



Teacher Feature

Kathryn Mazzarella didn't always know she wanted to be a teacher. She did know she didn't want a desk job and tested her skills in business as a manager of an Oberweis Ice Cream and Dairy Store. After spraining her wrist scooping ice cream and finding the winter season slow, she also tried out working in a daycare. Ultimately, she decided she wanted to be in a more academic setting with greater variety and interaction. It seems she found what she was looking for because after 14 years at Meadowbrook, she says, "You never know what can happen here!"

Miss Mazzarella grew up in Connecticut, earned a Bachelor's Degree in Human Development at the University of Connecticut and later a Master's Degree in Education at DePaul University. She came to Meadowbrook in the fall of 2003 and started as an aide to Miss Verne. She eventually took over another teacher's maternity leave and has taught fourth grade for the majority of her time here.

When she walks out of her classroom, Miss Mazzarella doesn't leave the chatter behind. Waiting at home for her is one talkative bird. Frosty, a Congo African Grey Parrot, has plenty to say. Miss Mazzarella inherited the now 34-year-old parrot from her grandfather when he passed. She wasn't that anxious to take Frosty into her home, but she decided to do so as a tribute to her grandfather. She says she's grown to love Frosty and her entertaining comments including "Is that your shirt?" and "Eat your grapes." If Frosty doesn't like some food she's been offered, she isn't shy. She'll toss it aside and announce, "Cheap crap!"

Miss Mazzarella also volunteers to take care of other birds at "A Refuge for Saving Wildlife." The Northbrook facility houses more than 60 birds, and Miss Mazzarella has regularly arranged for them to visit Meadowbrook's fourth graders.



Frosty

Her love of animals carries over to dogs as well. Miss Mazzarella has two dogs at home and volunteers for a dog shelter in Texas by checking applications online.

Fun Facts about Kathryn Mazzarella

Skipped 2nd grade with a group of gifted students.

Enjoys baking and decorating cookies and makes sweets for friends' events like weddings and showers.

Knits baby blankets, sweaters and hats for infants with heart disease.

Coming up next week: A special edition of the Teacher Feature: The Principal!

