Carole Morbitzer

Ohio Teacher of the Year

Ohio | Department of Education

"My greatest contribution in education is taking those students who previously struggled with mathematics and building a rapport with them so that they can be confident in their abilities. It is truly an accomplishment when the students leave my class at the end of the school year and say they like math, not because they like me, but because they learned the material and are confident in their mathematics abilities."

– Carole Morbitzer

Philosophy of Teaching

My personal philosophy of teaching can be summed up with two simple phrases: *students come first* and *high expectations for all students*. Every child deserves a chance at the same education from district to district, classroom to classroom, regardless of race or wealth.

I have heard many times from fellow teachers, "These kids can't do the work. They're not ready for it." The reality of it is that those students had not been successful before, not because of ability, but because they had not been expected to be successful. I believe in my students, thus they believe in themselves.

We must be accountable for our planning, instruction and assessment. The standards should guide our instruction and assessment data should be used to provide intervention for an individual student or an entire class.

Standards provide a clear target for our students and their parents. As teachers, we know what needs to be taught, and can now devote all of our energy in creative planning and building relationships with our students. Build the rapport with your students, and they will work for you and meet those high expectations.

A Leader in School and Community

Carole is a leader in her school, her district and her community. A clear and charismatic communicator, Carole works with colleagues far beyond the classroom. She has been featured in an Ohio Department of Education math instruction CD, contributed to the Franklin County Educational Service Center efforts and presented at the Ohio Education Association Leadership Conference.

Carole coaches math teachers in each of the district's buildings; guides the district math curriculum; leads standards alignment; works with the principals and the director of teaching and learning; writes middle school short-cycle assessments; chairs the high school math department; and coaches the women's volleyball team, as well as a developmental team for younger students.

Carole never misses an opportunity to communicate the district's goals and achievements to the community she loves and everyone in Ohio and beyond.

This was obvious when she accepted the Komen Outstanding Volunteer of the Year award in Fort Worth, Texas, for her work organizing Hamilton Township's efforts in raising more money for cancer research than any school community in 26 Central Ohio counties for five consecutive years.

Lifelong Learner

Throughout her career, Carole has participated in continuous action planning and is recognized as a teacher leader, not only locally, but also on the national level. In April 2012, she participated in the National Conversation about the Teaching Profession with the U.S. Department of Education.

In June 2011, she led her district's math teachers in a K-12 Academic Content Standards and Common Core State Standards comparison and now guides curriculum alignment throughout the district for the transition to the Common Core State Standards. She also acts as the lead decision-maker for continuous action planning within the department.

She led the math department through a total redesign of high school math and adopted blind short-cycle assessments to ensure continuity in expectations across the math program and to provide teachers common ground for planning and intervention. Grading practices now reflect a standards-based approach and are based on student assessments using data from the common assessments used throughout the math curriculum.

She also has been a pioneer with technology. She uses interactive technologies in her classroom and has trained other teachers in the district on the use of Smartboards. She was the first teacher in the district to use podcasts on her webpage to communicate lessons to students.

Biography

Carole Morbitzer has taught in Central Ohio since 1995 and at Hamilton Township High School since 2006. She won the 2011 Ohio Presidential Award for Excellence in Mathematics and Science Teaching.

As a volleyball coach, Morbitzer was named 1999 Ohio Capital Conference Volleyball Coach of the Year, the 2006 Central District Volleyball Coach of the Year, and was named the 2011 National Federation of State High School Association's Coach of the Year for Volleyball in Ohio.

She has been inducted into both the Hamilton Township Athletic Hall of Fame (2004) and the Hamilton Township High School Alumni Hall of Fame (2011).

In 2010, she was named the Komen Columbus Volunteer of the Year, and in 2011, was named the national Susan G. Komen for the Cure Outstanding Volunteer of the Year for leading the school district's Race for the Cure initiative. Hamilton has won the Komen High School Challenge five consecutive years and has raised more than $115,000 for breast cancer research.

She earned a Bachelor of Science in Education from The Ohio State University, completed the Teacher Leader Endorsement Program at Ohio Dominican University and is currently enrolled in the Masters of Education in Educational Leadership Program at Ohio Dominican University.

Carole Morbitzer

Through the eyes of others…

From a student

"I remember my first week at Hamilton Township High School. I asked two students, "Who's the best teacher in this school?" They answered, "Mrs. Morbitzer…she's a math teacher." I thought hey, maybe she can help me. I had a meeting with my counselor, who asked me if there were any subjects that I felt uncomfortable about. I said, "Yes! I really need help with math." My counselor knew exactly what to do.

I struggled in my math classes before going to Mrs. Morbitzer's class. I really never liked math because it was so frustrating. But Mrs. Morbitzer gave me hope that I would pass the Ohio Graduation Test. I didn't pass it the first time, but she gave me faith to believe that I would pass the next time. She helped me with everything, especially with understanding myself and that there are others who care about me.

As a result of Mrs. Morbitzer teaching me and getting to believe in myself, I passed the OGT."

From Susan Witten, Director of Teaching and Learning, Hamilton Local Schools

"Carole was teaching high school math at a neighboring district when I first met her. She had recently been named the Central Region Math Teacher of the Year and was featured in the Ohio Department of Education's best practices videos.

Our students' math results were abysmal, so I took a team of math teachers to Carole's school to observe her. My plan was to take away some successful strategies. We did even better than that; we hired her! I quickly learned that bringing Carole to our district was a major coup, because we not only got a master math teacher, but also got an inspirational leader.

She has led her department through a total redesign of high school math. She teaches the students who are at risk of failing the Ohio Graduation Test and has double-blocked Algebra 2/Pre-Calculus to give more advanced students the opportunity for more challenging classes. She also developed a Web-based K-12 standards-based math ladder for the entire district with input from teachers at every level that supports content alignment across grades."