2018 Partner in Excellence – Donna Morelli

Donna Morelli has been a well-respected teacher in the East Brunswick Public School District for the past 25 years. Throughout her years of teaching in the District, Donna has proven herself to be a dedicated professional holding herself accountable to the highest level of educator excellence, thus enforcing her core belief that every child has the right to a quality education.

Donna began her East Brunswick career in 1993 as a Kindergarten Teacher at Chittick Elementary School. In April 1994, she moved to Irwin Elementary School where she shared her passion for reading and writing as an ILA teacher for seven years. The students who still connect with Donna are the testimony to the inspiration of her teaching. Donna’s involvement, and collaboration, with her colleagues made Irwin’s Drama Club a lasting memory still joyfully talked about. In addition, Donna was also a member of Irwin’s Teacher Choir where she proudly sang in both Winter and Spring Concerts, as well as faculty weddings.

Donna’s next stop was to take her skill for teaching reading and writing, and infuse them with her love of history. For the last 17 years, at Hammarskjold Middle School, Donna made it her goal to engage students by bringing history to life. Donna was known for her enthusiasm, the rigor of her teaching, and her ability to successfully reach all students by meeting their individual needs. While teaching at Hammarskjold, Donna wore many hats. Since 2001, Donna was a co-coordinator for the Fairview Outdoor Education Trip. She was considered by her colleagues to be a leader in the Social Studies department.
embracing the continuous evolution of technology, she was a member of many diverse committees, and acted as co-chair of the HMS Faculty Council. In 2017, Donna was the proud recipient of Hammarskjold’s Teacher of the Year Award.

Throughout her inspiring career in East Brunswick, Donna recognized the great value of the EBEF. In partnership with her colleagues, Donna was the recipient of the EBEF’s generosity through grants that enhanced her teaching, and that of her colleagues, and enriched the learning experience of her students. The grants, which totaled well over $10,000, included technology such as iPad minis and new secondary sources for history research and archaeology projects. Students used these resources to explore many creative opportunities for learning such as collaborative efforts to practice and evaluate their speaking and listening skills, “Not So Current Event” investigations, and creating iMovies to teach their classmates about different topics from all of the ancient civilizations studied throughout the year. Great partnerships, such as this one with the EBEF, are critically responsible for keeping teaching innovative, keeping learning exciting, and keeping students engaged.

Even after 25 years, Donna’s dedication to her students found her spending many late nights reflecting, changing, and updating lessons. Donna’s tireless efforts to make every lesson better were a trademark of her as an educator. Donna acknowledges the support from her husband Fred, who as a successful businessman himself, understood the value in persistence and hard work. With their two children, Dr. Anthony Morelli and Christina Morelli, a screenwriter, and the rest of her big, beautiful family, Donna is excited to embark on the journey of retirement. Whether cruising to the Greek Isles,
traveling to each of the places Donna taught about, or just spending time at their beach home listening to the crashing of the waves, Donna will approach her retirement as she did her teaching, with an abundance of energy and enthusiasm.