



Welcome to the
2026-2027 School Year

New Staff Trading Cards





District



Elementary

Jenn DeBruin

Intervention & Support Coordinator

"Empowering Learners For Life"

STATISTICS

Jennifer "Jenn" DeBruin

Hometown

Downers Grove, IL

Favorite Sports Team

Iowa Hawkeyes

Hobbies

Reading, cheering on the sidelines of my
kids sports, planning vacations and
adventures

Favorite Restaurant

Sogno or Pierce Tavern

Favorite Travel Destination

New Zealand

Favorite Music Genre

Indie Rock

Favorite Morning Beverage

Coffee!!!

Childhood Occupational Aspiration

School Counselor

Favorite Quote

"Do the next right thing"



District Office Zachary Pros

Director of Facilities & Maintenance

"Empowering Learners For Life"

STATISTICS

Zachary Pros (Zach)

Hometown

North Riverside, IL

Favorite Sports Team

Chicago Bears

Hobbies

Living life/Boating/Fishing/Golfing

Favorite Restaurant

Mon AMI GABI / Greek Island

Favorite Travel Destination

Cocoa Beach, FL

Favorite Music Genre

Country

Favorite Morning Beverage

Coffee/OJ

Childhood Occupational Aspiration

Firefighter/ Policemen/ Director of
B&G (Just like my father)

Favorite Quote

"You can't go back and change the
beginning, but you can start where you
are and change the ending." C.S.
Lewis



BULLDOGS

Chris Reid

Principal, Blythe Park

"Empowering Learners For Life"

STATISTICS

Chris Reid

Hometown

Westchester, IL

Favorite Sports Team

Chicago Bears

Hobbies

Exercise, DIY home projects

Favorite Restaurant

Pier 290

Favorite Travel Destination

Europe

Favorite Music Genre

Pop Folk

Favorite Morning Beverage

Vanilla Latte

Childhood Occupational Aspiration

Architect

Favorite Quote

*"Things turn out best for the people who
make the best out of the way things turn
out."*

- John Wooden



District Office
Steve V
Director of Finance & Operations

"Empowering Learners For Life"

STATISTICS

Steve "Steverino" Wilder

Hometown

Bloomington, IL

Favorite Sports Team

Cubs, Bears, Blackhawks, Arsenal FC,
Miami Hurricanes

Hobbies

DIY home projects, Cycling, Jogging

Favorite Restaurant

The Burger Barge

Favorite Travel Destination

Beach/France/Spain

Favorite Music Genre

Rock n Roll

Favorite Morning Beverage

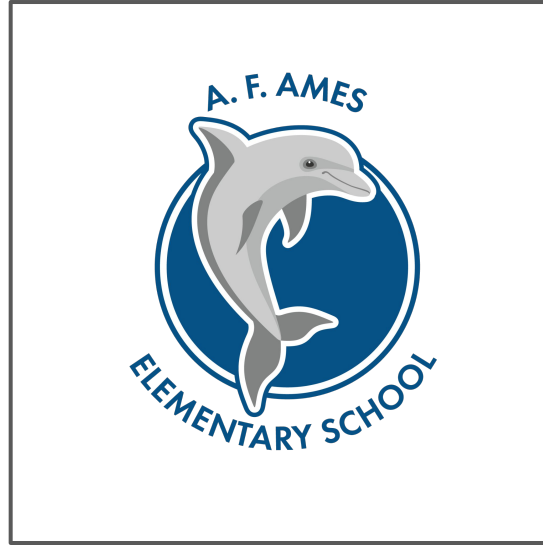
Coffee

Childhood Occupational Aspiration

Doctor

Favorite Quote

*Do unto others as you would have them do
unto you.*



Ames Elementary



DOLPHINS

Beth Brouwer

Mid-Day Assistant, Ames

"Empowering Learners For Life"

STATISTICS

ELIZABETH "Beth" BROUWER

Hometown

Sullivan, IL

Favorite Sports Team

White Sox

Hobbies

Gardening, Baking, Quilting

Favorite Restaurant

Sushi or Thai food

Favorite Travel Destination

Rio de Janeiro

Favorite Music Genre

Country

Favorite Morning Beverage

Coffee

Childhood Occupational Aspiration

Doctor

Favorite Quote

"Success is a journey, not a destination."

-Arthur Ashe



DOLPHINS

Emerson Azcoitia

Resource Teacher, Ames

"Empowering Learners For Life"

STATISTICS

Emerson "Em" Azcoitia

Hometown

Franklin Park, IL

Favorite Sports Team

Chicago Bears

Hobbies

Dance and Reading

Favorite Restaurant

Portillos

Favorite Travel Destination

Saugatuck, Michigan

Favorite Music Genre

Folk/Indie

Favorite Morning Beverage

Caffeine (any tea, coffee,
or energy drink)

Childhood Occupational Aspiration

Teacher!

Favorite Quote

*"Good, better, best, never let it rest,
'til your good gets better and your
better gets best!"*

- Ben Johnson (Bears Head Coach)



DOLPHINS

Jeanine Vaia

Permanent Substitute, Ames

"Empowering Learners For Life"

STATISTICS

Jeanine Vaia

Hometown

Riverside, IL

Favorite Sports Team

Chicago Bears

Hobbies

Spending time with family, Reading

Favorite Restaurant

Luccas

Favorite Travel Destination

Michigan

Favorite Music Genre

Country

Favorite Morning Beverage

Coffee

Childhood Occupational Aspiration

teacher

Favorite Quote

*"The most wasted of all days is the one
without laughter"*

- e.e. cummings



DOLPHINS

Rainu Thomas

Speech-Language Pathologist, Ames (Early Learners)

"Empowering Learners For Life"

STATISTICS

Rainu Thomas

Hometown

Addison, IL

Favorite Sports Team

Rarely Watch Sports

Hobbies

Reading, Walking, Podcasts

Favorite Restaurant

Cooper's Hawk

Favorite Travel Destination

Patmos, Greece

Favorite Music Genre

Country

Favorite Morning Beverage

Water/Matcha

Childhood Occupational Aspiration

Interior Designer

Favorite Quote

*"The happiness of your life depends upon
the quality of your thoughts."*

- Marcus Aurelius



DOLPHINS

Stephany Bassett

Early Learner Teacher,,Ames

"Empowering Learners For Life"

STATISTICS

Stephany "Steph" Bassett

Hometown

Western Springs, IL

Favorite Sports Team

Chicago Cubs

Hobbies

Exercising

Hanging with family & friends

Favorite Restaurant

Anything Greek

Favorite Travel Destination

Greece & Italy

Favorite Music Genre

Pop, rock, & rap

Favorite Morning Beverage

Coffee

Childhood Occupational Aspiration

Dolphin Trainer

Favorite Quote

*"Try to be a rainbow in somebody's
cloud."*

- Maya Angelou



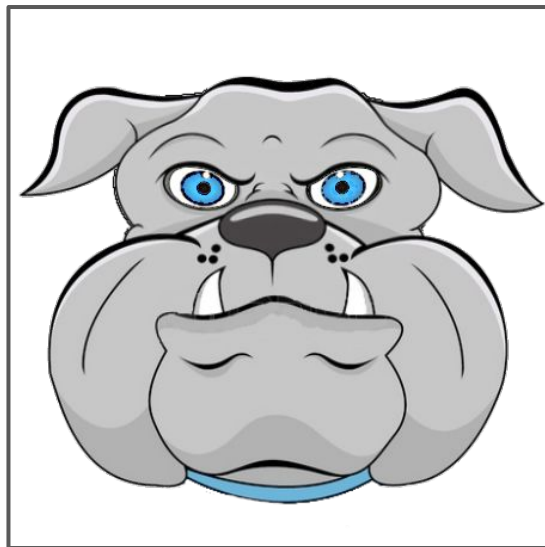
Elizabeth Campos

“Empowering Learners For Life”

Elizabeth "Lizzie" Campos

"Education does not change the world.
Education changes people. People
change the world."

- Paulo Freire



Blythe Park Elementary



BULLDOGS

Timothy Donfris

"Empowering Learners For Life"

STATISTICS

Timothy "Tim" Donfris

Hometown

North Riverside, IL

Favorite Sports Team

Chicago Cubs

Hobbies

Dungeons & Dragons, Watching Movies

Favorite Restaurant

Cooper's Hawk

Favorite Travel Destination

Iceland

Favorite Music Genre

Ska

Favorite Morning Beverage

Ice Coffee

Childhood Occupational Aspiration

Teacher

Favorite Quote

"The time is always right to do what is right."

-Martin Luther King Jr.



BULLDOGS

Ryan Stirrat

Paraprofessional, Blythe Park

"Empowering Learners For Life"

Paraprofessional

Ryan Stirrat

Hometown

La Grange Park, IL

Favorite Sports Team

Chicago Blackhawks

Hobbies

Reading, Going on Walks

Favorite Restaurant

Posto 31

Favorite Travel Destination

Savannah, Georgia

Favorite Music Genre

Pop Music

Favorite Morning Beverage

Alani Nu Energy Drink

Childhood Occupational Aspiration

Fashion Designer

Favorite Quote

"The best way to predict your future is to create it." Abraham Lincoln



BULLDOGS

Carrie Boike

Paraprofessional, Blythe Park

"Empowering Learners For Life"

STATISTICS

Carrie Boike

Hometown

Berwyn, IL

Favorite Sports Team

Chicago Cubs

Hobbies

Gardening, Reading, Walking to coffee shops

Favorite Restaurant

Planta Queen

Favorite Travel Destination

Norway

Favorite Music Genre

Pop

Favorite Morning Beverage

Iced Latte

Childhood Occupational Aspiration

Author

Favorite Quote

"Kindred spirits are not so scarce as I used to think. It's splendid to find out there are so many of them in the world."

- L.M. Montgomery, Anne of Green Gables



Central Elementary



ROADRUNNER

Jane Durkin

1st grade teacher, Central

"Empowering Learners For Life"

STATISTICS

Jane Durkin

Hometown

Riverside, IL

Favorite Sports Team

Chicago Bears

Hobbies

Hanging out with friends and family,

Shopping, walking

Favorite Restaurant

Chicago Cut Steakhouse

Favorite Travel Destination

Northern Michigan

Favorite Music Genre

House music

Favorite Morning Beverage

Iced latte

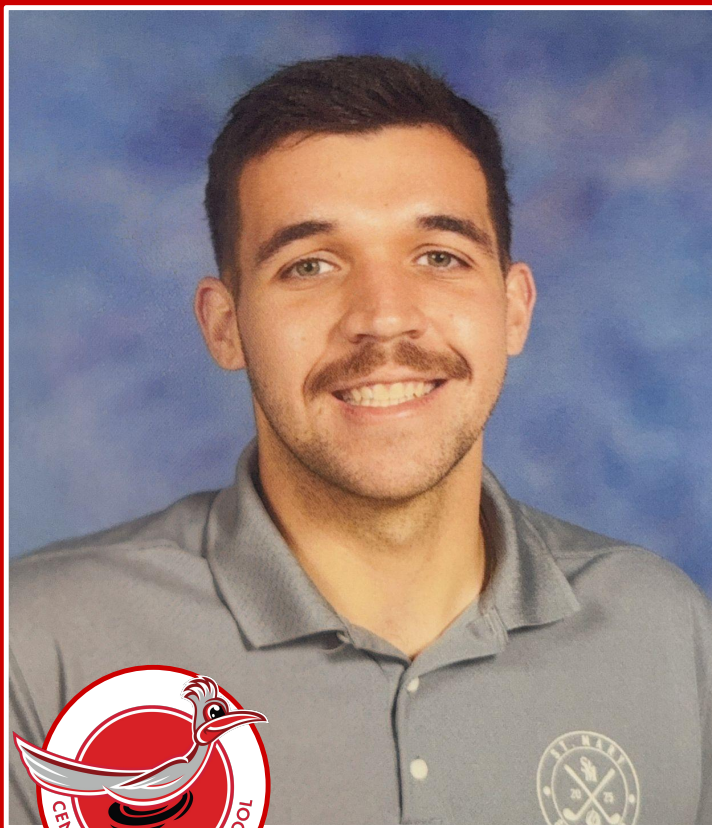
Childhood Occupational Aspiration

Teacher!

Favorite Quote

"Let them."

- Mel Robbins



ROADRUNNER

Ryan Kwilas

Physical Education Teacher Central

"Empowering Learners For Life"

P.E. Teacher

Ryan "Favorite Child" Kwilas

Hometown

Berwyn, IL

Favorite Sports Team

Chicago Cubs

Hobbies

Sports Card Collecting

Favorite Restaurant

Novi's Beef

Favorite Travel Destination

Fort Myers Beach, Florida

Favorite Music Genre

Country

Favorite Morning Beverage

Dunkin Coffee

Childhood Occupational Aspiration

Garbage Man

Favorite Quote

"It ain't about how hard you hit. It's about how hard you can get hit and keep moving forward. How much you can take and keep moving forward."

- Rocky Balboa



ROADRUNNER

Emily Merkt

Library Media Specialist, Central & Hollywood

"Empowering Learners For Life"

STATISTICS

Emily Merkt

Hometown

Wauwatosa, WI

Favorite Sports Team

Green Bay Packers

Hobbies

Baking, Reading, Gardening

Favorite Restaurant

I.d.

Favorite Travel Destination

Croatia

Favorite Music Genre

Folk/Pop

Favorite Morning Beverage

Coffee

Childhood Occupational Aspiration

Zookeeper

Favorite Quote

*"For there is always light, if only
we're brave enough to see it. If only
we're brave enough to be it."*

- Amanda Gorman



Hollywood Elementary



HUSKIES

Laura Sloman

Social Worker, Hollywood/Ames EL

"Empowering Learners For Life"

STATISTICS

LAURA SLOMAN

Hometown

Media, PA

Favorite Sports Team

Philadelphia Eagles

Hobbies

Soccer, Photography, Reading

Favorite Restaurant

Kama Bistro

Favorite Travel Destination

Scotland

Favorite Music Genre

90s Alternative

Favorite Morning Beverage

Oat Milk Latte

Childhood Occupational Aspiration

Magician

Favorite Quote

"When all else fails, take a nap."

- Winnie-the-Pooh



HUSKIES

RONDA CROSS

Special Education Teacher, Hollywood

"Empowering Learners For Life"

STATISTICS

Ronda Cross

Hometown

Clarendon Hills, IL

Favorite Sports Team

Chicago Cubs

Hobbies

Traveling, Family, Gardening & Reading

Favorite Restaurant

NEAT

Favorite Travel Destination

Paris

Favorite Music Genre

Classic Rock

Favorite Morning Beverage

Strawberry Refresher

Childhood Occupational Aspiration

Hair Stylist

Favorite Quote

"We rise by lifting others"

- Robert Ingersoll



HUSKIES

Heather Minchella

5th Grade Teacher, Hollywood

"Empowering Learners For Life"

STATISTICS

Heather Minchella

Hometown

Hoffman Estates, IL

Favorite Sports Team

Indiana Hoosiers

Hobbies

Running, Reading, Traveling, Gardening

Favorite Restaurant

Kama Bistro

Favorite Travel Destination

Namibia

Favorite Music Genre

I like a little of everything!

Favorite Morning Beverage

Coffee

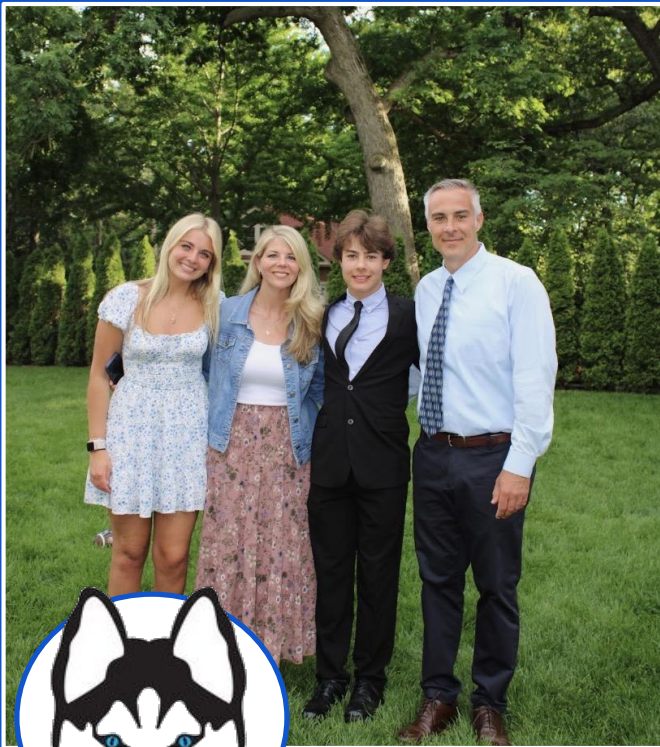
Childhood Occupational Aspiration

Teacher

Favorite Quote

"What you do makes a difference, and you have to decide what kind of difference you want to make."

- Jane Goodall



HUSKIES

Amy Koltz

Secretary, Hollywood

"Empowering Learners For Life"

STATISTICS

Amy Koltz

Hometown

North Riverside, Illinois

Hobbies

Spending time with my family,
bicycling and reading

Favorite Restaurant

Lou Malnati's

Favorite Travel Destination

Hawaii

Favorite Music Genre

Various

Favorite Morning Beverage

Dunkin Coffee

Childhood Occupational Aspiration

Elementary Teacher

*"Be the change you wish to see in the
world."*



Hauser Junior High



COUGARS

Nicole Tomasello

7th Grade Mathematics, Hauser

"Empowering Learners For Life"

STATISTICS

Nicole "Heinzl" Tomasello

Hometown

Berwyn, IL

Favorite Sports Team

Chicago White Sox

Hobbies

Reading, playing with my kids

Favorite Restaurant

Freddy's (Cicero)

Favorite Travel Destination

London

Favorite Music Genre

Country

Favorite Morning Beverage

McDonald's Diet Coke

Childhood Occupational Aspiration

Teacher

Favorite Quote

"Believe you can and you're halfway there."

— Theodore Roosevelt