

Name of Nominee:	The nominee is a:	Nominee's Supervisor	What ISD 917 Core Value does this staff member exemplify?	Highlight in detail why you are nominating this person for Employee of the Quarter based on the Core Value they exemplify?
Monique Marple	Licensed Staff Member	AJ Boehmer	Innovation	Monique is always trying to better/improve our systems that will ultimately help the students and staff. She is always a team player and just overall a great staff member to look up to!
Jess Hereford	Licensed Staff Member	Amy Swaney	Empathy	Jess is such a hardworking teacher. She truly cares for her students and is always coming up with new ways for them to learn and grow with their unique needs! She's always there when you need her. She's an awesome teacher and person!
Joe Heaney	Licensed Staff Member	Amy Swaney	Diversity	Joe brings strong assets to their role and our group/team is incredibly fortunate to have them as our lead teacher. I appreciate the way Joe creates a supportive learning environment, where everyone feels comfortable, asking questions. Not only is Joe respected by the staff, but also the students and parents.
Joseph Heaney (they/them)	Licensed Staff Member	Amy Swaney	Diversity	Joe has proved repeatedly to be a great leader in the classroom to both staff and students. They have come a long way in understanding the nuances of the students they work with, how to amplify the values the kids bring to the table, and create a classroom environment to make sure all staff that work in it also amplify the students' values. Joe has consistently shown that diversity is welcome in their classroom and is able to meet students where they are at while encouraging them to recognize and work around other student's unique needs as well. Joe promotes diversity within the classroom culture and in fostering growth mindsets within their students to show how differences can be challenging yet help us solve problems together.
Joe Heaney	Licensed Staff Member	Amy Swaney	Equity	Joe is an incredible teacher and communicator. They are very intuitive to their students needs and is always finding ways to best suit the needs of the students. They always find the positive in every student and strives to make the classroom an enjoyable environment. They have so much patience when students are escalated and after a student crisis, they will take the time to calmly process with the student. They have such a knack with words and is always honest with all of the students in their class. Joe also is a great mentor to the EPS's in their classroom. Making sure to take the time to help them learn each of the students and coaching them through difficulties they may face. I have learned so much from Joe and I appreciate all that they have brought to CEC.
Kim Wald	Licensed Staff Member	Chris Devine	Equity	Kim tailors lessons to meet the diverse needs of students by using various teaching methods—such as visual aids, hands-on activities, or technology—to cater to different learning styles and abilities. Kim sets high expectations for every student, believing in their potential to succeed in mathematics. They provide challenging tasks that encourage all students to stretch their abilities and engage with the material. Kim incorporates examples and problems that reflect diverse cultures and real-world applications, making the content relatable and relevant to all students. This helps students see the value and applicability of math in various contexts. Kim fosters a classroom culture that encourages collaboration, respect, and inclusivity. They create an environment where students feel safe to take risks, ask questions, and express their ideas without fear of judgment. Kim promotes group work and peer tutoring, allowing students to learn from each other's strengths and perspectives. This collaborative approach helps build community and enables students to support one another. Kim regularly reflects on their own teaching practices and seeks feedback from students to understand how they can better serve all learners. This might involve attending professional development on equity or engaging in discussions with colleagues about best practices.
Katie Collins	Licensed Staff Member	Don Budach	Collaboration	Katie is a dependable teammate. She is a dedicated teacher, new to TESA, who jumped right in with both feet! She has many students to serve, but still takes the time to thoroughly collaborate with support staff. She makes all students feel welcome, heard and understood everyday she walks into the classroom!
Jenna Sittarich	Licensed Staff Member	Don Budach	Collaboration	This year Jenna has assisted in creating our TESA data collection system and training others on how to implement this system. Jenna also co-teaches many classes to assist students authentic growth in their communication goals. Jenna is also mentoring and supporting another speech pathologist to our TESA team this year. Jenna also assists teachers in implementing visual supports that students need to be independent within their classes. Jenna also works with many staff to create social stories to assist student's understanding of complex and abstract concepts.
Wendi Renken	Licensed Staff Member	Don Budach	Collaboration	Wendi is the lead teacher for the TESA and DASH programs. She is always working to support staff and students. She is calm under pressure and empathetic to each person and their situation. I feel comfortable asking her for help and support, appreciated by her, engaged with her, heard by her, and seen. Wendi is an amazing lead and deserves to be recognized for her hard work and kind heart.
Betsy Larson	Licensed Staff Member	Don Budach	Personalization	Betsy is an absolutely amazing teacher. She works with our nonverbal students who are medically fragile. She goes above and beyond to Make sure her students that have so many various disabilities are able to learn and understand what's going on in the classroom. She also was constantly coming up with fun ideas to invite and include families like a Fall festival. This is done in a stand-alone classroom so she has to do the majority of the work on her own. She's constantly looking for new ideas and new ways to communicate with her students. She makes the staff feel like a community and family. When you walk in her room you feel like you're surrounded with love.
Betsy Larsen	Licensed Staff Member	Don Budach	Empathy	*Betsy has been a breath of fresh air in our room. She is very welcoming to staff and students. Everyone feels like their ideas and opinions are heard and valued. I look forward to going to work everyday! *Betsy uses hands-on activities that are unique, fun and inclusive for a supportive learning environment. She will alter or modify the curriculum to help students have access and a better understand of what is being taught. *Betsy takes the time to get to know students, parents and staff. She creates a calm and happy classroom that everyone can enjoy.
Emily Moulton	Licensed Staff Member	Don Budach	Personalization	Emily is a great candidate that shows the Core value, Personalization each and everyday. Her case load is unique and each student has their own. She works diligently to best support each one of her students each day. Her hard work and amazing skills help her students succeed each day in their own creative way.
Lisa Meyer	Licensed Staff Member	Jackie Pauley	Innovation	Lisa is always finding creative ways to incorporate new and exciting learning opportunities that meet state standards as well as provide real world kinesthetic learning opportunities that get our students ready for success in their lives.

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Lisa Mayer	Licensed Staff Member	Jackie Pauley	Personalization	When Lisa teaches she does it with her whole heart! She cares for the students and their learning, makes her class time very interesting and loves hearing all their thoughts in classroom discussions. She is an over achiever in everything she does, tries hard and works hard. She is very organized and helpful to all! Amber and I love working in her classroom at Alliance!
Josh Odell	Licensed Staff Member	Jennifer Hetland	Personalization	Josh continues to meet students where they are at all while academically challenging them. He shows integrity, personalization, and innovation daily with his students.
Adrienne Turzynski	Licensed Staff Member	Kate Hulse	Collaboration	Adrienne shows all these core values. She collaborates with people she needs to make sure that our students are successful, safe, and enjoying school. Adrienne works with everybody equally and makes sure everyone that needs to be included in different discussions are. She has empathy for all our students. She is always going to crisis calls whether she directly works with the students or not. She will spend as much time as needed in classrooms to observe and help where help is needed. Adrienne is an amazing person and very caring. I along side the students are lucky to have her make this the best learning environment as possible.
Jenna Nace	Licensed Staff Member	Taylor Lovin	Collaboration	Jenna is such a great teacher, team member, and advocate. Not only is she a wealth of knowledge, but she also shares that knowledge with all who she interacts with in a way that empowers and uplifts them. When faced with challenging teams and situations, Jenna is able to advocate for students and teams in a way that yields results. Jenna continuously goes above and beyond to work toward solutions for students, often spending personal time and resources. She consistently does what is right for students and ISD 917 is very fortunate to have such a wonderful person on their itinerant team!
Taylor McElligot	Non-Licensed Staff Member	AJ Boehmer	Integrity	We are so lucky to have Taylor apart of our school family! Taylor has been our only paraprofessional this school year, which means a lot has fallen on her as far as prep, data, and working with students. She consistently shows up to work with a positive attitude. Taylor exemplifies and leans into the powers of conscious discipline to help guide her practice of working with students and their unique needs. Taylor has especially grown into her assertive voice with students and is a model to others in our school building. We could not do it without her!!!
Lori Wilson	Non-Licensed Staff Member	AJ Boehmer	Diversity	Being a new member to the school I felt welcomed by all staff. However Lori stood out to me. She is always talking to me with students. Making sure everyone is included. Moving around rooms when needed with her flexibility. It has been a pleasure working with her and I look forward to the rest of the year.
Ashley DePover	Non-Licensed Staff Member	Amy Swaney	Communication	I am pleased to nominate Ms. Ashley DePover for her exceptional ability to foster open, transparent communication while creating a positive, inclusive, and collaborative learning environment. As an international teacher of color, being new to the school and Minnesota as a whole, Ms. Ashley is one of the reasons why I survived my very first month and going on my first year except for the fact that the admin at Concord absolutely rocks! :-) She brings a unique perspective and invaluable skills to the classroom, making meaningful connections with students, colleagues, and the broader school community. She excel in listening with empathy, encouraging open dialogue, and making space for all voices to be heard. Whether in one-on-one discussions or in team settings, she encourages conversations that promote mutual understanding, respect, and growth. I will never forget how Ms. Ashley even offer me and my co-Filipino teachers to be driven around town. She generously offered that she is just one text away if ever we need something from her. She is always so generous in sharing information about local events, ensuring that our families have the opportunity to enjoy them and that our kids can participate as well. She consistently goes the extra mile in her communication efforts, always ensuring that our families are well-informed and have access to opportunities within the community. When she is unable to come to work, it maybe simple but she always informs our classroom that she won't be able to make it for the day. Even though I am new, she always make sure that my voice is being heard and always encourage me to advocate for myself for any support that I might need, not only to our own classroom staff, but to our grade band, and to the admin as well.
Missy McElroy	Non-Licensed Staff Member	Amy Swaney	Integrity	Missy knows how to be warm, welcoming, and authentic with students which is good because she holds them to very high standards and because of how she leads them they trust her when she demands their best.
Amelia Peterson	Non-Licensed Staff Member	Don Budach	Collaboration	Amelia is someone you want to have on your team. She is ready and willing to step in where needed and constantly strives to help every student learn in their own way. She is able to take feedback and information from service providers and weave those ideas into her student's daily work. She is very helpful, with a ready smile and encouragement for any student who approaches her!
Rebecca Black	Non-Licensed Staff Member	Don Budach	Integrity	Rebecca believes in doing everything she can to ensure we meet student needs and consider staff strengths. She devotes her time to building relationships with everyone she works with and always has a positive attitude. She never lets her limitations or the limitations of others stand in the way of getting things done. She supports her colleagues and students with kindness. She shows up every day with integrity and always strives to do her best and give it her all. She looks for ways to solve problems, report not only what's not working, but also what is. She is very kind and hardworking.
Jody Bauer	Non-Licensed Staff Member	Don Budach	Empathy	Jody is a new employee this year with 917 and it is her first time ever working as an ESP. She has adapted to the demanding environment of DASH with the utmost dedication, kindness, and empathy. Each day Jody gives generously of her heart and energy to the unique students in our classroom! They each have a high degree of medical and PCA care needs and Jody always has a wonderful attitude no matter what new challenges the day brings. She sees each student as an important individual who deserves to be heard, seen, and cared for. Thank you for being a part of our DASH team at Two Rivers, Jody! You are the coolest person with the biggest heart!
Andrea Gray	Non-Licensed Staff Member	Don Budach	Personalization	Since I have first started this employee has always gone above and beyond for students and even staff. She is very flexible and so very welcoming. She knows how to make everyone feel better. She's a hard worker and would be greatly missed if she were to ever have to leave!

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Jenny Lentz	Non-Licensed Staff Member	Don Budach	Personalization	I first worked with Jenny almost 20 years ago when she served as an educational assistant for one of my students. We worked together for a couple of years and her dedication, positive outlook, going above and beyond always, was evident. Now, many years later, we share students at TESA. She has all of the same qualities if not more. I have NEVER seen her at work without 150%. She is a gift to ISD 917
Becky Splett	Non-Licensed Staff Member	Don Budach	Integrity	Becky has been with the district for several years, both in a teaching role and now as a para. Becky respects the privacy of students by keeping sensitive information about their academic performance, personal challenges, and any special accommodations confidential. If Becky makes a mistake or observes a situation where a student is struggling, she is honest about it. She communicate openly with the supervising teacher about issues or concerns, instead of trying to conceal them, and work collaboratively to find solutions. Becky advocates for students' needs by ensuring they receive the appropriate support and accommodations as outlined in their IEP's. She voices concerns when students are not receiving necessary services, acting in the best interest of the students. Becky treats all students fairly and equitably, regardless of their background or abilities. She provides the same level of attention and support to every student and do not show favoritism, ensuring an inclusive environment. By demonstrating integrity in their own actions—such as being punctual, completing tasks responsibly, and treating others with respect—Becky serves as a role model for students. This not only reinforces positive behavior but also helps to cultivate a culture of integrity in the classroom.
Jessica Ventrone	Non-Licensed Staff Member	Jackie Pauley	Personalization	I am a new ESP at Alliance Education Center and ISD 917, and Jess is my mentor, along with several other brand new ESPs. She is dedicated to her team, dedicated to her students, and incredibly considerate of the needs of those around her. She knows her students backwards and forwards, and her attention to detail and knack for the classroom is exemplified in the little tasks like memorizing locker combinations and reminding us to drink water, and big tasks like managing big behaviors and the training of all her mentees. She knows her staff, she knows her students, she knows her classroom, and she knows her school. It's been really wonderful learning under her, and she makes even the hard days feels manageable. She deserves more recognition than I could possibly give, and is an excellent candidate for Employee of the Quarter.
Kathleen (Kate) Everson	Non-Licensed Staff Member	Jackie Pauley	Empathy	Kate is an ESP in the CASE program. She is the cheerleader of the CASE program. She is always encouraging other staff members and keeps a positive attitude at all times. She finds strengths in others and will let them know that she notices these strengths and compliment them. Kate also notices when other staff are struggling. She will jump in and support wherever needed and will empathize with staff, encouraging and telling them that they are doing a great job. In addition to empathy and support of staff, Kate has empathy for students and is continuously trying to understand where they are at. She cares deeply for the students and provides empathetic support to them. She is in tune with what they need and looking for innovative ways to teach and support our students. I think that Kate is an exemplary ESP and very deserving of being Employee of the Quarter.
Nathalie Bohn	Non-Licensed Staff Member	Jennifer Hetland	Empathy	Nathalie continues to show up for her students even when things are difficult. She gives it her all and the students see her as a safe person to learn, grow from, and look up to. She meets students where they are at while holding them to high expectations.
Rachel Aster	Non-Licensed Staff Member	Taylor Lovin	Collaboration	Rachel is new to our program this year, but she brings with her a wealth of knowledge of both education and the Deaf community. She has jumped in with both feet, often taking initiative on her own, to help out both staff and students. She has already made a huge impact in our program, developing relationships with students and staff. She willingly shares her ideas for the program and field trips to help make things more accessible for all students and staff. Rachel is an amazing addition to our team!
Kenzie Richard	Non-Licensed Staff Member	Jennifer Hetland	Collaboration	Kenzie is able to step into any role an ESP might be asked to assume, including lunch distributor. She is organized and detail-oriented and includes students in the responsibility of getting food passed out in a timely and safe manner. She is skilled at working with any students and has done a phenomenal job implementing Nurtured Heart with consistency. The students she interacts with benefit greatly from her calm, nurturing personality. My classroom would not run half as smoothly without Kenzie on my team! I am so happy to collaborate with her daily!