Ravinia Teacher John Campbell Wins Golden Apple Award

The elementary music teacher was surprised with the award during his class Monday morning.

Highland Park, IL

John Campbell, a music and band teacher at Ravinia Elementary School, is one of ten winners of the Golden Apple Award for Excellence in Teaching this year.

The teacher was surprised by “an entourage led by Illinois State Representative Scott Drury” Monday morning in his classroom when he was presented with the highly respected award.


Campbell was selected from a pool of more than 600 nominations of pre-K-3rd grade teachers throughout Chicago and its suburbs. According to a Monday news release, Campbell's goal as a teacher is to “provide students with an opportunity to engage in music education in a way that will influence their musical futures.”

“He believes in creating ‘real world’ experiences for his students where they learn in the classroom and then transfer that learning to the community.”


Campbell's teaching method includes a “Musical Share” program, where students perform for their classmates once a week. He also helped secure the acquisition of a grant to purchase ukuleles, which are used in an after-school ukulele club he created. He also maintains a digital presence through blogging, Tweeting, and YouTube tutorials, in order for his students to remain engaged outside of class.

"We are extraordinarily proud of Mr. Campbell. His teaching embodies our District's values of innovation and creativity, and he is deserving of the highest recognition," said North Shore School District 112 Superintendent Michael Bregy. "He is dedicated to fostering a lifelong love of music in his students, and for helping them connect music to other areas of their lives."


Golden Apple, now in its 30th year, is a leading nonprofit committed to celebrating and developing great teachers with the ability and passion to make life-changing differences in the lives of students. The awards recognize and honor outstanding teachers for their roles in building a stronger, better-educated society.

Every Golden Apple Award recipient receives a tuition-free, spring quarter sabbatical to study at Northwestern University and a $5,000 cash award.

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