



Press Release

Eudora Schools Foundation Announces 2019 Teacher Fellow Grant Recipient

Wednesday, March 20, 2019; Eudora, KS: The Eudora Schools Foundation (ESF) announced today the winner of the \$5,000 ESF Teacher Fellowship. Staff submitted proposals describing individual plans to design and implement a high-quality professional development project to address the needs of their students.

"The review committee was so impressed with the effort and thought that each of the candidates put in to their application in order to take full advantage of the Fellowship opportunity. Now that we have reached this stage, we are beyond grateful for the passion and vision of the recipients. It is an honor for the Foundation to be able to support their efforts," said Matt Bova, ESF Board Member.

A team of staff members from Eudora Middle School (EMS) and Eudora High School (EHS) have been selected as this year's Fellowship recipients. They will spend the next academic year researching and designing a program with the intended outcome of training all staff to be more successful in reducing challenging behaviors and helping students develop essential life skills.

The 2019-2020 ESF Teacher Fellows:

Jessica Johnson, Eudora High School, Academic Support Instructor

Susan DeVoe, Eudora Middle & High School, WRAP Worker

Michelle Plegge, Eudora Middle School, Counselor

The 2019-2020 Teacher Fellowship, titled *Collaborative Problem Solving at Eudora Middle and High Schools*, focuses on researching, training, and developing a plan of implementation to empower students and staff to effectively work together to strengthen a positive learning environment.

"When our students thrive behaviorally, other areas of their life fall into place more easily. Our fellowship goal is to implement this trauma-sensitive approach that will help change the current school culture and how students, teachers, and parents are able to interact with each other," said Jessica Johnson, EHS Academic Support Instructor. "Collaborative Problem Solving promotes an understanding that challenging behavior is due to lack of skill, not a will to behave well; a shift in thinking that focuses on helping adults and students learn how to resolve problems collaboratively, by building positive relationships and developing the academic and social-emotional skills students need to succeed."

"We know that our students are facing tough situations in their school experiences as well as in their life activities beyond the school day. These situations can result in student behavior that slows or prevents learning from occurring in our classrooms," said Ron Abel, EHS Principal. "It is our hope that this collaborative problem-solving training will help build our teachers' ability to identify issues prior to escalation, and then help students' build capacities to problem solve in positive ways. This will prevent loss of productive instructional time. We want to make learning problem solving, an essential 21st century skill, and be an intentional lesson our teachers give to our students."

"To work in a district that has a partnership with the Eudora Schools Foundation gives our teachers opportunities to think outside the box. This group took that to another level by seeing a serious need in our middle school and high school," said Jeremy Thomas, EMS Principal. "Mental Health has been on the rise and I am thankful we have a team like this group of teachers who are willing to take that rise head on. Our students, school and community will benefit tremendously from this project and time that this group will put into this Teacher Fellows Project."

Over the past two years, the ESF has significantly invested in the Teacher Fellows program that allows school district professional staff to explore, design, and create an opportunity to make a significant impact on student and teacher success. The inaugural 2018-19 Teacher Fellows: Kelly Mulvihill, EES Kindergarten Instructor; Ashli Olivera, EES Technology Instructor; and Dace' Inbody, EES Special Education Instructor will complete their year-long fellowship titled *Lost at School* this June.

The Eudora Schools Foundation is a nonprofit organization (501(c)(3) that generates resources, builds relationships, and champions public education in Eudora Public Schools. Founded in 2006, the Foundation exists to enhance the quality of education through partnerships with the community.

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