



Barbara Jinkins
Holland Elementary

Jinkins has taught in Katy ISD for 34 years at Nottingham Country, Fielder, and Holland elementaries



Ron Mattson
Katy High School

Mattson has worked under six superintendents and seven principals in his 38 years in Katy ISD



Beth Stevens
Rhoads Elementary

Stevens became a librarian because she loves helping kids discover how exciting reading can be

Katy's Leading Librarians

A few of Katy ISD's standout librarians share how they are using technology, role models, and school programs to inspire the love of reading in their students

Written by Lisa Westbrook | Photography by Edward Heard

Today's school library is a comfortable space where ideas are nurtured and creativity blossoms, facilitated by the keen eyes, listening ears, and warm hearts of Katy ISD's school librarians. This is not surprising when you realize librarians share a common passion of seeing the spark ignite in each student when they make new discoveries in a good book. Sara Bergstrom, librarian at Winborn Elementary School, calls this spark "the moment when the love of reading comes alive." Once it's there, a child's curiosity will drive them forward.

Reading and Technology

The Eagle Reader's Club program for second graders through fifth graders at Winborn introduces students to

and encourages the use of a variety of technology skills. Each month, a new genre to study and technology-based project is introduced through the morning announcements, throughout the campus, and in the students' classrooms. Some students use the app Tellingami to create an animated book review, others use ChatterPix to make a video promoting a favorite author, make collage posters of facts, or use Tagxedo to generate a word cloud. The projects are later showcased on the library television.

Digital Citizenship

Every library in the district has engaging programs to encourage the students in reading, technology, and digital citizenship. Digital citizenship helps the student understand

Marta Lopez
Seven Lakes Junior High



Lopez was teacher of the year in 1999, 2000, and 2012 and selected to open Seven Lakes Junior High in 2012

Michelle Tuttle
Tompkins High School



Tuttle has been a librarian in Katy ISD for five years and was selected to open Tompkins High School in 2013

Sara Bergstrom
Winborn Elementary



Bergstrom enjoys reading books with her son Brady and is looking forward to a baby coming in February

how to be safe online, use good digital etiquette, and make good decisions realizing that “just like a permanent marker, everything they put on the internet is permanent,” shares Bergstrom.

Librarians share their ideas about using different technology by meeting in person regularly and through using hashtags, like #katylibrarians, on Twitter. Several librarians have inserted Twitter feeds on their blogs, and Katy ISD has a district-wide monthly Twitter chat.

Role Models for Reading

At Tompkins High School, every teacher has a sign on their door that says what they are reading. Tompkins librarian Michelle Tuttle initiated the program, which in addition to facilitating conversations about books, showcases adults as role models for reading.

Librarians like Tuttle at Tompkins, Lori Kelly at WoodCreek Junior High, and Marta Lopez at Seven Lakes Junior High all use book talks, book trailers, and speed dating of books in five to 10-minute intervals to expose students to a wide variety of genres and writing styles.

Lopez loves getting students excited about reading. One fun process is to have a “blind date with a book” where students get a book wrapped up, don’t know what they’re getting, but agree to spend a little time with it to see if they like it. She also feels it’s important to provide a welcoming environment that appeals to the current generation of students, with comfortable seating such as modular furniture and diner-style booths, mounted iPad Airls, electrical and USB charging stations, board games, and puzzles.

Read It Forward

Kelly reads a wide range of genres so that she can recommend books that will appeal to students at WoodCreek. Besides book trailers and book talks, the library has a reading incentive program called the “10,000 page challenge.” Students earn prizes as they reach page levels in the challenge. The library also sponsors a Read It Forward program each year. Students find copies of books around campus, read them, and pass them on like the “pay it forward” concept. The book club at WoodCreek meets online using Edmodo, where students are able to recommend books to friends, discuss books they’ve read, and vote on the next book club titles.

Kelly’s blog also has a tips page with videos she created to help students access and utilize eBooks and research online databases. Author visits sponsored by the school’s PTA also gives students a chance to meet award-winning authors.

Learning Something New

Even in this age of technology, “Most students love to be read to,” says Beth Stevens, librarian at Rhoads Elementary School. They love to hold and touch the books. Some of her favorite books encourage interactive play with the pictures and text. Stevens shares a well-known secret among librarians, that picture books aren’t just for kids.

Barbara Jinkins is the librarian at Holland Elementary School and is in her thirty-sixth year in the role. As a mentor of new librarians, Jinkins has also served on the Texas Bluebonnet Award selection committee and believes wholeheartedly that “Every book you read is going to change you.” She was deeply

Lori Kelly
WoodCreek
Junior High



Kelly helped open Rhoads Elementary and WoodCreek Junior High

moved after students reading the book, *America's White Table* by Margot Theis Raven, they acted on their own to set up a remembrance table for Veteran's Day.

Ron Mattson, librarian at Katy High School in his thirty-eighth year with Katy ISD is known for his thoughtful service to teachers and students. When students come looking for resources about careers, besides the library's resources, he shares memories of previous students to inspire current ones. He encourages students to pursue their goals, realizing that when they have a goal, "Life will adjust itself accordingly."

If you haven't met the librarian at your child's school, don't wait any longer. Check out their blogs, follow their Twitter pages, or volunteer to help in the library and you may just get to see the students' spark that brings smiles to their faces every day. KM

LISA WESTBROOK is a freelance writer who lives in Katy.

"Every book you read is going to change you."

*- Barbara Jinkins,
Holland Elementary School*

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