



Johanna Forshee – Wichita, KS

The educational goals and teaching philosophy of Johanna Forshee has grown and changed over her 50 years of teaching in rural, urban, and inner-city schools. Some of her ideas have remained the same while others changed due to evolving “education, circumstances, collaboration, and learning”. She says, “acceptance is the key” and “continuously finding new ways to teach and empower students”. Mrs. Forshee wishes she had another 50 years to give to her honorable career.

Her career began with earning a B.A. from Kansas Newman University in 1969. She then earned an M.A. in Elementary Education from Wichita State University in 1975. That degree was followed in 1982 by an Ed. Sp. In Administration from Wichita State University. She spent several years participating in Professional Learning programs from various Universities in Kansas.

In 1970 she was hired at St. Mark’s Elementary school to teach all subjects to 7-8th grades. In 1976 she moved to teaching at Mueller Elementary 6th grade. Followed by Peterson Elementary in 1982 and back to Mueller in 1983. Then in 1985 she was at McCollom Elementary. Next was Hadley Middle School science and math in 1989. In 1994 she became a principal at St. Mark’s Elementary. The remainder of her career was as an Intervention Specialist, Math Coach, Lead Coach, and MTSS Facilitator/Math Instructional Coach. All of her years not at St.Marks were with USD 259 in Wichita, KS.

Her awards include being name to Danforth School Administrators Fellow in 1987, Who’s Who in America’s Educators in 1984, Distinguished Title 1 School St. Mark’s principal in 2001, and Distinguished Title 1 School Curtis in 2014. She was also a finalist in 1991 for the Distinguished Classroom Teacher of the Year in Wichita. In 1996 she also received recognition for being in Phi Delta Kappa for 20 years.

She served her community by being involved in many and varied areas during her teaching career. She served on selection and adoption committees, presented at regional conferences, was an Adjunct Professor of Math for Friends University, was appointed to memberships of Pastoral Councils, and was even a co-chair of a Hot Air Balloon event at the Wichita River Festival.

“Johanna has always taught with a missionary zeal!” says Janet Eubank, a colleague. She further reports that Johanna has always had an “intrinsic desire to work with the students who need her most. Recently, she has been working with middle school students in high-poverty urban district during the challenges of COVID-19. With the fear that long-term virtual instruction would further widen the achievement gap, that does not seem to be the case for her students. They have made significant gains in spite of the challenges!” And, Ryan Graf, a former student,

who is working for Spirit Aerosystems, Inc. says “We need more teachers like Mrs. Forshee. I was just one student, imagine how many lives she has impacted!”

We welcome Mrs. Johanna Forshee to the Kansas Teachers’ Hall of Fame Class of 2021.