

‘Science comes alive’ in Val Driscoll’s classes

by Dan Brannan, Content Director
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Val Driscoll is known for making “science come alive” in her classes at **Lincoln Middle School** in Edwardsville.

Lincoln Middle School Principal Steve Stuart said Driscoll's labs allow students to get their hands dirty with experimentation and she shows them how science “relates to their everyday lives.”

The Edwardsville science teacher said she enjoys talking with the kids and seeing their “**ah ha**” moments where they understand what she is talking about.

“You can tell they are enjoying it and their homework shows,” she said. “The kids have a lot of questions and are always interested in technology and how this connects to real life. The kids come in every day ready to ask questions if they don’t know the answer.”

Driscoll said the classes are using the scientific method to experiment with exothermic and endothermic reactions, which pertain to energy and heat.

“The kids do a lab to essentially follow the steps of scientific method and complete a lab report,” she said. “We do one lab a week and different types of topics and experiments. I am a hands-on learner and I love doing things that prove what you are trying to do.”

Within her classroom science lab, Driscoll has burners, a sink and everything needed to carry out the experiments.

Driscoll was recognized with a **Golden Apple Award** a few years back. She is working on her master’s degree at Southern Illinois University Edwardsville and teaches five different sections at science Lincoln Middle School.

She believes at the middle school level, it is very important all science teachers have the same common approach with science. Driscoll exchanges ideas with the other science teachers in the district. She said the science teachers in the district are very unified and brainstorming with them always helps generate other ideas.

In class, Driscoll and the students use Smart Boards, Tablet Trainers and Microsoft Tables to perform a considerable amount of simulations.

The duties and responsibilities of a science teacher are quite extensive. Driscoll works long hours and sometimes has 150 papers to grade with her load of classes. Even with the long hours, she said the only way she can describe her experience in the Edwardsville School District and her occupation is “I love my work.”

She also said she thrives on the innovation and how the district is making solid use of technology. She also said she feels complete support for using the hands-on learning teaching method in her classroom.

