

October 2024

Sarah Schmahl

Teacher Harriet Thompson Elementary



If you have met Mrs. Sarah Schmahl, the first thing you notice about her is her engaging smile, warmth, and welcoming nature, but you may not know some of her background. Sarah went to college at Seattle Pacific University, graduating in 1992 and received a Master's Degree from Heritage University in 1996. Her teaching career started in Mabton at Artz-Fox Elementary School, where she taught 6th grade and where she met her now husband, Jim.

After 6 years in Mabton, she took a 17 year break from public education to raise four amazing children, Emma (26), Anna (24), Jakilyn (21) and Ryan (19). In 2011, she had the honor of stepping in to the very special Harriet Thompson Elementary classroom of the late Mr. Terry Valnes and teaching his wonderful first graders for a few months. Mrs. Schmahl said “she fell in love with the staff and students of HT,” and returned to full time teaching there in 2014 as librarian. “I have the best job in the school, because I get to know and teach all of our amazing students!”

When asked what the one thing was she loved about teaching, Mrs. Schmahl says, “my favorite part of teaching is definitely the relationships with the kids and observing them build friendships and learn together.” She continues, “It is such a privilege to have a front row seat to watch a child fall in love with learning, especially reading. For me, the greatest blessing in education has been the reward of reconnecting with former students and hearing their stories. They often share with me the difference that I have made in their lives, but little do they know that really, they have been the ones to make a difference in mine.”

When asked what advice she would give a starting teacher, Mrs. Schmahl replied, “To first year teachers I would say...start a teaching journal! You'll have enough stories someday to write a book!”

Thank you Mrs. Sarah Schmahl for your dedication to our students, school, and the community.