

- Greetings!

I am Mark White, a 5th grade teacher at Henry Puffer School. This is the 12th year of my 2nd career. The first 7 years were spent teaching 2nd grade at ElSierra in DG58, and then I moved to Puffer almost 5 years ago. Since my move I have taught 4th grade for 2 years and now, this is my 3rd year in fifth grade.

My first career was as an attorney. I graduated from Chicago Kent Law School in 1992 and started practicing in my family law practice right here in Downers Grove. I was happy enough practicing law, but when our daughter Emily, now 21, started kindergarten at Hillcrest, I volunteered as a centers dad many times over that year. It seems I was in her class at least every other week, and I remember that room well to this day. The funny part was I always hated school and it took a lot of effort to make myself go in and help out. However, I fell in love with teaching, and discovered what an amazing impact teachers have on the children they teach, and that teaching was something I really wanted to do for the rest of my working days. The next summer I enrolled at Benedictine University in a night program, and by the time Emily started 2nd grade, I was one semester away from student teaching in a 1st grade classroom at Fairmount. That was a crazy year. That summer I retired from the practice of law, after a 15year run, and took a job at ElSierra as a combination class teaching assistant. That was an even crazier year, and I am forever grateful to my wife for her unending support and encouragement.

During my teaching career I have been on nearly every committee the district has at one point or another, this is not an exaggeration. As a member of the technology committee I was a pilot teacher of iPads and an early adopter of many technology practices through the use of SAMR and TPACK models, extensive Twitter use as an educational tool among others. With a small group of fellow 2nd grade teachers I helped start a free PD event called PlaydateDG58 focused on helping teachers become better users of technology. The event is still running but is now know as SAMRiCamp. (This is one of my proudest achievements as a teacher.) We ran 3 events before I was asked to step into the Vice President role of our Association, and I had to step away from organizing the event. Since then I have served as our Associations Vice President and negotiations chair. I have been at "the table" for two contract negotiations, as well as helped draft our districts evaluation system as a member of our PERA committee among many other big initiatives.

This past year I completed a masters in administration, though I have no intention of ever becoming an administrator. Currently I am hoping to revive my use of technology in my classroom. I have stepped back from my Association roles and hope to focus all of my efforts on teaching, and to start presenting at professional conferences again. I am looking forward to this course and working with you all.

Cheers,  
Mark