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For Immediate Release:

Aberdeen Public Schools Foundation Presents Golden Apple Awards

Aberdeen, SD – The Aberdeen Public Schools Foundation announced the second annual Golden Apple Awards to recognize individuals that are dedicated, inspiring, and making a difference in the Aberdeen School District. This year’s honorees were Deb Schlosser, Shelia Sandquist and Evelyn McQuillen. Each received \$500 and a golden apple.

Deb Schlosser, DSC Administrative Assistant, goes out of her way to make everyone feel welcome to our District. From the school board president to a family struggling to find their way in a new community, everyone is treated with respect and made to feel at home. She is genuinely interested in and cares for the people and public she works with. As the first person to meet many new families, she represents our school district in an excellent way. Her sincere caring and compassion for people from all walks of life are evident and inspiring.

She has the ability to prioritize a wide variety of simultaneous demands quickly and efficiently with a smile. She is able to juggle multiple tasks and responsibilities with ease, even in a sometimes stressful work environment.

She has a servant's heart and volunteers as a member of the Sunshine Committee, student reading partner, Brown County Community Emergency Response Team, and the Brown County Fair where she was chosen as the SD Association of Fairs & Celebrations Event Person of the Year for her outstanding work.

Her tenure in the District has included working for 6 different supervisors in 4 different office locations. If she doesn't know the answer to a question, she usually knows the department or person to check with to find the solution. Her mantra as a DSC employee is "Service" is our middle name which she goes out of the way to demonstrate each and every day. Deb is one of our true "unsung heroes" in the Aberdeen School District.

Sheila Sandquist, Lincoln Elementary volunteer and food service employee, is a dedicated parent, school volunteer, and District employee. She started volunteering twelve years ago when her oldest daughter started school and started working for the District when her youngest child started pre-school. Sheila has spent countless hours organizing back to school packets, picture day, health fair, book fair, activity day, and fun night. She is instrumental in successful fundraising efforts such as box tops, soup labels, grocery receipts, and Coke rewards programs. She always has the student and school needs first and foremost and her goal is to create a fun environment for all families involved. One of her passions has been upgrading the playground equipment to be safe and up-to-date. Sheila supports the staff by welcoming them back to school with special treats, planning meals for conference days, and showing appreciation during National Education Week and Teacher Appreciation.

Facilitating a well-run lunchroom and demonstrating respect and patience for all students, sets Sheila apart in her school position. She makes it a point to know the student's names and amazingly all their lunch numbers. She mentors our 4th and 5th grade students by training them to serve the lunchroom; not only giving them responsibilities that can lead to pride in their work but also an experience to show kindness and patience of serving others. Sheila is an admired staff member at Lincoln Elementary as well as a dedicated advocate, volunteer and role model for our students and adults alike.

Evelyn McQuillen, CHS math teacher, consistently goes above and beyond what is expected. She doesn't just put in contract hours. She frequently takes grading home so that she can give timely feedback for her students. She arrives at school early every day (usually between 6:00-6:15) to prepare her lessons and meet with students. She positively impacts her students by working with them one on one when needed. She strives to engage her students through lessons from her basic level classes to her Honors classes. This is done through singing mathematical formulas, dancing to graphs, and chanting and making sound effects for mathematical procedures. Evelyn believes that creating an atmosphere of love, trust, and respect makes the difference in whether or not students want to come to class.

Her dedication inspires colleagues as well. She has maintained a positive attitude and commitment after several years of teaching. She checks in with new teachers to see how they are doing and offers advice if needed. She states, "I am so positive that the new teachers in our District hold the key to reaching a very new generation of technologically sophisticated students that I learn from them as much as they learn from me. I do not feel that there is enough that I can do to help our young teachers stay in a profession that has become increasingly stressful and faces such hostile takeovers from legislative and public initiatives. I feel that simply being nominated by one of our most promising young teachers has not only recognized my efforts, but also assured me that the future looks bright for education. That is enough for my heart."

The Golden Apple Awards are a special project of the Aberdeen Public Schools Foundation. For more information, contact the Aberdeen Public Schools Foundation at (605) 725-7118, Gretchen.Sharp@k12.sd.us, or visit the foundation website at <https://www-aberdeen.k12.sd.us/foundation>. The Aberdeen Public Schools Foundation is a non-profit organization that promotes excellence in education by forging partnerships among the schools, community and alumni.

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Attached photos – Deb Schlosser, Sheila Sandquist, Evelyn McQuillen