Letter of Support for Sharon Ciccone: Region 7 Elementary Art teacher of the Year

Dear region 7 Awards committee,

It is my pleasure to nominate Sharon Ciccone for the region 7 Elementary Art teacher of the year award. I have known Sharon since 2012, when I met her at an annual NYSATA meeting, and we have been in contact ever since.

As an art educator, Sharon has consistently shown strong leadership qualities. Her highest priority as an educator is to serve the needs of her students. Instead of seeing the challenges of our ever transitioning educational system as a frustrating obstacle, she embraces them, learns from them and adapts her curriculum as well as her instructional methods without compromising her values and her students' needs. Only rarely does one find a person who can turn problems into solutions with such efficacy. Sharon is clearly one of them. Meanwhile, Sharon is also one of the most supportive colleagues I have encountered in my profession. She is consistently willing to sacrifice her time to help and support her colleagues when needed, whether it is creating new opportunities for other teachers or through her invaluable service she performs for NYSATA. Whether she invests seemingly unlimited time in co-chairing NYSATA, or organizes and teaches in-service workshops and social events, Sharon has helped to make NYSATA what it is today – a dynamic organization that pulls together the region's art teachers and effectively promotes the value of art education throughout the state of New York. This is an extraordinary achievement by any standard, but even more so considering that she does all that while teaching six hundred elementary school students. As art educator, Sharon does not only uplift the students in her classroom, but through her activities outside the classroom has significant impact on countless students in the region to receive a quality arts education.

In conclusion, Sharon is a remarkable and inspiring individual who deserves recognition for her dedication to her profession, her students, and the NYSATA organization. Her pleasant demeanor and sunny personality makes her a joy to be around. As a tireless toiler in the vineyard of art education she is a role model not just for me, but to an untold number of my colleagues. In fact, so strong is her impact on my own work, that I consider her a major reason I continue to be involved in art education in general, and with NYSATA in particular. I recommend her for the Region 7 Elementary Art Teacher of the Year Award with unqualified enthusiasm.

Sincerely,

Christine Attlesey-Steger

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3-14-14

Dear Region 7 Awards Committee,

It is with great admiration that I nominate Sharon Ciccone as Region 7 Elementary Art Teacher of the Year. She is one of the most passionate, hard-working, thoughtful, and child centered teachers I have ever met. She is consistent in her valuable contributions to our region and to the field of art education overall.

As most of us you know, Sharon Ciccone is currently serving as co-chair of Region 7 and she has brought with her the beauty and grace of intelligent and diplomatic fortitude. She is very well organized and empowers others to take part in all the wonderful events that happen in Region 7. This characteristic is also evident in her classrooms… yes, she too is split between schools as the only full-time elementary teacher the Spackenkill School District, serving over 600 students. Few others would be able to uphold a high quality elementary art program, such as hers, in the same situation. It was Sharon who first demonstrated to me, with clarity and practicality, a very child-centered art room. Each area of her classroom space is designed to accommodate the artistic needs and wishes of her students and encourage meaningful art making. Even after 20 years of teaching, and being very good at what she does, I know she is constantly improving her curriculum and her methods to adapt to the changes in her students. I also respect her efforts to improve her school through her work with the teacher's union, school committees and special programs (such as the elementary art show and arts-in-ed). She also knows how to balance her life by spending time with good friends and family, traveling the world, and enjoying a variety of culturally rich experiences that enliven her teaching.

Sharon Ciccone is by far one of the most impressive teachers I have known and she continues to amaze me… and who can overlook her smile that lights up a room!

Thank you for considering her nomination.

Respectfully,

Amanda Buhler, NYSATA Secretary
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