



Cindy Taylor

Pittsfield, MA

Within minutes of meeting Cindy Taylor, she envelops you in her energy field and asks myriad questions that reveal common commitments and experiences. Perhaps it is her insatiable curiosity, her genuine desire to know people, or her skill as a teacher, but Taylor is always building community, especially for the vulnerable.

As a child Taylor lived in Detroit, Michigan with her grandparents, a doctor and a teacher. Her grandfather opened the first free medical clinic in Detroit to serve patients without access to medical care. This commitment to society's most vulnerable members fuels Taylor's service. While energized by working with vulnerable individuals, Taylor also builds and transforms institutions that serve others.

Taylor was on the board of directors that created Berkshire County Kids' Place - a non-profit agency for abused children. It was a pioneering project. Berkshire County Kids' Place's interview room was revolutionary because a child only had to recount abuse one time behind a two-way mirror where multiple agency representatives could listen to the interview simultaneously.

An elected member of Pittsfield's School Committee for six years, Taylor has represented Pittsfield with state legislators reforming the state education funding formula. Taylor's list of education priorities in Pittsfield is long but her particular concerns for the district's 5,600 students are science, technology, engineering, and math (STEM), and arts education. Taylor works with the Berkshires' many theatres, museums, and arts organizations to bring art into the classroom and to provide after school arts programs. As a museum docent, Taylor sees firsthand the way exposure to art raises fascinating questions for children.

Taylor started her career as a reading and social studies teacher and she is still fascinated by how children learn. An avid follower of the newest research in cognitive science, Taylor wants children to gain knowledge but also to master their own learning style.

Cindy Taylor knows her learning style. In this third stage of her life, she continues to be energized by her engagement with others and the fascinating worlds they inhabit.

Photography: Susan Geller

Words: Katherine Kidd