

AWLA Featured Member

KIM DAVIS

Tuscaloosa County High School



*** What do you teach and where?**

French 1-4 at Tuscaloosa County High School, Northport, AL

*** I'm known for ... my zany energy in class and talking about my pets (2 cats and a dog). Somehow, my students all know the French words for cat and dog.**

*** I'm currently addicted to ... 18th century dresses. I've started researching and making my own 18th century dresses. Last fall, I completed my first robe à la française which is the dress most people think of when they think of that time period.**

*** I can't do without ... the three C's: coffee, chocolate, and cheese, especially stinky French cheeses. Also, I can't live without my pets, Ziggy, Alex, and Bailey.**

*** I find joy ... in my students. Teaching can be tough, but forming strong relationships with students means that we get to celebrate their successes.**

*** Favorite teaching moment is ... when I see the light in a student's face, because they have interacted with the language in a real, authentic way. I love to celebrate when they can read a book on their own. I love their excitement when they have found a new singer or Instagrammer in French. Sometimes, they interact with French speakers either in real life or on the internet. I love seeing their pride and enthusiasm when they have these authentic interactions.**

*** I'm working on ... advocating for the Seal of Biliteracy in my district and once it's adopted, implementing it. I am also working on a guide for including reflection portfolios in the curriculum that prompt students to recount their experiences in a language class. I'm also reflecting on ways that I can support rural schools in the state since I came from a rural area and know the challenges that languages face.**

*** Advice for a new teacher... go to conferences and learn from a wide variety of teachers. Get involved with teachers in your district and online. Read blogs. Make teacher mentors from the language department, but also in other content areas. Finally, be kind to yourself. You can't build Rome in one year, so pick one or two things that you will do really well in your first year, and then continue building your skills each year.**

*** I admire ... everything Tina Hargaden is doing to innovate in the language classroom. I also will always admire my mentor from the University of Alabama, Dr. Russell McCutcheon, who is one of the greatest teachers I have ever worked with. He taught me how to be a good teacher, but also, how to be a professional in my discipline.**

*** I love teaching because... I get to work with students. Teenagers are a great age, and since I teach all 4 levels, it is really special to get to follow students from their freshman year to graduation.**

*** I'm most creative ...when I'm collaborating in the story creation process with my students. When we find the flow, we really make magic. Also, I'm most creative when I'm working with a team of teachers committed to student-first pedagogy.**