

Fall

Teacher of the Month

Ms. O'Donnell

November 2011

Q: You have been at CSEE for the past six years. Share the good experiences that led you from your beginnings here as a teacher assistant to now being the lead teacher of the middle school program.

Six years sure does fly by! It seems like yesterday that I was being interviewed for a kindergarten teaching assistant position. That first year taught me a great deal about the type of teacher I wanted to become. Within one year I learned the importance of being not only firm, but loving all at the same time. Students need to know and value the importance of an education and this is shown through discipline. However, they also need to be comfortable in order to approach you with a personal problem. C.S.E.E. has taught me how to be both of these things. Through professional development, parent communication, support of administration, and observing my colleagues I believe that I have been able to effectively balance these two traits.

Q: What advice can you offer new teachers that could help them be successful?

Consistency, preparedness, consistency, preparedness! In my experiences children always know when a teacher is unprepared or "winging it." The most effective classroom has clear and established rules and teachers that are knowledgeable in their content areas. I cannot stress the importance of reviewing a lesson plan the night before implementing it. For example, I know that my weakest content area is science; it has been since I was in middle school. I now review the lessons nightly to make sure that I have a full understanding of the material I am going to present.

Q: What has contributed to your success as a teacher?

My success is solely based on the support of my colleagues, parents, and administration. My colleagues allow me into their classroom at any time to observe their most effective practices and I am incredibly appreciative of this. By sharing our ideas we can only ensure student success!

The administrative staff assists me in any way I need. I can approach them with any problem, and I know that they will do their best to work with me to help solve it.

The parents at C.S.E.E. have always been incredibly supportive of me and my instructional program. They truly value their child's education and assist me as best they can and I am very grateful for them. Thank you parents!

Q: Share a special quote that you feel represents who you are and what you stand for as an educator.

This quotation best sums up my love for teaching and learning. I hope that everyone agrees with it! (And yes, it is by my favorite children's author!)

"I have a passion for teaching kids to become readers, to become comfortable with a book, not daunted. Books shouldn't be daunting, they should be funny, exciting and wonderful; and learning to be a reader gives a terrific advantage."

— Roald Dahl