

First Grade

Teacher

Biography



*Ms. Gifford

Making learning FUN is my passion. My love of teaching began when I was a ski instructor in Montana where I realized the joy of watching a child learn something new. I had a degree in graphic design, but soon realized my heart had something else in mind. I got a master's in education and have been teaching elementary school since 2005. When I'm not immersed in molding the minds of the future, I love being outside. I enjoy hiking, paddle boarding, skiing, and gardening.



Ms. Nelson

I started teaching in David Douglas in 2003 after obtaining my Bachelor's degree in Education from Concordia University. I had an exceptional mentor teacher while earning my degree: Mrs. Kellie Burkhardt! It was in her classroom that I found my love for teaching young children. I was lucky enough to get my first teaching job in first grade and taught at West Powellhurst for 5 years. During that time I was also earning a Master's degree. In 2008 I left West Powellhurst to stay home with my 2 children and re-entered the teaching field in 2015. I am so thankful to be back in first grade in a wonderful school district. I love my job!



Mrs. Smith

This is my 28th year of teaching and 20th year working for the David Douglas school district. I started my teaching career in Springfield where I taught 6th grade for 6 years at Thurston Middle School. I moved to Portland in 1998 and worked for 8 years at Gilbert Heights Elementary teaching 5th grade. After getting married in 2006, I moved to London, England and taught 3rd grade for 2 years at The American School in London. We moved back to the U.S. shortly after my son was born and I took a job share position at Menlo, teaching 4th grade with Carrie Cowan. Carrie and I were partners for 6 years teaching 4 years with 4th graders and 2 years with 1st graders. Once my son finished Kindergarten, I decided to teach full-time again. Although each grade that I have taught over the years holds a special place in my heart, I believe I will end my career teaching fabulous 1st graders!