

MUSTANG PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Mustang, Oklahoma 73064

February 7, 2012

To the Selection Board of Oklahoma Parents Center:

I would like to nominate Trina Neff Eaves for the 2012 "Parent of the Year" award. As Principal of Mustang Trails Elementary School, I have worked with Trina, her child and family for four years. Mrs. Eaves has been a tireless advocate for her child in the educational environment. She has partnered and collaborated with school staff to insure her child receives the opportunity of an education in the "least restrictive environment". Over the past four years not only has Trina advocated for her child, but she has been a voice to and for parents across the state providing guidance and hope for dealing with the challenges that accompany raising and educating children who have special needs.

Four years ago, Trina began requesting class time for her child in a general education setting (with appropriate support). She provided data (antidotal, auditory and visual) to the team to demonstrate the level of ability of which her child was capable. Mrs. Eaves helped guide the process of transitioning her child from a self-contained classroom designed for students with severe and profound needs to (four years later) over 80% of the instruction delivered in a general education setting. Due to her efforts with her child, special and regular education teachers at Mustang Trails began to question the ability of other students with special needs and expand the focus of an appropriate "least restrictive environment". Trina's advocacy and knowledge reached past her home and Mustang Trails Elementary and into the community. She began speaking to parent groups designed for parents of children with special needs similar to her child. She actively supported with time, money and by encouraging others to support the foundation for children with autism. In an effort to raise awareness of the needs not only of the child, but the family that provides care for the child with special needs, she opened her home to OETA (2010) and shared about the daily struggles and future concerns connected to raising a child with special needs.

Trina Neff Eaves is a dedicated parent – first to her child and then to others. Her focus is on insuring that as a parent she has a voice in her child's education by partnering, collaborating and supporting educators who work with her child. Trina is a friend, role model, and fellow team member to me and to Mustang Trails. Without hesitation, I recommend her to be considered for the honor of receiving the "Parent of the Year" award. If I can be of further assistance in providing information concerning Mrs. Eaves, please contact me.

Respectfully submitted,



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