

Flemington-Raritan Regional School District
2021 Educators of the Year
(Board Recognition -- February 22, 2021)

On behalf of the Board of Education, the Flemington-Raritan Education Association and our entire District, we are proud to announce, acknowledge and congratulate the Flemington-Raritan Regional School District's 2021 Educators of the Year! Their hard work, dedication and contributions have helped our students grow, learn and achieve. It is because of outstanding staff members like them that our district continues to provide all students with an excellent education and the foundation they need to succeed in the future. Congratulations to each of this year's honorees!

Barley Sheaf School



Teacher of the Year: Susan Fischer, Grade 1

Mrs. Fischer has been a first grade teacher at Barley Sheaf Elementary School since 2007, when her family relocated to New Jersey. Mrs. Fischer targeted her home search to the Flemington-Raritan School District due to the District's positive reputation for their own children, and Mrs. Fischer eagerly became a first grade teacher at Barley Sheaf. Mrs. Fischer has been an educational leader in our district, serving on various committees and writing curriculum over the years. She models leadership and risk taking for her colleagues and students by being willing to try new teaching strategies in her classroom to find what works best for her students and shares her knowledge with others. Mrs. Fischer's passion for teaching is evident when you see her students' excitement about what they are learning in her classroom. She instills a sense of pride and ownership in her students, which echoes in their respect for their classmates and school. Mrs. Fischer is a committed and highly motivated teaching professional, both inside and outside of school, always seeking ways to improve her instruction and our school community.



Educational Services Professional of the Year: Dayna Hamlin, Literacy Support

Mrs. Hamlin joined Barley Sheaf Elementary School in 2006, when she relocated to Flemington. Mrs. Hamlin has since become an educational leader in our District, eager to represent her colleagues and contribute to the curriculum that will best meet the needs of her learners. Mrs. Hamlin seamlessly transitioned to literacy support, which she has taught for the past 9 years. In this role, Mrs. Hamlin has seen students in small group settings and has pushed into classrooms to provide student support. This has allowed Mrs. Hamlin to build strong relationships with colleagues and collaborate to provide the most effective instruction to her students. Mrs. Hamlin is always willing to discuss ideas with colleagues and learn from one another. Mrs. Hamlin's flexibility and responsiveness help make her an integral part of students' learning experience in school. Mrs. Hamlin can also be found at events for Barley Sheaf, as both a teacher and a parent supporting our PTO and school wide events.

Copper Hill School



Teacher of the Year: Susan Stillwell, Preschool Disabled

Mrs. Stillwell is a dedicated, caring, and professional member of our preschool team. She has spent the last 30 years changing lives as an educator, and the last 6 at Copper Hill School. Mrs. Stillwell is a leader amongst her team and an active member of our school community. Her knowledge of preschool best practices and curriculum is respected by her colleagues and administrators. Mrs. Stillwell advocates for her students, while building relationships with her families to promote the success of our youngest learners. She epitomizes what it means to be a team player. She is the conduit between her students, teaching assistants, service providers, and parents. Mrs. Stillwell is a valuable leader and member of Copper Hill's Pandemic Response Team. Her support and preschool expertise allowed us to bring back our youngest learners first, while providing a nurturing and safe environment for Copper Hill's youngest learners.



Educational Services Professional of the Year: Terry Calabrese, Teacher Assistant

Mrs. Calabrese is a dedicated, caring, and professional member of the Copper Hill community. She has dedicated 20 years of service to Copper Hill School and the Flemington-Raritan School District as a teaching assistant and personal assistant. Mrs. Calabrese is currently a personal assistant to a student with various needs. Mrs. Calabrese's professional, yet extremely nurturing and caring approach, is widely admired and recognized by her colleagues and our school community. Mrs. Calabrese goes above and beyond to ensure the social, emotional, and academic growth of her students. Mrs. Calabrese's support goes well beyond the needs of her student. She is a leader and supports any student or colleague who needs support. Words can not express the love and support that characterizes Mrs. Calabrese.

Francis A. Desmares School



Teacher of the Year: Lea Klein, Computer Teacher K-2

Mrs. Klein is described by her colleagues as a dedicated, committed, compassionate, and empathetic teacher. Her dedication and commitment to students are an inspiration to her colleagues to become a better professional every day. Mrs. Klein designs fun and interactive lessons where students learn computer literacy skills, in addition to the skills needed to troubleshoot an issue with their device. Mrs. Klein will drop almost anything in her life to come to the aid of a child, whether they are in her class or even in our school! Her dedication to ALL students extends far beyond the walls of our school but toward students across the entire district.



Educational Services Professional of the Year: Ana Headley, Teaching Assistant

Mrs. Headley has been a part of the Francis A. Desmares School community since 2007. She is best described by her colleagues as one who insists on getting to know all of the students. At times, she will stop students as they are walking in the school just to get their name and introduce herself. As a teaching assistant, she adjusts her support methods according to what she knows will bring out the best in her students. Mrs. Headley finds ways to help the teachers she works with by always looking for ways to support them in the classroom. Our teachers say, "When you have Ana Headley in your classroom, you truly have a partner in the children's learning."

Robert Hunter School



Teacher of the Year: Jennifer Smits, Grade 3 Teacher

Jennifer Smits has been named Robert Hunter's Teacher of the Year! Mrs. Smits is a third grade teacher and innovative educator within Robert Hunter! She works tirelessly to create and execute effective and engaging lessons. Mrs. Smits ensures that each and every student is successful. She values every child in her classroom as a unique learner. She wants every child to succeed and advocates for each student in her classroom - collaborating with families and colleagues and always trying out new ideas. Jenn is an active member of the school community. She implemented Robert Hunter's first ever Book Swap and has run the Read Across America Committee for many years. Mrs. Smits has a huge passion for reading and science. She helped write the science curriculum for the district. She also is a Teacher Leader for the Science Education Institute at RVCC where she assists other teachers to learn the NGSS practices. Mrs. Smits also ran a "Save the Frogs" fundraiser. Mrs. Smits has served on many committees including the Wellness Committee, School Climate Committee, the AED Committee and currently the Pandemic

Response Committee. She has taught many professional development courses in the district including Smartboard training, Readers and Writers workshop, and Science courses. Mrs. Smits also participates in district wide events and tutors piano and violin in the local area. Mrs. Smits is described as a collaborative professional who goes out of her way to connect with her students!



Educational Services Professional of the Year: Zoey Blampey, Stretch Teacher & RTI Coordinator

Zoey Blampey has been named Robert Hunter's Educational Services Professional of the Year. Mr. Blampey is a teacher of 11 years, several schools and two continents. This is his second year at Robert Hunter, taking over the position of Stretch Teacher and RTI Coordinator after seven years teaching language arts and science within the district. In his roles as Stretch teacher and RTI specialist, Mr. Blampey loves to challenge each child to find new passions, something he believes is key to developing students who grow into intrinsic learners. His childhood was spent discovering new places, environments, animals, people and the stories they have to share and he looks forward to seeing his students gain the same sense of curiosity. Mr. Blampey is a passionate educator who connects with students and staff alike. Zoey provides creative, insightful ideas to accelerate learning and promote student growth. Zoey would be described by his colleagues as knowledgeable, hard working, and collaborative; he is a true champion for student and staff advancement!

Reading-Fleming Intermediate School



Teacher of the Year: Lisa Coster, 6th Grade Special Education

Mrs. Coster is well known for her enthusiasm, energy, as well as having great school spirit! Mrs. Coster not only develops lessons that are curriculum-based, but are also crafted around the individual needs of her students. Mrs. Coster is constantly pushing students to raise their level of performance in the classroom and is always coming up with creative ways to deliver instruction. Mrs. Coster encourages her students to become lifelong learners and models this for them every day. Colleagues describe Mrs. Coster as non-stop and always looking for ways to grow and develop professionally and personally. Despite all of the restrictions this year, Mrs. Coster continues to find ways to connect with students. Mrs. Coster consistently goes above and beyond to ensure that all her students have every opportunity to learn. Mrs. Coster influences many 6th-grade students through the podcasts she records everyday that are made available to all 6th-grade students.



Educational Services Professional of the Year: Beth Brennan, Child Study Team: School Psychologist

Ms. Brennan is an educator who goes above and beyond to make sure all students experience success at RFIS. Ms. Brennan is described by her colleagues as being collaborative, dedicated to her students, and having a witty sense of humor. Ms. Brennan always knows how to make others feel welcome and heard, and never loses sight of what is in the best interest of students and families. Ms. Brennan is an expert problem solver and makes herself available at any time to assist in any situation that benefits students. She is a true advocate for students.

J.P. Case Middle School



Teacher of the Year: Misti Meyer, 7th Grade English Language Arts

Mrs. Misti Meyer transitioned to J. P. Case as an English Language Arts Teacher in 2018 after previously acting as the Technology Integration Specialist at Reading-Fleming Intermediate School. Her 14 year career in education began after her service in the United States Military. Her colleagues have recognized her as a champion for children, who forges connections with students of all backgrounds and ability levels. She creates learning experiences that not only increase student's subject area knowledge, but also help students become more empathetic, compassionate, confident, and humane. Mrs. Meyer is a lifelong learner. Her diverse background allows her to differentiate and implement timely and creative lessons that also prioritize social emotional learning and build community. Mrs. Meyer serves as a leader among our faculty. When our doors closed last March, she took the initiative to help her colleagues with the challenges associated with switching to virtual instruction. She volunteered her own time to create tutorial videos for the faculty and held meetings to provide support and assistance. She is an exemplary teacher, a true team player, and inspiration for our community.



Educational Services Professional of the Year: May Wong, Learning Disabilities Teacher-Consultant, LDTC

Ms. May Wong has enjoyed a 44 year career in education, having served as a Learning Disabilities Teacher-Consultant in the Flemington-Raritan School District for 25 years. She is a devoted and hard-working professional, as evidenced by her perfect attendance record and strong, multi-generational relationships with the families in our community. For many years May has been dedicated to promoting programs that are designed to help students achieve their greatest potential. Her colleagues recognize that she helps and counsels parents and guardians, as well as educators, on how to do their best to meet the needs of all students. May always makes herself available to collaborate with stakeholders. She is a leader in her field.