

## February Teacher Feature: Mary Springer, Early Intervention Teacher

*Around here, we don't look backwards for very long... We keep moving forward, opening up new doors and doing new things because we're curious... and curiosity keeps leading us down new paths.*

*~Walt Disney*



Mary Springer is in her 21st year with the district. Currently, she is the Early Intervention teacher. She worked 9 years in early childhood education, then switched to teaching reading for children in kindergarten through 3rd grade. Now she is back with the little ones.

She lives in the area with her husband, Michael. She has two sons, John (Stephanie) and Jacob and several grandchildren and step-grandchildren. She grew up in Crookston. After high school graduation, she attended the University of MN-Crookston and then transferred and graduated from Moorhead State University.

When Mary first started working for the district she was the parent education and preschool teacher/coordinator for both Early

Childhood Family Education and School Readiness. Her first classroom was the little white house that was located on the playground in Gonvick. The children often thought they were coming to play at “her house where she lived with her sister”- Sarah Hoagberg, her co-teacher! She felt so blessed when the new school was built because the district knew how important early childhood education was and they included it in the plans. Mary has always felt that the early childhood programs are the welcoming wagon to the school. Parents and children are introduced to the building, staff, and the school atmosphere through these programs.

**Why did you choose to be a teacher?** I grew up in a teaching family. My dad was the high school math teacher and my mom the middle school special education teacher in Crookston. My dad would bring home the small pieces of chalk that he could no longer use at school so I could play school at home with my siblings. I always had the role of teacher and my siblings were my students. At first I went to school for Home Economics but later switched to Elementary Education.

**What did you do before coming to Clearbrook-Gonvick?** I moved to Wyoming (Casper, Kemmerer, and Sheridan) after I graduated from college. We lived there for 13 years until moving to Gonvick in 1995. In Wyoming, I taught kindergarten and first grade.

**What is the best part of your job at Clearbrook-Gonvick?** The best part of my job is the staff and students I work with. I couldn't work in a nicer environment. I tell my family and friends that I sing, dance, and play for a living, what could be better than that. When my boys were in school, I got to see them everyday and now I see my grandson and granddaughter for Monday night ECFE.

**What is the biggest challenge of your job?** My biggest challenge would have to be fitting everything into my day. There are so many things I would love to teach my students, but the days and weeks go by so fast and you just can't fit it all in.

**If you could have any job in the world - what would it be?** I am doing what I love!

**What do you do when you are not at school teaching?** I enjoy spending time with family and friends and going to our lake cabin. I enjoy snowmobiling and snowshoeing in the winter and boating and kayaking in the summer. My other great love is snorkeling and scuba diving.

**What are your favorite aspects of the Clearbrook-Gonvick community?**

Clearbrook-Gonvick has been a great place to live, work and raise my kids. This is a small community with a big heart.

*And now a few words from the students about Mary Springer from the students....*

**What do you think is Mrs. Springer's favorite thing to do at school?** *"Teach about stuff from a farm." "Just play." "Make hearts." "Play with us."*

**What do you think Mrs. Springer does when she is not in school?** *"She goes to the dentist." "She sits at home and plays games." "She lays on the couch." "She goes on a vacation." "She vacuums."*

**What is the best thing about Mrs. Springer?** *"She is my teacher." "She plays games with me." "She gives me hugs." "She teaches us all sorts of stuff." "She has all kinds of hearts, yellow hearts, red hearts, purple hearts, pink hearts." "She comes to school."*

**What do you think Mrs. Springer was like when she was in the pre-schooler?** *"She was nice." "She like to play." "She liked to draw and paint and put stickers on everything." "Funny" "I bet she like to make lots of crafts."*

**What do you think is Mrs. Springer's favorite book is about?** *"An Elephant Story," "Paw Patrol," "My Favorite Stuff," "Dinosaurs," "The one with some sick animals that were all better in a couple of days."*

**If you could send Mrs. Springer on a vacation anywhere in the world, where would you send her? Why would you send her there?** *“I would send her to a hotel.” “To the first grade” “To a water park because it has WATERSLIDES!” “To the fair because she likes watching animals.” “I would send her to the park to play with me.”*

**What is one thing Mrs. Springer ALWAYS says?** *“Thank you.” “Let’s play hide and seek.” “What are you doing?” “This is fun.”*