

Beth Cleary has been a long-standing member of the Monticello School District family. She has touched the lives of many students and is remembered fondly by all who were fortunate enough to be her student. Below are some thoughts from her colleagues:

“Beth Cleary had strong, positive and close relationships with all of ENL students at RJK. She also worked closely with the families of our ENL community and was an advocate for them when they needed a voice. Her passion for teaching was evident and the students looked forward to going to her class every day. She created a safe, fun and educational learning environment for her students. She is a loving and compassionate educator. Her students and colleagues will miss her and wish her nothing but the best!”

“Beth's dedication to ESL students was evident from the start. Duggan School had a fair number of students whose parents were migrant workers or recent immigrants from Central America. It would be easy to overlook them or minimize the importance of their receiving a full-fledged education. But not with Beth around. She worked selflessly whether students were being taught in or out of the classroom (push-in or pull-out). She was not content when traditional methods didn't help students learn. She would improvise to connect with students so they learned the educational idea being taught in a variety of ways. Her patience was limitless, except when administrative bureaucracy got in the way. She would stand determined to do what was best for her students. Her career has proven itself as many of those students credit their success to her help.”

“A favorite memory of mine which sums up so much about Beth Cleary as a Teacher from the Heart was the year when Hurricane Maria hit Puerto Rico, causing so many people to flee to New York, two of them to Monticello. That year, the only way to schedule Beginner ESOL students from the HS together was to have them walk over to RJK to take their afternoon class with Beth. Not only did Beth help them with English, but she did everything in her power to help them feel safe, welcome, understood, and loved. That's Beth for you: kind of like being a minister as well as a teacher. Her students remember her years later, not only for how much they learned from her, but also for the many ways including singing, dancing, laughing, even crying, that she made them feel welcome, safe, understood, valued, and loved.”

Beth will be missed and we wish her much happiness in the future!