

TEACHER SPOTLIGHT: JENILLE REESE

By: Carson Willis

Mrs. Reese is one of the many language teachers working at Belleville East, specifically as one of the Spanish teachers. Beloved by her students, former and current, she and her class have held the title of “favorite” by many.

Although this is only her 4th year at this school, she has actually been teaching for 17 years. Before she came to East, she was a Spanish educator in Collinsville and Hazelwood. Not only did she teach Spanish, but also English as a second language. In her time at East, she has taught Spanish 1-2 and (previously) 5-6 classes, and now for the 2024-2025 school year, has begun to teach 3-4. Mrs. Reese tries to make her lessons as clear as possible for the ease of her students, while creating a friendly and cooperative environment in the classroom through group projects and speaking activities. Her favorite subjects to teach in her 1-2 classes are the food and clothing units.

What she loves most about teaching at East is being able to hangout with her students, because of their young, enthusiastic energy. She also appreciates being able to watch them and their understanding of Spanish grow over the school year. She credits our large, vibrant community of students and teachers as the reason for her passion of teaching being reignited. Besides teaching, she contributes to the school and its community through the Racial Equity Committee, which manages school guidelines to ensure fairness for all on campus, and Avid Site Team, which discusses

TEACHER SPOTLIGHT: JENILLE REESE

By: Carson Willis

strategies for teaching and college preparation. When asked about what she likes to do outside of school, Mrs. Reese responded: “Outside of school, I enjoy spending time with my daughters and supporting them in their activities. I love knitting and am learning how to embroider and cross stitch.” She also enjoys traveling and trying new foods. To her, her greatest achievements are raising her family and obtaining her master’s degree + 30.

When asked to give his opinion on his class with Mrs. Reese last year, Kymani W. had this to say: “Mrs. Reese’s class was very fun. We did a lot of [...] studying, but when we were done with our work, we would always do a Gimlet, Quizlet, or [quiz] either about Spanish or some fun subject we all agreed on. Mrs. Reese is a very good teacher as well. She is very nice, understanding, and all together a [...] good person. Her class was hands down my favorite class, and I don’t even like Spanish class that much, it’s mainly because she was my teacher.” Another student claimed that “she is the best Spanish teacher, and she is very kind. She makes her class very enjoyable.”

After my experience in Mrs. Reese’s class last year, I figured she was deserving of the spotlight for this issue. That’s not to say my former and current teachers are not stellar, but she has helped to create a new interest in a subject I had once already tried to explore. I have no doubt that she has inspired many, many more students like me to pursue a superior understanding of Spanish outside of the classroom.