



Greene Street Friends School Welcomes Ryan Kimmet as the new Head of Lower and Middle School

Greene Street is pleased to announce the appointment of Ryan Kimmet as the new Head of Lower and Middle School. Ryan comes to Greene Street from New Canaan Country School (CT), where he taught for 14 years. Ryan also served in various administrative roles, including: Acting Head of Middle School; Associate Director of Enrollment Management; and Director of the Apprentice Teacher Training Program.

Ryan will join Greene Street as of July 1, 2014, along with his wife Leah and young son Trainor. We hope all will give the Kimmet family a warm welcome to Philadelphia.

Below is Ryan's Educational Philosophy, which the Search Committee saw as a perfect fit for the Greene Street community:

“My earliest understanding of educational philosophy dates back to my beginnings as a student at The Harley School in Rochester, New York. My mother taught Kindergarten and was eventually the lower school head. Throughout my 14 years at Harley, I always had a unique perspective. My teachers were family friends that came over to our house for dinner. My classmates and I were extremely close and all our parents were friendly. I was part of a community. Of course I didn't realize that not everyone's school experience was the same, but to me school was an extension of home. With my mom and sister I arrived early and stayed late every day. If I had an issue at school, all the adults in my life worked together to help me solve it. Similarly, I had equal amounts of support to celebrate my accomplishments.

It wasn't until I had been teaching in a classroom of my own for a few years that I truly began to understand the importance of community in schools. Like Harley, New Canaan Country School reinforced the notion for me that every child matters and is unique. I learned that students learn differently from one another, and my job as a teacher was to meet the needs of everyone in my class. This, I soon discovered, was about more than just differentiated instruction. It involved truly knowing each child as a person. Like my teachers at Harley, I learned how to support the development of everyone in my class and celebrate their victories. I found that creating a classroom community in which every child can take risks, extend themselves and try new things was a good first step. I also learned that good communication and a clear partnership with parents is essential.

When I took my first steps into administration, as Acting Head of the Middle School, I learned how a leader can influence the tone and environment of an entire division of students and teachers. By visibly welcoming every single student into the building each day, I helped students understand that they were known and valued. By developing programs that allowed students to showcase their talents, I reinforced the notion that diverse interests are important. By utilizing meeting time in productive and efficient ways, faculty felt that their time was valued and that collaboration was important. Finally, by being as open, honest and funny as possible, I learned that school leaders must bring their whole selves (including their sense of humor) to the equation.

School leaders have the opportunity to help incorporate all of these ideas in meaningful ways. In my mind, there is no greater opportunity to do this than with middle school students. The middle school student is one who is growing and changing on an almost daily basis. If a school is to encourage students to take risks and to grow intellectually and emotionally, it must provide a non-judgmental atmosphere for all students to do so. Educators, whether teaching in the music or science classroom, coaching on the soccer field, or responding to something overheard in the hallway, can have a profound impact on the development of children.

School leaders must also be able to put philosophy into action. I believe that good administrators are not only responsible for setting the tone, but also shaping a calendar of events and activities suitable for the middle school, hiring and keeping successful, dedicated personnel, and setting forth, with faculty collaboration, yearly and long-term plans that will significantly improve service to students and their families that will strengthen the institution and the community in which it resides.

It's funny to think that I was already learning some of these essential lessons as a Kindergarten student, but in some ways it's true. I knew, even then, that I was a part of a community that cared about me, wanted to help me grow as a student and as a person, and wanted me to enjoy my time there. They helped me understand how I learned and how to be successful. It is this same type of environment that I continue to strive for in my professional career."