

Michelle Seymour Has Best Of Both Worlds As Liberty Middle School Math Teacher/Technology Coach

by Mary Ann Mitchell
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EDWARDSVILLE - As a math teacher and technology coach at Liberty Middle School, Michelle Seymour has the best of both worlds.

“I love math, but educational technology and how it can help kids learn is what I'm extremely passionate about.”

It's Seymour's 20th year of teaching and her second in District 7. She began her teaching career in Springfield, Ill., and during that time, she met her husband who was in the Air Force. His position took them all over the country and as a result, she has taught everything from first grade to eighth grade at schools in California, Virginia, Ohio and Illinois. But no matter where she was or what she taught, technology played a vital part.

From having two mobile computer labs that she would bring into her classrooms to working at a technology magnet school and even teaching at an all-virtual K-12 public school in Ohio several years before COVID-19 introduced the rest of us to virtual learning, she's been able to incorporate technology into her instruction.

"I love technology and finding out how to help kids grow with it."

Seymour has been able to take those experiences and love for technology to help grow District 7, especially now with both middle schools using 1:1 devices.

"Technology allows you to work smarter and not harder. There are so many ways in which you can let the kids work at their own level and it automatically adapts and lets them progress at their own pace. It also provides immediate feedback for students, something you don't get with paper and pencil. Think about how when you're on a computer and misspell a word and it's underlined. If you were writing on paper and had to turn it in to the teacher, you wouldn't know about that misspelling until after you got the paper back. Technology doesn't change teaching; it just enhances it."

She said she's grateful to be part of the transition to 1:1 at Liberty.

"It's incredible to see how teachers reacted at first to now, when you can walk through the building and see laptops open in every room. The students are enjoying it and the teachers have really bought in."

Ironically, Seymour didn't want to go into teaching. Her mom and several aunts, who were all teachers, even tried talking her out of it.

"Education was actually my fourth major in college. When I was a junior, I took a career evaluation test, and everything pointed to teaching. It was what I was meant to do."

And it's what she's loved since the moment she took it on.

“I’ve never thought of leaving the profession. Even with all the moves we’ve made and the opportunities to do something different. The best thing about it is that it's always changing, and two days are never the same. The content might stay the same, but how everyone interacts with it is different.”