



## **The Golden Apple Award**

### **Livonia Public Schools Nomination Form**

The purpose of the Golden Apple Award is to recognize an outstanding contribution of time, talent, and effort in support of the students, parents, and staff of Livonia Public Schools. Some qualities of a nominee may include: a positive attitude; dedication; dependability; self-motivation; helpfulness; etc. Please fill in the areas below with your thoughts supporting a Golden Apple Award for your nominee.

**Name of Nominee:** Jeff Graham

This nomination is lovingly submitted by the staff of Roosevelt Elementary, no matter how many or few hours they work in our building. The outpouring of comments and stories from staff members when asked was amazing and has been summarized below as one cohesive voice for us all. You can just imagine, after reading this, how much longer this nomination form would be if we had asked for parent and student comments as well. 😊

#### **1. How is this person a positive representative of the district (give examples)?**

Being Roosevelt's Building Supervisor isn't just a "job" for Jeff. He is dedicated and a positive role model and supports the LPS Character Education Initiative by demonstrating and communicating the Community with Character elements throughout the day. He doesn't let his job description of Building Supervisor limit what he does for Roosevelt Elementary School. He lives by the words listed in our respectful interaction gears. He puts his needs secondary to the needs of staff and most importantly students.

We feel like he really goes above and beyond! He integrates himself into our building culture. He can be seen participating in spirit wear and Roosevelt themed days. What makes Jeff stand out is that he assumes a leadership role in our building and sets a positive example by going above and beyond what one would expect would be his normal duties. For example, you can often hear him making morning announcements, leading our students through the Pledge, and doing recess duty daily.

He gives direction when needed. He encourages students to make "good choices". He can frequently be heard giving verbal "pats on the backs" of his student helpers. He builds relationships with children who need an extra loving, guiding, caring hand. He works with students that need to build their responsibility skills by giving them leadership tasks like emptying recycling bins. The students look up to him, listen to him, and he plays an important role for them. He has even come in and helped in classrooms when some behavioral issues were taking place with students.

Jeff is very friendly to everyone. The Roosevelt community knows Jeff, from the students to the parents to the staff. He is truly a part of the school with his positive interactions with the teachers and students. He even volunteers to oversee the Roosevelt Family Movie Night.

He is always working to complete a never ending to-do list of things. It is rare to ever find him sitting and if he is, it's because he's answering our emails. If you ever need something, he gets to it right away, literally as soon as he's notified. That response time is unheard of. Jeff keeps our environment very welcoming and beautiful and safe. His high energy at work is a positive influence on the whole school.

Without a doubt, our school would not run as smoothly without him or be such an enjoyable place to work at. Jeff is the type of person you want on your team and in your building because not only does he give 100%, he is personable as well as professional.

## 2. How is this person a positive role model for others?

Although Jeff keeps our building safe and sparkling, he doesn't limit himself to just those roles. He interacts with our students to supervise student recycling and can be found on the playground every day. He even sings the FHS fight song during the announcements when the hockey team went to States. He begins everyday by greeting parents and children at arrival and ensuring the safety in our parking lots. He interacts with all the kids; it doesn't matter how old or how young. He comes into our classroom and in addition to doing all the "quick" fixes we might need, he talks to the children. He thanks them for jobs well done as well as addresses things that they could be doing better like cleaning up after lunch.

Jeff puts his all in everything he does and you hardly hear him complain. One thing you'll notice is he always seems to have a positive attitude when we all put a lot on him. He goes out of his way to help staff make their day easier, better, and safer. Jeff participates in the school day. He doesn't sit in his office and wait to be called upon. He is proactive and outstanding in arrival supervision, cleaning duties, snow removal, grass cutting, and recess and lunch monitoring.

He is always there to help students feel good about themselves by giving them a 'job' or giving them an opportunity to 'help him out' in some way. Students love working with Jeff in the cafeteria because he is kind but does hold students accountable. He is very interactive with our students, especially when he does outdoor recess duty at lunch. The older students especially need that mentoring from him when they play sports.

For example, there are two fourth grade students that look up to Jeff so much, that they wanted to help him with emptying the recycling bins during recess. Jeff immediately agreed and took them under his wing. He is all in all an amazing role model, especially for the fourth grade boys. He shows grit, hard-work, and respect.

Jeff is a community helper our students respect! Jeff communicates the character element of the month daily through leading by example and making morning, lunchtime, and recess announcements connecting the character trait to the situation.

## 3. How is this person innovative? How do they seek new ideas or methods?

If something is broke, Jeff will find a way to fix it. He is always willing to try several times. If it is outside his field of expertise (which occurs rarely), he puts in a work order. He always follows-up to make sure everything is the way it should be.

Our first example is that Jeff works hard to keep our laminator working - fixing it and un-jamming it when needed. He makes sure there is enough lamination film and that the staff are trained on how to work the machine. Recently when there was an electrical problem with it, Jeff was immediately on it, called for help, & it was working again that same day.

Our second example is when our preschool program joined Roosevelt several years ago. Whether they need help with tricycle repair, assembling a trampoline, or squeezing into the gym after lunch, Jeff is happy to work with them to find a solution.

The third example is that Jeff is always supportive regarding the lunch program by being willing to try new procedures to ensure the safety of the children, smooth transitions and behavior expectations in the lunchroom. He even attends school climate meetings to share his input.

He seeks input from others, he has colleagues that support him and most importantly he has a mindset that always focuses on a solution and not a problem. Our school district has always stressed teaming together. Truly, Jeff lives this day in and day out for the Livonia Public Schools School District.

A fourth grade teacher recalls when she and her students would always say, "If anyone can do it, Mr. Graham can!!" We all believe and know it's true! He is always willing to help in any way that he can offering ideas to "just let me know and we'll make it happen".

#### 4. How are they self-motivated?

Jeff really loves our building and the people in it. The building is one of the cleanest, well maintained schools many of us have ever been in. No one can ever complain that they asked for something from Jeff and he did not address it. New staff members are always amazed at how readily available and helpful he is when they are first assigned to our building.

When the ASD program joined us, space was tight, and some people were left without an office. Jeff thought of ways people could share offices, obtained extra furniture (without staff asking), and worked hard to make sure everyone felt welcome. He is truly so kind for thinking of others and thinking outside the box. We can't thank him enough.

For one fourth grade teacher, upon finding out she was getting a new student, Jeff had removed her extra table and gave her a new desk in less than 24 hours. He also found space to save that table for her, even though he is short on storage in the building right now.

When we received storage carts from the PTA, Jeff built and delivered all of them in less than 24 hours. He also assists with assemblies and technology needs. In addition, Jeff is a valued member of the Roosevelt PTA. He goes above and beyond to support school events and functions on his own time. A building doesn't function well without everyone moving in the right direction.

Walk with Jeff sometime! He walks the halls of our building quickly because he is on top of every situation and he has something to do every moment of the day! Ask and you shall receive! Go, go Gadget Jeff!

#### 5. List any other reasons this person is deserving of the award:

Jeff has been an amazing part of helping the ASD program adjust to Roosevelt. From day 1 he has welcomed them and done anything they have needed. He happily does this without blinking an eye and with a great sense of humor and patience. He is great with the ASD students! He is always willing to help a student up, take a hand, or block a runner. He helps them brainstorm safety issues and truly cares about their program. This year, Jeff spent a whole day as Santa so their students could get pictures.

He is going from the minute we walk into the building past his release time. Jeff comes in on his days off. Just when you think something needs to be fixed, you find Jeff has gotten to it... no need to let him know. He is acutely aware of everything going on in the building, takes his job seriously, and cares about the building and the people who work at Roosevelt.

He is dealing with a lot of behaviors at first recess and lunch, but he keeps his cool and manages to wrangle all 70-something students that he is supervising. Jeff is always available to help staff with behavior issues in the school. He is willing to help walk a student to the office, give the student a job or provide support during challenging times.

He takes care of our feathered friends that lay eggs in our court yard each year. He'll even come in on his day off to make sure they are taken care of & released. He delivers our Scholastic Book orders to our classrooms and has been a guest reader for March is Reading month.

Of all those items listed above, what impresses us the most about Jeff Graham and is the essence of the Golden Apple Award, is his dedication to students. He cares about their safety (*arrival duty, lunch duty*), he mentors students who are struggling with behavior or self-esteem (*by giving them jobs to help around the building and build their leadership capacity*) and our students who respect and care about him dearly.

In conclusion, he goes above and beyond for Roosevelt and we think he is a most deserving person to receive this award. He is dependable, friendly, helpful, and an active member of the Roosevelt community. We can think of no other person more deserving of the Golden Apple Award. Jeff is an "everyday hero who makes a crucial difference in our children's lives." We, the Roosevelt community, are lucky to have him here with us! Jeff is like a DC Comics character from the Justice League. He is Roosevelt's very own **SUPER HERO!**

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**Nominee's position and work site:** Building Supervisor at Roosevelt Elementary

**Nominee's email address:** jgraham6@livoniapublicschools.org

**Name of nominator:** Entire Roosevelt Staff; comments collected by Amy Truchan

**Nominator's phone and email:** aatwater@livoniapublicschools.org

**I am a(n):**  Student  LPS Employee  Parent/Guardian  Citizen

*Please return this form to:  
LPS Communications Department, Attn: Stacy Jenkins  
15125 Farmington Rd., Livonia 48154*