

KANSAS ASSOCIATION OF MIDDLE SCHOOL ADMINISTRATORS 2015-2016 EXEMPLARY MIDDLE SCHOOL ASSISTANT PRINCIPAL



Garold Baker, Basehor-Linwood Middle School Assistant Principal, was selected as one of the KAMSA “Exemplary” Middle School Assistant Principals for 2015-2016. Basehor-Linwood is a 4A school district located in Northeast, Kansas, just west of Kansas City. Basehor-Linwood Middle School serves 6th - 8th grades and has an enrollment of approximately 530 students.

Garold attended Pratt Community College (1985-1987) and Fort Hays State University (1987-1990) earning a Bachelor of Science in Physical Education/Health. He was employed by Ness City High School during the spring of 1991 as a full-time substitute. In the fall of 1991 he accepted a full time teaching position with Tipton Catholic High School in Tipton, KS teaching Physical Education, Health, Strength/Conditioning and Science. After working in Tipton for five years, he moved to the Kansas City area where he accepted a position with Bonner Springs High School. His first four years at Bonner

Springs High School he taught Physical Education, Health and Strength/Conditioning. While teaching at Bonner Springs, he began working on a Master’s Degree in Educational Administration through Emporia State University. After teaching four years at Bonner Springs, he accepted his first administrative position where he spent the next eight years serving as the District Athletic/Activities Director for Bonner Springs School District. In 2008, Garold accepted a position with Turner High School in Kansas City, Kansas as an Assistant Principal/Activities Director. Garold spent seven years in the Turner District with his final year being at Turner Middle School as an assistant principal. The past school year Garold accepted a position as Assistant Principal at Basehor-Linwood Middle School, which has created new career challenges and opportunities for him.

Throughout his career in education, the school districts Garold has worked in have allowed him to experience a wide range of diversity with large and small enrollments, high and low socioeconomic status and rural and metropolitan locations. He feels these experiences, along with being privileged to work with and learn from several great administrators, have provided him the ability to be an effective leader.

Basehor-Linwood Middle School Principal had the following comments about Garold: “Mr. Baker’s willingness to “jump right in” and be involved has not gone unnoticed by our students, staff, and parents. In a very short amount of time, Mr. Baker has proven himself to be an outstanding instructional leader, communicator, athletic director, teacher/coach mentor, and reliable colleague. My first year as a principal, could not have begun to be as enriching as it has been without him by my side.”

Garold is excited and honored to serve as an Assistant Principal for Basehor-Linwood Middle School. BLMS has a great staff and strong team concept. The students, parents, staff and community are hard-working, supportive and full of pride. The BOE and community are strong supporters of education and continue to move forward offering new challenges and opportunities to the Basehor-Linwood students.

Garold and his wife Nancy, who has taught English at Bonner Springs High School for 27 years, have two daughters. Katie is a sophomore at Basehor-Linwood High School and Harley is a fourth grader at Basehor-Linwood Intermediate School. Garold and his family reside in Basehor, Kansas

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Mark Koepsel, an Assistant Principal and Activities Director at Washburn Rural Middle School, was selected as a KAMSA “Exemplary” Middle School Assistant Principal for the 2015-16 school year.

Mr. Koepsel graduated from Kansas State University with a BS in Secondary English Ed in 1987. He earned an endorsement to teach elementary Physical Education. From 1987 – 1996, Mark taught junior high language arts and PE at Harveyville Grade School and coached a variety of sports. He also served as a basketball coach at Mission Valley High School.



In 1996-97, Mark taught high school English at Santa Fe Trail High School and completed his MS degree in Education Administration at Washburn University. He returned to the Mission Valley district where he served as an elementary and junior high principal for six years.

From 2003 – 2011, Mr. Koepsel was the Auburn Elementary Principal in USD 437. In 2011, he transferred to Washburn Rural Middle School where he has worked for the past five years. Mark has served on various district curriculum committees, oversees our classified staff, is in charge of building maintenance, and facilitates our concessions.

One staff member noted, “Mr. Koepsel works tirelessly to keep things running smoothly. He has a quiet, calm, yet confident demeanor that works well with students, staff, and parents. A teacher stated, “Mark has a knack for working with struggling students. He builds rapport, sets goals, and consistently follows up with them on their progress.”

WRMS Principal Jerry Meier made the following comment: “Mark Koepsel is an administrator that spends a great deal of time, like all outstanding administrators do, at our school. It is likely that when working on Sunday evenings, I will see Mark in his office. It is hard to imagine how much time he spends at school with 5 football teams, 4 volleyball teams, 2 tennis teams and a cross country program that has over 100 runners competing, and that is just our fall sports. He does so with an efficiency that is rarely matched. He hires coaches on not only abilities, but demeanor and strength to work with middle school students. He has the open door policy that staff find inviting and open for problem solving.”

Mark enjoys reading, bicycling and sports in his spare time. He is married to his wonderful wife, Lori, and has two grown daughters, Bailey and Raegan.

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Brandi Lundgren, an Assistant Principal of Junction City Middle School in the Geary County school district, was selected as a KAMSA “Exemplary” Middle School Assistant Principal for the 2015-2016 school year.

Brandi received her bachelor’s degree in Elementary Education, including a middle-level endorsement in mathematics from Kansas State University in 2006. Her student teaching experience was split between Junction City Middle School (8th grade) and Woodrow Wilson Elementary School (1st grade). While Brandi was student teaching at Junction City Middle School, she was hired as a 6th grade math teacher upon graduation for 2nd semester.

Brandi continued teaching 6th grade math at Junction City Middle School for three more years. During that time, Brandi was named as one of the 2009 Kansas Horizon Award recipients and earned an endorsement in English for Speakers of Other Languages. In the fall of 2010, she took on a new teaching position as an Instructional Coach and the school’s first AVID teacher and coordinator. In addition to these career changes, Brandi began working towards a master’s degree in Educational Leadership through Kansas State University. She continued her work as an Instructional Coach for three years working mostly with newly hired and math teachers on pedagogical practices and transitioning to the Kansas College and Career Readiness Standards. In 2012, Brandi graduated with honors and later earned her building leadership license in 2013.

In the fall of the 2013-2014 school year, Brandi began her journey as an Assistant Principal at Junction City Middle School. She has helped the staff write a new mission statement, provide professional development supporting school culture, AVID’s WICOR strategies, school improvement efforts, mathematics, and more. She has presented at a state and national math conference - KATM (Kansas Association for Teachers of Mathematics) and NCTM (National Council of Teachers of Mathematics) sharing best practices and resources in mathematics education. Brandi has taken on the roles of testing and summer school coordinator, and is an active member of her school’s AVID Site Team and serves on multiple building and district committees.

She feels fortunate to loop with her students from last year and continue to develop the relationships she has built with them and their families. In addition to students, she works to build connections with her colleagues and strives to provide effective feedback to help increase the quality and effectiveness of classroom instruction. Her favorite days are when she gets to visit classrooms and interact with students, teachers, parents and content. Brandi is known for her dedication and passion towards the work she does with kids and staff, her grace towards others and in challenging situations, and her positive energy and words of encouragement.

Mary Wright, JCMS Principal writes about Brandi: “Mrs. Lundgren is a dedicated Administrator who believes that “All” students will learn if we provide them a caring, safe, rigorous, and engaging environment. Her passion is evident in her interactions with students, parents, and staff. She truly wants the best for JCMS and will work tirelessly for the success of our students and staff. “

When she is not working, Brandi pours her energy into her faith and family. She enjoys studying the Bible, teaching children’s church and camping, playing games and relaxing with her husband, Matt, and daughter Lilianna (5).



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B.J. Pruitt , an associate principal of Fort Scott Middle School in the Fort Scott school district, was selected as a KAMSA “Exemplary” Middle School Assistant Principal for the 2015-2016 school year.

B.J. received a Bachelors of Education from Pittsburg State University in Pittsburg, Kansas in 2004. His student teaching was completed at Girard High School and Middle School in the Girard School District teaching high school and middle school physical education. He began his teaching career in the Fort Scott School District in 2005 at the Learning Center, where he taught social studies courses as well as facilitated computer based curriculum for students attempting to make up credits.



In 2006 B.J. accepted a position at Fort Scott Middle School as the boys physical education teacher, where he stayed until 2011. During the 2011-12 school year B.J. served as the high school physical education teacher in Fort Scott. In addition to his teaching responsibilities B.J. has served head high school baseball coach, head high school track coach, assistant high school football coach, assistant high school basketball coach, as well as a middle school intramural coach.

Ft. Scott Principal Jim Howard commented about B.J.: “Mr. Pruitt is the most loyal and supportive person I have had the chance to work with. He takes care of anything that is asked of him and goes above and beyond in all areas without being asked. The teachers trust him, the students respect him and this building could not run without him.”

B.J. started his Masters degree in educational leadership in 2010. Upon graduating in 2012 B.J. accepted a position at Fort Scott Middle School as the associate principal. B.J. attempts to make meaningful connections with all students. B.J. works with students and parents to try and help them in all situations. As one stake holder stated “In a society where so many focus on “Me, Me, Me” it is refreshing to know someone who is genuinely concerned for the well being of others.” B.J. is married to wife Kayla and they have two boys Easton (4) and Mason (2).

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Mandy Rohr, assistant principal at Derby Middle School; part of the Derby USD260 school district, was selected as a KAMSA “Exemplary” Middle School Assistant Principal of the year for 2015-2016.

In 1990, upon completion of a Bachelors of Education from Wichita State University, Mandy began her teaching career as a history/humanities teacher at Northeast Magnet High School in Wichita, Kansas.

In 1997, Mandy joined the Derby High School, where she taught for fourteen years. She taught a wide range of social studies courses, including Advanced Placement United States History. In 2003 Mandy was selected to participate in Teachers as Scholars in Kansas (TASK) and in 2006 she completed her Master of Arts in Teaching from Emporia State. She has a passion for education and believes in differentiating instruction, particularly using Howard Gardner’s theory of multiple intelligences, to reach students of all academic levels. During Mandy’s tenure as a teacher at Derby High School, she was the Derby School District nominee for Kansas Teacher of the Year in 2006 and 2012.

In addition to teaching at Derby High School, Mandy served in leadership roles on numerous committees; including enhancing the use of instructional time, redesigning teacher evaluations, and the integration of academic content into career and technical education. She was the AdvancEd faculty chair of the school improvement committee from 2004-2012. In this role as school improvement faculty chair, Mandy worked with administration and teachers to incorporate professional learning communities; to build a collaborative culture that was focused on student learning. In 2008, Mandy presented the Derby High School model of integrating professional learning communities with school accreditation at the AdvancEd National Conference.

In 2009, Mandy completed her Master of School Leadership at Friends University and in 2012 was selected to become Assistant Principal at Derby Middle School. Working with principal Clint Shipley, Mandy has helped in transforming Derby Middle School both physically and culturally. A second middle school was opened in Derby in 2015 and sixth grade was incorporated into the middle school format; where as before there had been a stand alone sixth grade center. The opening of a second middle school not only reconfigured students but staff as well. Mandy has assisted with the middle level education transformation in Derby.

Mandy has a passion for education and helping all students succeed. She strives to ensure that students are provided the academic, behavioral and social-emotional support they need to be successful. She helped start Girls on the Run at Derby Middle School. This national program seeks to empower girls to set and achieve goals. Mandy not only want students to feel success but staff as well. In her role as an administrator she enjoys mentoring teachers, including several who are former students.

Derby Middle School Principal Clint Shipley has this to day about Mandy: “Mrs. Rohr is an unsung hero at DMS. She never stops teaching, be it with students and discipline or coaching teachers. Her experience and discernment make her an outstanding mentor. Her passion for the profession makes her an amazing example of what we all should aspire to be as educators.”

Mandy has been married to her husband Steve for 33 years. They have two sons, Steven and Michael, who are both also happily married. She enjoys traveling and spending time with her three grandchildren.