

HOMETOWN HERO:

Celeste Crowder

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Mrs. Celeste Crowder is a special educator at Marley Elementary School who deserves recognition for her dedication to students on the autism spectrum. By nature, Mrs. Crowder sees the promise of every child. She is very skillful in identifying students’ strengths and finding strategies to support their weaknesses. This year, Mrs. Crowder has supported our professional staff to understand the behaviors exhibited by a high-performing student with Asperger’s. Through each conversation, Mrs. Crowder upholds his promise and supports our staff in understanding his behaviors within the context of his autism. In any exasperating moment, Mrs. Crowder is quick to remind all of us that the action or words were a reflection of his autism. In those trying moments, all of us needed the reminders that the words and/or actions were not personal. When our professional staff does not immediately recognize this, Mrs. Crowder will come and whisper the words to us. In addition to the calming words, Mrs. Crowder helps all staff learn professional strategies and skills to better support our students on the spectrum.

At Marley Elementary School, Mrs. Crowder is a Hometown Hero not only for the compassionate and consistent care that she provides for our students on the spectrum, but also for the dedication that she gives to our professional staff in helping us to better meet the needs of students. All stakeholders — teachers, parents and students — appreciate Mrs. Crowder’s dedication to students on the autism spectrum.