

December 2024

Areli Ruiz

Teacher at A.H. Smith Elementary



Meet Ms. Areli Ruiz, first-grade teacher at our Arthur H. Smith Elementary. When someone mentions Areli's name, the definition of 'passion for teaching' immediately comes to mind, along with her engaging personality, and love for her students.

Areli graduated from Sunnyside High School in 2016 and continued her education at Central Washington University, graduating with a bachelor's degree in elementary education. Ms. Ruiz began her teaching career in 2021, and has been with the Grandview School District for almost 4 years.

Outside of the classroom, Ms. Ruiz enjoys traveling to new places specifically to learn about different cultures, connect with others, and step out of the daily routine. She also enjoys spending quality time with loved ones by watching movies or talking around the dinner table.

When asked what Areli's favorite part about teaching is, she says " My favorite thing about being an educator is seeing my students become a community. I love to see how they not only work together to reach their goals, but they encourage one another to overcome a challenge they believed to be too difficult. I have the privilege of seeing them build their confidence, as leaders and scholars."

We also asked what Areli's proudest moments while teaching to which she replied, "receiving kind messages from current and former students during Kindness Week." She continues, "seeing how I was able to positively impact students' lives inspires me to grow as an educator and individual. Reading those notes reassured me that my students are resilient and will continue to work hard. They know they are cared for and understand that they can achieve great things - whether it be reaching academic goals or striving for personal success."

All teachers remember their first year of teaching, so we asked Areli what she would tell her first-year teacher self, to which she answered, "To take a minute to breathe and celebrate the milestones. Over the years I have learned how important it is to have our end goals in mind, but if we take a minute to celebrate our success along the way, we want to continue to develop as leaders and lifelong learners."

When asked what advice she would give a teacher that is a new 'in-coming' teacher, Areli says, "I would advise a new teacher to get to know each student and their families. When we build relationships, we can better understand how to work as a team to support students. I would also encourage them to ask questions and be open to trying new techniques and strategies." She continues, "I am an educator dedicated to creating an inclusive, empowering, and safe learning environment. I aim to support students in their growth as leaders and lifelong learners."

Thank you Ms. Areli Ruiz for your dedication to encouraging and supporting our students, families, and our community.