

## **Lisa Stewart**

Twenty-five years ago Black Elementary School teacher Lisa Stewart was like many excited and nervous freshman college students on the University of Texas at Austin campus. However, she had leg up on the competition as she was armed with a diploma from Cypress Creek High School (Class of 1982) and a scholarship from the Cypress-Fairbanks Educational Foundation.

It was that scholarship, and her strong resolve to one day educate Cy-Fair ISD's young students, that allowed Stewart to attain a degree in Elementary Education in just three-and-a-half years.

Now 25 years later, Stewart has an impressive 22 years of teaching Cy-Fair ISD elementary school children under her belt, as well as special education, English as a Second Language (ESL), gifted and talented, and dyslexic certifications.

"I have always been in Cy-Fair and will always stay in Cy-Fair," said Stewart, who is a special education teacher at Black Elementary School. "I was born and raised here, and the school district has been so good to my entire family."

"It is only right for me to give back to my community and its students," she said.

Stewart said she knew at a young age that she wanted to teach. An early-release program her senior year at Cy-Creek High School allowed her to test that theory. She left the campus each day to tutor Horne Elementary School students, and loved it.

"The (CFEF) scholarship allowed me to go to the school of my choice – the University of Texas," Stewart said. "It helped me to focus on school instead of working. I was also able to graduate in 3-and-a-half years and start teaching!"

Stewart started substitute teaching in Cy-Fair ISD after she graduated, and was hired on as a full-time first-grade teacher at Lieder Elementary School in the fall of 1986.

"It was really neat because the principal of Lieder when I was hired – Robbie Sheridan – was my principal when I was a first-grader at Matzke Elementary," Stewart said.

Stewart spent one year at Lieder, and then subsequently taught first-graders at Milsap and Hamilton elementary schools. After a brief move out of the country, the Stewart family returned to Cy-Fair and she spent a year teaching third-graders at Bane Elementary before returning to Hamilton to teach fourth-graders from 1998 through 2003.

She became a special education teacher at Hamilton in the 2003-04 school year and taught there through 2006 when she left to open Black Elementary School.

Stewart was honored as one of Cypress-Fairbanks Independent School District's outstanding "Spotlight Teachers" in 2004. The Cypress-Fairbanks Educational Foundation honors the district's Spotlight Teachers for their hard work and dedication to their students and schools at the annual "Salute to the Stars" gala. The black-tie event also raises funds for Cy-Fair ISD's Instructional Excellence Grant program.

In addition to being honored at the gala, Stewart was a speaker at the first CFEF Spotlight Teachers fund-raiser in 1997.

Stewart said she and her family owe a lot to CFEF and Cy-Fair ISD. Her late father, Mack Seigle, worked at Cy-Fair High School until his death in 1994. Her mother, Ann Seigle, worked as a registrar for Cy-Fair ISD until she retired in 2003.

Husband, Jayson, is a 1977 graduate of Jersey Village High School; son, Trammell, is a 2007 graduate of Cy-Fair High School; and daughter, Kayla, is member of Cypress Woods High School's class of 2011.

"The Cypress-Fairbanks Educational Foundation is a wonderful organization," Stewart said. "When my father passed away, we asked that donations be made to CFEF in lieu of flowers. It is a wonderful way to give back to the community

and our students.”

“I recommend that all Cy-Fair ISD students look in to scholarship opportunities available to them through CFEF,” she said. “I know that thinking about the future can be scary, but it is worth it to rise to the challenge and hold on to your dreams.”