

# LEARN BY HEART

## Spotlight on Erin Korson

When Erin Korson was hired as the art teacher for F.C. Reed Middle School last fall, she had one weekend to prepare for her first day of class. Excited about the opportunity in the Bridgman School District, she dove into the art room headfirst.

"Because I came in right before school started, I wasn't aware of all of the wonderful resources available to our students," laughed Mrs. Korson as she reflected back on the beginning of the school year. "Teachers were telling me 'you know you have iPads' or 'you know you have stop motion animation software', and I think that's so amazing!"

Mrs. Korson is no stranger to trying new things. When she first graduated from college, she and her husband moved to China to initially teach English for a year. She then taught art at an international school in Wuhan to students from 28 different countries. Finally, they moved south of Beijing where she taught art to elementary students.

"I tried to incorporate local art with Chinese styles because we had access to their tools. We did ink painting, brush painting and calligraphy," stated Mrs. Korson. "I would like to introduce Bridgman students to Japanese printmaking, which involves painting fish. We would go to the fish market, buy fish, octopus and squid and actually paint on the fish. You lay rice paper on top of the fish and press it down and you pull a print. It's a very realistic and beautiful copy of the fish. In the States, we could use silicon molds of fish to get the same effect."

Students have been working on a variety of projects, including the Local Wildlife banners hung along Lake Street for everyone to enjoy.

"Our daughter is passionate about art, and often talks about her current art projects," said



**ERIN KORSON,  
ART TEACHER**

parent, Megan Bolinder. "I appreciate her commitment to growing our young artists!"

The middle school students are finishing up a clay unit, where each grade has a different project. Fifth grade students created donuts, learning the basics of smoothing and detail work. Sixth grade students created boxes that look like food, such as a cupcake or pizza, with removable lids. Seventh grade students created themed salt and pepper shakers, like a pair of birds or frogs. And eighth grade students created mugs with the theme "it's alive". All are on display in the glass case outside the art class.

"Erin has been a great addition to the RMS staff," said Kelly Wells, Science teacher at the middle school. "She brings great enthusiasm to her art classes. I love seeing all of the art projects in the hallway."

Mrs. Korson loves that the students get so excited, give each other feedback and think like an artist.

"Mrs. Korson helps the students in art by being extremely kind and patient," said student Hannah Caudell. "She makes art fun for the students and encourages them to try their hardest. She helped me make an art piece I am proud of. I am very grateful that she is my teacher."

Thank you for helping our art students Learn by Heart, Mrs. Korson!