

2020-2021 RCSS Teacher of the Year

KATHY FLEETWOOD

Randolph Early College High School



Mere words will always fail when it comes to describing Kathy Fleetwood and her classroom. One has to not only observe her class, but truly experience the magic that occurs on a daily basis between her and her students. Magic might be the only term to explain what happens in room 109 each day. From the time a student enters the classroom, Ms. Fleetwood engulfs them with an energy that is both contagious and mesmerizing at the same time. Ms. Fleetwood has the ability to draw in each student and not just make them feel valued, but make them feel like they are the most important person in the world. She does this with each student, no matter their background, their test scores, or their ability. Each child leaves Kathy Fleetwood's class feeling like a million bucks.

Her principal, Shea Setzer Grosch, states, “There is an intensity in her class that I have never witnessed before.” The pace is non-stop with an energy in which the students thrive. Through music, theatre, video, texts and most importantly, her own style, students not only learn American History, but they LOVE it! At the Winter Dance or prom, RECHS Juniors and Seniors begin screaming, jumping, and dancing when a song from Hamilton plays. That is Kathy Fleetwood! Her love of history and ability to make the content relevant and addicting is easily observed when listening to students discuss topics in her class.

To reference Hamilton, her students are well aware of the line, “If you stand for nothing, Burr, what’ll you fall for?” The sentiment of that quote is exactly what Ms. Fleetwood teaches. She teaches students to have passion and to take a stand for their beliefs. She inspires them to accomplish any goal they set. On top of that, she gives them the confidence to achieve those goals.

Mrs. Setzer Grosch says, “Each class period, no matter the day or time, I think of the Vince Lombardi quote regarding Kathy Fleetwood.” Lombardi said, “I firmly believe that any man’s finest hour, the greatest fulfillment of all he holds dear, is that moment when he has worked his heart out in a good cause and lies exhausted on the field of battle....victorious.” That is exactly Kathy Fleetwood. Every minute, she pours herself into her content and students. The magic that occurs is the result of meticulous planning, love, personality, an innate sense of pedagogy and work ethic. Each day, when Ms. Fleetwood goes home, she may be exhausted, but she needs to know she has worked her heart out and she is victorious!