

Mount Clemens Community School
Outstanding Teacher of the Year Nomination Form

CRITERIA FOR NOMINATING AN OUTSTANDING TEACHER OF THE YEAR

The Mount Clemens Community School District *Outstanding Teacher of the Year* awards are given annually to honor teachers who have achieved the highest standards of excellence in their profession. These awards are created out of a conviction that quality public education is essential to our community and that encouraging excellence in education is the shared responsibility of all who reap its benefits.

With national attention focused on all students meeting high standards, teacher quality is more important than ever. The most important mechanism a school has to ensure teacher quality is its evaluation system. The Mount Clemens Community School District uses Charlotte Danielson's **Framework for Teaching** theory as the cornerstone of the *district Outstanding Teacher of the Year* nominating and scoring process. We believe this system is research-based and provides a professionally meaningful system of teacher appraisal.

In Charlotte Danielson's book *Enhancing Professional Practice: A Framework for Teaching*; she outlines measures relating to quality teaching organized into four domains, each with several components. These measures are:

- **Planning and Preparation** which includes comprehensive understanding of the content to be taught, knowledge of the students' backgrounds, and designing instruction and assessments.
- The **Classroom Environment** is concerned with the teacher's skill in establishing an environment conducive to learning, including both the physical and interpersonal aspects of the environment.
- **Instruction** is concerned with the teacher's skill in engaging students in learning the content, and includes the wide range of instructional strategies that enable students to learn.
- **Professional Responsibilities** includes a teacher's additional professional responsibilities, including self-assessment and reflection, communication with parents, participation in on-going professional development, and contributing to the school and district environment.

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NOMINATING TESTIMONY (Must be in third person)

NOMINEE'S NAME: Suzanne Shea

Please list the outstanding achievements and service demonstrated by the nominee during the last two years. In fairness to all, we ask that you limit your testimony to this assigned sheet and one additional blank sheet following.

**A. Evidence of teacher's evolving knowledge of Planning and Preparation:
*How does the nominee demonstrate his/her knowledge of content, pedagogy, students, instructional goals, and the design of coherent instruction? (25 points)***

Examples might include:

- Teacher's translation of instructional goals into meaningful learning experiences (i.e., adapting standards and benchmarks to their teaching, organizing and sequencing activities to engage students in learning and reflecting)
- Adjustment of instructional goals to accommodate the diversity represented by their students (i.e., knowledge of resources, varied approaches to learning, student interests and abilities)
- Use of assessment to inform the instructional process and plans for next steps (i.e., student feedback, reflecting on learning)
- Professional development in curriculum or in general teaching techniques

Use only the space provided on this sheet and one additional blank sheet following

Suzanne arrives at Lincoln an hour before her starting time. If you observed her in the middle of a Reggio – Emilia art activity, you would know why. She is an artist at heart and adept at helping her young students appreciate and create beautiful paintings and drawings. Each lesson is organized, interesting, and relevant. One lesson that immediately comes to mind was her approach to teaching about tools. A corner of her classroom held strategically placed whisk brooms, mops, vacuum cleaners, etc. A fellow teacher will appreciate the time and effort needed for this lesson.

**B. Evidence of teacher's ability to establish a Classroom Environment:
*How does the nominee build a respectful learning community where there is respect, safety, and high expectations for all students? (25 points)***

Examples might include:

- Existence of relationships grounded in respect, dignity, safety, and caring
- Strong culture of learning where everyone is engaged in pursuits of value on high-quality work
- Student pride in work
- Procedures for smooth operation of the classroom and the efficient use of time (i.e., management of classroom procedures, standards of conduct)

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- Enhancement of the physical environment and use as a resource for learning

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Suzanne's classroom has snowflake lights hanging from the ceiling. There is a bulletin board with photographs of each child's family. The classroom door contains a welcome sign and pictures of student in the room. There are fresh flowers and plants on tables and science experiments on back shelves. The walls contain beautiful art work from ancient artists and blossoming artists. Most importantly, the atmosphere is consistently calm, happy, and encouraging. Suzanne laughs easily and heartily and enjoys the children. She is a master at helping children with challenging behaviors. She treats each child and parent with respect, concern and compassion. Parents who have had Suzanne as their child's teacher always request her for sisters or brothers.

**C. Evidence of the teacher's evolving knowledge of Instruction:
*How does the nominee promote student engagement in learning the content and which instructional strategies are used? (25 points)***

Examples might include:

- Communication skills (i.e., vivid and expressive language, quality of oral and written communication)
- The use of questioning and discussion techniques (i.e., elicits student reflection, framing questions of high cognitive challenge, use of questions to extend learning)
- Active construction of learning (i.e., intellectual involvement with the content, participation, problem-solving activities, student choice and initiative, use of higher-order thinking skills, learning designed to be relevant, diverse grouping strategies, use of instructional materials and resources, lesson structure and pacing)
- Provision of high quality feedback
- Demonstration of flexibility and responsiveness (i.e., sense of efficacy, commitment to the learning of all students)

Use only the space provided on this sheet and one additional blank sheet following

Suzanne's students transition to kindergarten with the necessary skills to succeed. She models and teaches kindness and respect. While enjoying lunch with her students, she explains the fundamentals of table manners and good nutrition. She never reads a book without noting the author and illustrator. She is a voracious reader of professional literature. Her lesson plans reflect her extensive knowledge of instructional strategies. One classroom element that is immediately evident is that her young students feel listened to, they contribute at all levels, and are self assured in their ability to problem solve.

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**D. Evidence of the teacher's evolving knowledge of Professional Responsibilities:
*How does the nominee reflect on his/her teaching and foster relationships with colleagues, parents, and agencies in the larger community? (25 points)***

Examples might include:

- Reflection (i.e., sensitivity to the engagement of students, accurate assessment of a lesson's effectiveness, use of reflections in practice)
- Maintaining accurate records (i.e., records of competencies, portfolios)
- Communicating with families
- Contributing to the school and district (i.e., collegiality, leadership, volunteering)
- Growing and developing professionally (i.e., professional organizations, conferences, local and state educational agencies, conducting research, supervising teachers, mentoring teachers)
- Showing professionalism (i.e., professional standards, advocacy)

Use only the space provided on this sheet and one additional blank sheet following.

As you may know, Suzanne Shea is retiring. When I read the accolades from her peers, it was evident that she mentored many of them. They talked about her enriching and engaging activities, her love of children, her interest and exploration of different cultures and traditions, the magnificent art work her children produced, and how her presence will be sorely missed at Lincoln Center. Suzanne had a gift for teaching. It was not born of a university . . . it was born of her soul. She is uniquely creative. She thought outside the box. She gave her children more than the average teacher. She helped them become thinkers and doers. Suzanne taught children to believe in themselves and their unique gifts and talents, their ability to institute change, and to utilize their own powers to work out problems and solutions. They each walk with their heads held high, with an enthusiasm for school and life, and the knowledge that they had a safe and engaging introduction to school.

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