

Outstanding Rural Elementary Teacher

Beth Vonderahe

Pettis Co. R-V School District

Beth Vonderahe is a teacher who does not take her duties lightly and gives 110% to her job. Now in her 30th year in public education, Beth has served the last 26 as a kindergarten teacher at Northwest Elementary in Houstonia, Missouri. The term “served” is used purposefully, because that is truly Mrs. Vonderahe’s attitude as she works with the students, parents, colleagues and patrons of the Pettis County school community.

The first teacher to arrive at the building each morning and the last to leave at the end of the day, Mrs. Vondershe is energetic and caring. Her daily plan of action is simple – if the kids are at school, she’s with the kids. Each individual is treasured and each child makes great strides academically and socially in her classroom. Greeting each individual personally in the gym each morning sets the tone for a positive day. In her classroom, Mrs. Vonderahe is a dynamic and innovative teacher. She works diligently to create fun, to be creative, use hands-on lessons – the majority of which include the integration of technology.

Beth once told a fellow staff member that she “intensely dislikes” summer because she misses her students. During some summers, she has taught children swimming, worked at summer camps with children, in addition to taking in foster children, being active in her church working with both children and adults, as well as pursuing professional development opportunities to become highly skilled with technology for the teaching profession.

Mrs. Vonderahe’s wealth of experience, her ability to accelerate or modify instruction as needed and her efforts to instill self-discipline and motivation for learning, sets her apart and makes it appropriate that we congratulate Beth Vonderahe as Missouri’s Outstanding Rural Elementary Teacher for 2011.