenhagen: Denise Herman is a very dedicated and hard-working employee. She is always willing to help and support all teachers and staff. She goes above and beyond to make sure she is completing her duties to the best of her abilities and more. Denise has high expectations for student learning and holds all she works with accountable. Denise has worked for the Highland School District for over 26 years and holds the Highland Community near and dear to her heart. As she retires this year, we will greatly miss her leadership, her guidance, and constant support. She has truly impacted the lives of so many students, and all who have worked with her are honored for her years of service to our school.



Submitted by Director of Business & Operations Francis Badu: Beyond that façade of calmness was always a certain measure of steadiness, reliability, and professionalism that remained unbeknownst to most people watching from a distant. For those of us who did, Robin was always the shadow director within the food service department. She's worn every hat and filled every shoe. From menu planning in the backroom to running the register, preparing food to determining with uncanny precision what needs to be shipped to other buildings, Robin has done it. It has been 24 years but the final curtain is coming down for Robin at the end of this school year. She will be sorely missed. It is for all these years of service and dedication that I would like to nominate Robin Wynn as the Business and Operations employee of the year.



I also want to recognize the following finalists who have done outstanding work:

- Cristian Tejeda - MWC 3rd Grade Teacher
 - Karin Skone - TIS 4th Grade ELA Teacher
 - Sara Crowston - HHS Math Teacher
 - Cindy Huck - TIS Para-Educator
 - Glorimar Delgado Garcia - HJH EL Migrant Para
 - Lourdes Diaz - HHS Attendance/Athletic Secretary
 - Makize Hernandez - SSO SpEd Para
 - Danny Wise - B & O Grounds Manager
- Thank you for all your hard work and dedication to the students of Highland School District.