



PRESENTS THE TEACHER OF THE MONTH



Carolyn Taylor Teacher discovers joy is contagious

For Shugart Elementary School second grade teacher Carolyn Taylor, professional success begins with a positive attitude.

“When you love the children, love what you’re doing, feel the joy of teaching, when you’re enthusiastic about what you do, you’ll have success as a teacher,” Taylor says.

And after testing that theory for over 20 years in the classroom, she has proved it to be true.

As a 16-year-old in Michigan, Taylor happened upon the opportunity to work with children who had been adopted from overseas by families at the church she attended. The new parents recognized Taylor’s natural affinity for working with the children – even the ones who didn’t speak English. With their encouragement, she started working with the children regularly, teaching them English through songs, manipulatives such as felt boards and crafts, and by reading to them.

“I felt so encouraged,” she says. “The joy of knowing I helped was a wonderful feeling.”

With that encouragement as a driving force, Taylor earned her bachelor’s degree in special education, then taught private school in Kuwait for two years. Taylor returned to the U.S., eventually making her way to the burgeoning Dallas job market. She taught for 19 years in the Dallas school district, took time off to run an ESL program at her church, then found her way to Garland ISD six years ago.

After three years teaching second grade at Shugart, Taylor says she’s definitely found her teaching home. “I’ve taught every grade in elementary, but

second grade is my favorite,” she says.

As the second grade team leader, Taylor says she works with three other general education teachers and one bilingual teacher. Together, the second grade team works to evaluate successes as well as evaluate situations when they fall short of success to determine new strategies.

Taylor says her ESL training and her special education background have proved useful even in her general education classes.

“When kids are struggling, those strategies help me to work with different learners’ needs,” she says.

But for Taylor, the clearest path to success is the enthusiasm she feels for her students, her school and her profession.

“I feel so blessed and honored that I get to go to school every day and spend time in the classroom with my students. Being a teacher is a sacred trust from the parents: a teacher is responsible for teaching children the skills they need to go on.”

Taylor says she knows the other members of her team feel that same respect for their profession.

“I work with such great professionals,” Taylor says. “Shugart is a wonderful place to work, and the principal and assistant principal are so encouraging. Garland offers great staff development opportunities, and the district recognizes hard-working teachers, which means so much.”

Congratulations to this dedicated, enthusiastic professional, a truly deserving recipient of the Garland Power & Light Teacher of the Month honor.



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