

FORT

School District of Fort Atkinson

2022

Retirement

Reception



Thursday, May 26, 2022

Reception: 3:15 p.m.

Program: 4:00 p.m.

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School District of Fort Atkinson

Fort Atkinson High School

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On behalf of the Board of Education, the Administration, and our entire learning community in Fort Atkinson, we extend our deepest gratitude to our retirees. They are pillars in the intimate structure of our schools and community. Their influence and the significant contribution each has made to our District and larger community is cause for great celebration this day, May 26, 2022.

We also want to extend our gratitude and honor the families of our retirees. Pouring one's life into shaping our youth is a calling that comes with enormous responsibility. The family support you have provided has most certainly influenced the many successes and accomplishments of our retirees. Thank you.

In this exciting new chapter in their life, it is my hope our retirees are filled with a long and lasting sense of great accomplishment. May the many fond memories of their life's work be cause for many smiles and continued investment in others. Our retirees will continue to be a kindling force in the lives of those they have served. Each of them will always be a valued member of the School District of Fort Atkinson family.

Thank you so much for your dedication, professionalism, and honor with which you served the next generation - our future!

With Deepest Gratitude,



Dr. Robert Abbott
Superintendent
School District of Fort Atkinson



School District of Fort Atkinson



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2022 Retirees

Cindy Fairfield

Janice Madson

Linda Rice

Rebecca Rossing

Lisa Schuenke

Susan Sullivan

Donald Walden

Chick Westby

2022 Retirement Reception

Welcome.....Dr. Robert Abbott

Remarks.....President Kory Knickrehm

Introduction of Senator Stephen Nass...Dr. Rob Abbott

Reading of Citation.....Senator Nass

Presentation of Honorees.....Dr. Rob Abbott

Presentation of Bells/Chamber Bucks...Board Members

Presentation of Citations.....Senator Nass

Closing.....Dr. Robert Abbott

Pictures.....Daily Jefferson County Union
and Fort Atkinson Online

Linda Rice



Teaching has been one of Linda's aspirations since she was young. She has always wanted to make a difference in the lives of children. She has been so blessed to work in the same school for the past 33 years teaching over 1,200 second graders. She has worked with so many amazing and talented educators who have helped her to grow into the teacher she is today.

Linda student taught second grade at Rockwell under the wings of Betty McGinn. There she learned that every child is unique, special, and has something wonderful to offer. That summer she was hired by Rockwell's principal; Mrs. Paulie Nikolay. Linda absolutely loves what she does, and retiring has been a difficult decision.

Linda has been married to her husband Brian for 33 years. They have raised twin daughters (Marlee and Alexandra) and have one granddaughter (with another grandchild on the way this summer). Linda is excited to be able to spend more time traveling with Brian, seeing her daughter Marlee in the Washington DC area, and being active in the lives of her grandchildren. Linda also has a green thumb, and can't wait to get more plants, grow more flowers, and expand her garden.

Linda leaves the School District of Fort Atkinson knowing that she has followed her dream, has been surrounded by wonderful colleagues, and has made a difference in so many lives.

Rebecca Rossing



Becky Rossing is a proud graduate of the Fort Atkinson High School Class of 1985 and was excited to return in 1996 as a High School Math Teacher. She has been teaching math for 33 years with 26 of them being here in Fort Atkinson. In her years here, Becky has also coached Girls Volleyball for 6 years, leading her varsity teams to 2 conference championships which includes a perfect 12-0 conference record. She has also served as F-Club advisor and was humbled to receive the F-Club blanket in 2016 after 7 years serving as the advisor. Becky has also been Math Department Chair since 2014 and is also currently the 1Fort team leader for the High School Math department. What she enjoys most about teaching is the relationships that she has built with students and staff. In retirement she is looking forward to spending much of the winter in Florida with her husband Jeff. She is also hoping for lots of quality time with her son Scott and his wife Lauren that live in Wauwatosa and making many visits to Denver to spend time with her son Michael and his wife Lauren. Becky has taught alongside numerous amazing colleagues over the course of her career and is especially grateful for all of the friendships she has formed that will last long after retirement. Go Blackhawks!

Lisa Schuenke



For the past 19 years Lisa has been proud to call the School District of Fort Atkinson, specifically Luther Elementary, her home. It has been her honor and privilege to work alongside so many true professionals and outstanding educators. Over the years Lisa has built what she believes to be lifelong relationships and connections with students, parents and colleagues.

The late Paul Pelnar took a chance on a "non-traditional" college graduate and hired Lisa to teach 4th grade at Luther. Lisa is forever grateful for the opportunity. During that time her passion for all things math took over. She began to get involved in math program selections and incorporate guided math and math workshop into the math block because she thought it was what was best for kids.

10 years into her career, Luther's current principal, Dave Geiger, encouraged Lisa to become one of two of the district's first math interventionists. This was the job she loved the most! She got to work with students ranging from Kindergarten through 5th grade and their teachers. She learned more efficient strategies to teach math and passed them onto her students to help close some of their gaps and make them better mathematicians. Lisa hopes she has done that.

It is now time to end that chapter of her life and begin a new one. The School District of Fort Atkinson has been a wonderful place in which to work. Lisa raised her son, Charlie, during her time here and he is now ready to head off to college. Lisa's husband, Glenn, is already retired and is waiting for her to join him in traveling during times they were never able to travel before, in the fall and in the winter. Her hope is that they are blessed with good health and are able to enjoy many years in warmer weather playing golf or hanging by a pool!

Lisa is grateful for the last 19 years here and feels like she is leaving still at the top of her game. Using a sports analogy, it's always better to go out with a win than a loss. She has been so lucky to have done a job she loved for so long. That is what she considers a win!

Donald Walden

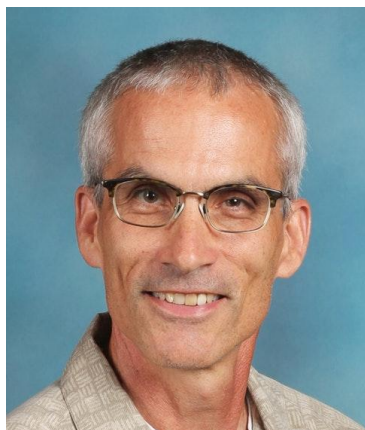


Don Walden has been teaching Vocal Music in the Fort Atkinson School District for the past 4 years and 48 years overall. Don taught majority of his career in Colorado, prior to moving to Wisconsin. In addition to his time in the classroom, Don also enjoyed coaching football for 29 years, basketball for 20 years and track for 15 years.

Upon retirement, Don looks forward to traveling with his wife Ann and spending time with his sons Jeremy and David and his four grandchildren Jordan, Isabella, Sienna and Cora.

Don feels blessed to have worked with so many talented coworkers. He looks forward to the next chapter of his life and wishes all the best for the Fort Atkinson School District.

Chick Westby



Chick Westby began teaching in the spring of 1985 as a substitute in the Eau Claire schools. After being hit in the face on the first day by a chunk of chalk, then having several students walk out and not return, he still decided to continue to pursue a career in teaching.

After a one year stay at a K-8 school in central California and substituting for the School District of Waunakee, he accepted a position teaching eighth grade physical science and coaching cross country and track in Prairie du Chien, WI – the year was 1987. He taught and coached there for 10 years. In 1997, he and his wife Kim (Luther Elementary Librarian) moved to Fort Atkinson with their young family. His first position was at J.F. Luther Middle School where he taught 7th and 8th grade science. In the fall of 2000, Chick took over the physics position at the high school.

The concept of a job, career or occupation does not fit how Chick views his time as an educator. It has been a true vocation. When asked about teaching, he often replies that he hasn't worked a day in his life, because he loves what he does. He never goes to work, he goes to school. "It was never on my radar to be a teacher, I wanted to be a pharmacist. One afternoon I just thought 'what can I do with all this science?' In the next moment, he decided to be a teacher and changed his major the following day. "I feel that teaching chose me I didn't choose it," Chick said.

Since the beginning, Mr. Westby has made it his aim to create personal connections with students and draw them into the wonders of science – how to think, how to question, how to gather and analyze information, how to communicate and how to find wonder and excitement in simple things. In addition, Chick has coached cross country and track for the past 35 years. For the past 20 years, he has been the head boys and girls cross country coach here in Fort. He feels incredibly fortunate to have had that role – just one more way to sew into the lives of young people. CC Rules!

Says Westby, "This coming fall will be very odd indeed. Ever since I can remember, I have known nothing but the rhythm of the school year – from Montessori school in 1965 until my last day in 2022. It will be a big adjustment to not be near the amazing people I teach and coach with every day. I do know that I will then have time to complete all sorts of projects that never got started, and better yet, to complete those I haven't finished."

Chick would like to thank his wife Kim for all her patience and support. In addition, he would like to give a special shout-out to his faithful bike, the Centurion, for carrying him over 25,000 miles to and from school for the past 35 years.

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We also recognize and thank:



Cindy Fairfield



Janice Madson



Susan Sullivan