



### **Kelley Berryman - Kindergarten**

With arms outstretched, Kelley Berryman weaves through orange cones, tracing the figure eights her kindergartners will follow on their bikes. "You'll come over here, turn, and then come around here," she explains. It's the annual bike rodeo and even though she's been teaching Kindergarten for 15 years at Topeka Collegiate, Mrs. Berryman seems as excited as the children.

Making sure children are excited about learning is one of Mrs. Berryman's primary goals in Kindergarten, along with helping the children become more independent and nurturing their creativity and imagination. "I make sure they want to be learners," she says, "by highlighting what they do well and figuring out what makes each student succeed and progress." The growth from the beginning to the end of Kindergarten is striking and hugely rewarding. "Children who are just learning to put sounds together in the fall," she says, "are reading the books they've written in front of family and friends at the end of the year. There are always tears in my eyes on that day. All the little successes add up to one big one. They are so proud!"

In 2010, the graduating class presented Kelley Berryman its Lower School teaching award. "She made everything so fun to learn," they said. "Even after we moved on she

continued to teach us and it always felt like she was our teacher." Mrs. Berryman considers herself lucky to have the opportunity to watch her students as they move up through the grades. "Many of them still give me hugs," she smiles. "Every child is special and unique and they make me proud and excited to be their teacher! I always marvel at all of the amazing talents that they all have and I love watching them flourish as they mature and grow throughout their years at TCS and beyond."

One of the things those older students remember about Mrs. B's class is her singing. "This is your lucky day," she'll announce and then launch into an impromptu song, rhyming words to a made-up tune. The songs keep the children focused, make them laugh, remind them to line up or quiet down - anything, really. Four years ago, when Mrs. Berryman's father died after a long illness, it was her students who helped ease her grief. "They kept me smiling!" she says.