

Iroquois principal retires after 35 years at CV

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By Nicole Tuttle, Voice Reporter



Iroquois Middle School Principal James Capoferi buys a snow cone during lunchroom monitoring duty at Iroquois. Capoferi will retire at the end of this school year after 35 years in the Chippewa Valley School District. Photo by NICOLE TUTTLE

When school gets out for the summer on June 11 in the Chippewa Valley School District, Iroquois Middle School's eighth-graders won't be the only ones moving on from the Macomb Township school.

On April 28, it was announced at a Chippewa Valley Board of Education meeting that Iroquois Middle School Principal James Capoferi would be retiring at the end of the school year. Capoferi said that he has been a part of the Chippewa Valley school district for 35 years.

"My first grandchild is on the way, that was one reason I made the big decision to retire at this time," Capoferi said. "We are moving from this area to Grand Rapids."

Capoferi said he began working in the district as a long-term, permanent substitute then picked up a few hours a day working at Clinton Valley Elementary School in Mount Clemens before working as a physical education teacher throughout the district. He next moved on to teaching at Algonquin Middle School in Clinton Township for a year. Capoferi said that after Algonquin, he taught for four years at Wyandot Middle School in Clinton Township. Capoferi said that he became an assistant principal at Iroquois Middle School in 1996 and then, principal in 1997. Capoferi said that he also coached sports such as basketball and baseball during his career but stopped coaching when he became an administrator.

One of the things Capoferi said he has enjoyed most about being principal at Iroquois is when fifth grade orientation to middle school rolls around. In March he visits schools that feed into Iroquois, such as Fox, Mohawk and Sequoyah, to read to fifth-graders as part of March is Reading month. This serves as a way to get to know the fifth-grade students and answer some preliminary questions about middle school, Capoferi said. Fifth-graders also get an opportunity to tour Iroquois under the guidance of Junior Honor Society members during April, and parents of fifth-graders also have an orientation to prepare their students for the transition.

“I will miss the kids and the staff,” Capoferi said. “Middle school kids are unique. They are at that point where they are starting to make adult choices. ... I have been fortunate to work with teachers and many people who enjoy middle school students. I like the fact that they are open to learning and want to try different things. I love their spontaneity and good sense of humor. All of those things interest me.”

Capoferi said that he plans to take time off when he retires but in the future could consider another job in a field outside of education.

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