

My Favorite Teacher

Essay & Art Contest



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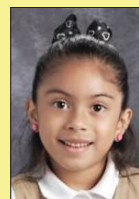
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Kiara Nikolle Arias

Grade 1, Harrisburg Elementary



The Teacher

Bailey Faile

Grade 1, Harrisburg Elementary



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Here's what students think makes a great teacher

Read these essays our students have written, and you'll have a pretty good idea of what makes a great teacher.

Our students use words like "enthusiastic," "dedicated," "hardworking," "uplifting," "loving," "intelligent," "funny," "encouraging," "talented," "kind" and "patient."

And I agree. I've visit classrooms across our district several



times a week and I'm impressed by how hard our teachers work to make sure all children understand and how creative their methods are.

I'm also impressed with all the courses and workshops and studying our teachers do to find new ways to reach students.

I'm impressed with the hours our teachers spend preparing, with their willingness to share with one another and learn from one another.

Here's more of what students say about what makes a great teacher.

A great teacher encourages

I watch our teachers push discouraged students to work harder, to achieve more, to believe in themselves and their abilities.

I've watched a student's face go from "I just don't get this" to "Wow, I can do this!" because of a

teacher's encouragement.

One student writes her teacher "teaches her students that any dream or goal can be reached as long as you dedicate yourself to your work, and are willing to accept any change that comes along with it."

Another student says her teacher's "encouraging attitude towards everyone she meets inspires me to be a better student everyday."

A great teacher listens

Great teachers listen to the child whose parents can't afford the supplies he needs, they listen to the student who needs to talk because her mother is battling cancer, they listen to the student who's crushed because she didn't make the cheer squad.

One student says her teacher "is a good teacher to go to if you have a personal problem."

A great teacher goes the extra mile

One student writes her teacher is "always in his room, like he's waiting. He knows the struggles we have, and there's no doubt he cares."

A great teacher makes students be responsible

As one student writes, "She motivates me everyday to ask questions and take charge of my education."

A great teacher inspires

One student says her teacher "is an excellent, inspiring and motivational teacher. She has forever made an impact on my life."

A great teacher makes learning fun

One student says her teacher has shown her "school can be so much more than just another part of my day I have to get through; it's a place where I can learn and grow."

Most of all,

a great teacher cares

One student described his teacher as treating him as "one of her sons."

The drawings and essays in this publication represent hundreds of drawings and essays our students turned in.

And as you see and read the winning entries in this year's *My Favorite Teacher Art and Essay Contest*, you'll see these traits repeated over and over.

These essays show again that teachers make such a profound difference in their students' lives.

Thank you to *The Lancaster News* and other businesses whose support made this contest possible.

And thank you to the thousands of parents and students who take the time to say special thank you's to teachers across our district this week.

Gene Moore

Gene Moore
Superintendent

Essays from Grades 9-12

She teaches her students to write with eagerness

The Teacher



Joyce Meyer

Journalism
Lancaster High

She's the reason I have passion for writing. Journalism on the first day of school was just an ordinary class at an ordinary high school to me. But on the second day of class, Joyce Meyer taught me the passion and love for writing I have today.

On that day, she became one of my favorite teachers of all time. She introduced me to the enthusiasm I have for photojournalism and just writing in general.

I'll never forget when she said to me "Dayjah, you have been picked



to be an editor for the *Bruin Pride*," and shock filled my face because I knew my hard work and dedication had paid off in class.

She also taught me how to write professional questions I used for my show on LearnTV, *Get Your Money Right*.

Mrs. Meyer teaches her students to write with eagerness and great description, to write as if you were writing for the *New York Times*.

Many people have influenced

me into taking a serious interest in journalism, but Mrs. Meyer was the one who made me look into a serious career in journalism.

Mrs. Meyer always shows commitment and interest to her students and makes sure they are on task every minute of class. I can always count on her to help me with anything I need with my school work and anything personal. I am honestly blessed she has taught me and her happiness has rubbed off on me majorly. Thanks, Mrs. Meyer, for everything you have done for me.

The Student



Dayjah Benson

Grade 11
Lancaster High

Thank you, Mrs. Vogel, for all you've done for me

The Teacher



Erika Vogel

Spanish
Lancaster High

Erika Vogel's the reason I'm headed towards greatness.

She really showed me what I can achieve.

She's a free spirit who truly has a heart for the people and the thing that she loves the most, teaching. She teaches her students that any dream or goal can be reached as long as you dedicate yourself to your work, and are willing to accept any change that comes along with it.

Born in Peru, Erika Vogel moved to the U.S. for a new start in life. Becoming a teacher at Lancaster High,



she cast her knowledge of Spanish onto thousands of students year after year.

When I first found out I had a Spanish course, my first thought was, "Oh no, this is going to be a disaster." But, Mrs. Vogel helped me see beyond my fears of learning something entirely new.

She cared about my perception of things and really listened to me if I had any problem at all. She held the keys to my future, and with each

key, she opened a new door that led me further to a greater beginning.

Being in Mrs. Vogel's class has truly improved my love for Spanish. I now engage in conversations and can translate things without an error. I'm more confident with my being able to communicate in a different language than I was before.

Mrs. Vogel is my heart and soul, without her I would be nothing. Without Spanish, I wouldn't know anything. She's why I'm headed towards greatness. Thank you, Mrs. Vogel, for all you've done for me.

The Student



Kiera Catoe

Grade 11
Lancaster High

She uplifts her students in so many ways

The Teacher



Daphne Lathan

Business Education
Indian Land High

The best teachers are the ones that don't just teach what is required but what is needed in all aspects of life. Daphne Lathan is not your typical teacher but one that is admirable and a mentor to so many students.

She has all the characteristics that I believe make a great teacher. She's uplifting, hardworking and dedicated. Mrs. Lathan uplifts her



students in so many ways; she gives great advice not only on how to navigate through school life but life in general.

One of her great pieces of advice included keeping your head up no matter the situation which I and so many other student have benefited from. Hardworking

is an understatement for Mrs. Lathan. She is always striving to help her students; and not just in school work but the long run. One example, is that she is always taking her spare time to find scholarships for her students.

Mrs. Lathan is dedicated and shows it through her teaching each and every day. This is why Mrs. Lathan is my favorite teacher.

The Student



Maia Sykes

Grade 11
Indian Land High

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Essays from Grades 6-8

She treats all her students equally

The Teacher



**Deborah
Williams**

Math
Buford Middle

Have you ever thought about what an extraordinary teacher is? Would your teacher go to Mars and back, just to see you succeed?

My favorite teacher is Deborah Williams. She would do anything to help us succeed more in life. This is what I think a great teacher is!

She has effective methods when it comes to teaching. She is intelligent, caring, loving and most



importantly, welcoming.

When you walk into her class, it's a whole different atmosphere! The subject math can be difficult, but she has

found methods that work best for us. In a much easier way!

She isn't one to pick favorites; she treats all her students equally.

When we're good, she rewards us, and when we're having a rough day, she uplifts us. She is a teacher of many traits, with a heart of gold. In my eyes, she is a star that shines bright.

Mrs. Williams is the best teacher you could ask for. Mrs. Williams, you may be just a teacher, but to your students, you are a hero.

The Student



**Madison
Weaver**

Grade 6
Buford Middle

He is eager for us to learn, understand

The Teacher



**John
Hyde-Volpe**

Math
Indian Land Middle

John Hyde-Volpe is an incomparable educator in the world of instructors. There's no doubt he's my favorite. The technique he uses to teach and the unconditional amount he cares for each student in his classroom are ridiculous.

He acts as if he is a father to each and every one of us. His mindset is unrivaled. He is eager for us to learn, to understand, to work hard.

The confidence he has given us is inimitable, he reminds us what we are learning as students does affect our future. He does multiple things displaying the importance of learning and making sure we benefit from the information given to us. He offers early morning tutoring, and he gives us important study material through websites such



as ixl. The unconditional amount of love we have for him is insane.

I'm telling you, one glance at this guy will make you collapse from laughter. His sense of humor overflowing your emotions with joy. The ability to have a sense of humor and actually deliver information clearly is practically impossible, but this guy makes it happen every single day – and we're talking algebra.

The moment he introduces new information, he scans the room searching for lost students. Then he asks them, "What's wrong?" quickly addressing the issue. Constantly he's helping, constantly he's watching,

constantly he's teaching. What more can you ask for? He is perfect.

When he notices we don't understand, he simply states, "Then come to tutoring." You do, and he's always in his room, like he's waiting. He knows the struggles we have, and there's no doubt he cares, and when he introduces something difficult, he assigns ixl. Ixl is a stress-causing, phone-breaking, banging and screaming website, but it works, and he knows it does. He's so unanticipated, and I hate it. He's so capable, and I hate it. He's smart and I hate it. "There is no such thing as a perfect teacher," Vicki Davis stated. Well, let's just say she hasn't met my favorite teacher, Mr. Hyde-Volpe.

The Student



**Joy
Sabet**

Grade 8
Indian Land Middle

She has inspired me to do my best

The Teacher



**Stephanie
Secker**

Language Arts
Indian Land Middle

I like all of my teachers, but there is one I love. Her name is Stephanie Secker and she is my language arts teacher. There are many reasons why I love her!

She has an amazing personality. Every time I need help, she helps me understand it better. She uses effective teaching strategies.



Also, she is a good teacher to go to if you have a personal problem. She is never mean or rude to students. She always encourages her

students to do their best.

Mrs. Secker has inspired me to do my best and never give up. She

always listens to what I have to say.

When I first met her, I thought she was nice, but when I got to know her better, I found out she was kindhearted!

When I see her in the mornings, she makes me happy and my day goes well. She was always kind, thoughtful and generous.

The Student



**Norina
Kovendi**

Grade 8
Indian Land Middle

Essays from Grades 3-5

She's the teacher I'll never forget

The Teacher



Leslie Jacobs

Grade 4
Indian Land
Elementary

My second grade teacher, Leslie Jacobs, is a great teacher who I'll never forget!

She is kind, has made special memories with me and taught me a very important lesson.

Ms. Jacobs is a very kind teacher. One kind thing she does is when someone's stick is drawn for class jobs, she lets them pick the job they want. Another way she is kind is by treating everybody equally. Also, she is kind by giving



former students hugs in the hall.

Ms. Jacobs has helped me make special memories. One example is Friday journal, a project she made up where we write a letter to our parents and they write us back. This is one of my favorite memories with Ms. Jacobs.

The most important lesson Ms. Jacobs taught me is character.

She said, "Character is who you are even when you are not being watched." This lesson is one I'll remember forever. Ms. Jacobs always reminded the class when we needed it.

In conclusion, Ms. Jacobs is the teacher I'll never forget. She is a kind teacher who teaches important lessons and helped me make great, special memories I'll always remember.

The Student



Aidan N. Chirico

Grade 4
Indian Land
Elementary

She helps her students who don't understand

The Teacher



Michelle Anderson

Grade 4
Indian Land
Elementary

Have you ever had a favorite teacher? My fourth-grade teacher, Michelle Anderson, is mine.

I remember when I first learned she'd be my teacher. I was thrilled. After being with her, she's the best! She's patient, kind and a creative teacher.

She's so patient. When students need extra time, she'll make sure they have the time they need. She helps her students when they don't understand a concept. For



example, I needed help with capitals in the middle of words. She called me over and went over my work patiently. She was kind and let me

fix everything. I felt happy and proud.

She's happy and kind. She's always smiling. Her smile shows me it's going to be an awesome day. I remember her kindness when she took Mrs. Mountain to the doctor.

She's a fun and creative teacher. Every holiday, she surprises us. Once, we played a game where we moved a cabbage with only our heads. It was great. She also rewards us when we earn compliments.

Mrs. Anderson is the most kind, patient, and creative teacher. I'm lucky to have her as my fourth-grade teacher. Thank you for all that you've done for me, Mrs. Anderson!!!!

The Student



David Lopez

Grade 4
Indian Land
Elementary

I enjoy having her as part of my life

The Teacher



Casey Cato

Grade 4
Brooklyn Springs
Elementary

My name is Keevon Watts and I attend Brooklyn Springs Elementary as a fourth grader. There is one teacher who is considered to be my favorite. Her name is Casey Cato.

Mrs. Cato was my brother's first-grade teacher. My family and I got to know her very well during that time. Since then, Mrs. Cato



has always kept an eye on me and made sure I stayed on track. No matter where we are, she always gives me a hug and tells me she loves me. She also gets on me when I do wrong.

Mrs. Cato is always at football-

games and cheers the players on. She is such a friend to everyone and makes sure she waves every time she passes my house. She treats me like one of her sons.

For that reason, I enjoy having Mrs. Cato as a part of my life. I hope my teachers in the future are as nice and sweet as she is.

The Student



Keevon Watts

Grade 4
Brooklyn Springs
Elementary

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Honorable Mentions

She's made me love coming to school again

The Teacher



**Dana
Wilson**

French
Buford High

Brad Henry once brilliantly said, "A good teacher can inspire hope, ignite the imagination and instill a love of learning."

Dana Wilson has done just that. She has single-handedly made me love coming to school and learning again, something I haven't really done since the second or third grade. She motivates me everyday to ask questions and take charge of my education. Her encouraging attitude towards everyone she meets inspires me to be a better student everyday.

Mrs. Wilson, or Madame Wilson as we call her in the classroom, is my French teacher. Mrs. Wilson speaks French so well that on the



first day of class, for the first five minutes, we all thought she was from France. Everyone in my French class agrees it is one of the best classes we have ever taken.

Mrs. Wilson makes sure all her students, no matter what kind of background they come from, are never confused or lost. She treats her students with respect and always makes them feel important.

Mrs. Wilson is over the Buford High color guard. She always makes sure our half-time shows are beautiful and entertaining. She

also encourages us to participate in school-wide activities, like dressing up for homecoming.

Mrs. Wilson gives off a very professional vibe, because she knows about the education system in both the United States and France. She has a wide range of knowledge about both countries.

Mrs. Wilson is a very positive, encouraging and motivating person. She has shown me school can be so much more than just another part of my day I have to get through; it's a place where I can learn and grow.

I cannot think of anyone more deserving of the My Favorite Teacher Award than Dana Wilson.

The Student



**Kaitlyn
Rabon**

Grade 12
Buford High

She loves to read, write and help others

The Teacher



**Lisa
Snipes**

Grade 3
Indian Land
Elementary

The best teacher in the world is Lisa Snipes. Mrs. Snipes works at Indian Land Elementary School. She loves to read and write, help others, and have fun.

Mrs. Snipes loves to help others. She helps kids on math problems. She also makes sure everyone understands what she's saying and if we don't she helps us. And when we can't spell a word she sounds it out with us.



Also Mrs. Snipes is a good reader and writer. One thing she does is give us great ideas on what we should do. And she always reads aloud to us and she does just like the person in the story. Also, she's a good writer because she knows how to spell everything. One memory I have with Mrs.

Snipes is going to Brattonsville and Mrs. Snipes knew everything. At first, I thought Mrs. Snipes should have been the tour guide. It was amazing. I had a great time that day. It was awesome.

All in all, Mrs. Snipes is the best teacher because of her good reading and writing skills, good memories, and helping others.

The Student



**Dominic
Driskill**

Grade 3
Indian Land
Elementary

She teaches us to aim for the highest limits

The Teacher



**Michelle
Bruce**

Grade 5
McDonald Green
Elementary

My favorite teacher is Michelle Bruce. This is my first year at McDonald Green and she was so welcoming when I first came.

Mrs. Bruce has a really fun and energetic personality. She is easy going and funny. She is one of the nicest teachers I have ever had. If there was an award for the greatest teacher ever Mrs. Bruce would most definitely win it.



Mrs. Bruce is also very patient. Once when I did not understand how to add and subtract fractions, Mrs. Bruce took time from her class time just to help me understand what I was doing. Mrs. Bruce never moves on until all of her students understand what they are doing. She also teaches different

methods and we use the one we understand the most.

Mrs. Bruce teaches everyone in her class to aim for the highest limits. She is always pushing her students to do great things. Mrs. Bruce has been making me smarter every day. I will never forget my loving and caring fifth-grade teacher, Mrs. Bruce.

The Student



**Jordan
Brown**

Grade 5
McDonald Green
Elementary

Art Contest Winners

The Teacher



Stephanie Clemons

Grade 2
Harrisburg Elementary

The Student



Dax Lefevre

Grade 2
Harrisburg Elementary



2ND



HM

The Teacher



Lee Ann Toby

Grade 2
Buford Elementary

The Student



Anniston Bailey

Grade 2
Buford Elementary

The Teacher



Tara Patterson

Grade 2
Erwin Elementary

The Student



Na'Kiya Grier

Grade 2
Erwin Elementary



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