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News Release

Soaring Eagles Elementary First Grade Teacher Gina Oellig Is Milken Family Foundation Honoree

In a surprise announcement in front of an all-school assembly, Soaring Eagles Elementary School first grade teacher Gina Oellig was presented this morning with a \$25,000 check from the Milken Family Foundation in recognition of her exceptional work as a model teacher for the state and nation.

The award was presented in collaboration with the Colorado Department of Education. Colorado Board of Education Member Peggy Littleton, Commissioner of Education Dwight D. Jones and Milken Educator Awards Senior Vice President Jane Foley were on hand in Colorado Springs for the announcement and celebration of Oellig's talent and dedication.

"Gina Oellig is a proven leader. She's involved, dedicated and appreciated in her community," said Mrs. Littleton. "Her talent reaches far beyond the classroom."

Added Commissioner Jones: "Gina Oellig is creating the foundational skills that her students need to be successful. It is clear she not only motivates her students, but her peers as well."

Oellig has taught in Harrison School District 2 since 2003. As a team leader and teacher she created a schoolwide tutoring program for at-risk students and designed and implemented curriculum and assessments. She has also been nominated as a Soaring Eagles

Distinguished teacher for two years in a row. Previously, Oellig worked in Widefield School District 3.

In her letter of recommendation, Soaring Eagles Elementary School Principal Kelli Trausch wrote: "Gina is an administrator's dream with her can-do attitude and strong work ethic. Her classroom is a showcase of best practices."

The event was part of the Milken Family Foundation's 24th Annual National Notifications tour, honoring more than 55 outstanding educators as 2010 Milken Educator Award recipients with collective cash prizes totaling more than \$1.3 million. For more information, visit www.mff.org

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