



Marcy Fiore 158
ROBS History Project 10-10
Exit Interview 04/28- 29/10

Marcy Fiore came to the district in 1980, gave thirty years of dedicated service and retired in 2010. Her last seventeen years have been teaching Kindergarten at the Kindergarten Center.

“Well as an educator, I feel we’re in the position of always giving of ourselves something I’ve always enjoyed. However now I feel it’s time to give more of myself to my family because I haven’t had that much time with my children who while I was teaching are already grown. I haven’t been able to spend as much time with them as I’ve wanted. I’ve learned so much and I have so much to be grateful in so far as my teaching profession is concerned. I see myself actually being ready to learn what I can from the wider world. The classroom has been my world up until now. But as I have acknowledged my thirst, you might even call it my hunger to explore our world at large, I’d like to think of it as if it were my classroom in the hope of finding new and different avenues for teaching and learning. I believe it’s time for me now to explore my arts in totally new ways and different forms.”

“For the last seventeen years I’ve been assigned to the East Kindergarten Center where I taught Kindergarten Art. The total number of years that I’ve been working in the Brentwood School District has been thirty years. Prior to coming to Brentwood I was previously a student matriculating at Pratt Institute in Brooklyn. I look upon every year I’ve been teaching as an important year that has built upon all those that came before it and as an introduction to those yet to be. Think of them as building blocks providing the foundation for those to come with each one becoming better than the one before. I think one of my most exciting years was when it was similar to being in a contest where we did large stamps and displayed

them at the Brentwood post office and they were like blown up examples of stamps with large designs and I remember kids feeling so "excited that *"oh, my*

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stamp, is going to be shown at the post office," and they were very proud because they felt that they had something to share with the community. And that was an exciting time too because in the sense that anything you did in the classroom could also add enrichment and beauty to the community. That was very exciting."

"Well, actually coming back into the District after I took a leave of Absence, from 1989 to 1983 was very difficult for me because after having been out of teaching for four years then back into the classroom I was feeling like I had to reorient myself; to learn the job all over again. It almost felt like it was a new career. That was very challenging for me. It included being on a cart because I didn't have my classroom any more. But I adjusted quickly because being an artist I think you learn to adjust to change. I still felt that I was very grateful that Brentwood was still giving me an opportunity to teach the students."

"Years ago, we did a book; we put a book together. It was my idea that, *"If I ruled the world"*, and I always wanted the children to think that someday they might be a leader of one kind or another whether it be President of the United States or whatever, you'll be able to show your influence to do the most good. And we did all these beautiful little contributions to this little book that was bound together of what you would do if you were able to rule the world. And it was one of the most exciting times because the kids just felt like there was a sense of purpose like everything that they were doing in school was leading to some future point seeing themselves grown up now even though they're children. I guess the proud moment was putting the book together and having the Principal and the whole school being involved, *"Oh, my goodness, look what the children have done"* almost as if they were illustrators. And they had like poetry and writings accompanying it and last but not least, our work was shown at Pratt, where I went to school. We did *endangered species posters*. We were doing posters attempting to educate the public by bringing the work that they are doing in the classroom out to the public eye; heightening awareness of the disappearance of and risk to populations of endangered species. And it got such a wide reception that the pictures were shown at the school where I was an alumni so I was very proud and they were very sophisticated."

“Manny Vega was an amazing human being. I don’t know if he created the Art Department but he was an incredible human being. He was of invaluable help to me as a new teacher. He was a wonderful person. Let’s not forget Lorraine Sopp who was a wonderful Art Educator who we were very lucky to have as a Coordinator. She really carried the torch for whatever Manny Vega started.”

“I think the economic difficulties in a community like Brentwood are those that we can truly do without because to me what makes us truly Americans and the great citizens that we think of ourselves as being, presupposes that every child has a birthright to receiving the best education possible. So many programs are threatened and/or endangered by government and public defunding of education to our most needy educational institutions.”

Most of all, Marcie hoped to be remembered by her students as being kind, and *“she hoped that they knew how much she cared about each and every one of them, as if they were her own and not packed into a classroom like so many sardines (we have so many children, class upon class, and schedule upon schedule), because once we’re in that class I want to feel that I’m there for each and every child because – they need us”*.

To her incoming replacement Marcie had a few things to say. *“As teachers we are all very lucky to work and teach in a District like Brentwood where we make such an incredible difference in the lives of students and their families. Our influence has no end. It crosses generations and makes a difference – a big difference. Success is not about being famous, or getting rich or achieving status or recognition. It is about making a difference. You can do that here if you want to. If you have a lot of pride in what you do I think your students will pick up on that and they will take pride in what they do and they will bring that out into the world. It’s almost like you will live on forever in those children’s hearts and souls because you might even touch something deep inside of them that they can hand down to their children and so it goes.”*

We thanked her for her generosity of time and congratulated her upon her forthcoming retirement. She thanked us again for our questions and said she’d been touched by the very interview experience itself.

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