

INTRODUCING TEAM RIEBLI

2020-2021



Emily Todd



Principal

I can honestly say I wake up every morning excited to see what is in store for me at 315 Mark West Springs Road. These students, and my family, are my heart and soul.

Before coming to Riebli, I was a Principal for 9 years in Petaluma, including Kenilworth Junior High and Grant Elementary School. I also have taught 6-12 graders in Rohnert Park and Sacramento. I was born and raised in Santa Rosa, attending Slater Jr. High (where I met my Hubby) and Montgomery High School (and I had some of the same teachers as both of my parents who also attended these schools). I went to UC Davis for my undergrad work and Sacramento State for my Masters and teaching credential. I am married to the amazing Dave and we have a son, Jasper. I love to read, travel, camp, Watch Giants Baseball and hang out in the backyard and play!

I'm so excited about the 2020-21 school year! Let's do this Panthers!

Office Staff



Carol Contreras- Bilingual Paraeducator



Lisa Greco- Office Manager

Brittany Beseda



Kindergarten

Hi! My name is Brittany Beseda and I am a kindergarten teacher at Riebli School. Next year will be my 10th year of teaching. I grew up attending elementary school in this district, so it is extra special for me to teach here! I am also a Riebli parent of twins that are going into first grade. I love teaching kindergarten because we have so much fun together every day! We get to sing a lot of songs, dance, read a lot of fun books, paint a lot of pictures, make new friends, and learn a lot! But, my very favorite part of kindergarten are all the hugs, handshakes, and high fives I get from students just like you! I am so excited to meet you in August!

Heidi O'Hare

Hi, my name is Heidi O'Hare. I originally left a career in Marketing and Accounting and was hired by the District Business Office in 1991 while I earned my teaching credential. I received my credential from St. Mary's College and was hired to teach at San Miguel Elementary in 1994. I then taught at Mark West Elementary for 20 years and moved to Riebli six years ago. I have taught different grade levels, but my passion for teaching has always remained in Kindergarten and First grade because of my Early Literacy training. I love what I do from the inside out, but the best part of my day is the warm smiles and hugs I receive from the "little people." They are our hope for the future and a privilege to teach!

Kindergarten



Tami Trager



Kindergarten

Hi, My name is Tami Trager. I am in my 36th year of teaching!! Yikes, did I say that? Yes, this is not my first rodeo! I started out in Chinatown SF, then Mark West School for 22 year and the rest is history. Kindergarten is just a perfect fit for me. A little silly, a little bumpy and a lot of the unexpected. I love stepping into the classroom each morning ready for whatever adventure may come along. Remember everything you need to know you learn in kindergarten.. and these days much more. :) The 3R's are at the core of our program but they are neatly woven with so much fun. The arts, gardening, field trips, cooking and best of all friends. I can't wait to see you in August!

Melissa Haviland

Hi! My name is Melissa Haviland, I am so excited to be joining some fantastic first graders this year at Riebli! I have been an educator for the past four years teaching at the second grade level but first grade has always held my heart. I love to see the spark of understanding in my student's eyes and strive to nurture their personalities and passions within the classroom. When I'm not in the classroom you can find me enjoying time with my fiancé, three step-children, and dog who always keep me on my toes. I love to garden, and enjoy traveling to new places to see what our wide world has to offer. I can't wait for the year to officially begin to become a part of the Riebli family!

First Grade



Erin Bowman



First Grade

Hello, my name is Erin Bowman and I have been happily teaching here at Riebli Elementary for 25 years. I taught second grade for 12 years and now have been teaching first grade for 13 years as well! I love first graders because they are so enthusiastic about learning and they love their teachers! Teaching students to read is my passion! I have 3 children who all attended Riebli School! Tyler is 29 and is a helicopter firefighter. Matt is 27 and is an Environmental Scientist. Tara is a Senior in high school who plays competitive softball. I enjoy gardening, baseball, and trying new restaurants. I look forward to an exciting year in First Grade!

Megan Black



First Grade

I am thrilled to be joining the Riebli Staff! I've been a part of the MWUSD community for 10 years as a parent and 9 years working on staff in a variety of different positions. Most recently I was teaching 4th, 5th and 6th grade GATE/Enrichment. I have also taught 2nd grade and PE for TK-6, and substituted for every grade TK-8. Helping my students rise to a challenge is my greatest joy. My very first job in education was as a paraeducator in 1st grade, so I am very excited to get back to my roots.

In my free time I enjoy indoor spinning, hiking with my family and our dog, watching my 2 boys play sports, camping, and reading.

Nicole Jaco

Hello, my name is Nicole Jaco. This is my fourth year at Riebli Elementary school and my second year in 2nd grade! I love being a panther and feel so fortunate to be part of the Riebli team. I graduated from Sonoma State University in 2013 with my BA in English Education. I have both a Multiple subject teaching credential and a single subject English credential. This means I can teach k-12th grade, but my heart is in 2nd grade. My mother, aunts, sister, niece, and myself all attended school in the Mark West Union School District, so you could say I have Mark West in my blood!

Second Grade



Chloe Brewer



Second Grade

Hello, my name is Chloe and this will be my sixth year teaching here at Riebli. I started in education 11 years ago after working at a summer camp for 10 years. Once I realized I had the skills to help kids have fun, I knew public education was my calling. I enjoy making learning fun through creative art lessons, movement, building, and researching about the wonders of our world with my students. At home I have an amazing family! My two oldest sons will attend Riebli this year and my daughter will join us in a next year. This summer, my favorite thing was bike riding with my family through Tahoe's fresh mountain air. I am excited to start a new school year and look forward to meeting all my new students and their families.

Tina Kneis

Hi! My name is Tina Kneis, and this is my 21st year of teaching. I started my career with 7th & 8th grade students in Sacramento, while still earning my teaching credential. I then spent 5 wonderful years teaching 2nd grade in Foster City before realizing I wanted to come back home to Sonoma County in 2004. I have been here at Riebli ever since, 13 years in 3rd grade, 3 years in 4th grade and now 2nd grade!

I absolutely LOVE what I do and am so incredibly lucky to have my work and home worlds collide with all 3 of my children here at Riebli with me this year. We are truly a Riebli family! Outside of school I love hiking, camping, being outdoors, watching my kids play sports, and traveling. We have two cats, Tiger and Toby, and an albino California Kingsnake, Draco. I can't wait to learn more about your families this year!

Second Grade



Kristie Weber

Third Grade



Hello, my name is Kristie Weber and I have been at John B. Riebli Elementary School for 25 fabulous years. I started teaching at Riebli as a second grade job share teaching partner. Over the course of my career, I have had the pleasure of teaching every grade level except for kindergarten. In addition to a Bachelor's degree and teaching credentials, I hold a Master's of Science degree in Curriculum and Instruction. I am passionate about sharing my love of Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math with my students. On my free time, I enjoy being outdoors. I live along the beautiful Sonoma Coast line with my husband and three cats (Koko, Yum Yum, and Blondy).

Sarah Bell

Third Grade



Hello, my name is Ms. Sarah Bell and I have been at Riebli Elementary for 24 years. I started in education in 1993. I have taught first, second and third grades. Prior to teaching at Riebli, I taught in Greenfield, Massachusetts where I received excellent early literacy training in Boston. I have one child who just started high school! Outside of school, I enjoy spending time with my son William. I love hiking, reading, and singing. I have two cats named Lexie and Shadow.

Doug Detrick

Third Grade



Jacklyn Zagacki



Fourth Grade

I am a Sonoma County native and am excited to continue my career in the district where I too went to school as a 5th and 6th grader 20 years ago! After Mark West, I stayed local with my education ultimately attending Sonoma State University, where I earned my teaching credential. I can attribute my desire to attain my credential to the wonderful teachers I have had in this county throughout my education. It is a privilege to now be one of them! I have taught grades 3rd, 4th, and 7th. While I find joy in teaching all grade levels, I do have a particular fondest for 4th grade. It is always exciting assisting students as they navigate between primary and upper elementary.

When I am not on campus, I am most likely on a hike with my dogs and husband, crafting, or doing some home improvements on our newly purchased "fixer upper." During any of these activities, you will likely find me with my headphones on listening to an audio book. Most recently I have been on a mystery genre kick. In the off chance I don't have a book going, I am most likely watching a Giants baseball game!

I'm excited to rejoin the MWUSD community and look forward to getting to know you all!

Amanda Johnson



Fourth Grade

Hi! My name is Amanda Johnson, and I am so excited to be a part of the Riebli family. I am the former GATE and intervention teacher at Mark West and have worked with students at every grade level. I was born and raised in Sonoma County, and I am happy to call the Larkfield community my home. I have two daughters, Baylee who is a second grader at Riebli, and Brooklyn who will start kindergarten next year. I love to be outdoors, and in my free time I enjoy hiking, camping, snowboarding and wake surfing.

My goal as a teacher is to create an environment in which my students are engaged and excited to learn. I believe in challenging my students to achieve their goals by using creative thinking, exploration, problem solving techniques and reasoning. I love the enthusiasm and sarcasm that fourth graders possess, and I can't wait to meet my new students and families.

Andrea Farrell



Fifth Grade

Hello, my name is Andrea Farrell and this will be my 9th year here at Riebli Elementary. I grew up in Windsor on a little farm. I have a B.S. in Business Management from SSU, an M.A. in Education from USF, and will be working on my administrative credential this year. I am a fifth generation teacher and I love coming to school everyday.

I enjoy gardening, reading, hiking, traveling, and going to the beach every weekend.

Caroline Gonsalves

Fifth Grade



Hello, my name is Caroline Gonsalves and I have been at Riebli Elementary for 6 years as a teacher. Professionally I have always worked with children, including directing a before and after school childcare in Oakland, working at an environmental education program in Sonoma County (while living in a log cabin!), teaching high school and graduate school in the Bay Area, and working with at-risk high school students. I have a Bachelor of Science from U.C. Davis and Master in Education from Saint Mary's College.

My "why" in teaching is to make a lasting, positive impact in a child's life through providing a dynamic, wholistic educational experience.

I have two children who went through Riebli and now are in middle school and high school. I enjoy biking, running, yoga, cooking (especially cooking with others), gardening, and calligraphy. My family and I love exploring together.

Every year is a new year in teaching. Every day a new opportunity!

Kate Gohl

Sixth Grade

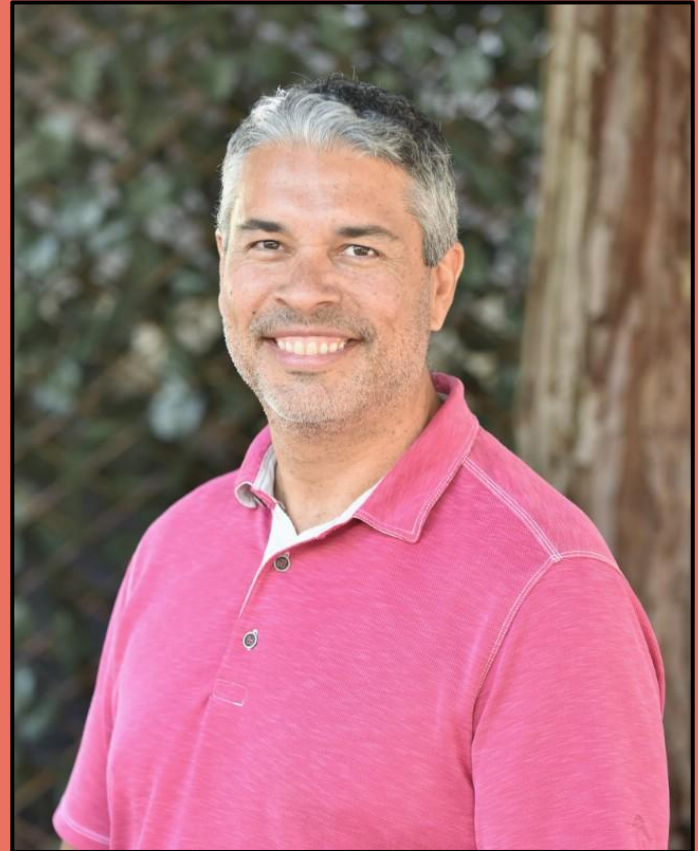


Hello, my name is Kate Gohl and I have been here at Riebli Elementary since we opened in 1992. This is my 35th year of teaching and I still have a huge passion for educating your children! I have taught every grade from pre-k through 10th and have found my wheelhouse in 6th. I have two sons (who graduated from Riebli) and I am thrilled that I became a Grandmother in January 2020! I enjoy hiking and traveling and getting to the ocean whenever I can!

Steve Larson

My name is Steve Larson, and this will be my 15th as a 6th grade teacher at John B. Riebli Elementary School in Santa Rosa, California. This is my 17th year teaching in the Mark West Union School District. I have taught in various grade levels as a student teacher and as a substitute teacher at Riebli, San Miguel Elementary and Mark West Elementary. I was born and raised in Oceanside, CA (30 miles north of San Diego). I graduated with a Bachelor's Degree in English/Communications from Sonoma State University in 1994. For fun, I enjoy spending time at home, or on the water as well as working on my computer and enjoying sports of all types, especially baseball (Go Padres!), swimming, and cycling.

Sixth Grade



Erica Wheeler

SDC Teacher



Philip Worms



RSP Teacher

Hello, my name is Philip Worms and this is my second year here at Riebli Elementary. I started in education as a paraprofessional at Centennial Elementary in Gilbert, Arizona. During this time I pursued my teaching credential in special education. I have spent the last four years as the middle school RSP teacher in Cloverdale. My teaching experience ranges from 4th to 8th grade and I look forward to working at the elementary level again. I have two children, Naya and Omar. Naya will be joining us as a Panther this year. I love working with students and hope that I can add to their joy and appreciation of learning. I love football and am a huge Minnesota Vikings fan. SKOL Vikings!

Marci Murphy



Reading Specialist

Hello, my name is Marci Murphy and I have been teaching at Riebli Elementary for 7 years. I started teaching in 1999, working in both Santa Rosa and the in the state of Minnesota. I have 2 children of my own, who will start middle and high school this year. I enjoy walking my 2 dogs (Murphy Murphy and Ginger), reading, hiking, camping, and traveling with my family. The best part of my job is watching students get excited about reading, and making progress in the various areas of reading. I am excited to begin a new school year with our amazing students, parents, and staff!

Angela Somawang School Psychologist



I am so excited to join the MWUSD staff this year! I am a California native and have been a school psychologist in Sonoma County since 2012. Before that, I worked in education in the Los Angeles and Tulare County areas after graduating from Fresno Pacific University. I have a dinosaur obsessed son who will be joining the Riebli family as a kindergarten student this school year! I enjoy hiking, playing soccer, gardening, traveling, and talking about wine. The best part of my job is working with families and staff to problem solve together and make successful learning plans for students. I get so much joy from watching students who once struggled start to make academic connections and begin to enjoy learning! Cheers to a great school year!

Anna Hopkins

I never thought back in 2008 when my son Ian started kindergarten here at Riebli that I would be here still 11 years later on staff! I started as a weekly volunteer in his kindergarten class and I have now been teaching at Riebli for 8 years. I have a Bachelor's degree in Mechanical Engineering from Cal Poly SLO and an elementary teaching credential from Sonoma State, so teaching STEM is a perfect match for me! My husband Darren is a biomedical quality engineer and keeps the fun in our family. My sons Ian and Drew both went to Riebli, and are now a junior and a freshman at Windsor High School. I enjoy hiking, swimming, music, math, tinkering and quietly sipping coffee in my backyard in the summer.

STEM Teacher



Denise Cater



Librarian

Hello! The children call me Miss Denise, and I consider it an honor to be their Librarian. I joined the Riebli community in 2011. I originally joined the Mark West District community when our oldest child started Kindergarten in 1990. All 3 of our children attended San Miguel Elementary. I volunteered all 13 years, served as a Board Member/Trustee for 8 years, served as a classified substitute for 1 year, and I now enjoy serving as an employee. I love my job! Assisting children in their reading adventure is my passion. Married in 1981, Andy and I have 3 grown & married children, along with 1 amazing granddaughter! I enjoy spending time with my family, being home, our cat, music, cheering for our Bay Area teams: Giants, 49ers, Warriors, and READING! I'm looking forward to another amazing year in our Library!

Kara Kaufman



Music Teacher

Hello, my name is Kara Kaufman, and I have been teaching music to TK-8th grade in the Mark West District for the past six years. Previously, I worked in the Wright School District as librarian, teacher's aide, after-school mentor, and literacy specialist. I have a B.A. in English, B.M. in music history, M.A. in English, and M.A. in teaching. Yes, I kind of love school.

Reading and music are my passions! I play violin in the Sonoma County Philharmonic, and I have danced with Bay Area Flash Mob. I have one daughter, Jane, who also loves to sing and dance, and one cat, Izzie, who despises both. I look forward to another fabulous year of music!

Classroom Aides and Yard Supervisors



Joy Gomon



Tina Magee



Jenny Ferronato

Travis Ploos van
Amstel



April Robinson



Jaynne Florence

Classroom Aides and Yard Supervisors

Kayla Eagle

Carmen DeLoza

Kathy Sendner

Ami Stark-Anderson