



New Providence School District

Statement of Impact

Recognizing Excellence in our Staff

Candidate: Mr. Elias Leader
From: Jeannie Drexinger
School: Salt Brook Elementary School
Date: 11/5/18

In early September, several Salt Brook students requested a meeting with Mrs. Drexinger on an issue that they were concerned about. During the meeting, it was brought to Mrs. Drexinger's attention that one of the trees previously planted on school grounds was no longer there. Apparently, the students "adopted" this tree, named it "Sam", and took care of it by regularly watering their tree even during the summer months. The tree was a meeting place for the student in the morning and again after school. The students were quite upset when they returned to school in September to find their tree missing.

The Salt Brook students put together a well thought-out presentation for Mrs. Drexinger containing facts about trees, how trees help us, and their request to raise money to plant another tree in that area. Following, this meeting Mrs. Drexinger contacted Mr. Leader to share the students presentation. He was more than willing to investigate this situation and help the students come up with a solution. Mr. Leader found out what happened to the old tree and shared that information with the students. He then spent time researching new trees that would thrive in the chosen location and shared four options with the students. He allowed the students to become part of the selection process and pick their new tree. Then, when the new tree arrived Mr. Leader arranged a time for the students to come outside and help him plant the tree.

Many times our maintenance staff are unsung heroes in district. They ensure our facilities are up and running and often respond in a moment's notice to unanticipated situations that occur during the day. They don't always have the opportunity to interact with our students. On this particular occasion when the opportunity was presented, Mr. Leader gladly offered his assistance and played a vital role in helping to turn the student's idea into reality. He demonstrated exceptional leadership and commitment to the district and most importantly to the students. Mr. Leader is to be commended on supporting the students in their endeavor. With his help and guidance these students were empowered to respond to what they thought was an immediate need for the Salt Brook community. This was a great lesson for them in service learning. One that they will remember for years to come.