

MRS. FIELDS:

"I fell in love with writing when I was studying abroad in Israel during my junior year of high school and began journaling. I began teaching English as a high school teacher when I was 23 years old, or right out of college, earning my Master's Degree almost immediately. When I was ready for a change, I had an interview here at Cresthill. I tried my middle school teacher hat on only to discover I was meant for middle school all along! I laugh a lot through my days and I love the challenge of working with kids who are in this kind of tricky part of their lives; I'm so glad I am able to be there for them during this time."



Photo by: Ellie Roadfifer

MR. NORTON:

"After my time in the U.S. Navy and after serving as a police officer, I chose a career in education, because teaching is my passion. I enjoy teaching language arts because I personally really enjoy reading and writing. My favorite part of teaching is seeing my students grow as learners and improve their reading and writing skills - skills that will help them to achieve great things in high school, college, and later in life. These kids learn something new everyday, and it excites me to be able to teach them new things that make their eyes light up. The moment a kid finally understands something is such a joyous feeling for all."



Photo by: Ellie Roadfifer

MS. SCHWARTZ:

"I grew up with dyslexia and struggled with reading and writing my whole life. In college, I realized that I wanted to be a teacher because I wanted to help those who struggled with literature, like I did. I also had some awesome English teachers that made me fall in love with literature. I love being able to make those tiny connections with students. I love learning about them and it's so fun that I get to do that, but also I get to see them grow and become stronger learners; it's amazing growing with my students. I am also constantly learning with them. The cool thing about being a teacher is you are a forever learner."



Photo by: Ellie Roadfifer

MR. LEVINE:

"I wanted to become a language arts teacher since I was a seventh grader, as hard as it is to believe. I was really into poetry and I wanted to explore that as a writer, as well as give young people the opportunity to find the same joy in that as I did. I think everyday is a new adventure, and I love coming to school and teaching something unordinary yet beneficial to these young adults. Our second semester learning focus is Shakespeare, and it's so fun, silly, and exciting. It lets kids have fun in a safe and free environment. They really grow as learners and as people with this unit; they learn so much about classic literature."



Photo by: Ellie Roadfifer

MRS. VOLK:

"I'm an idealistic person, and I wanted to change the world. I feel like writing to express ourselves can stop us from being naive in damaging ways, and I also think that reading about the past in non fiction or story form can teach us so much about what to do and what to avoid in our actions. My favorite part of teaching is laughing with kids - no question about it. I enjoy having kids react to what I know is great literature, to seeing them understand what they're reading or make connections. I think the lessons I teach in my class bring the empathy and stewardship of our community out into the broader work!"



Photo by: Ellie Roadfifer

MR. KELLY:

"I became a teacher because I wanted to spend my life enthusing readers. I wanted others to have the joy and wonder I have had as a lover of stories. All of our lives are a story. I had a fantastic and inspiring English teacher myself, and she was someone I admired and wanted to emulate. My favorite part of teaching is discussing our reading and taking students on a journey deep into the heart of books. I love the look on their faces when they consider a new angle, a deeper interpretation that had never before occurred to them. I love their enthusiasm towards this, as it is at the very core of everything literature is about."



Photo by: Ellie Roadfifer

"I loved how we began this year with the book *Touching Spirit Bear* by Ben Mikaelson. Its themes of self-understanding, acceptance, and forgiveness tied in so nicely with first quarter's theme of Growing Up With Courage. I really felt like my students could feel Cole's self-loathing and eventual acceptance; I truly think this book made a huge impact on my students as learners, readers and teens in general."

"The literary selections I teach are carefully chosen because of their appeal and relevance to seventh grade students. I believe that every piece of literature my students experience in my class, from full-length novels to short stories, teaches them valuable lessons about becoming a sturdy human being. Each piece has its own value, its own lessons, and its own benefits. They all individually contribute something to these kids' learning overall. This drives me to help enforce learning."

"I believe that the most valuable book that Explorers has read is *Touching Spirit Bear* by Ben Mikaelson. Reading this book and hearing the responses of my students was outstanding. They learned so many lessons such as respect, courage, kindness, and the importance of friendship. I believe that this book taught them how to become sturdy human beings. I love this book and I know that they did too. I tell my students every day that we are all in this together."

"Horizon's favorite is *We Were Liars* by E. Lockhart. The lessons therein are to be yourself, to not be selfish, and to face your conflicts head-on. When in doubt, trust in who you are and what you are capable of. I think that regardless of the twist at the end of the book, the growth that we see Cady go through is amazing and furthers the message that while things can get you down, it's better to face them than to let them fester inside. "

"*Tallgrass* by Sandra Dallas is Summit's favorite book. It taught the kids about what was happening in World War II in Colorado, which isn't a topic most adults even know much about. It also contained lessons about friendship and persistence that everyone should understand. Finally, the book was sort of controversial plot-wise, meaning it was fun to discuss what we wish the author had done and hadn't done in the book."

"Legend liked *The Boy in the Striped Pajamas* by John Boyne. I've never had a class that was failed to be moved by it. The end is shocking, heart-breaking, and memorable. It allows my students to ally with the bigger themes of conflict, but also makes them have empathy for the 'enemy'. It's an emotional rollercoaster that deals with dark issues with a light enough touch to make it a prime debut for this period of history."



Photo by: Ellie Roadfifer



Photo by: Abby Lupo

Listen and Learn

Legend teacher Mr. Kelly reads a passage from *The Boy in the Striped Pajamas* aloud while the students in his class listen.

Trekkers

"I don't really use my phone as much at home because I don't feel it isn't much of a need."
-Aidan Shaw



Navigators

"The new no-phone rule doesn't really effect me much because I didn't have a phone before."
-Quentin Onouye



Explorers

"I'm upset that I don't have my phone this year because I'm not able to text any of my friends or contact anyone."
-Olivia Watson





Word Nerd

Nouns, verbs, and adjectives, OH MY!

Pages flutter. Ink bleeds. Hands shake. The pen scrawls across the paper, eager thoughts running down the page. It's language arts class. Students on both 7th and 8th grade teams enjoy this time of day when they can pour all their thoughts onto paper and let their imaginations run wild. Language arts teachers Ms. Schwartz, Mrs. Fields, Mr. Norton, Mr. Levine, Mrs. Volk, and Mr. Kelly make all this learning possible. "I wanted to become a language arts teacher because many told me that I couldn't. I grew up with dyslexia, and I wanted to show kids that even if you are struggling, you can do anything, even when people tell you that you can't," stated Ms. Schwartz, the Explorers' language arts teacher. Along with spending time in class, each student is given the chance to enhance their learning through the exploration of this subject in their everyday lives. Students learn skills like analyzing text, writing essays, advanced literature components, highly-developed vocabulary, and much more. "I believe there are many different ways to reach students and to teach them skills in ways that are fun and engaging for them; this type of teaching flexibility comes naturally. You really have to know your audience. When you're teaching it has to be natural and genuine. Connecting with my students is my number one priority; after that, everything else falls into place," remarked Mrs. Fields. Language arts class is a chance for students to express themselves in ways they didn't think was possible.



Photo by Haley Rauo

Sharing is Caring

Mrs. Field's Trekkers students spend the day sharing during literature circles.

Shakespearean Shenanigans

Horizon students in Mr. Levine's class practice reading classic literature.

Debate Preparation

Summit's Mrs. Volk leads her students through the grueling work that goes into preparing for a successful debate.



Photo by Ellie Hoedler



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On the Farm

Mr. Norton, Navigators language arts teacher explains the complex morality of the classic novella Animal Farm.

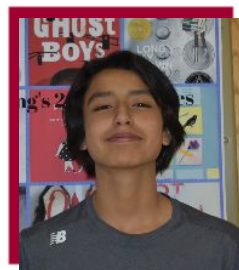


Photo by Haley Rauo



Summit

"It's actually pretty nice having the no-phone rule because there's way less drama without being able to text. Also, everyone talks more at lunch."
-Sage Underwood



Horizon

"I think the new phone rule is really good because it lets kids connect."
-Nodin Tilson



Legend

"To be honest, I actually enjoy having no phones because everyone isn't engrossed in their phones anymore."
-Chelsea Napper