Press Release
For immediate release: May 16, 2017

Nikki Merrick
Certificated Employee of the Year
Cupertino High School

Nikki Merrick was named Cupertino High School Certificated Employee of the Year by the Fremont Union High School District Board of Trustees at its meeting on March 21, 2017. Nikki began her teaching career at Cupertino in 1996, where she was hired to teach World Literature as part of the Core team. From 2007 to 2010, Nikki stepped out of the classroom to serve as a New Teacher Advisor, working with new teachers at Cupertino, Homestead and Fremont high schools and in the Middle College Program. Over the course of her career, she has taught ELD 2, Sheltered World Literature, 9th grade Literature and Writing, World Literature, American Literature, American Literature Honors and AP Literature.

Nikki is grateful for the opportunity to journey through literature and complex ideas with her students, all while collaborating with thoughtful, passionate educators at Cupertino. She says that every day and class period brings new insights, questions and laughter. Nikki appreciates that no two days in her profession are the same and that she has a front seat to the evolution in thinking and writing that occurs in her students over the course of a school year.

Diagnosed with breast cancer in March 2016, Nikki had to take a medical leave of absence from the classroom last Spring. She shared, "I feel so incredibly fortunate to work at a school where I was so supported by my colleagues, students and PTA. I feel so fortunate to get to do this important work at such a wonderful school."

Principal Kami Tomberlain shared that, "Nikki is one of the best teachers I've ever known – and I've been in this business a long time. She is witty and wise, warm and demanding, engaging and caring." Another colleague praised Nikki by saying, "Watching Nikki in the classroom is like watching a seminar on good teaching. And when you talk to Nikki about teaching she doesn't talk in teacher-speak, or platitudes, her insights are so valuable and applicable. She is no-nonsense about what this job takes and yet her enthusiasm for it is infectious and she reminds you how much you love this job."

Nikki was born in Heidelberg, Germany and raised in Santa Clara, CA. As a Cupertino High School alum from the Class of 1988, she remembers her high school years as filled with the laughter of friends and the sounds of great music. Nikki went on to graduate from San Jose State University in 1995, receiving her teaching credential the following year. She loves to spend time with family and friends, read, shop, eat and travel. Nikki and her husband Greg, a fellow Cupertino High School teacher and curriculum lead, have been married for 15 years after meeting as colleagues at CHS. They have two beautiful daughters, Olivia (14) and Kate (12). Their family would not be complete without their beloved pug Franco.