

Faculty Highlight

Patti Smith



6th, 7th, & 8th Grade Math
4th - 8th Grade Computer Teacher

What do you teach at James L. Collins Catholic School and how long have you been teaching here?

I started at JLCCS in 2016. I teach 6th – 8th math/algebra and 4th – 8th technology lab. Previously, I spent 11 years teaching with CISD.

What college did you attend and what degree do you hold? Specializations?

I attended Navarro College and received an Associate's Degree. Then, I attended Texas A & M Commerce where I received a Bachelor's of Science in Interdisciplinary Studies. I have and EC-4, 4-8, and ESL certifications.

What motivates you each morning when you come to work?

The students are my motivation. Seeing their faces and interacting with them daily makes my job amazing. Teaching can be overwhelming at times and yet so rewarding also! There is a saying, "Teaching is the hardest job that you'll love." I love to see students gain understanding and get excited about figuring out something that they thought they couldn't do. That moment is priceless.

Do you advise any extracurricular activities at the our school (including coaching)? If so, what? And why do you enjoy that activity?

I co-sponsor the Student Council with Mrs. Whiteside. This group is made up of 6th – 8th grade students. They are developing business and communication skills. The group has sponsored the following activities this year: Pumpkin decorating, Red Ribbon Week, Veteran's Day bake sale, Turkey Trot fundraiser, the Polar Express, and the Valentine's Dance. They also have the Variety Show coming up. This group makes tasks enjoyable because they are hardworking and fun loving. We have a great time together.

How do you incorporate the 4 cornerstones into your daily classroom setting?

I integrate faith, learning, work and service in an effort to honor God in all that we do. We work on encouraging and supporting others. The students learn to work together with respect. We begin the day with prayer, pray before lunch, and end our day with a closing prayer.

What would your students be surprised to find out about you?

I think they would be surprised to know how much I love the NFL and MLB. I love to watch a good competitive football or baseball game. Also, I have a wide array of music that I enjoy with my family. We can go from the oldies to current pop with anything in between.

What is one thing that sets your teaching method apart from other teachers at other schools?

I think that I make a real connection with my students that sets my class apart. I teach the subjects with the students in mind. How can I instill the love of learning? They are "mine". What that means is that no matter how long it has been I still consider them mine and love to keep that relationship going. Recently, I received a phone call from a previous student to let me know about a scholarship and acceptance to college. I push them to strive for success and become life-long learners!

What is your favorite aspect about teaching at a Christian school?

I am grateful that I can pray at any time and talk with students about their faith. You can take advantage of an opportunity to discuss students' thoughts.

Which event at the school do you look forward to and why?

I look forward to the Valentine's Day Dance so I can see the students enjoy the music and social time. The Student Council worked hard to earn enough to hire a DJ to make the event a big hit with the students.

What advice would you give to your students to help them be more successful?

My advice would be to set a goal and don't lose sight of how to accomplish it. Then, set another one. They can do whatever they set their mind to do! The world is constantly changing and they need to grow and change with it.