



# Neah-Kah-Nie Middle School

25111 Hwy. 101 North, Rockaway Beach, OR 97136  
(503) 355-2990 - Fax: (503) 355-8514

January 3, 2023

Dear Paul Erlebach, School Board Members, and Community Members,

It is my pleasure to recognize Mike Wantland as this month's Volunteer of the Month.

When thinking about how to honor Mike Wantland as this month's Volunteer of the Month, I found myself asking, "How do I put into words what Mike does for staff and students of Neah-Kah-Nie Middle School?" Defining what a volunteer is seemed like a logical first step. According to Cambridge Dictionary, a volunteer is *a person who does something, especially for other people or for an organization, willingly and without being forced or paid to do it*. This definition is true of what Mike does, times ten.

Since I have been in my current position at NKN Middle School for the past four years, Mike Wantland has been a part of the middle school, spending at least 2–3 days per week working with our students. It started with Mike providing active breaks for our most challenging students at the end of the day. Students would work hard all day to spend the last 30 minutes shooting baskets with Mike. Of course, Mike spent his time with these students, sharing his wisdom and advice in the hope to improve student behavior in the future. After I noticed his special talent with our students, I asked if he would be a lunch buddy. Mike comes to the school several days per week and spends his lunch visiting with students as they eat lunch in my office, with his ultimate goal of building a relationship with them.

His volunteerism does not stop with working with students during the school day. Mike has volunteered his time as a football coach, and he is a regular chaperone to all of our middle school dances. Finding adults to spend an evening with 100 plus adolescents at a dance is a hard feat to accomplish, but Mike does not bat an eye when asked to attend. In fact, there is nothing Mike would not do for our school. He is truly dedicated to our district with the intention of building relationships with students in the hope to help them move down the right path, and he would do anything to help any staff member who asks for his support. All of us at the middle school, both staff and students, consider Mike a member of our school family.

In closing, it is my honor to recognize Mike Wantland as this month's Volunteer of the Month. He truly exemplifies all the characteristics of being a volunteer and then some.

Thank you for your hard work and dedication to the Neah-Kah-Nie School District.

Lori Dilbeck  
Principal, Neah-Kah-Nie Middle School