

LEARN BY HEART

Spotlight on Kelly Wells

For the past 23 years, Mrs. Kelly Wells, science teacher at Bridgman's F.C. Reed Middle School has inspired and supported both students and staff.

"She is one of the teachers in my life who inspired me to become a teacher," said former student Allie Brown. "She inspired me to make my future students feel seen and known, just as Mrs. Wells made me feel seen and known by her."

When Mrs. Wells heard the kind words Brown said about her, she was touched.

"How often does somebody have a chance to say that they received feedback like that from a student or that they actually changed somebody's life in a good way? That made my day, my week, my month!" Mrs. Wells exclaimed.

Mrs. Wells connects with her students by finding things that are important to them and tries to incorporate them into her lesson plans.

"Kelly is a teacher who focuses on the well-being of not only students, but also administrators and fellow teachers," said STEM and math teacher, Kerri deBest. "She looks for ways to encourage personal growth and gives students opportunities to focus on non-school related topics with Kagan strategies."

Wells explained that Kagan strategies are used in the classroom to help students interact with each other to elicit better conversations in the classroom. This gets students to really listen to each other and stay more engaged which leads to a feeling of ownership in their learning.

Ultimately, Mrs. Wells genuinely cares about the success of her students today and well into the future.

"She always pushed students to be our best but also showed that she genuinely cared about us as people," said former student Clara Fast.

While Mrs. Wells' care for her students hasn't changed over the past 23 years, the teaching profession has.



KELLY WELLS, SCIENCE TEACHER

"I didn't go to school to teach technology," said Mrs. Wells. "But I have to incorporate that into the lessons now so I get a lot of different colleagues' input."

Whether using technology, such as Quizlet or Blooket to help students study in a fun and engaging online experience, or using Kagan strategies to give students an interactive brain break, Mrs. Wells certainly has a knack for getting her students' attention and making the learning process fun. It doesn't stop in her classroom. Mrs. Wells also helps fellow teachers throughout the district.

"Kelly shares resources with all teachers in the building, even reaching out to teachers in other buildings," said Ms. deBest.

Mrs. Wells is so thankful for everything the community has done to keep students in school through the pandemic.

"Everyone is working around the clock trying to do what's best for these kids, and it brings tears to my eyes thinking about that because they're so important and we don't want to fail them," Mrs. Wells said. "They're the reason why we're here, the reason we get up in the morning and come every day."

Bridgman Public Schools is so thankful for Mrs. Wells and how she continues to help students and staff Learn by Heart everyday!