



# Public Schools of Plainfield New Jersey

## **Office of Community Engagement**

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## **Plainfield Teacher Named 2019 Literacy Teacher of the Year**

*By the New Jersey Literacy Association*

**Plainfield, N.J. (March 22, 2019)** - Shalonda Archibald, a Reading Specialist at Maxson Middle School, Plainfield Public School District, was named 2019 Literacy Teacher of the Year by the New Jersey Literacy Association.

Dr. Ken Kunz, President of the New Jersey Literacy Association, a professional network of educators that promotes advancing literacy education, made the announcement at the association's board meeting last month. Kunz said the Board "based on her experience, qualifications, and work on behalf of helping readers and writers succeed" unanimously approved Ms. Archibald for the award.

Currently, Ms. Archibald serves as Response to Intervention (RTI) literacy teacher and coach for grades 6-8 at Maxson Middle School. Her supervisors, Dr. Antoinette Adams, the Director of Intervention Programs, and Donna Mullaney, the (RTI) and English Language Arts Coordinator, congratulated Ms. Archibald on this distinguished recognition.

"Her love of reading is infectious and inspires her students. She is a life-long learner who strives to encourage young minds to view learning as something to be valued. Additionally, she supports teachers in creating learning environments that differentiate instruction to best meet the needs of all learners.

The entire RTI team is very proud of Shalonda's recognition and urges her to continue to strive for excellence in all of her endeavors!"

Archibald has been with the Plainfield School District for six years. Prior to that, she taught in Newark and Jersey City. She is a graduate of New Jersey City University with two masters' degrees as Reading Specialist and Urban Education with a specialization in Administration and Supervision.

“I am very proud of this award because I work very hard in my position, not just as a classroom teacher, but as a member of a school community. I work really hard to establish reading routines that support the needs of my community.”

Archibald is the proud coordinator of “Project Lit”, a school wide reading club, where all can join, teachers staff, custodians, security officers and students in grades 6-8. All members read the same book and meet once a month to do activities and talk about the book they are reading. Currently they are reading, Refugee by Albert Krantz. The last book they read was Ghost Boys by June Parker Rose.

Joan Cansdale, Director of English Language Arts said, “One of Shalonda’s many assets is her ability to develop strong relationships with students that support the transformation of even the most reluctant readers into “real readers.” Her impact on the many young people she has taught lasts well beyond the middle school years and in many cases even affects the trajectory of their lives.”

Archibald provides best practices in reading instruction through modeling and support in working with her students. The reaction for her club and the books they have read has been amazing.

“I had 70 books, and all are gone. I have none left. All the copies are out in the school, in kid’s hands and in adult’s hands. And that’s part of what I want to happen. That we develop lifelong readers, that kids again have a passion for reading and that they value it as a major part of their lives. Because they want to, not because it’s something that is forced, but because they want to do that and they enjoy it.

Project Lit gets its books from Donors Choose and most recently for a one-year Scholastic Grant. Last year Archibald was awarded the Scholastic Grant with the Paterson Partnership Scholarship. The grant for \$500 enable her to purchase the current books. Archibald is always looking for sources to donate. Archibald expects to purchase 70 to 100 books per year. It has become her standard. If she could purchase more she would appreciate that, but it would mean having more donors. To donate please contact [SArchibald@plainfield.k12.nj.us](mailto:SArchibald@plainfield.k12.nj.us).

In addition to Project Lit, Archibald is the coordinator of Maxson's Battle of the Books team, a member of the district's ELA curriculum committee, the coordinator for an inter-district book club (a partnership with Scotch Plains and Kean University) and a member of the National Council for Teachers of English, International Literacy Association, Association for Middle Level Education and NJ Association for Middle Level Education. She received the Governor's Educational Services Professional of the Year Award, Literacy Teacher of the Year Award and the Patterson Partnership Grant through Scholastic.

Archibald will receive the 2019 Literacy Teacher of the Year certificate at reception later this year.