

Recognition of Retiring Teachers June 2003



*L-R: Row 1: Gary Richard, Edward Lestinsky, Joanne Seger, Elizabeth Dowd, and Martha Hanrahan
Row 2: Eloise Farmer and Adla Keywan*

Elizabeth Dowd – 28.5 Years

Betty Dowd began her teaching career in Harwinton in 1964 as a third grade teacher. In 1969, she began teaching remedial reading for a private school in Winsted. She came to Torrington in 1975 as a reading consultant. From 1981 to the present, she has been at Torrington School, where she has taught grade 4.

Mrs. Dowd received her Bachelor of Science degree in elementary education at Central Connecticut State University in 1960. She then continued at CCSU, receiving her Master of Science degree in reading in 1971. Later, she returned to CCSU and received her Sixth Year Certificate in 1996 in the area of reading. Betty's favorite song as she retires: No Matter What by Boy Zone.

Eloise Farmer– 36 Years

Eloise Farmer came to Torrington Public Schools as an elementary and science teacher in 1967 after having been an elementary teacher for a year and a half in Milwaukee, Wisconsin (1954-1956) and a junior high school science teacher for one year in Stony Point, New York (1966-1967). After a brief stint (two months) at Southwest Elementary School, she quickly became a science teacher at Torrington High School, most recently teaching biology. Eloise received her Bachelor of Science degree from the State University of New York at Cortland in 1954 and her Master's in biology from St. Joseph College in West Hartford in 1971, and a Sixth Year degree in administration and supervision in 1990. She has been honored many times as an outstanding science teacher and has been very active as a class advisor, club advisor, coach, and member of various committees.

Eloise says that the most memorable parts of her teaching career have been great colleagues. She has taught all the sciences except chemistry. About her students, she says, "Most grew up to be good citizens – and I see their sons and daughters in my classroom. Some still send Christmas cards, some are my colleagues." Eloise's favorite song as she retires: Feeling Groovy by Simon & Garfunkel.

Martha Hanrahan – 33 Years

Martha Hanrahan began her professional training at St. Joseph College in West Hartford, where she completed her Bachelor of Science degree in 1965. She began her first year of teaching in the Torrington Public Schools in 1965 at Torrington High School, teaching French until she resigned in 1969. She returned to St. Joseph in 1973, receiving her Master's degree in special education in 1975, while coming back to the Torrington schools to teach elementary special education in 1974. Since 1995 she has been at the Torrington Middle School. Martha's favorite song as she retires: You're In My Heart by Rod Stewart.

Adla M. Keywan – 30 Years

After receiving her Bachelor's degree from the University of Connecticut in 1970, Adla Keywan pursued graduate studies at Central Connecticut State University 1970-1972. She began teaching English and Italian at Torrington High School in 1973, where she has remained until now. She has taken a very active part in the student life of Torrington High, most visibly as part of the leadership team for many, many theatrical productions. Adla's favorite song as she retires: Time To Say Goodbye-- Con te partirò, by Andrea Bocelli and Sarah Brightman.

Edward Lestinsky – 35 Years

Ed Lestinsky began his professional training at Central Connecticut State University, where he received his Bachelor of Science degree in education in 1968. He continued his training at the University of Hartford, where he received his Master of Education degree in 1976. Ed began his 35 years of service to the children of Torrington in 1968, served in the military 1970 through 1971, and returned to teaching full time in 1972. During all the years, he has taught math for the middle school grades. He has served on various committees through the years. Ed stated, "Now that I am finally graduating from 8th grade, I look forward to exploring new and exciting adventures." Ed's favorite song as he retires: Jail House Rock by Elvis Presley.

David Reuter – 9 Years

Although Dave Reuter has been working in Applied Education for the Torrington Public Schools for only nine years, he is completing 23 years as an educator. The first 15 years were as a teacher and administrator in the Granby Public Schools. He completed his Bachelor's degree in social science in 1967 at Central Connecticut State University in 1967, where he later received his Master's degree in geography in 1969. He has additional certification in industrial arts and completed his Sixth Year Certificate in administration and supervision in 1985.

Gary Richard – 35 Years

Gary Richard did his undergraduate studies at the University of Connecticut, where he received his Bachelor of Arts degree in zoology in 1967. Gary then continued at UCONN to receive his Master's degree and certification in biology in 1970. He began his professional career as a teacher with Torrington Public Schools in 1968 when he accepted a position at Torrington High School teaching biology and other physical sciences. Gary's favorite song as he retires: Through the Years by Kenny Rogers.

Joanne Seger – 36 Years

Joanne Seger came to Torrington Public Schools in 1967 as a grade 5 teacher at the North School. In 1976 she moved to the East School, where she has remained ever since, still teaching grade 5. Joanne's professional training began at Danbury State College, now Western Connecticut State University. She received her Bachelor of Science degree in elementary education in 1967. A few years later, Joanne went to Central Connecticut in New Britain, where she received her Master's degree in elementary education in 1973. Joanne says that "I have taught 5th grade for 36 years—I am a walking/talking 10 year old expert!" Joanne's favorite song as she retires: Theme song from the movie the Titanic, My Heart Will Go On by Celine Dion.

Mary Zbell – 36.5 Years

Mary Zbell received her Bachelor of Arts degree in history from Good Counsel College in 1966 and her certification in elementary education from Danbury State College, later Western Connecticut State University, in 1968. She began teaching grade 5 at the Riverside School in 1966 while pursuing further graduate studies at the University of Hartford. In 1969, she began teaching English and social studies at the Vogel School and in 1994 made the move with her colleagues and students to what is now the Torrington Middle School. Mary's favorite song as she retires: You Are My Sunshine.

A special thank you to all of you for the lives that you have touch and for the contributions you have made to children of Torrington. May you have a long and happy retirement!