

## **Joshua Twedt**

Josh graduated from Luther College in Decorah, Iowa in 2001 with a Bachelor's Degree in Elementary Education. He earned his Master's Degree in Educational Leadership and Policy Analysis in 2006 from UW--Madison. He has been teaching at Purdy School since the 2001 school year mostly as a 5<sup>th</sup> grade teacher and also at the 4<sup>th</sup> grade level.

Josh believes that students learn best when they are able to construct new knowledge based on meaningful interactions and experiences. He incorporates this philosophy with the use of technology to enhance educational experiences and garner excitement for learning.

Josh could be best described as one of Fort Atkinson's curriculum leaders! He was one of eight district participants who volunteered for the Comprehensive Literacy Model Program which builds upon the reader's workshop approach that allows him to give students the opportunity to develop higher level thinking skills and deepen their understanding of the text they are reading.

Josh volunteered to pilot the FOSS science program which allows students to have hands on experience in their learning. Josh has been able to have students record their experiments on iPods and edit them to demonstrate their understanding of the scientific process. Sharing these videos made a huge difference in student engagement and learning. He has also worked in our district in implementing the National Geographic Thematic Units, a unique world region based geography curriculum offered with multiple reading levels. This allows the students to become the "expert" of their content and share this knowledge with others.

In raising achievement for all students, Josh maintains high yet achievable standards to raise performance levels for all students and hold them accountable for their effort and work. He is continually collecting and analyzing data on his students to make sure they are making steady growth and he uses this data to inform his practice in the classroom.

When asked about innovative programs, a project that Josh is very proud of was the development of his classroom living wax museum. This project consists of students selecting someone from history who was born before 1900, thoroughly researching their person, going through the writing process to publish a biography and finally creating a poster and preparing a costume to make their person for the wax museum. On the day of the wax museum, he and his students invite families in the classroom to come,

learn, and ask questions of his experts. This experience is amazing and builds each year as each class tries to top the previous year's wax museum.

From a former student, now in middle school, "Before I had Mr. Twedt as a teacher, science was not one of my favorite classes. I did not always understand what my teachers or the science book were trying to teach. He made learning fun and kept my class focused on learning. Also, in my social studies class we had student government. We all had our roles and jobs to do. Mr. Twedt made us do our jobs neatly and taught us how it was supposed to be done. I was the banker. I had to pay people weekly for doing their jobs."

From Principal, Dr. Rick Brietzke, "Josh's reading and writing classes represent the nation's best in literacy instruction. Josh is a leader in curriculum. His efforts with our social studies and science programs have greatly advanced our teaching and learning at Purdy School.