

Superintendent's Message: May 5, 2020

Dear Parents and Community Members:

I have had a lifelong appreciation for “my teachers.” I can remember the name of nearly every teacher who taught me throughout all of my elementary, junior high, and high school years. For me, there is at least one indelible memory associated with each that has not been forgotten and has not changed in its impact on my mind, my spirit, or my heart.

As one of four children, both of my parents worked very hard to make ends meet. Nevertheless, they managed to buy a house, take the four of us to church on Sundays, and teach us right from wrong while also helping with homework on the dining room table and refereeing competing selections for television time on the one set in our living room. In many ways, school was an orderly, quiet respite from my somewhat chaotic and very loud home life. I loved my family but I also loved school life with my teachers and friends.

When I wrote my dissertation, I dedicated it to two special teachers: my first grade teacher who taught me to read and write and my doctoral committee chair who taught me to think critically and persevere.

As a teacher, myself, I continued to learn from my colleagues who opened their classroom doors and introduced me to new teaching strategies and materials as well as new ways of seeing and understanding and reaching students. In 1984, I relocated with my husband and our children to Hong Kong. After ensuring that the family transitioned successfully, I took a teaching position at the Chinese International School. At the time, I was the only American on staff. My colleagues from Singapore, Taiwan, China, New Zealand, Australia, France, and Great Britain shared their programs and systems for teaching reading, math, geography, English as a Second Language, and Mandarin. Despite my three Master's degrees, and eight years of teaching experience, I realized I was still a novice teacher. My colleagues took me under their wings and challenged me to improve in ways I could never have imagined. During the six years we worked together, they left impressions on me that I will never forget.

As a school administrator, for the past thirty-four years (and especially the last nineteen years in Island Park Schools), I have continued this lifelong appreciation for “my teachers.” I enjoy hearing the enthusiasm in teachers' voices for their students, the visible excitement in teachers' eyes for their students, and the satisfaction teachers express when they have helped their students overcome a challenge and realize their potential. Our teachers are always an inspiration to me.

Teacher Appreciation Week is all week long (May 4-May 8). Though we don't have the opportunity to say a few words of thanks in passing as we might have in years past, please join me in celebrating and thanking our teachers in a brief email or social media post. This year, our teachers have proven that their skills and talents are surpassed only by their devotion and commitment to our students.

Wishing you and your family the best of health and much happiness.
With fondest regards,

Rosmarie T. Bovino, Ed.D.