



Liberty Middle School Welcomes Four New Teachers For 2021-2022 School Year

by Mary Ann Mitchell
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EDWARDSVILLE - Liberty Middle School and Principal Allen Duncan welcomed four new teachers for the 2021-22 school year, including Lauren Davis (sixth-grade science), Amber Giesecking (seventh-grade science and PE), Jordi Harre (seventh and eighth grade English) and Katie Speaks (eighth-grade science).

Davis and Giesecking are veteran teachers, while Harre and Speaks are both in their first years.

Davis is in her 10th year as a teacher, coming to District #7 from St. Boniface Catholic School where she taught sixth grade for eight years and fifth grade for one year. Davis graduated from SIUE in 2011 and worked as a teacher's assistant for two teachers at Columbus Elementary School in her first year out of college.

Being a teacher is all Davis has ever wanted to be.

"I love interacting with people and I love the excitement school brings," she said.

Now as a teacher, she lives for that "lightbulb" moment.

"I also enjoy the diversity in my classroom and showing all students kindness as they develop a love for learning."

Davis, who also coaches volleyball at the high school, loves the family and team environment she has experienced at Liberty while teaching and at the high school while coaching.

"I have really enjoyed meeting all the families and students of District #7," she added.

Davis and her husband, Adam, live in Edwardsville, with their two boys, six-year-old Cameron and two-year-old Grayson. Together, they enjoy being outside playing, riding bikes and going for walks.

When she's not in the classroom, Davis enjoys exercising, playing in adult softball and volleyball leagues and relaxing at Table Rock Lake.



Giesecking is in her seventh year as a teacher, having spent one year of first/second grade at St. Paul's Lutheran School in Troy, four years in family service, one year of second grade at Bernard Long Elementary in Madison and four years in seventh-grade science at Alton Middle School. She has a Bachelor of Science in Education with endorsements in math, science and social studies.

Giesecking originally became a teacher to make a difference in the lives of underprivileged youth in low economic areas, and while that is still true, she now sees the need in all kids.

“However, I’ve learned that kids of all socio-economic backgrounds need a safe place to learn, grow and mature to become their best selves and I want to provide that wherever I feel led to teach.”

A native of Prairietown, she attended Bunker Hill High School, although both of her parents are Edwardsville alumni. She now resides in Edwardsville with her fourth children: seventh-grader Kennedy and sixth-grade twins Kami and Kobi, who all attend Lincoln Middle School, and three-year-old son Krosby.

“We are a very active family. We love sports, traveling and family!”

Evidenced by being an active family, Giesecking said their hobbies include putting miles on the minivan.

Giesecking also coaches girls’ basketball and Lincoln and club basketball at BallHogg Academy. Her children are also involved in running, basketball, volleyball, dance, cheer and track.



“My niece and nephew are big soccer athletes so when we don't have our own sports - we are at theirs,” she added. “As a family, we love Christmas because of our faith, family and the memories made-forgoing gifts to create experiences together.”

Harre knew she wanted to become a teacher because she wanted to help students reach their full potential and goals.

“I love seeing my students succeed and watching them grow every day. It is such a rewarding career!”

Harre graduated with a degree in business administration from SIUE in 2019 before earning a Master’s in Education from McKendree in 2021.

Although she may be new to District #7, she’s felt more than welcomed.

“As a new teacher it can be intimidating, but everyone has been so helpful and kind,” she said. “This community is incredible and I absolutely love working here.”

Harre grew up in Nashville, Ill., where her parents and older sister still reside.

Harre will be getting married in October in Colorado.

When she’s not in the classroom, her and her fiancé love staying active by working out or going for walks. They are both also close with their families and enjoy spending time with them.



Speaks is a recent graduate of SIUE with a degree in elementary education and middle school science. She student taught in a second grade classroom in Troy.

Speaks has wanted to be a teacher since she was little and had a teacher that truly inspired her.

“I hope to be that teacher for my students. I love instilling a love for learning in students, and helping them discover their interests and strengths. Nothing brings me more joy than seeing that "lightbulb" moment in the classroom!”

Speaks, whose husband, Quinn, teaches and coaches at Edwardsville High School, loves how close-knit the Edwardsville community and school district are.

“We love being a part of this community and cannot wait to raise a family here!”

The couple was recently married in July and they have a red fox lab puppy named Oakley.

When she’s not in the classroom, Speaks enjoys spending time with her family, watching the Iowa Hawkeyes and St. Louis Cardinals, playing with her puppy and shopping at Target.