



Kenai Peninsula Borough School District
Golden Apple Award | March 5, 2018

Mrs. Devin Michel Way

Every school deserves to have at least one teacher as charitable and distinguished as Mrs. Devin Michel Way, for it is teachers like her that cause positive change not only in their own classrooms, but across the staff and beyond. Mrs. Way is a superlative example of an educator who gives of herself, and who moves through her practice with grace, no matter how large the task and no matter how much she offers to do. Her generosity of spirit builds relationships and trust, and on that foundation Mrs. Way acts as a guide for students and staff to learn and grow.

A kindergarten through fourth grade teacher at Port Graham School, Mrs. Way is a master at differentiating for each and every student across five grades. For many, teaching five grade levels would be daunting, if not impossible. Without being asked, Mrs. Way assumes a high level responsibility at Port Graham School beyond the classroom in communications, public relations, and day-to-day functions. Without a principal on campus four days per week, there are myriad challenges, including scheduling variances, community concerns, guest speakers, special events, student support, staff absences, mechanical issues, internet outages, and nameless other issues. She cheerfully helps with these challenges, communicates regularly with her principal. She keeps parents informed of school activities, and acts as editor on the school Facebook page. She engages with all students, not just her own. She also coaches middle school cross country running, is the Assessment Coordinator, school librarian, and serves on Port Graham Site Based Council. She provides stability for the entire school. Mrs. Way does this all with a gentle spirit, willing attitude, and love for people.

A particularly extraordinary aspect of Mrs. Way's practice that goes above and beyond is her remarkable ability and eagerness as a professional development facilitator for Port Graham and Nanwalek Schools. This role began as a stipend position, during which Mrs. Way exceeded expectations by fully facilitating in-services, early release days, and collaborations. When the stipend was no longer available, she stepped forward to continue, and leads collaborative sessions for all instructional staff in both locations that could be likened to seminars led by professional facilitators. With a sensitivity to the needs of our K-12 rural schools, agendas center on initiatives such as personalized learning and ConnectED, with practical applications to multi-graded settings. With poise and a touch of authority, Mrs. Way facilitates new concepts, engages meaningful discussions, and requires participants to collaborate on products that can be applied to current practice.

Recognizing her skill and importance as a professional development facilitator, Apple, Inc. invited Mrs. Way to the Dallas ConnectED Academy with Team Nanwalek last February. Mrs. Way had helped initiate the "iPads for Orcas" technology program in Port Graham, earned status as an Apple Teacher, and is a constant resource to teachers in many areas, including technology. Apple Education Development Executive Katie VanSluys was excited to have Mrs. Way's participation because of her collaborative nature and generous spirit. Ms. VanSluys stated, "Having worked with Devin over the course of two years—launching and growing programs to integrate and innovate with technology, it became immediately clear to me that Devin is a learning leader. Her work with kids and colleagues is passion-filled, professional, and caring. Her actions model what we, as educators, want to develop in our students. Devin identifies challenges, approaches problem-solving with intrigue and stamina, engages others gracefully and strategically, and finds joy in process of learning. She is a remarkable educator, respected colleague, and inspiring teacher to me and countless others."

The Kenai Peninsula Borough School District Board of Education is proud to recognize Mrs. Devin Michel Way for her dedication to the students of the school district, past, present, and future.