

EF EDUCATOR RECOGNITION AWARDEE

JENNIFER SPIEGEL



Jennifer Spiegel has taught at Elizabeth Forward High School for 24 years. During this time, she has distinguished herself as an English teacher and a sponsor for extracurricular activities while earning two advanced college degrees.

The eldest child of the late Frank and Dawn Markovich, Spiegel graduated from Baldwin High School in 1993. She attended Point Park University where she double majored in Journalism/Communications and Secondary Education and, in 1997, became the first person in her family to earn a college degree. In 2005, Spiegel earned a Master of Library and Information Science degree from the University of Pittsburgh which provided her with dual teaching certifications. She finished her education in 2019 when she earned her Doctor of Philosophy in Rhetoric from Duquesne University. Her dissertation,

The Postman Always Rings Twice: Neil Postman's Views on Education are Relevant Again in the 21st Century Classroom was published in 2020 and followed by the publication of an essay titled "Prensky Revisited: Is the Term 'Digital Native' Still Applicable to Today's Learner?" in *English Leadership Quarterly* in 2021. She is currently working on additional publications.

Spiegel has taught 13 different courses as a member of the English Department and is currently the English Department Curriculum Coach, a leadership position she has held for 15 years. While in this position, she helped her department implement new curriculum and courses, including AP English Language and Composition and two courses in the AP Capstone program. As an English teacher, Spiegel strives to give her students learning experiences that push them outside of their boxes to discover authors and writings that they never knew they loved.

As an extracurricular sponsor, Spiegel is most proud of her current role as the advisor of the Student Government Association. In the nine years she has been the advisor, the organization has grown from 12 members to over 100 and been named both a PASC State Distinguished Council of the Year and a NatStuCo National Gold Council of the Excellence. In 2017, she was named the PASC Region B Advisor of the Year and the PASC State Advisor of the Year for Pennsylvania for her work with SGA. During her tenure, the organization has developed several exemplary service projects. These include a Warmth Drive that raised over \$3,000 in supplies for the homeless, the Foster a Warrior project that raised \$1,500 to purchase supplies for foster kids in Pittsburgh, a Pen Pal program with fourth graders, the Book Buddies project with first graders and the now annual EF Night of Service where students from multiple organizations work together to complete several service projects in one night.

Most notably, however, is SGA's building of the Li'l Warrior Book Nook located at the old Elizabeth Elementary School in 2017. Spiegel and her students built a community library space where SGA now does monthly programs for elementary students that focus on literacy and the arts. She is also a proud recipient of the Warrior Award from the EF School District in 2017. This award has great meaning to her because she was nominated by her amazing colleagues.

Spiegel lives in Pleasant Hills with her husband of 25 years, Tom. She spends her free time with her husband, her brother Brad, his wife Danielle and her nieces Hayley and Chloe. She also enjoys reading, writing and traveling.