



Samantha Smith



Leti Hernandez

Inspiring Learning

Lindsey Benefiel, 1st Grade Teacher

My favorite thing about St. Mark's is the community. When I walk through the hallways at St. Mark's, I feel like I am home. The students, parents, and faculty are all very welcoming. They make you feel as if you are a part of their family. As a teacher at St. Mark's, I know I am on a team to help ensure that our students are the best they can be. I've always wanted to be a teacher. I love teaching because I like seeing my students grow in knowledge, confidence, and responsibility. I like seeing the lightbulbs in their brains light up when they learn something new. As a teacher, every day is different and something new. Being a teacher is very rewarding as we get to see our students progress and change throughout our year together. This year I attended a Responsive Classroom workshop and have learned the importance of building a sense of community in the classroom and helping students develop stronger social skills. It's been a great year so far, and I'm so proud of my students!

Samantha Smith, 6th Grade Language Arts Teacher

What I love most about St. Mark's is the community. Our families and our staff take care of each other. I feel valued as a professional, as a friend, and as a co-worker. I see our mission in action everywhere: in teachers eating with their students at lunch, in snippets of student and teacher conversations in between classes, in the science work the middle school teachers do with our little ones, in our 8th graders as they spread across campus Tuesday mornings for jobs in various spaces. I think that at St. Mark's, our mission is embedded in each of our decisions as adults, in the way we develop and plan the time our students spend at school, and in our daily conversations about education. It's ever present and has become so woven into our daily lives that it simply IS who we are. At St. Mark's we are all encouraged to have a passion for discovery, and I am passionate about language arts and literature. No two students (or adults) have the exact same taste in literature, and finding the right fit for each student is a challenge I love.

Leti Hernandez, Music and Fine Arts Teacher

St. Mark's feels like my family; it's my home away from home. The relationships amongst our teachers are wonderful. From encouraging one another, to offering help in a time of need, to working together to develop new and exciting teaching ideas: this spirit of camaraderie creates an environment where the passion is felt tangibly, and it filters down to our students. I see our mission in action every day! From our youngest students to middle schoolers, students act, play, and learn differently. I feel that we do a great job of teaching the child in front of us and adjusting our individual methods to their needs. I enjoy introducing students to different concepts and watching them run away with them. I also love watching many of our former St. Mark's students continue with the arts in high school and beyond. It is an amazing moment when you get to see them perform in later years, and they say thank you. That's one of the greatest gifts a teacher can ever receive.