Outstanding Staff Member

Amy Parsons

Lincoln High School

Owosso Public Schools

Owosso, Michigan

When we give credit for a school’s success, we frequently acknowledge the teaching staff and principal. Often overlooked are the support staff who serve a vital function to the school. Ask anyone who works in the field of education “Who runs the school?” and quite unanimously from students, and staff, you will hear: “The school secretary does!” Amy Parsons is no exception to this rule. Nominator Josh Dewley states: “There is no question in my mind that Lincoln would not be the outstanding program that we are today without Amy’s experience managing our office. “ And as a colleague at Lincoln, I would add “and a lot of other things besides the office!”

Amy is described as serving in many different capacities by her fellow staff members. Teacher Carrie Rugenstein points to only a few of these when she says, “Throughout the day she can be seen acting as a mother, mentor, counselor, executive secretary, truancy officer and any number of other roles needed by the staff and students of Lincoln.” Former principal of Lincoln Karen VanEpps describes Amy as the “front porch” of Lincoln High School. “Anyone who works in education – private, public or alternative – knows how important a person’s first encounter with the school is. The first impression often shapes the attitude of the parents, the support of the community and the success of the student. I have seen firsthand Mrs. Parsons shape all of the above. The community respects her, the parents appreciate her and the students adore her.”

The appreciation for what Amy Parsons does for Lincoln High School does not stop with the professionals. In her letter of support for the nomination student Alana Lavery wrote: “Mrs. Parsons is one of the most altruistic people I have ever met. She is always going above and beyond for everyone she meets, whether it is for a day or for years. She is always willing to be a listening ear and a shoulder to cry on when it is needed. Did I mention she gives the best advice? No matter who you are or how upset you are, she will bring a smile to your face within seconds.”

Speaking of bringing a smile to your face, one of the most infamous stories in Lincoln’s history (and trust me, there are many!) is one that involves Amy front and center. Ironically when Lincoln first began that was where Amy’s desk was, front and center in the middle of the hallway with no walls. Social studies teacher, Michele Schmitz relates how much Amy is revered above all others on staff in her tale of a student who was asked to exit: “As the student yelled and left the building in the most dramatic way possible, he shouted and pointed to all staff in the hallway screaming, “F-You, F-You. F-You, Not you, you’re cool! F-you!’ And then he left the building with a swift kick of the door. Of course the “Not you, you’re cool was addressed to Mrs. Parsons, in which she promptly and politely replied, Thank you!” Lincoln High School could think of no better way to express appreciation for and honor the hard work and commitment displayed by Amy Parsons than the MAEO Outstanding Staff Member of the Year.

CONGRATULATIONS Amy!