

## Julie Brancato – 2019 Grand View Teacher of the Year



It is with pleasure and pride that we announce that Kindergarten teacher Julie Brancato is the Grand View Teacher of the Year! This honor is greatly deserved for her dedication to education, to children, and to our school. Here are what Julie's colleagues have to say about this amazing educator:

Julie Brancato's Kindergarten classroom is an engaging and positive learning environment. Julie keenly understands that children enter her classroom at many different levels of readiness for the classroom, and she jumps right in to meet each of them where they are emotionally, socially, physically, and academically. She helps them feel safe and capable so they can grow more independent.

Julie has stepped up to be our PBIS [Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports] coach at GV. She realizes the importance of school community and has created a community in her classroom that celebrates character and responsibility.

Julie strives to design learning activities and opportunities for her students to grow. In her classroom, students are part of a team. They take responsibility for their learning supplies and environment. She uses our PBIS Gator Awards to acknowledge students who are showing the character traits of being a Great Gator. She communicates expectations clearly and holds high standards for her students while allowing them the chance to make mistakes and learn from them.

Julie has taught Kindergarten for 21 years! She knows the norms for a Kindergartener and commits to getting each child to know letters and sounds and to read by the end of the year. She has seen curriculum materials come and go, and she knows deep in her heart what the developmental milestones are for Kindergarteners. She can instinctively adapt lessons to fit her group each year. She introduces Kinders to technology and many years ago, she was the first teacher to volunteer to host an iPad pilot in her classroom. She has adopted the workshop model and uses it effectively to engage students in Reading and Writing Workshop.

Julie designs a sequence of learning that helps young emerging readers crack the code of letter and sound recognition to unlock the ability to read. She teaches CGI [Cognitively Guided Instruction] Math to build number sense; she provides whimsical projects that grow fine motor skills in the most engaging way.

Julie knows the Kindergarten standards and is constantly assessing students' progress toward these standards. She has resources to test progress, adjusts goals, and communicates clearly with parents what they can do to support their child at home. She sends weekly emails detailing what students worked on during the week, sends pre-made flashcards home, as well as meaningful homework. She includes parents in many community building events throughout the year and makes herself available to parents as support.

Julie is a respected and beloved member of GV's staff. Not only is she a veteran teacher at our school, she is the glue that holds us together. Her unique blend of professionalism mixed with her lighthearted sense of humor helps her colleagues find the balance day in and day out. Julie has totally stepped up to be our PBIS site coach. She has led staff meetings, works closely with our principal, and can be trusted to practice anything she preaches. She is honest and has a strong sense of family.

Julie is an awesome teacher and part time swim coach. She is doing so much for our South Bay community!

**CONGRATULATIONS, JULIE BRANCATO!**