



Hats Off to Our 2023 Friends of Education!

Cordley Elementary – Katie Green

Katie is truly the Energizer Bunny, inspiring and leading a PTA that provides AMAZING support to our growing Cordley Community. If we have a dream, she figures out how to make it happen and brings 10 more dreams of her own! Katie is an engineer and brings those skills to her amazing organization and execution. She's the brains, brawn, and the magic behind so much. We LOVE her!

Presenters: Becky Reaver & Tracee Sowers

Deerfield Elementary – Christina Terfler

An invaluable member of our parent community for several years, Christina has supported our Deerfield family by serving on our PTO, coordinating numerous committees, and volunteering in the classroom. She is always willing to give her time, energy, and effort to help wherever needed.

Presenter: Joni Appleman

Billy Mills Middle School – Kenneth St. Pierre

Kenny is a devoted Indigenous educator, advocate, coordinator of Native American Student Services, and a proud member of the Yankton Sioux tribe. As a former classroom teacher, he brought his cultural knowledge and passion for truth telling and teaching to his students. He has devoted his life to education.

Presenter: Kady Carson

Prairie Park Elementary – Jamie McNally*

Jamie served as PTA president through the 2022-2023 school year, leading and supporting our school in a "kid-friendly" way and ensuring that all students could participate in events at no cost. She fostered a PTA environment in which parents who had never participated found a welcoming place and ways to support Prairie Park.

Presenter: Jason Townsend

Sunset Hill Elementary – Bonny Greenlee

Truly an exceptional volunteer, Bonny's dedication shines through her remarkable ability to organize room parent volunteers who seamlessly execute classroom parties and teacher appreciation events. Bonny's clear, well-crafted plans and organizational skills make these events enjoyable and stress-free and ensure that teachers and students feel valued and appreciated.

Presenter: Jeremy Philipp

Southwest Middle School – Betty Yung

Betty has made our school a warmer, more welcoming place, going above and beyond and offering not just time, but a piece of her heart to all she encounters. From conference meals to serving on parent committees, her presence serves as a reminder that unwavering support is always within reach, fostering a culture of partnership and support for our Bulldog family.

Presenters: Dr. Carissa Miles & Jason Kingman

Kennedy Elementary – Mary Yoder

Mary is one of those people who quietly supports our building weekly. She assists our classroom teachers, our Parents As Teachers educators, and our other programs by making sure our books, games, and equipment are all organized and ready to go!

Presenters: Esther Kottwitz & Jill Anderson

Liberty Memorial Central Middle School – Mary Davidson & Jenny Skillman*

Mary and Jenny played quintessential roles in organizing our 100-year celebration, working countless hours ensuring that historical artifacts, artwork, facilities, and personnel were all organized for our big day. Mary is a retired LMCMS special education teacher. Jenny has been an active parent and community member for many years.

Presenter: Deb Keary

Lawrence High School – Shelly Rojo

Shelly had not been involved in PTO before volunteering to lead ours during the pandemic. As LHS PTO leaders transitioned, Shelly realized she had a knack and an interest for the merchandise role. We are so grateful to her for taking this on because merchandise sales fund 70% or more of what PTO does for our students and staff.

Presenter: Dr. Quentin Rials

New York Elementary – Kimberly Williams

An amazing book buddy to a student for the past two years, Kimberly is a member of the Breakfast Optimist Club. She also has helped to encourage other volunteers to sign up, so many students benefit from this amazing partnership!

Presenter: Sunny Halsted

Woodlawn Elementary – Will Dunn

Presenter: Jayci Roberson

Will's exceptional dedication to our school has significantly impacted our students and staff. His analytical perspective brings a unique and valuable viewpoint to PTO meetings, helping us make comprehensive decisions. He also has organized the acquisition of math games for every Woodlawn family and prepared delicious meals for our staff.

West Middle School – Kathleen Lohfeld

Presenters: Therese Brink Edgecomb, Eve Loos, & Sally Peters

Kathleen has never passed up the chance to support West staff and students. She often leads volunteer opportunities by stepping up when there is a call for help, always with kindness and a smile, and often providing delicious food! Kathleen makes our community and schools stronger with support and genuine care that lifts the spirits of our school family.



Recognition Ceremony II

Schwegler – Megan Poindexter

Presenters: Dr. Jared Comfort, Amy Shellhorn, Christy McWhirt

During her time at Schwegler, Megan served our school in so many ways. Even though her kiddos have moved on to middle school, we want her to know how much we appreciate her support and leadership through PTA and other events. Thank you, Megan, for donating your time, knowledge, and abilities to our Schwegler community!

Langston Hughes Elementary – Anne Koprince & Casey Wallace

Presenter: Jackie Mickel

Anne and Casey resemble Wonder Woman in their roles as PTO president and secretary. Their tireless efforts and unwavering commitment make a profound and lasting impact on our school community. From fundraisers to dance parties, they have been at the forefront, ensuring that everything runs smoothly and that our entire community can come together to celebrate and learn.

Hillcrest Elementary – Maren Bradley & Sabrina Kuksi

Presenters: Sarah Kruse & Rylin Barrett

Maren and Sabrina are co-chairs for our PTO. Sabrina worked to make our dream of a shade structure on our playground a reality, while Maren joined us from Pinckney and brings knowledge of traditions we can continue.

Free State High – Lew and Alicia Hanna

Presenter: Amy McAnarney

Lew and Alicia Hanna have been members of the Free State Site Council for several years, offering ideas and advice that have been much appreciated. The Hannas have helped organize meals for parent-teacher conferences that our staff looks forward to each fall and spring. They also have been active "cross country parents," helping with meets and whatever else is needed.

Quail Run Elementary – Tom Pasniewski

Presenter: James Polk

Tom has been a constant at Quail Run for several years, spending countless hours helping teachers be prepared for the lessons in their classrooms with supplies and support. Tom has been so effective volunteering, he was asked to serve as our PTO co-president.

Sunflower Elementary – Heather Flachsbarth

Presenters: Amanda Green & Michelle Walthall

Heather has a deep commitment and long-standing care for our Sunflower Community. She is seen volunteering her time and talents multiple times a week by supporting in the lunchroom, helping with our BEST Buck Store, updating the marquee, helping with big events, volunteering as a room parent, and SO much more. Heather co-chairs Marathon Club and is passionate about ensuring students have the opportunity to reach their fitness goals. We are so grateful for Heather's volunteerism and commitment!

Community Connections at Pinckney – Kelli Huslig, Uplift Coffee

Presenters: Jenna Viscomi & Jennifer Burnes

Kelli has generously offered her coffee shop as a practical learning environment for our students to gain work experience. Her team's dedication enables students to observe and engage in small business operations. We are grateful to Kelli and the Uplift team for their ongoing support and warm reception of our students.

USD 497 – Carrie Poe & Kristi Heintzelmen, L-SEAC

Presenter: Laura Basham

Carrie and Kristi have served as co-chairs of the Lawrence Special Education Advisory Committee for several years, volunteering many hours to grow the group. They lead parent meetings, informational nights, and coffee meetups, and dedicate their voices to partnering with the district to improve our services and strengthen engagement with parents of students with exceptionalities.

Special Thanks to ALL school volunteers, our 2023 Friends of Education, principals and school presenters, student emcees Maya Smith, Danny Phalen, Gage Monse, and Jasper Rightmeier; Dr. Anthony Lewis, Kelly Jones, and reception volunteers Coleen Martin, Joyce Tallman, and Julie Boyle. ***2nd-Time Friends of Education Honorees!**

