

# Inspiring LTUSD educator saying goodbye

By Kathryn Reed

Planting seeds. It's what Beth Delacour does every day. But what sprouts is no ordinary specimen. Her finished product is a responsible, self-confident educated young person.

This is Delacour's seventh and final year as principal of South Tahoe Middle School. She is retiring when the school year is over.

She has spent her entire 35-year career in education at Lake Tahoe Unified School District. This is rare. Usually to move up in the education world one has to switch districts.

Delacour started with kids and is ending with kids – which she thinks is perfect. She started as a regular classroom teacher, then taught special education, became the program specialist for 10 years, agreed to take on the human resources job for three months – it turned into eight years, and now she is at STMS.

The most difficult time in the district for her was in 2007 when she was HR director and the Angora Fire wiped out 257 houses. Houses that belonged to teachers, staff and students. The support was immediate, with school facilities opening up that summer to help, with assistance continuing for months to allow people to gain some semblance of their lives prior to that June.



Beth Delacour is retiring after 35 years in Lake Tahoe Unified School District. Photo/Kathryn Reed

“My favorite part of the job was anything with kids,” Delacour tells *Lake Tahoe News* as she sat in her office.

She has a view to the front walkway – seeing who is coming and going from her school. Her door is usually open. People pop in needing answers. Student artwork is in her office. One wall is the entire school schedule. Books are a prominent feature.

Delacour isn’t an ordinary educator. Her dedication, compassion and passion are extraordinary. Her job doesn’t end when the last bell rings. It’s not over when Friday comes. Some might say she cares too much, if such a trait is possible.

But it’s always been this way for the 58-year-old. When she started at Tahoe Valley Elementary School it was usual for her to be at the school until 6:30 at night. She was making \$11,000 a year and thought it was great.

Her passion for kids has never wavered.

“Personally, it’s always a thrill to work with a professional who has a heart for all students. Her emotion always comes through with seeing them succeed. That is fun to watch,” Superintendent Jim Tarwater told *Lake Tahoe News*.

Tarwater has worked with Delacour in her current position as well as when she was director of human resources.

Karin Holmes has also worked with Delacour in two capacities – as a teacher at STMS and since last year as assistant principal.

“Beth is the most supportive person you could ever work with. I don’t think I would be here if it weren’t for her,” Holmes told *Lake Tahoe News*. “She has so much heart. It is just amazing. She is honest, she speaks the truth.”

Holmes tells stories of being various places around town and hearing people talk about the impact Delacour has had on their lives.

“Beth is a role model for kids and they respond,” Holmes said.

While Judy Klingler has liked all six of the principals she has worked for as their assistant, she said there is something special about Delacour.

“She has heart and compassion. Kids always are first and foremost. They are her passion,” Klingler told *Lake Tahoe News*. “She always puts the kids first, whatever they need, whatever the goals are they had. (She was there) whether for financial help or just being there as an inspiring adult.”

Delacour has no intention of leaving all of this behind. But what exactly the future holds, well, she isn’t sure. More time with her dad, kids and grandkids is the first priority. After about a six-month break from life as she knows it, Delacour said she would start the next chapter of her life. It’s likely to involve children and/or older people.

She knows she will miss her students, but she also knows it is time to move on.

“I have great hope for the kids and their future. Some of them are phenomenal,” Delacour said. “If they are going to run the world, it’s in good shape.”