

School District of New Berlin Dedicate New Courtyard in Surprise Ceremony to Longtime Administrators Set to Retire in June

New Berlin, Wis. - The School District of New Berlin recognized longtime administrators Joan Paque and Dave Funk for their combined 86 years of service to the district by dedicating the new courtyard outside New Berlin Eisenhower Middle/High School, 4333 S. Sunnyslope Rd., at a brief, surprise ceremony May 17.

Paque and Funk, who both will retire June 30, were lifelong champions of students with special needs. Two plaques thanking them for their years of outstanding service and leadership were placed in the courtyard.

Paque, the district's Chief Academic Officer for the past seven years, joined SDNB in 1977 after teaching special education for one year in Kalispell, Montana. At SDNB, Paque spent a majority of her career at Orchard Lane Elementary, where she taught special needs students for 22 years, was an instructional resource teacher and interim principal, and principal for six years. Through her leadership, SDNB played an instrumental role in southeastern Wisconsin in the inclusion of special education students in regular education classrooms. She shared the Orchard Lane experience with other districts that were developing inclusion models. Paque then moved to the district office to serve as student services director for two years before being named chief academic officer.

Funk, the director of student services, has been with SDNB even longer. After teaching one year at a school in Palatine, Illinois, Funk came to SDNB in 1969 and spent 17 years as a special education teacher. He then served as a diagnostic teacher and program support teacher before becoming director of student services. Funk developed and taught university-level courses on classroom management, effective teaching and special issues. He also was actively involved in the "Love and Logic" parenting/teaching philosophy, writing books with founder Jim Fay and presenting around the country on how to apply Love and Logic to youth with special needs. Funk and his wife Diane fostered dozens of infants for 17 years and also helped many families in the Navajo community.

"Joan and Dave have dedicated their lives to the School District of New Berlin and have positively affected countless students, families and colleagues over the last several decades," Superintendent Joe Garza said. "It is no longer common to have individuals stay with the same district as long as Joan and Dave have. We've been fortunate to have these two talented and devoted educators for as long as we have, and we're sad to see them move on. But we wish them nothing but the best in their well-deserved retirements.

"The Eisenhower courtyard is right outside our district offices, and dedicating the courtyard to Joan and Dave's combined nearly nine decades is one way we can honor their careers."

This spring, SDNB hired Kellie Sanders, formerly from an Illinois school district, to replace Paque as chief academic officer. Current student services support specialist Amanda Mazurkiewicz will replace Funk.

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