

AmeriCorps Seniors Lifetime Impact Volunteer

Lorraine Schluter

CESA 10 Foster Grandparent Program



For 27 years, Lorraine Schluter has been a constant presence in the classroom, enriching the lives of students through her AmeriCorps Seniors volunteer service with the CESA 10 Foster Grandparent Program. At 88 years old, she travels 22 miles each day to guide students in the Osseo-Fairchild School District to higher academic achievement and provide them with extra care and comfort. Even when she has experienced health issues, her students remained her priority. She schedules appointments in the afternoon to be there for her students and even arranges surgeries or procedures during breaks so she doesn't miss time with her students.



Lorraine readily teaches and reviews whatever skills each of her students need to practice. She finds ways to connect with them, often staying late to have a lunch date with a student, playing games with students during recess to celebrate their learning gains, and offering 1:1 tutoring when a student is struggling to learn a skill. She makes time for each student and challenges them to improve a little each day, helping them improve their self-esteem and experience success as she guides them towards developing independent work skills. As a result, 94% of her students have assessed improvements in reading and/or math.

The difference she makes goes beyond these measurable academic improvements, as she also creates bonds and friendships with her students that have impacts beyond their year together in the classroom, with students often seeking Lorraine out for a hug and to reconnect as they graduate. Osseo-Fairchild Elementary First Grade teacher Cheryl Peterson explains that "Grandma Lorraine has had such a lasting impact for so many students for nearly three decades of time. The number of students that have learned to challenge themselves because she challenged them at the age of six has a life-long impact for so many."

While she typically is assigned to work with a few students each year, she impacts everyone in the classroom, with Cheryl describing that "Grandma Lorraine is always observing students and my teaching, and she consistently shares observations of individual students that might go unnoticed by me when teaching the whole class. Her valuable input often helps me to make necessary modifications for individual students that allow for optimal learning growth...to better meet the needs of all our students...It has been such a pleasure to work the Lorraine. She is an absolute treasure and has such a large impact on the learning of all students."

