

2006 HONOREE

## Anne Ferlito

Moreland Hills Elementary School, Pepper Pike, OH  
Primary Elementary Education • 2nd Grade



**Years Teaching:** 21

**Average Class Size:** 20

**Classes Taught Per Day:** N/A

**School's % of ESL Students:** 2%

**School Type:** Public, Suburban

**Type of Class:** Self-contained

“Colleagues often ask how I ‘fit in’ the project work I do with students. The answer is, I use my time as carefully as I can. I watch my students. If they are not engaged in the work we are doing, I ask myself ‘why not?’ I talk to my students; I use their ideas, and together, we stay focused and co-construct our knowledge. We document our learning and revisit ideas together. My ‘open’ classroom, where students are moving about and making choices from a menu of work options is often noisier and may look ‘less structured’ than a typical room. I have found myself defending my ideals of what ‘structure’ is defined to be in my situation. I believe that the students who appear to need the most ‘structure’ in their day are often the ones who find happiness and peace inside my walls. Their ability to choose what to do first and move to spaces of comfort may seem ‘unstructured,’ but in reality, the ‘structure’ of our collaborative community and expectations for independence, productivity, and self-control apart from teacher-control are probably not as visible to someone who has not spent time learning with us.”

“I believe my students come to me already full of wisdom, theories, and knowledge. It is my responsibility to figure out what each child already knows about the content I must teach before I begin. We make large ‘webs’ on our white board, drawing connecting lines and arrows to illustrate our knowledge. Children challenge each other’s thinking



and raise questions about the ideas that don’t seem to have any easy conclusions. That is where we begin our work. Once I am free from my role as instructor, I can move about or pull students to me to re-teach and collect information for my next steps.”

“I have had numerous opportunities to observe Mrs. Ferlito’s instructional expertise as well as her genuine care and concern for children, both of which come shining through everything she does. In my eyes, Anne Ferlito exemplifies the best in the teaching profession. She is a master teacher who constantly reflects on her own learning, and uses that knowledge to enrich the education and the life experiences of her students, her families, and her fellow educators.”

– Marc C. Haag, principal,  
Moreland Hills Elementary School

### OTHER HIGHLIGHTS:

Orange Teacher of the Year (2004) • Radio Disney Award (2003) •  
National Board Certification (2003)