

## Betty Hainsfurther

*Arie Crown Hebrew Day School*

Hartman Family Foundation Educator of the Year Awardee

If you were to ask Betty Hainsfurther how she got into the field of education, she would tell you it is the family business. Betty grew up in suburban Columbus, Ohio, as the child of teachers. She loved math but wasn't sure she wanted to continue the tradition of teaching. Therefore, she double majored in elementary education and dental hygiene at Ohio State University and began her professional career as a pediatric dental hygienist. Three years later, Betty moved to Chicago to work on a Master's Degree in Public Health from the University of Illinois-Chicago. Upon graduation, she went to work for the American Dental Association, speaking at professional dental meetings around the country. (Yes, in a way, you could call that teaching.) It wasn't until 1996, when the director of her synagogue's religious school asked Betty to come and teach *t'filot* and religious studies, that she realized the classroom was, indeed, her home.

After 11 years of teaching Hebrew school and substitute teaching in the Highland Park public schools, Betty returned to school herself, graduating from National Louis University with a Masters of Arts in teaching and a middle school endorsement. She began substituting at Arie Crown Hebrew Day School in January of 2010, and was quickly offered a job for the following year. Her first three years at Arie Crown were spent teaching American History, and in 2013, she became a seventh grade math teacher. If you asked Betty the best part of teaching, she would quickly tell you it's the relationships she has built with her students.

Betty lives in Highland Park with her husband, Tripp. They have two children, Sara, who continues in the family business, as a special education teacher in Chicago, and Adam, a multi-media news producer in Washington, D.C.