

Long-time Peculiar Elementary School principal plans to retire to Colorado

Rob Weida did not go straight into teaching, but after changing paths, his entire education career has been in the Ray-Pec School District.

He earned bachelor degrees in criminal justice and physical education from St. Cloud State University in St. Cloud, Minn., while also playing hockey for the university. "I had a blast doing that!" he said. After graduation, he worked as a youth counselor at Crittendon Psychiatric Hospital and Residential Treatment Center and in specialty retail management for Foot Locker.

"I had wonderful teachers and administrators as a child and always had a desire to follow the footsteps of those wonderful people," he said. "It just took me a while to mature to a point that I would be able to do for others what those teachers/administrators did for me."

Weida obtained his elementary teaching certification at Central Missouri State University, his master's in teaching from Webster University, and his education specialist degree in elementary school administration from CMSU.

He began working for Ray-Pec by teaching fourth grade at Shull Elementary School from January 1993 to May 1994. He then taught fourth grade at Raymore Elementary from 1994 to 1998. He was named Assistant Principal at Peculiar Elementary for the 1998-1999 school year, and then became school principal in 1999. Over his years in the District, his sons, Dan and Joe, attended and graduated from Ray-Pec. His wife, Kelley, works for the District. Currently, she is the Administrative Assistant at Shull Early Learning Center.

"I know it sounds cliché, but my fondest memories are of all the wonderful people I have worked with throughout the years, students, families and staff," Weida said. "Being able to help so many people learn and grow has been a huge blessing in my life."

"I am most proud of our school earning the award in 2015 as the Kindest School in the greater Kansas City area," he said.

What's next for Weida?

After retirement, Weida and his wife, Kelley, are moving to Winter Park, Colo., to ski, skate, mountain bike, hike, and enjoy the culture of a small mountain community.

"I love the Ray-Pec community, but I don't think I could live here and not go to Peculiar Elementary every day," he said.