

# Teacher Features

## Jessica Buteyn

### What inspired you to become a teacher

I never even thought of becoming a teacher as a child or young adult. My dad was a middle school science and math teacher, and I had absolutely no desire to do what he did! I didn’t even enjoy the company of children! I went to college and earned a degree in business administration with a minor in marketing. I dabbled in the retail fashion industry buying market, bridal, and restaurant management over the next six years trying to find my niche. In my late 20’s, I co-owned a children’s resale shop and realized that I enjoyed interacting with the kids that came in more than I did with their parents. After having a long talk with my dad, he revealed to me that he always thought I would make a great teacher, and a week later I was enrolled in college AGAIN, to earn my education degree. I guess dads really do know best!



### What’s the most challenging part of your job?

The most challenging part, by far, is not being able to meet every need of each child that steps foot in my classroom and the guilt that comes with it. As you hear over and over again from teachers, our students become “our kids” and just as we want to meet the needs of our own children, we desire to meet the needs of our students. When I have a student that doesn’t make as much progress as I would have liked, I blame myself. When I see a student struggling and have tried every strategy I know of, I feel helpless. When I see a student that is being left out or just doesn’t seem to fit in and have done what I can to remedy the situation, but they still seem so sad, I wonder night after night what else I can do to help. This becomes both mentally and physically exhausting.

### What’s the most rewarding part of your job?

The most rewarding part of my job goes hand in hand with the most challenging! I may not be able to meet every need of every student, but I am able to meet MANY needs of MANY students. This is an incredible feeling. When I receive an encouraging e-mail, letter, or message from a former student years after I’ve had them, this more than makes up for the exhaustion of trying to meet all the challenges that come with my job.

### What’s the most memorable moment you’ve had in the classroom?

One afternoon my students were being exceptionally squirrely. One boy was specifically challenging me by looking at his graphic novel as I was trying to teach social studies. I finally looked at him and said, “If you look at that book one more time, I’m going to throw it out the window!” Of course they all laughed at me and within three minutes he was looking at the book again. So I picked up the book, opened up the window, popped the screen off, and chucked the book out! The entire class looked at me like I had lost my mind. Then the realization came that it was a library book and I needed the book back! So, I ended up leaning out my window to reach for the book! Here was the super tall, curly-haired, 5th grade teacher, half in and half out of her classroom. I can’t even imagine how I must have looked from the road. My students were roaring and I was giggling so hard I couldn’t stop. I love moments like this when I get to be silly and spontaneous with my students.

### What’s your favorite subject/class to teach and why?

I LOVE social studies! I find history interesting and very important to help us understand why we act and think like we do today. Most of my students grumble when I say at the beginning of the year that I will have them enjoying social studies by the end of the year, as I know I am in the minority. But by the end of the year, a vast majority of my students enjoyed learning about U.S. history, creating a state book, and performing in the famous U.S. person wax museum.

### Background information:

Years at the school — 17 years teaching at Brandon School. I have taught both 4th and 5th grades, but the vast majority has been in 5th. I have been the Varsity Dance Team Coach for three years at Laconia High School and the yearbook advisor for 16 years at Brandon.

Hometown — Oakfield, WI. I was born and raised a Mighty Oak.

Education — U.W. Stevens Point: Bachelor’s Degree in Business Administration; U.W. Oshkosh: Educator’s License, Marian University: Master’s Degree in Educational Technology

Family — Married to Scott for a long time now, with daughters Cassidy (23), Kylie (17) and Karsyn (15), none of whom want to be teachers. We’ll see ;-)

## Morgan Deich

### What inspired you to become a teacher?

Deb Christopherson. She was my first grade teacher and really showed me the care and love that teachers have for their students. She was able to comfort me during a tough time and made learning fun! She held her students to high expectations but also showed grace and understanding. I looked to her as an example when I started teaching, and I am still in contact with her today.



### What’s the most challenging part of your job?

The most challenging part is not comparing myself to other teachers and what I am doing in my classroom. I need to trust myself and my abilities in order to reach my students and unlock their potential.

### What’s the most rewarding part of your job?

Those “lightbulb” moments where students finally grasp a concept and gain confidence in themselves. I start the year off with telling my students that it is okay to make mistakes, that we can learn from them, and to never give up. So when I see that being put into practice, it gives me goosebumps and makes everything worth it!

### What’s the most memorable moment you’ve had in the classroom?

It is hard to pick just one moment. Every year, I enjoy seeing the students form a community and family within the classroom. We are able to trust and respect each other, while learning new things. We support each other through our learning and are truly there for one another. The classroom community is AMAZING!

### What’s your favorite subject/class to teach and why?

I enjoy teaching everything but really like reading groups. To be able to work in smaller groups of students and discuss what they are reading is really exciting and important. I find that those students who are a little quieter are more comfortable sharing in small groups, so this is their time to shine. I love hearing their thoughts. I also feel that with working in smaller groups, I am able to see individual progress and help students grow in specific areas.

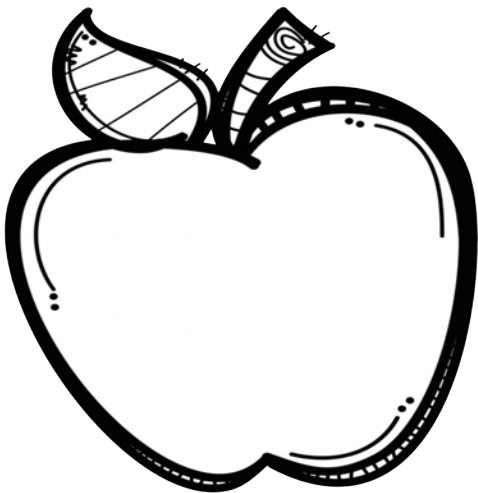
### Background information:

Years at the school — 5 years

Hometown — Waupun, Wisconsin

Education — UW-Eau Claire where I double majored in Elementary and Special education. Currently attending Concordia University for a masters in Educational Administration.

Family — Single and a certified foster parent. Currently trying to adopt a dog. I have two younger brothers (Dustin 25, Dakota 17) and parents who have been married for 31 years (Dan and Pam).



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