

Name	Blurb
 <p data-bbox="139 407 326 474">Shelby Arden Kindergarten</p>	<p data-bbox="391 205 1539 373">I am a proud David Douglas and Gilbert Park alumni. The saying is true, "Everything you need to know, you learn in kindergarten." The growth kindergarteners make and the enthusiasm they show is inspiring. This is my fifth year teaching kindergarten and I love it! When I'm not teaching I enjoy coaching volleyball at Alice Ott, spending time with my family and friends, exploring the outdoors, and travelling.–</p>
 <p data-bbox="139 701 326 768">Denise Davis Kindergarten</p>	<p data-bbox="391 499 1539 636">This is my 26th year teaching at Gilbert Park. I love teaching kindergarteners!! I love their innocence, enthusiasm and eagerness to learn!! My husband and I have 2 children who are both in college. I love camping and boating with my family, spending time at the beach, reading, and I am a HUGE Blazer fan!!! :) Go Blazers!!!</p>
 <p data-bbox="139 989 326 1056">Lincoln Fisher Kindergarten</p>	<p data-bbox="391 787 1539 955">Growing up in the quiet desert of New Mexico certainly taught me the value of a good book. In many ways I became a kindergarten teacher so that I could share my love of reading with a new generation. I enjoy spending time in the outdoors with my family, as well as listening to and performing music. The five year olds that I work with are usually the smartest, kindest, hardest working people I meet.</p>
 <p data-bbox="139 1276 326 1344">Carly Riepe Kindergarten</p>	<p data-bbox="391 1075 1539 1306">This will be my third year teaching Kindergarten in David Douglas, and my first year at Gilbert Park. I am thrilled to be here! Kindergarten is such an important year for students, and I am humbled to be a part of it. My goal is to prepare my students academically for first grade, and make it known to them that they are a vital part of a community. When I am not at work, I enjoy taking my puppy to Mount Tabor, hiking, and spending time with friends outdoors. I am blessed to be a Northwest native, from Washington. I think this is the most beautiful region on the planet.</p>
 <p data-bbox="139 1564 326 1631">Jennifer Flagel 1st Grade</p>	<p data-bbox="391 1362 1539 1499">I'm excited to be starting my 13th year teaching First Grade at Gilbert Park. We have a great staff and community. I got married in the fall of 2016 and had a wonderful honeymoon this summer in Mexico. I have a 7th grade son named Owen. He is definitely a middle-schooler (yikes!) and loves to play the trumpet. GO BLAZERS!</p>
 <p data-bbox="139 1852 326 1919">Janet Huntley 1st Grade</p>	<p data-bbox="391 1650 1539 1881">This is my 28th year of teaching at GP. I grew up in the David Douglas School District and I went to GP for grade school. I'm teaching in my old first grade classroom. I've been teaching in the David Douglas School District for 26 years. I love to travel around the United States and abroad. This summer I spent time in Boston, Nova Scotia, Canada and Aruba. I love and spending time with my family and friends. I am an avid sports fan and love the Blazers! I've had season tickets to the Blazers for 22 years. Go Blazers!</p>



Rachel Pugh
1st Grade

I am starting my 2nd year of first grade at GP. I taught a split third and fourth grade class prior. I also did my student teaching in second grade here. I graduated from Concordia University with my Bachelors Degree in 2015. I'm excited for this new school year! I have a seven-year-old foster daughter. I enjoy reading, swimming, and working in my garden. I love spending time with my family and friends. Let's have a great year!



Cara Schlesser
1st Grade

I was born and raised in the Portland area! I am starting my 5th year at GP and this is my 4th year teaching 1st grade. I graduated from Oregon State University in 2010!!! Go Beavers!!! I love spending time with my friends and family in my free time. I enjoy traveling and got to go to Mexico this summer with my family. I enjoy sports and am a big Blazers fan! Go Blazers!!!



Becky Franzke
2nd Grade

This is my 17th year teaching in the David Douglas School District. I have taught grades 1st-4th throughout my career. I also attended schools within the district K-12. I enjoy spending time with my husband and 3 sons by traveling and watching them participate in a variety of sports. I am looking forward to another fabulous year at Gilbert Park!



Stacy Harrison
2nd Grade

This is my 11th year teaching in the David Douglas School District! I also attended grades K-12 in David Douglas. I received my Bachelor's degree from Western Oregon University and my Masters at Teaching degree at Concordia University. I enjoy spending time with my family and friends. Walt Disney World and the beach are my favorite places! I look forward to another great year at Gilbert Park.



Melanie Phillips
2nd Grade

I have been teaching for 12 years in David Douglas and this is my 11th year teaching at Gilbert Park. I have 3 grown daughters and 4 grandchildren. In my free time, I enjoy spending time with my family and friends, traveling, cooking, reading, and gardening.



Dora Plancon
2nd Grade

This is my first year teaching at Gilbert Park, and I am so happy to be here! I have worked previously in the David Douglas School District with the SUN program and as an instructional assistant. I grew up in the woods of Maine, and went to Vermont for college. Then I moved to Portland, Oregon and began working in schools. I was inspired by the communities of Portland and went back to school for a Masters of Teaching at Concordia University. In my free time I enjoy hiking, skiing, yoga, baking and being crafty.



Jessika Joers
3rd Grade

This is my 14th years in the David Douglas School District. I taught kindergarten for 9 years and this will be my third year in second grade., 4 years in second grade, and this is my first year in third grade! I have two children who also attend school in the district. I love teaching at Gilbert Park and feel lucky to be a part of such a great community!



Lauren O'Gara
3rd Grade

This is my 4th year at Gilbert Park Elementary, and I am so pleased to be a part of this wonderful community. I have taught 3rd grade and 4th grade while at Gilbert Park. In addition, I have had 8 years of accumulative experience working with students ranging from preschool to 4th grade. I have experience in public schools, private schools, international programs, and after-school programs. I have worked with students from around the world, and I have enjoyed time with students from a variety of backgrounds. I strive to facilitate a strong sense of community within the classroom, and I value the needs of each child socially, emotionally, and academically. Outside of school, I enjoy hiking, traveling, yoga, reading, and spending time with my friends and family.



Laura Riehl
3rd grade

This is my 4th year teaching and my 3rd year teaching 3rd grade at Gilbert Park. Prior to that I spent 13 years in various positions in education. I have a wonderful husband and two fantastic children who both attended David Douglas schools through high school. I love to spend time with my family at our cabin on Lake Merwin where we enjoy boating, playing games, and campfires. I am an avid reader and strive to ignite the reading "bug" in all of my students. Go Ducks! Go Seahawks!



Amy Spencer
3rd Grade

This is my fourth year teaching in DDSD. I went to Western Oregon University for music and Portland State University to become a teacher. I have lived in the Pacific Northwest my whole life and especially love this beautiful city. In my spare time, I love to read, swim, go camping, sing, and be with my family. I also love wild animals, especially owls, which you'll see a lot of in my classroom :)



Scott Burton
4th Grade

I am beginning my 15th year at Gilbert Park. I grew up in the David Douglas School District, and I am very happy to be home. I have three daughters and a wonderful wife who all attended Gilbert Park. Go SF Giants!



Jana Daley
4th Grade

I've been teaching for 27 years in the David Douglas School District. I've taught 5th, 4th, and 3rd grades as well as did a 6 year stint in the Library back when it was a certified position. My husband and I have two wonderful boys (22 and 19 yrs. old) who keep us very busy and are students at the University of Oregon. We are avid football fans (Go Ducks and Go Packers!). I love to read and spend time with family and friends!



Dan O'Brien
4th Grade

I am excited to be joining the Gilbert Park team for my first year of teaching. I recently graduated Westfield State University and majored in Elementary Education, with a concentration in math. I was born and raised in Billerica, Massachusetts, about 20 minutes outside of Boston. I love hiking, swimming, reading, soccer and volleyball and am a big Boston sports fan.



Rachel Pitts
4th Grade

This is my fourth year teaching 4th grade and my second year teaching at Gilbert Park. I moved to Portland last year from Georgia. I am really enjoying all that the Pacific Northwest has to offer. In my free time I enjoying cooking, reading, and spending time outdoors.



Megan Cullerton
5th Grade

This is my first year teaching at Gilbert Park and I am so honored to be part of the community here! I previously worked in David Douglas as an instructional assistant. I am a Portland native and love spending time outdoors. I have my BA in Communications from Western Oregon University and my Masters of Teaching from Concordia University. Before classroom teaching I worked for the MESD Outdoor School program teaching 6th grade environmental science and for Portland Parks and Recreation organizing summer camps. I love reading, hiking, going to concerts, spending time with my family and cheering on the Portland Trailblazers. I am very excited for a great year with my students!



Luan Nguyen
5th Grade

Hello! I'm Mr. Nguyen and I am very glad to be back at Gilbert Park after working for three years at Earl Boyles. This is already my 14th year as a teacher! I can't imagine having a better job than I do right now! In my spare time, I like hanging out with my incredible wife and my two amazing children. We do all sorts of things from hiking, spending time at the beach, or just hanging out around town. I also enjoy watching and playing sports, especially golfing with Mr. Burton and Mr. King. I believe that all children deserve the best education and I intend to give it to them!



Rod Purdum
5th Grade

I have lived in Oregon since the age of twelve. I graduated as a Beaver from OSU, and later earned my Masters in Education from Portland State. I've been part of the awesome Gilbert Park family since 2004. I am a hot air balloon pilot and enjoy traveling, especially on a motorcycle.



Aika Topolski
5th Grade

This is my first year teaching at Gilbert Park; however, I have been in the David Douglas School District for nearly ten years. This will be my third year teaching 5th grade. I grew up in Portland, attended college at the University of Puget Sound and obtained my Masters in Teaching at Concordia University. I love to be outdoors as much as possible: hiking, camping, swimming, etc. I also love music and reading and going on adventures with my family and dog. I look forward to having a phenomenal year with my students!



Valerie Anderson
Student Behavior
Specialist

It is my privilege and honor to work with the incredible staff of GP. They are what make GP such a special place to be! This is my 12th year with DDS. When not enjoying the warm & supportive community we work so hard to build, I love riding my bike, exploring the world, and learning new Knock, Knock Jokes. Please share your favorite with me!



Lisa Schill
Special Education

This is my first year working at Gilbert Park as the Educational Resource Center teacher. It is also my first year living in Portland! I moved this summer, after previously living in San Jose California. I went to college at CSU Chico, in Northern California, where I received both my Teaching Credentials and Master's. I'm so excited to be here and can't wait to see what this year has in store!



Cheryl Hull
Reading Intervention

This is my second year at Gilbert Park as the Title 1 teacher, as well as my second year living in Portland. Prior to living in Oregon in 2000, I lived in Idaho, Wyoming, Vermont, and grew up in upstate New York. My dog Harry and I love many outdoor activities including hiking, running (especially on the beach), kayaking, and snowboarding.



Val Ellett
Music Teacher

I enjoy painting in my free time. I also play flute with Portland Wind Symphony. The best thing about teaching at Gilbert Park is that I get to know EVERY. SINGLE. STUDENT! Often, for years! This is my 22nd year of teaching. My classroom motto is, "Together, We Rock!"



Amber Tatge
English Language
Development

I am originally from Minneapolis, Minnesota, but I started my teaching career in San Jose, California. Now enjoying the green Oregon climate, I am specializing in English Language Development and helping English Learners succeed in school. I love languages and traveling. I speak German and Spanish.



Shane Burchell
English Language
Development

This is my 22nd year teaching in David Douglas but my first year at Gilbert Park. I was born in Portland but I spent most of my childhood in Alaska. I graduated with my bachelor's degree from Western Oregon University and received my Master's in ESOL from Portland State University.



Patty Utz
Student
Achievement
Specialist

This is my 15th year at Gilbert Park. I taught 5th Grade for 13 of those years and currently I am the student Achievement Specialist. I was born and raised in Portland and attended Portland Public Schools. I graduated from University of Oregon with a bachelor's degree in Psychology. Go Ducks! I earned my Masters in Education and Reading Endorsement at Portland State University. I have two sons, Mason and Miles. In my free time I like to read, sew, and spend time with my kids.



Paul Crain
P.E.

I have been teaching physical education in David Douglas for 24 years. My wife and I have been married for 29 years with three wonderful daughters. I enjoy spending time with my family, fly-fishing working out and watching college football. Go Sun Devils!!



Peter Martin
Speech & Language
Pathologist

I am originally from upstate New York (a frozen wasteland), but then my wife and I relocated to Portland (an idyllic paradise). This is my third year as the speech-language pathologist at Gilbert Park, where I am rewarded daily by supporting all of my exceptional and typically-developing students. Outside of work I play drums, write, and dote upon my loving wife and our four dogs. I am also an avid collector of books, records, and films from around the world.
Ask me about my veganism :-)



Erin Hanson
Counselor

The social/emotional well being of your child is very important to me. In my 11 years as a school counselor I've seen a lot of things, but I'm more convinced than ever that every child can flourish with the right support. I love the work that I get to do everyday. I also love drawing, journaling, and creating new things. My husband and I live in Beaverton with our little dog, Adi