



Binkley Elementary Charter School

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September 10, 2019

To The Board of Trustees and District Administrative Team:

It is with great enthusiasm and pride that Binkley recognizes one of our teachers this evening as certificated employee of the month for September. Jennifer Gallaway is one of Rincon Valley's finest teachers, and I am honored to speak on her behalf. Jen began her teaching career in 2004 at Matanzas, as Jennifer White. She taught there for one year and then joined the Binkley team, where she has taught kindergarten and second grades for the last 16 years.

I've had the pleasure of working with Jen both as a colleague and as her principal. Over the years we have attended many staff meetings, conferences, sat on STAC together, and collaborated as part of SCOE's Leadership Network team. Through all of these platforms, I have witnessed her many strengths. I am constantly enamored by her drive, integrity, collegiality, inquisitive nature and desire to learn and grow professionally.

At the beginning of the year, our staff focused on identifying and sharing our values as a way to guide our vision and practices for the year. We learned that Jen values relationships, creativity, strength, recognition, and leadership. The cool thing is, those that have spent any time with Jen know exactly what Jen values. Because she lives out those values every day in her classroom, with children and their families, and with her colleagues. She forfeits her recess break at a moments notice when a student is in the red zone and needs help regulating. She's available to parents at the drop of a hat through the Bloom's app, midnight or at 4:38 a.m. Her colleagues value that she has the courage to speak up when something needs attention or just isn't right. She rocks the boat, when the boat needs rockin'. And she steadies the ship when others feel uneasy.

Jen is a true warm demander, for students, parents and her colleagues. She has high expectations for others and holds herself to these same esteemed standards. She takes the time to find out exactly what each student needs to progress and then sets up a plan of action. Her strong second grade team is known for their purposeful, targeted instruction and successful academic results. However, just as importantly, Jen understands the hearts of children. She knows that it's important to nurture their social and emotional side and she realizes that this strong foundation ultimately leads to success. Therefore, she outlines this foundation carefully and lays every brick with intention and purpose. Knowing just what her students needed a couple of years back, Jen took it upon herself to learn about the Zones of Regulation and has become a champion for this program at Binkley. Last year, she stepped up to be on the district behavior committee. This year, she's trying flexible seating, which even the staff have enjoyed the benefits of, at our first staff meeting this year.

I remember having a conversation with Jen a few years back, colleague to colleague, about what was next in her professional career. Selfishly, I'm so thankful she stayed right where she was. Not only does the Binkley staff need her, but her students need her, and I didn't know it at the time, but so do I. The last couple of years have tested her. However, just like I knew she could, she shined. Thank you for your light. Thank you for your professionalism. Thank you for your unwavering dedication to this noble profession and for growing our students' hearts and minds. Just like your values dictate, you are strong, you are a leader, and you truly deserve this recognition.

Please join me in honoring Jennifer Gallaway as Rincon Valley Union School District's Certificated Employee of the Month for September!

Thank you,

Hilary Kjaer
Principal