



DATE:	February 20, 2023
CONTACT:	Courtney O'Hara 248.489.3350
FOR RELEASE:	IMMEDIATE

Farmington Public Schools' Newcomer Program teacher is also a former program participant

Farmington, MI – Farmington Public Schools (FPS) was excited to hire Rebekah Leighton as a teacher in the Newcomer Program at Beechview Elementary School at the start of the 2022-2023 school year. Leighton graduated from Harrison High School in 2016 and went on to become a teacher at the same elementary school she attended.

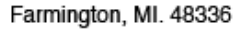
The Newcomer Program is a program that helps families that are new to the United States of America. The program is designed to help students and their families feel welcome in their new communities. Additionally, the program provides opportunities for each member of the community to let their culture be present, creating a welcoming environment with teachable moments for everyone. Leighton herself was a student in the Newcomer Program at Beechview Elementary School as a child, which makes this all the more special.

Leighton decided to become a teacher because of her fourth and fifth grade teachers at Beechview. "They taught me that school could be a safe and fun place to learn," she said. "They made me realize that the mistakes are a part of the learning process and not a result of the deficit. It was the first time I felt included and seen at school. I teach because I want to be that person for someone else."

Leighton is a multicultural teacher in the multicultural room at Beechview. Having been through the program herself, it gives her the chance to give students the experience that she wanted/needed as a language learner when she was young.

"Being in this position feels like a second chance," she said. "Because of my experiences, I am able to empathize with my students and I can address their needs more easily."

As a teacher in the multicultural room, Leighton is trying to create a safe space for her students to learn while teaching native English speakers empathy as most of them only speak one language.



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"Being in the multicultural room, I feel like I am exactly where I am supposed to be," said Leighton.

Thank you Rebekah Leighton for all the wonderful work you do for students! Farmington Public Schools and Beechview Elementary School are so lucky to have you!

To learn more about the Newcomer Program, visit www.farmington.k12.mi.us/domain/257.

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