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## **Kettle Lake Elementary's Mary Frey Honored with Michigan Lottery's Excellence in Education Award**

**Caledonia, Mich.** – Caledonia Community Schools is proud to announce that Mary Frey, a beloved kindergarten teacher at Kettle Lake Elementary, has been recognized with the prestigious Michigan Lottery's **Excellence in Education Award**.

Frey, known for her passion, dedication, and deep personal investment in her students' growth and success, was surprised with the award earlier this month. She received a \$2,000 cash prize and will be considered for the Michigan Lottery's Educator of the Year honor, which comes with an additional \$10,000 cash prize.

The Michigan Lottery established the Excellence in Education awards in 2014 to celebrate exceptional public-school educators across the state. Award winners are selected based on their excellence in advancing student achievement, dedication to their work, inspiration to others, leadership, and positive impact on students.

"Mary Frey's dedication to each student, evident in her detailed care and personal investment to each individual in her classroom, is truly remarkable," said Lottery Commissioner Suzanna Shkreli. "She inspires students to have 'ah-ha' moments and fosters kindness that ripples throughout the entire school and beyond. She is a true hero to her students and an asset to her school."

Frey has been an educator for 22 years, spending the last 15 years at Kettle Lake Elementary. A proud graduate of Michigan State University, she holds a Bachelor's degree in Early Childhood Development & Elementary Education, and a Master's degree in Literacy. Her colleagues and students' families regularly praise her for the enthusiasm, warmth, and creativity she brings to her classroom.

Teaching kindergarten, Frey believes, offers a unique opportunity to build a foundation for lifelong learning. "Kindergarten is such a precious time when little ones are discovering their own abilities, interests, and independence," said Frey. "It is a privilege to witness so many 'ah-ha' moments and to foster a love of learning from the very beginning."

Frey was nominated for the award by a grateful parent who highlighted her daily personal updates, community outreach projects, and lasting impact on students and the broader school community. One notable example of her leadership is the Kettle Lake Kindness Project, which began with her class creating Valentine's Day cards, notes of encouragement and snacks for Helen Devos Children's Hospital staff that expanded into a schoolwide movement of kindness.

The Caledonia Community School district celebrates Mary Frey's incredible accomplishments and thanks her for the lasting difference she continues to make in the lives of her students, her school, and the greater Caledonia community.