



PRESENTS THE TEACHER OF THE MONTH



Joy Luke Passion and professionalism help teacher provide the best for students

Is there a greater achievement than positively influencing a child's life? Garland ISD Teacher of the Month, Joy Luke, a third-grade teacher at Toler Elementary, believes there is not.

"I'm very proud to be an educator, and I feel this is my special place, my destiny. I love the opportunity to work with these kids," Mrs. Luke says.

"I've seen positive changes in my kids, and not just in their grades, though that is one example. I've seen students who develop a desire to learn, who realize they have to be part of their own learning process."

That learning process goes beyond the pages of a textbook, Mrs. Luke says. "Every day presents a fresh academic and social challenge for students. I try to guide them to meet their challenges by helping them assume personal responsibility for their school work and their actions. I also help children take pride in their accomplishments," she says.

High expectations result in students' abilities to meet those expectations, she adds. "I have a strong belief that what a teacher expects, students will achieve."

After obtaining her Bachelor of Science in elementary education from Tarleton State University in Stephenville, Texas, Mrs. Luke added certifications in teaching learning disabled kids and English as a Second Language. She says both of these certifications have been helpful to her in dealing with a variety of classroom situations and student abilities, and the strategies she learned have even helped her enrich her teaching methods for working with students at all levels of achievement.

Mrs. Luke's 15-year teaching career began in Copperas Cove, moved to Round Rock, then finally to Garland when her husband's career brought them to the Metroplex. Those 15 years have been spread over a much longer period, however, as Mrs. Luke stayed home with her own children for 17 years after her first four years of teaching.

"I learned much from my own children's teachers. They helped enrich my own teaching experience," Mrs. Luke says. Her 17-year hiatus "allowed me the parent's perspective," providing her with an additional way of approaching her profession.

Another positive force in her life and career path was Mrs. Luke's own third-grade teacher. "She was a bubbly lady who loved teaching. Even as a young girl I realized she had a passion for what she did," Mrs. Luke says.

Now in her third year at Toler, Mrs. Luke says she has been delighted with the camaraderie at the school. "My colleagues and our administrators make this a wonderful place to be," she says.

No doubt Mrs. Luke is one of the people who help make Toler a great school. "The more I teach, the more I realize it's my calling," she says. "Maya Angelou says, 'Love life, because life truly does give back, many times over, what you put into it.' That's what I believe about life, and about teaching."

Mrs. Luke's passion for her profession and for her students makes her one of Toler Elementary's many assets, as well as a deserving recipient of Garland ISD Teacher of the Month.



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