

Kathy Szabo has taught physical education at Coolidge Elementary for 11 years. Kathy exemplifies the characteristic of a master educator. She teaches the whole child and strives for balance in that accord. Kathy's leadership, enthusiasm, competency, determination, and personality join with her impeccable ability to work with her peers to achieve success. She has been a leader during Cedar Rapids' physical education curriculum revision, elementary in-service meetings, PE Seminar meetings, and during the recent elementary report card revision.

She is a hard working and caring individual. She is admired by her students and has a knack for getting the most out of her classes while making the activities fun. Her students have a great respect for her and look forward to going to class each day. She utilizes a variety of teaching strategies to motivate and educate her students across grade levels and activities. She tailors the lessons to the grade levels of the students and then accommodates and differentiates even more for the skill levels within each grade. Kathy's physical education classroom is always full of happy smiles, attractive visual props, adequate equipment, and passionate learners. Kathy reminds students, staff, parents, and the community that healthy students are better learners across all academic realms. With the rise of obesity and associated illnesses at even younger ages, Kathy helps students learn to take control of their own health and fitness while still having fun. Students who come in contact with her, walk away with a life long awareness of making healthy choices across a variety of settings. They understand that they can set their own goals and achieve those through hard work but also enjoy the journey.

Kathy is not an 8 to 4:00 teacher. She runs a very successful before school intramural program for 4 and 5th graders that NO ONE wants to miss.

She coaches the Iowa Skippers Jump Rope team...she organizes and supervises weekly practices, educational visits to schools, and community activities. Kathy works with a younger group of junior skippers every other Friday morning at her school. Kathy also runs a summer jump rope camp with the help of 3 very important retirees from the Skippers program. This year's camp had over 300 jumpers from all metro area schools and jumpers from as far away as a hundred miles.

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Jodi Larson has taught physical education at Northview Middle School in Ankeny for the past 6 years.

She can be characterized as a true learner and a natural leader. Her teaching style is eloquently balanced between a fierce focus on results and the innate ability to foster positive relationships with all stakeholders. Specifically, she has been instrumental in creating a true Professional Learning Community within the physical education/health department. With Jodi's lead, the teachers have collaboratively aligned their research-based practices with the district's expectations in the triangulation of curriculum, instruction, and assessment. She has been a strong advocate for the role of physical education and health in the lifestyle of all students, and the consistent implementation of content literacy strategies seamlessly connects her content with other content areas throughout the school community. During the summer of 2005, she took the lead as Northview Middle school moved to an integrated physical education-health concept where students participated in a program designed to help them make informed health decisions in regard to their social, emotional, physical and mental health. The program emphasizes personal fitness, team sports and life skills through a variety of activities from which students have an opportunity to choose. During this process, she successfully guided her department through the development of physical education standards that included meaningful content, specific skill development, and extensive work on assessments linked to the standards.

In 2010, She helped develop curriculum aligned with the NASPE standards and has the creativity to meet these guidelines in non-traditional means. She developed a "Survivor Challenge" and an "Amazing Race Challenge" to promote teamwork, leadership, cooperation and sportsmanship amongst students. While students are developing these affective characteristics they are simultaneously meeting fitness guidelines. Jodi's ability to think outside of the box has introduced new activities and given traditional activities a new twist.

Her implementation of these new ideas ensures that all students are able to succeed and that PE is not just for the physically gifted.

Jodi's efforts have helped take a traditional PE program and turn it into a PE4Life Model school. She has been able to promote simple ideas and strategies to visiting teachers to help them build an effective program. The networking also allows her to gain valuable insights and strategies from other teachers.

Jodi is relentless with learning, reflection, and the drive to succeed. She will always work to provide a successful and rewarding experience for her students while ensuring lifelong skills that will affect them beyond their years at Northview Middle School.

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Matt Orton has been a physical education teacher for 14 years. This is his first year at Jefferson High School in Cedar Rapids. Matt is a professional educator that teaches young people how to set goals, create a successful plan, evaluate their own progress, make adjustments and understand that a daily commitment to their own personal health will lead to a successful, longer, healthier life.

Matt puts his student's needs first. He is a champion advocate for his students and it is easy to see he is respected for it. He embraces the wellness and fitness for all his students.

Matt implemented technology into the PE curriculum with the use of Polar Heart Rate monitors. He organized the cardio room with rowing machines. He engaged the industrial arts classes to build jump boxes and other types of equipment for the cardio. He has organized wellness/health fairs and involved many of the community in presenting to the student body.

Matt has organized a summer program for elementary aged students with fitness, activity and healthy living as the goals. He arrange Hy-Vee dieticians, biking running, swimming and Cross Fit Kids as their workouts and healthy choices, helped students set goals and taught them how to monitor their fitness levels.

He embraces the goals and ideals for PE4Life over the last 5 years. Attending many of the PE4Life conferences and DuPage Institutes in Naperville, IL

Matt is a tireless advocate of physical education and what the 'right thing' is for students. He has worked with the Adapted classes at West High to create Physical Education classes that kept students moving within their abilities and to have fun. Again, he developed the program with the cooperation of the Special Education teacher. Matt is a TRUE TEACHER and believer in all students. All students can learn...he has worked tirelessly and will work tirelessly to advocate for students and Physical Education.