

# SPECTRUM ACADEMY GIRAFFES

## MONTHLY NEWSLETTER

AUGUST 23, 2017: BACK TO SCHOOL!

### SEPTEMBER:

4 : LABOR DAY - NO SCHOOL

20-21 : PARENT TEACHER CONFERENCES  
(EARLY OUT FOR STUDENTS AT 1:40)



### Principal's Welcome:

*I am so excited to begin a new school year. We have the most amazing staff with a wealth of knowledge and experience. This is going to be a great year!*

*It was wonderful to see everyone at Back to School Night. We had a great turnout and everyone was so happy to meet their teachers. I love seeing the kids and getting all their sweet hugs.*

*I'm looking forward to a great school year!*

*-Christine*

## NEW TEACHER BIOGRAPHIES:

### Kindergarten

#### Kayla Budge:

Hello, my name is Kayla Budge and I am the Kindergarten teacher this year. I have been part of the Spectrum family for three years now. I started my journey as a Paraprofessional in the second grade classroom from there I moved to our functional skills classroom where I spent two years. Some of my hobbies include hiking, traveling, and hanging out with my super cool science teacher husband. I love it here at Spectrum and I feel so grateful to teach such a wonderful grade this school year.

#### Marissa Smith:

I have been at Spectrum since January 2015. I have worked as a classroom para in the 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> grades before making the move to Kindergarten! This is my second year teaching. I am from Logan, Utah and have lived in various places in Utah and Idaho. I received bachelors in social work from Utah State University and a master in social work from Boise State University. I am a major Utah State Aggies fan and am always excited when football season rolls around! I enjoy spending time with my family, especially my nieces and nephews.

# First Grade



## Jessica Govington:

Hi! I am originally from Virginia and North Carolina. I graduated from BYU in 2012 with a degree in Special Education! Since graduating, I have worked as a registered behavior technician for children and adolescents with autism. While I love working one on one and in the home, I have decided to follow my dream of teaching! I really appreciate all the work that goes into parenting and welcome any information and contact from my student's families. I myself am a mother of two young children and love spending time with them. I am married and live in North Ogden. We love outdoor activities and I am a huge advocate for learning in a natural environment. I am so excited to be here at spectrum!

## Alyssa Murray:

Hi! My name is Alyssa and I recently moved to Salt Lake City from Anchorage, Alaska. I was born and raised in Tampa, Florida and love visiting my family back home. I started teaching at Spectrum Academy last March and I am so excited to begin my first full year at this incredible school! My hobbies include anything outdoorsy and artsy. I enjoy mountain biking, rock climbing, swimming, painting, fishing and yoga. I graduated from the University of South Florida with a B.S in English Education and I also have my RBT (Registered behavior Technician) certification. Teaching is truly a passion of mine. There is nothing more rewarding than seeing a child "light up" when they have discovered something new. My experience with education ranges from K-12th grade in various capacities such as; teaching, tutoring and behavior therapy. I am looking forward to a great year filled with hands on learning and exploring! "It is a beautiful thing with a career and a passion come together"



## Kathie Phillips:

Hello, my name is Ms. Kathie and I am so excited to be a part of the Spectrum Academy second grade team! I am sure this will be a SUPER year full of lots of learning and new adventures. I'm going to tell you a few things about me. I have lived most of my life right here in Utah, but I was born in Wyoming and lived for a few years in Connecticut. I have been married to my wonderful husband James for 31 years. Jordan (27), Nick (25) and Katlyn (23) are my three supercool children, with Clark (7) and Chloe (5) as my sidekick grandchildren. I graduated from the University of Utah...but I will always be a Cougar! I love watching any sport live but I can't sit still long enough to watch them on T.V. When I was younger I loved to run and have ran 17 marathons including running the Boston Marathon twice. Now that I am older I love to travel and spend time with my family. I love hard work, there is no better way to end the day than fully exhausted having accomplished everything I set out to do!

## Jennifer Florez:

My name is Jennifer Florez. This is my first year teaching a Spectrum Academy. I have been teaching in the public-school system for 20 years. Before that, I taught preschool for a total of about 8 years. I attended the University of Utah for 3 years, and graduated from Regis University in Denver, CO. I majored in Elementary Education, with a minor in Early Childhood Education.

I have lived in several regions of the U.S. I grew up in Utah, but have lived in Georgia, Colorado, Vermont, and Hawaii also. I am fortunate to have experienced the cultural and geographic diversity of these states.

I am married and have 3 children. I also have 3 grandchildren. My granddaughters and son live in Indiana, and I miss them very much! I also love animals, especially horses. We have many pets including 2 miniature horses and an alpaca. The most important things to me are my faith, my family, and my friends. I love children and teaching, too!

I feel very blessed to part of the Spectrum family. It is an honor to have the opportunity teach such wonderful and special children!

# 3rd Grade

## Angie Rodriguez:

I hope you are ready for an adventurous year in the third grade! I am Mrs. Rodriguez and I will be your teacher this school year. I am ready to share this fun experience called third grade with you all. This is my second year teaching third grade at Spectrum Academy. My family moved to Utah in the summer of 2016. Before moving here I have spent time in Germany where my husband worked at the Air Force base. I have a two year old son, Justin a new baby girl, Paisley and two dogs named Beau and Cash. I am looking forward to this wonderful school year together. Our classroom and theme this year is "Ms. Rod's Round Up".

## Katherine Morfitt:

I am originally from Boise, Idaho and have lived in Utah for seven years now. The majority of the time was living in Logan, going to Utah State and enjoying the various outdoor activities there. I moved to Salt Lake back in October where I took my first teaching job as a part-time resource teacher specializing in third grade. When I am not teaching I love adventuring and sharing the tale afterwards. The best adventures are found anywhere, whether it is up in the mountains, checking out some cute local shop, or going for a drive. Most recently I have started exploring the natural wonders of Southern Utah and the Wasatch Front.

# 4<sup>th</sup> Grade

## Jessica Blades:

Hi! My name is Jessica Blades. I'm excited to be joining the fourth grade team here at Spectrum Academy! I enjoy working with students, and helping them reach their dreams through their education. I believe every child should be valued and treated with respect. Education should empower children, and help them make a positive contribution to our world.

My husband, my two beautiful children, and I moved to the Salt Lake area this summer from California. Saying goodbye to our small, dusty desert town was made easy by the awesome lifestyle we stepped into here in Utah. We've enjoyed exploring this amazing area the past few months, and look forward to all the wonderful adventures we have to find. Feel free to recommend your favorite things to do around here! I

## Laura Glass:

I recently moved to Park City, UT from Dallas, TX. My children and I are so excited to be part of the greater Salt Lake City community. We love it here!!! I started my teaching career in Dallas in a 1st grade classroom. I wanted to learn as much as possible about teaching reading to struggling readers so I trained to become a dyslexia therapist. Over the years, I've worked as a dyslexia therapist, a literacy coach, and as a classroom teacher for both elementary and middle school children. I absolutely love what I do, and I'm thrilled to be part of the 4th grade team at Spectrum Academy!

I have two amazing children, Alex (11) and Zoe (8), and we've been exploring all there is to enjoy here in Utah. We've spent much of our summer hiking with our dog, Tennessee, kayaking, and swimming, and we're always looking for a new adventure!



# Fifth Grade

## Aimee Martin:

Hello! My name is Aimee Martin and I am ecstatic to be teaching 5th grade at Spectrum Academy! I cannot wait to begin this school year and get to know each and every one of you. Since I am new around here, let me introduce myself.

I am originally from the Tri-Cities in Washington. For those of you who may be familiar with that area, I am specifically from Kennewick. I moved to Pocatello, Idaho to complete my Bachelor's in psychology then moved to Idaho Falls for work. While working in mental health and disability services, I often supported and advocated for my clients in the educational setting. This fostered my passion for Special Education so I worked as a paraprofessional for two years: first in a resource room then an autism program. I worked towards and completed my Master's in Teaching - Special Education this past year and am thrilled to spend my first year here!

Though I tell people I moved to Idaho for school, I really moved there for the snow! I absolutely love winter and any kind of colder weather. I recently have taken up skiing and can't wait to test out the resorts here in Utah. I love the outdoors all together. On weekends you'll find me living in a tent somewhere in the mountains or simply on a day hike.

I am also a very musical person. While in school, I participated in band, choir and orchestra. I was in the color guard for Idaho State University's marching band, and at one point, I briefly taught piano lessons. Throughout this school year I intend to integrating music and movement into our classroom for both sensory and academic benefit.

## Brooke Zitting:

Hello and welcome to Fifth Grade! My name is Ms. Brooke and I'll be your teacher for the next year. We'll have lots of awesome adventures in learning and life, and I'm excited to get to know all about you! Let me tell you a little about me. I'm from Salt Lake City and have lived most of my life in Utah. I studied at Westminster in Salt Lake, as well as Boston University, before graduating at the University of Utah. I've lived the past 6 years in Southern Utah, where I worked in the SPED program and raised chickens. In my spare time I like to kayak, play the piano, and host culinary paint nights. I'm excited for my first year teaching and can't wait for all of our fun plans!



# A MESSAGE FROM THE BEHAVIOR TEAM:

Welcome back to school! We are so excited to seeing the returning students and to meeting those of you that are new! Starting a new school year can be fun and exciting but it can also be overwhelming and scary. We have a few tips to help the school year start off on the right foot for students, parents, and staff.

Build Relationships: focus on the person and their needs instead of the behavior. Validate how others feel even if it seems "irrational". Offer support and genuine concern for the person.

Think Strategies: come up with strategies to help support students when they are feeling overwhelmed or frustrated. Practice using those strategies when everyone is calm and collected. Use verbal prompts to remind them to use their strategies. Role-play everyday so the strategies become a habit.

This is going to be a great year!

# OCCUPATIONAL THERAPY CORNER:

Welcome to the 2017-2018 School Year! We are excited to see our returning students again, and are excited to meet all of our new students! Each month, our Occupational Therapy (OT) staff will include tips and information in the newsletter. We have an incredibly strong and knowledgeable OT staff who are ready to share what we are doing!

I wanted to start out the school year by talking about OT and what we do. OT's work in a variety of settings, and with all ages. Basically, we help individuals engage in "occupations" (activities) that are meaningful to them. We help individuals gain or regain function in the areas that mean the most to them. In schools, this means that we help our students access their educational program. In order to do this, we work on skills in a variety of areas, including motor skills, social skills, sensory processing skills, and visual perceptual skills. Functionally, we help students with handwriting, cutting, coordination, behavior, self-regulation, feeding, life skills, and many other areas. We see students in the classroom, in the lunchroom, and at recess.

At Spectrum Academy, all students have access to an OT through classroom groups, teacher training and consultation, and environmental modification. In addition, all students have access to sensory materials and supports. Students receive direct services through their IEP or 504 Plan. Services can be initiated by a teacher or a parent, but must address outcomes that are educationally relevant. According to federal law, a student must require OT services in order to access his or her educational program.

We are happy meet with you at any point during the school year. Our OT staff can be reached via email (contact information for your campus is listed on our website), or by calling your child's school.

— WELCOME —  
BACK TO SCHOOL

Krisanne Lewis MOT, OTR/L  
Student Services Coordinator  
Spectrum Academy