

About Ms. Dennison

Welcome to a once in a lifetime learning adventure! This year marks my 6th year at Gateway and nearly a dozen years teaching. I became a teacher because I love learning, and while this is a bit like a high dive into deep water, I love being in the company of students and we are jumping in together!

Communication Arts is the broad term that more accurately covers my teaching career. Here at Gateway, I currently teach freshmen in ELA I and all levels in journalism, including publication of our yearbook. In other districts, I have taught ELA, Speech & Debate, and Drama at both the high school and middle school level. I also have teaching credentials in Journalism, Special Education, and as a Library Media Specialist.

A long career in professional creative production led me to teach media arts and technical theatre while in Los Angeles, where every student aspired to stardom and many adults had a draft of a screenplay. I found I truly enjoyed guiding young people, but I also discovered a real need to teach the elements of storytelling and help them analyze what has come before and compare classics to how stories are developed and shared now.

So, *years* after University of Illinois (theatre) and Webster University (media/film), I went back to school to get my teaching certification in English at California Lutheran University. Having children of my own brought me back to my home state of Missouri and extended family. While my two boys were still toddlers, I completed my Master's degree in Teaching and Missouri English certification at Lindenwood University. At this point, my students usually say, "Wow, you must really like school," to which I respond, "I really like students---*you!*"

Yes, we are all students! I became a teacher because I love learning and my great hope for my students is that they become lifelong learners too!