

Joan Hurley has been an educator in Connecticut for 18 years. She began her teaching career in Hartford, teaching for one year at Parkville and 12 years at R.J. Kinsella Community School in the Sheldon Charter Oak neighborhood. She has taught second and third grades for CREC since 2001, serving students at University of Hartford Magnet School from seven districts, including Hartford. This year, with Parent Choice, she now teaches students from throughout the greater Hartford region. Joan loves the diversity represented by the magnet school population and believes magnet schools are the cornerstone to creating a more connected society, one in which each child, no matter their circumstance, will benefit from the increased chances in life a magnet school supports and sustains.

Joan is not only a dedicated teacher, she is dedicated to education, embracing and practicing current research in her classroom and school. She has been involved in HOT Schools with the CT Commission on Culture and Tourism for eleven years. Her beliefs in constructivist theory and cognitive science have led her to be a passionate advocate for arts and academics-infused instruction and an inquiry-based approach to teaching and learning. Human beings process information in multiple ways. Students should be taught to notice connections and examine relationships between concepts, to demonstrate their new learning visually, musically, kinesthetically, as well as verbally, mathematically and in writing. Joan believes that skills and strategies should not be taught in isolation, but rather in service to big ideas.

Joan believes that public school educators contribute to the greater good of society. She has said, “It is our impact on today’s children that will influence tomorrow’s world. Our efforts, our stamina, are driven by the hope—the conviction—that we can build resilience and make a difference in the lives of human beings. What we do is research-based idealism. I love what we do.”

Joan lives in Southington with her husband, Jim McGetrick, also an educator, their bright and delightful two-year-old son, Daniel, and their criminal genius dog, Molly.