



Yoncalla School District Names Hanna Drennen as New Elementary Principal

Yoncalla, Ore. — The Yoncalla School District has announced the hiring of Hanna Drennen as the new principal of Yoncalla Elementary School for the 2026-27 school year. A Yoncalla resident with five years of classroom experience, Drennen brings a background rooted in elementary education and a commitment to community-centered leadership.

Drennen has taught across multiple grade levels, including one year each in first and second grade and three years in third grade. District leaders noted her varied classroom experience and familiarity with early elementary instruction as key strengths as she steps into the leadership role.

A graduate of Days Creek High School, Drennen began her post-secondary education at Umpqua Community College, where she earned an Associate of Arts Oregon Transfer degree in Elementary Education. She later transferred to Pacific University, completing a Bachelor of Education with a focus on teaching and English Language Learning.

In addition to her undergraduate work, Drennen has completed a P-3 Leadership Certificate through the University of Colorado and is currently finishing her master's degree while working toward her Principal Administrator Licensure.

During a recent interview, Drennen expressed enthusiasm about the opportunity to lead Yoncalla Elementary and emphasized her philosophy of building a strong, unified school community.

"My leadership philosophy is centered on cultivating unity through belonging, empowering aspiration, and creating lasting impact for students, staff, and the broader community," Drennen said. "I believe strong leadership is grounded in authenticity, trust, and meaningful relationships."

She described her approach as one that prioritizes collaboration and a shared commitment to student success, highlighting the importance of creating an environment where students, educators, and families feel connected and valued.

"I believe deeply in a community school model where education is a shared responsibility," she said. "Student growth is strongest when we work in true partnership, building consistent communication and shared expectations that support the whole child."

Drennen said she plans to focus on developing intentional systems and strengthening relationships to ensure every student is both supported and challenged. Her approach includes fostering academic achievement alongside social and emotional development.

For Drennen, student success extends beyond academic performance. "It means every child is growing in ways that reflect their individual strengths, needs, and potential," she explained. "It's about students feeling a strong sense of belonging, believing in their ability to learn, and developing confidence to take on new challenges."

Looking ahead, Drennen said she hopes to build on Yoncalla Elementary's existing strengths by deepening collaboration among families, educators, and community partners. She emphasized the importance of clear communication, shared expectations, and alignment across grade levels.

"A key priority will be fostering unity so students experience consistency in expectations, language, and support throughout their school experience," she said. "When systems are aligned and relationships are strong, students feel a greater sense of belonging and are more successful."

Drennen also underscored the vital role families and community members play in education. "Parents are the first and most important educators in a child's life," she said. "When schools and families work together with trust and shared purpose, students are better able to thrive."

She added that partnerships with local organizations and community members can help extend learning beyond the classroom and provide students with meaningful real-world connections.

Outside of school, Drennen said she looks forward to continuing her active involvement in the Yoncalla community. She enjoys exploring estate sales and antique shops, spending time outdoors, and supporting local community and school activities.

"I value being part of the community," she said. "You'll often see me at local events, youth activities, or cheering on students and families at school and sports gatherings."

District officials expressed confidence that Drennen's leadership style and local ties will help strengthen Yoncalla Elementary's culture and support student success in the years ahead.