

# SNO SPRINGS SCHOOL

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Issaquah, WA 98029

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Dear Parents,

My name is Julie Ruffner and I am incredibly excited to be teaching at SnoSprings. I knew from the very first moment I stepped into this welcoming and child-focused school, it would be the perfect place for me! A warm and compassionate staff, a positive and accommodating learning environment, and caring and supportive parents – it is the complete recipe for success in my book!

My husband and I have resided in Issaquah for the past 29 years. Our two sons are both attending college in order to pursue careers in business and computer science. We love to hike, take our dog for long walks, and watch baseball. I am an avid baker and cake decorator, and love artistic outlets including painting with watercolor and acrylic paints.

I graduated from Western Washington University with a Bachelor of Arts in Education, with endorsements in Elementary Education and Art. I also hold a Master's Degree in Education with an emphasis in the Creative Arts from Leslie College.

I taught elementary school for 15 years in an innovative multi-age setting, working with 1<sup>st</sup> through 6<sup>th</sup> graders on a daily basis. My goal was to promote a positive and cooperative learning environment, committed to ensuring the academic and social growth for each student. I also created and presented informative staff-led student writing instruction workshops, focusing on the 6 traits of writing effectively, while also presenting at the district level. Additionally, I was the staff art representative, piloting new art curriculum and presenting strategies for effectively integrating the visual arts into the curriculum.

My next teaching endeavor was to develop, plan and teach a creative after school art program which focused on teaching visual arts through an art history approach for 1<sup>st</sup> – 5<sup>th</sup> grades. My focus was to increase student appreciation, awareness and understanding of the visual arts through creative, hands-on instruction which included exposure to a variety of mediums. The Great Masters, such as van Gogh, Picasso, O'Keeffe, and Monet were introduced, and a piece of artwork was created by each student that embodied an artist's particular style.

Over the past year, I have been a substitute teacher at SnoSprings on a regular basis in both kindergarten and first grade, exhilarated to be back in the classroom again.

Communication between home and school is essential and I look forward to meeting and partnering with you next year. Together, I am confident that we can provide an open, exciting, and dynamic education for your child.

Sincerely,

Julie Ruffner