

# THE HISTORY OF STEPPING STONES ACADEMY

## THE TALE OF STEPPING STONES ACADEMY

Once upon a time there lived two teachers who dreamed of a school filled with happy children, caring teachers, and supportive parents. One day the two teachers decided to make their dream come true, so they spent the next two years designing their school. They built a small and inviting campus, chose a high quality and challenging educational program, and hired certified and dedicated staff members. The teachers dreamed of a school where everyone knew each other, so they established small class sizes and limited campus enrollment to 205 students. They envisioned a safe and friendly environment, so they adopted a strict code of conduct where children worked together as team members and friends. They imagined children understanding why school is important, so they used special programs to make class lessons relevant to job, social, and life skills. Finally, on September 7, 1999, the teachers' dream became real, when Stepping Stones Academy opened its doors for the first time. And the two teachers, with all of the children, parents, and teachers, lived happily ever after!



## MEET THE FOUNDERS

AnnMarie Short and Dedre Alliger founded Stepping Stones Academy in 1999. After two years of planning, their dream became reality when they opened a school with small class sizes; high academic standards; application of academics to job, social, and life skills; and a partnership between the school and families. Mrs. Short and Mrs. Alliger serve as school principals at Stepping Stones Academy.

Mrs. Short taught for 9 years before becoming principal. She graduated from ASU West with a dual major in Elementary and Special Education and then earned her Master's Degree in Counseling from NAU. Mrs. Short lives in Peoria with her daughter, Emma.

Mrs. Alliger graduated from Central College in Iowa with a B.A. in English Education and minors in Reading, Journalism, and Psychology. She taught for 17 years before becoming principal. She lives in Peoria with her husband, Dennis, and children, Caleb and Courtney.