



Terry Littleton

February 8, 1948 - December 11, 2018

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Terry Littleton of Ashland, Oregon, a champion for public school education, passed away from cancer on December 11, 2018. She left this life the way she lived it, with grace and courage. Her family and friends were by her side.

Terry's career in education included work in outdoor education for low income children, elementary school teaching, public schools administration, and service on the Ashland School Board.

A native of Monterey, California, Terry was the second of seven children born to Emilee Boone Murphree and Dr. Harold C. Murphree. Her father's career as a surgeon in the U.S. Army took Terry and her family to California, Washington, Germany, New York, New Jersey, Maryland, Hawaii, and back to California. Terry graduated from George Washington High School in San Francisco in 1966 and the University of California Santa Cruz (UCSC) in 1970.

At UCSC she studied political science and international relations and was active in many of the social movements of the 1960s and 1970s, especially movements to support social justice, environmental protection, women's rights, and educational reform. She and her UCSC classmates developed and ran one of the first programs in California focused on providing outdoor education for children from low income families. Her work in these movements helped lead her to her career in education.

Terry earned her master's degree in education and teaching certificate from UCSC in 1971. She worked as an elementary school teacher in Watsonville, California and in Brookline, Massachusetts before getting her Ph.D. in educational administration from the University of Texas at Austin.

While working as an administrator for the Corpus Christi, Texas public schools, she met her husband to be, Vance Littleton, a retired US Navy officer who was also a public school administrator. Terry and Vance were both committed to equal opportunity education, and worked to implement desegregation policies in their district. They moved to California where Terry became Superintendent of the Cotati-Rohnert Park School District. In 1992, the Littleton family, now including children Sam and Eliza, made Ashland their permanent home.

Both Terry and Vance quickly became involved in the Ashland community as classroom volunteers, coaches, and mentors. Terry worked on the Ashland School District's Board of Directors during 1996-2004 and served as both chair and vice-chair. Her service on the Board was grounded in her deep commitment to student success and her support of the staff that served the students. She was always a voice of calm and caring as the Board grappled with the problems of declining enrollment and revenue. Terry was the board representative for collective bargaining during her entire tenure, and was well respected by the teachers she worked with. Terry's greatest gift to the school district was creating a culture of respect and understanding of the views and needs of the district's diverse stakeholders.

Both she and Vance were wonderful parents who supported and were involved in their children's numerous activities. After many happy and fulfilling years together, Vance passed away in 2012.

Terry will be remembered not only for her warmth, wit, kindness and intellect, but for her numerous talents and interests. She read widely and was active in several book clubs and a weekly Spanish study group, she enjoyed being in nature and traveling with family and friends, and shared her talents as a knitter, cook, and gardener in thoughtful gifts. Terry was gracious and generous, creating special dishes for gatherings of family and friends, mentoring young women in the community as well as her nieces, and being a supportive friend when someone was in need. Whatever she undertook, Terry did it well and with panache.

Terry's children and siblings are her son Sam (Portland, OR), daughter Eliza (Medford, OR), sister Gwyn (Napa, CA), and brothers Harold Mark (deceased), Tom (Monterey, CA), Eric (Tigard, OR), Carl (Marshall, MO), and Phil (Gillette, WY). Terry is and will be deeply missed by all of her family and her many dear friends.

No services are planned. Memorial contributions may be made to the Ashland Schools

Foundation (<http://www.ashlandschoolsfoundation.org/>).