

# like MOTHER like DAUGHTER

Tara Vereyken and Misha Stempel take on teaching mathematics and biology respectively as a family. *Story & Design by Aanika Valliani*

**S**tempel and Vereyken are valued members of the teaching staff, being seasoned veterans with 34 and 16 years of experience each. But what you may not know is that they are family, keeping the teaching spirit alive.

Stempel knew early on in her childhood that teaching was for her.

"A lot of little girls play house," Stempel said. "When I was little, I played school and I was always the teacher. My dad had built for my sister and me a two-story playhouse in our backyard and that's where I'd have school."

As a teenager, Vereyken was given a unique insight into the teaching profession through her stepmother. Stempel obviously loved her craft and the impact it had on the upcoming generation.

However, Vereyken's journey was the opposite: throughout her teenage years, she had no interest in pursuing that career. She was very passionate about

biological sciences and planned to major in them when pursuing a college education.

"I enjoyed a lot of the sciences, and I wanted a career where I could apply that every day," Vereyken said. "If you told my younger self that I would be teaching, I would not have believed you."

While the road was unexpected, Vereyken has become just as passionate about her job and her students as her stepmother.

"If a kid is like 'you know, this is really hard for me and I don't necessarily like it, but I love coming every day,' then that's half the battle."

Of course, teaching can be a taxing job, with busy work schedules balancing office hours with prepping curricula. With such a hectic schedule, Stempel and Vereyken often have very brief interactions throughout the day.

However, their bond has only grown stronger as they tackle the challenges of being a high school teacher with the support of one another.

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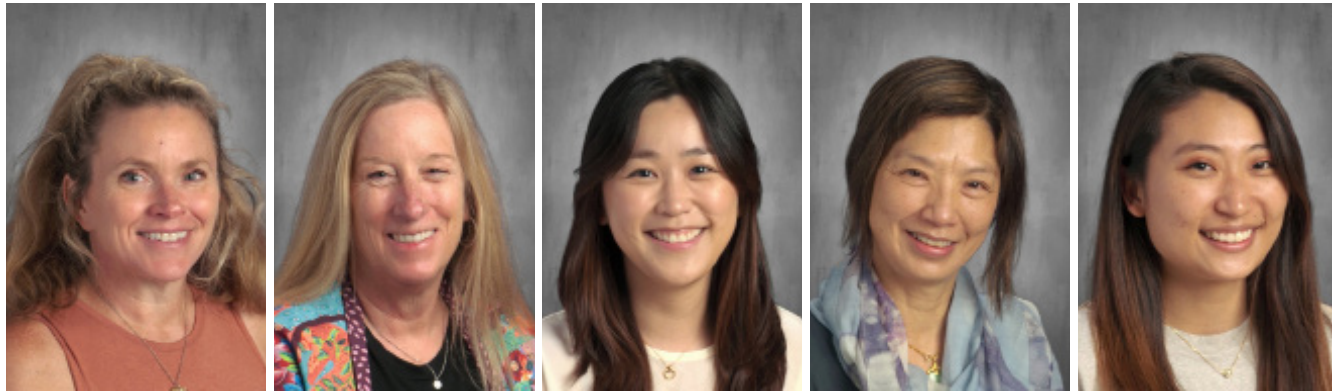
**MISHA STEMPEL**



POSING AT THE Giants' game, Misha Stempel and Tara Vereyken enjoy quality time away from the classroom.

*Photo courtesy of Misha Stempel*

Karla Larson | Counselor  
Kindel Launer | English  
Mia Lee | Mental Health Therapist  
Wai-Ping Lee | Instructional Aide  
Young Ju Lee | Mathematics



Nicole Loomis | Science  
Kristine Ludemann | Academic Technology  
Michael Lupoli | Science  
Virginia Mainville | Special Education  
Eva Martinez | Mental Health Specialist



Victoria Mataele | Special Education  
Melinda Mattes | Psychology  
Eileen McCarthy | Special Education  
Theresa McDermott | Culinary Arts  
Keola McDonald | Mental Health and Wellness Associate



Kate McKenzie | Art  
Gabrielle McQueen | Mental Health Therapist  
Randolph Mercado | Mathematics  
Gregory Miller | Music  
Hector Mora | School Psychologist



Sheri Mulroe | Physical Education  
Michael Najar | Music, Audio Production  
Daniel Nguyen | Mathematics  
Erik Olah | Assistant Principal  
Apryl Pascua | Special Education



David Peters | Mathematics  
Thomas Peters | Mathematics  
Tap Phou | Custodian  
Bernard Pineda | Custodian  
Elizabeth Poux | Case Manager



Katie Elder | English  
Hunter Reardon | English  
Jillian Restivo | Guidance Counselor  
Alicia Rodriguez | Special Education  
Richard Rodriguez | English