

2013 TERREL H. BELL RECIPIENT

Jennifer Nauman, Principal

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As described by one district administrator, Jennifer Nauman is a principal who leads with both her head and her heart. This process started three years ago when Nauman arrived. She set forth to create a clear, concise vision for the school.

Shields was already a good school, but Nauman intended to make it great. Her first step was to bring everyone on board. She asked questions. Lots of them. She talked to the stakeholders who stopped by over the summer, and surveyed parents and teachers to get an understanding of who they were and what they needed from her. Then she created a school

improvement team to map what she learned onto her vision. The result was a shared vision that prioritized high standards that focused on continuous improvement.

Throughout the school year, Nauman continues to question stakeholders in order to ensure the school is meeting everyone's needs. She uses surveys, committee meetings and one-on-one conferencing to gain constant teacher feedback and input on school challenges and concerns. Teachers feel they have a say in what happens not only in their classroom, but in the school as a whole, and this two-way communication gives teachers a voice in school decisions. Nauman's goal is that, should she leave, Shields will have a sustainable culture of achievement.

Nauman believes in nurturing all aspects of a child's development. Through her leadership, she encourages a positive, caring school environment that welcomes all students and families. Family events and student celebrations are conducted including curriculum nights, and technology nights. Visual and performing arts programs draw in community members as well as parents. The past three years, the second grade has put on a play including all 120 second graders. A school wellness committee helps make decisions to promote students' mental and physical well-being, and this year Nauman implemented a health committee.

By establishing a strong rapport with her staff, students, and families; creating a collaborative environment where all stakeholders want to excel; and setting high expectations, Nauman cultivated an environment of success at Shields Elementary School.