



## HEAD OF MIDDLE SCHOOL



### What is your role at St. Mary's?

I started here in August of 1996 teaching Algebra and Geometry. I became the Middle School Head in 1999 and have taught primarily Middle School math classes since then. I coach basketball and track and field and, just to keep things interesting, assist with the management of the grounds and physical plant.

### How did you get into teaching?

I was an economics major at Carleton College and tutored students who were taking introductory-level classes. During my college summers, I taught horsemanship at a Boy Scout camp up on Mt. Hood and found that I really enjoyed working with kids. After I graduated from college, I went to work in a large law firm in Portland as a clerk. While I was working there, I tutored some of my co-workers' kids in

algebra. After that, I headed to north-central Oregon and worked for a while on a large commercial cattle ranch near the town of Antelope. Teaching really appealed to me as a longer-term occupation.

### Where did you train?

I earned a master's degree in education in the spring of 1996 from Tufts University, which is in the Boston area. While in graduate school, I was an apprentice in the Teacher Training Course at Shady Hill School, a pre-K through grade 8 day school in Cambridge. The curriculum there is defined by Central Subject, which is a theme that guides each grade level's literature, geography, and history studies. The school really values "teaching for understanding", discovery and skill development, and the importance of teaching kids to think deeply about topics, whether it's literature or mathematics. My time at Shady Hill fundamentally shaped how I think about schools and teaching.



Shady Hill developed the Teacher Training Course in 1928, initially to supply teachers for the school. Since that time, it has grown into a national model of site-based teacher preparation. Apprentices are matched with a master teacher and are in a classroom for an entire school year, working alongside their mentor, developing curriculum, and planning and teaching lessons. In addition, apprentices attend classes and subject-specific workshops at the school that lead to a Massachusetts teaching license.

### What is your "Middle School philosophy"?

The most important part of a successful Middle School is teachers who are creative, enthusiastic, and who really understand and genuinely like young adolescents. I think that Middle School classes should be intellectually engaging, appropriately challenging, and should push kids to think deeply and to ask "Why?".

### What are your interests outside of school?

I enjoy running, fly-fishing, and being outdoors. I also volunteer as a firefighter-EMT with Jackson County Fire District #5, which serves Phoenix, Talent, and rural Ashland.