

# New Teacher Finds her New Home



By: Bonny Lemma

“I chose the Fort Thomas Independent Schools district because it held academics to a high esteem and I wanted to work with teachers, administrators and students who shared those beliefs,” said Mrs. Jill Terlau, the new math teacher. Mrs. Terlau was hired as a part-time math teacher to teach sixth, seventh and eighth grade and complete the new teaming initiative

Mrs. Terlau was recommended to Mr. Goetz, Principal, by a trusted friend. “Of the people we interviewed, she stood out,” said Mr. Goetz. She filled the position that the school needed. She was originally a communications major and lived in New York City. She moved to Kentucky to get married to her husband, Jake Terlau. They have a 3 year old daughter named Marietta who is just starting preschool. She taught for 3 years at Walton Verona. Of her teaching experience, Mrs. Terlau said, “I enjoy working with kids. I always have.” Even after a couple of weeks of school, she has already impacted her students. Savannah Brady, eighth grade geometry student, said, “I like how she understands her students and how they learn. She mixes things up and uses lots of interesting styles that help the class learn more.” “Mrs. Terlau has a very energetic personality.” said Natalie Werhle, eighth

grade geometry student.

Mrs. Terlau has three classes. She teaches sixth and seventh grade math as well as eighth grade geometry. She said that having three different classes was hard to juggle because she has to write three different lesson plans. However, she also said that she liked having only three classes because it allowed her to put her family first and still get all her work done. Cooking, gardening and traveling are some of her other passions. “One weird thing that I’m good at is Wheel of Fortune.” Mrs. Terlau said smiling. “Mrs. Terlau is a great teacher because she relates our abstract math concepts to real life,” said Brady.

Mrs. Terlau was hired so that the school could go back to teaming. Mr. Goetz initiated the change because he believed that teams individualize the learning environment for the students. This change required a lot of detailed organization on the school administration’s part. According to Mrs. Lori Maines, guidance counselor, “A whole school day was devoted to organizing the students into teams! Dr. Dawn Laber, Assistant Principal, Mr. Goetz, and I spent a day in early June distributing the each of the students into teams and classes.” Every grade level needed 2 math teachers, but the number of math teachers didn’t match the number needed to complete the

teams. Without another teacher, the classes would’ve had more students. “The classes would’ve been big,” said Mrs. Angela Cochran, Head of the Math Department, “They would’ve averaged around 28 – 30.” Now though, with the addition of Mrs. Terlau as a part time teacher, all the classes are around 25 students each. These changes are greatly affecting the dynamic of the school.

With Mrs. Terlau on board, the teaming concept could be implemented. “It’s hard to put a value on the impact of a good teacher on a student. Great teachers lead to great instruction and that in turn leads to students reaching their full potential,” said Mr. Goetz.



Above: Mrs. Jill Terlau, takes a break from her geometry class. “Jill is always happy and upbeat no matter what the situation,” said Mrs. Stephanie Ewald, eighth grade math teacher.