
Pawnee Heights Schools

UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT NO. 496

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To: Elementary School Parents
From: Brian Spencer
RE: Teacher Certification

Good teachers are essential to the success of a school, and we strive to hire and maintain good teachers here at Pawnee Heights. One sign of a good teacher is having a certificate in their subject area. However, there are times when good teachers, that don't have a certificate in the content they are teaching, are employed. The most common example of this is a substitute teacher. Substitutes can be hired to cover all ages and all content areas. Beyond serving one or two days at a time, sometimes substitutes are hired to fill in for a regular teacher that is absent for an extended period of time. Another example, that has become much more common in the past few years, are teachers that take a non-traditional path into the classroom. These teachers normally have a college degree but were not trained as teachers. When these people decide to become teachers, they receive their training while they are teaching. So, they are teaching on a "restricted" license until they complete their programs.

We had both of these situations at Pawnee Heights this past year. We had someone with a substitute teacher license fill in for one teacher for several weeks, and we have teachers that are in the transition to teaching programs and will be earning their full certification over the next few years.

We feel one of the best ways to maintain good teachers in our district is to find good local people, and then help them become successful teachers. These people are invested in our communities and schools, and will be in the area for many years. The transition to teaching program allows for this development. We have had more success with this method than we have convincing people from outside the area to move here and stay for several years.

If you have questions about the qualifications of your child's teachers please don't hesitate to contact me. I will be happy to discuss qualifications and the various types of certifications we have in the district.