

Six Boys Show True Friendship at Cassens Elementary School

by Sydney Sinks, News Reporter
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EDWARDSVILLE - It's tough to switch schools in the middle of the year, but six students at Cassens Elementary School decided to make that transition a little easier for a new friend.

Fifth graders Cooper McMichael, Gavin Rinderknecht, Ben McCaw, Jacob Fetsch, Jeremiah Collier and Jackson Stonewater have been friends for years. When a new student started school at Cassens last month, they created a petition to make sure everyone was okay with inviting the new student to their lunch table. All six boys agreed, and they've been happy to welcome their new friend to lunch every day since then.

Cooper McMichael, Gavin Rinderknecht, Ben McCaw, Jacob Fetsch, Jeremiah Collier and Jackson Stonewater are all [Gerard Fischer](#) Students of the Month for the Edwardsville Community Unit School District #7.

Every day, the boys get an additional chair from a nearby table and squeeze together so all seven of them can sit together. They return the chair after every lunch period. The group has become good friends since they started sitting together.

"I'm sure he was nervous at the beginning, but when he saw what we did and that we wanted to make him feel welcome and sit at our lunch table, he felt happy," the boys remembered about their new friend. "We all feel great. Makes us feel like better people...If you share a piece of your heart with someone else, it can have a big impact on the world and shows there are good people."

The boys have been recognized by their teacher Bre Leach and Cassens Principal Katie Bevis-O'Neal, but the best reward has been their new friend. The seven of them will continue to sit together for the rest of the year, and they enjoy spending time together inside and outside of the classroom.

Congratulations to Cooper, Gavin, Ben, Jacob, Jeremiah and Jackson for this recognition by ECUSD7 and [Gerard Fischer](#)!