



**Heather Anderson**  
Bend-La Pine Schools  
Oregon Teacher of the Year  
2016

## **II. Educational History and Professional Development Activities**

### **A. Education**

Johns Hopkins University, Graduate Certificate: The Professional Teacher (2005)

George Fox University, Masters of Arts in Teaching (2001)

Oregon State University, Bachelor of Arts: Options in Education and Social Studies (2000)

Oregon State University, Global Graduates Program, Guadalajara, Mexico (1999)

### **B. Employment History**

- 4<sup>th</sup> grade teacher at Juniper Elementary School in Bend, OR (2012-present)
- 4<sup>th</sup>, 6<sup>th</sup>, 7<sup>th</sup>, 8<sup>th</sup> grade Language arts, social studies, Spanish and reading intervention teacher at Three Rivers K-8 School in Sunriver, OR (2007-2011)
- Literacy coach and 6<sup>th</sup> grade world studies teacher at Parkland Magnet Middle School for Aerospace Technology in Rockville, MD (2006-2007)
- Adjunct Professor for the Graduate School of Education at The George Washington University in Washington D.C. (2006-2007)
- 5<sup>th</sup> grade teacher at JoAnn Leleck Elementary School at Broad Acres in Silver Spring, MD (2001-2006)

### **C. Professional Associations and Activities**

- National Education Association (2001-present)
- Oregon Education Association (2008-present)
- Bend Education Association (2008-present)
- Oregon Education Association: National Board Core Team (2014-present)
- Training Coordinator for Oregon Accomplished Teachers: (2014-present)
- Washington DC Area Cadre of Teacher Leadership (2006-2007)
- Executive Member of National Board Network of Maryland (2005-2007)
- Maryland Education Association (2001-2007)
- Montgomery County Education Association (2001-2007)

#### **D. Leadership Activity and Training Future Teachers**

- District trainer for elementary English language arts for Bend-La Pine Schools (2011-Present)
- District support provider for Bend-La Pine Schools National Board candidates (2011-Present)
- Oregon Education Association trainer for National Board candidates in Oregon (2014-Present)
- Committee chair, Professional Advancement System, Bend-La Pine Schools (2014-Present)
- Instructional coach and curriculum leader for Bend-La Pine Schools (2013-Present)
- Co-Facilitator, language arts Common Core State Standards task force (2011-2013)
- Member of Bend-La Pine Schools writing focus team (2008-2010)
- National Board candidate support coach in Montgomery County, MD (2005-2007)
- Montgomery County Schools teacher trainings: Big ideas in science, summarizing strategies and team teaching (2005-2007)
- Presenter at National Board Network of Maryland conference (2006-2007)
- State test writing for Ohio Achievement Test: American Research Institute (2004)
- Grade 5 team leader at JoAnn Leleck Elementary at Broad Acres, MD (2004-2006)
- Participated in the Teaching American History program at the Smithsonian Institute (2003)
- Created training videos for new teachers in Montgomery County Schools, MD (2002)

#### **E. Awards/Recognition**

- Oregon State University Cascades spokesperson: "We Believe" campaign (2015)
- Bend-La Pine Schools Teacher of the Year (2014)
- Bend-La Pine Schools Excellence in Education award (2014)
- Featured in Harvard study: *Closing the Achievement Gap* (2001-2006)
- National Board Certified teacher (2005)
- Featured on U.S. Department of Education's TV program: *Education News Parents Can Use* (2004)

### III: Professional Biography

I have always had a desire to help others and I love working with children. My mother and my grandmother, both teachers, greatly influenced my decision to become a teacher. My grandmother taught in a one-room schoolhouse in northern New York during the Great Depression. My mother, a retired music teacher, taught in Bend-La Pine Schools and Corvallis School District for more than 30 years. I grew up helping in my mom's classroom and assisting with musical performances. As a high school student in 1994, I served as a cadet teacher at Bear Creek Elementary, which is the same school I attended and is the school my son currently attends. In 1995-1996, my senior year at Bend Senior High School, I worked with Spanish teacher Bonnie Elliott to develop and teach Spanish enrichment programs to third-graders at several Bend elementary schools. Bonnie Elliott inspired me with her passion for learning and empowered me to become a strong teacher by training me and trusting me at the age of 17 to help students.

In the winter of 1999, I was accepted in Oregon State University's Global Graduates program and became a student teacher abroad. I was placed in Guadalajara, Mexico, in a fifth-grade classroom. Soon after I arrived, my cooperating teacher quit, so I took over the class. During my time in Mexico, I experienced incredible growth as an educator. I had to persevere every day to learn Spanish fluently, manage a classroom, and build relationships with students, while finding a way through the basics of teaching. During this time I discovered the joy of hard work, grit, dedication, and accomplishment in a challenging situation. I also learned the joy of teaching children to read! By teaching these children to read, I was able to unlock a world of literary characters and introduce them to new and exciting information. This experience was a powerful influence in my decision to become a teacher.

My greatest accomplishment in education is empowering children to become thriving lifelong learners. I am a firm believer in the phrase, "Where there is a will, there is a way," and I teach my students that **effective effort + strategies = success**. I motivate children by

building strong relationships, emphasizing hard work and celebrating success. I build strong rapport with my students that stresses hard work resulting in intrinsic rewards. I help all students by scaffolding or extending their learning so that they can meet their goals and work even harder to reach higher levels. My students believe they can succeed, both in school and in their future careers.

As a lifelong learner, I have always tried to integrate new ideas and technology into my teaching to motivate and empower students. In my classes at both Three Rivers School and Juniper Elementary School, I have integrated technology into almost every aspect of learning, which resulted in incredible growth in student achievement.

Starting in the 2013-14 school year, all my students have iPads, with regular access to laptop computers. Students learn to translate their finished writing pieces into stop motion movies and use iMovie, as well as Keynote, to produce research projects. I built a green screen that students can transform with backgrounds from other time periods or historic events. This is an effective tool to make history and science come alive. Students share their knowledge by creating their own Keynote presentations, iMovies, movie trailers, and other digital art with technology. They demonstrate understanding of content and standards by teaching others using tools on their iPad. I want my students to be leaders in the use of technology to enhance learning.

#### **IV: Community Involvement**

I am proud to be part of this amazing community, teaching now in the same town where I was raised. I want students to show pride in where they are from by giving back to their community. Each year, my fourth-graders have the opportunity to learn to knit during recess. I enlist volunteers and together we teach the students to knit hats. Students use reading skills to follow the directions. The students knit many hats, which we then donate to the Neonatal Intensive Care Unit (NICU) at St. Charles Hospital. Community members donate the materials that we use for this project: about 100 skeins of yarn a year, as well as looms, needles and other knitting tools. Many students teach family members how to knit hats and continue knitting as a family activity long after the school year has concluded.

In 2014-2015, I had a student in my class who needed a liver transplant. Camila was born with a rare protein issue and spent most of her life on the list for a liver. In the spring of her fourth grade year, she finally made it to the top of the liver transplant list. Before the surgery, I led a fundraising campaign for Camila through our school and her church. We had a breakfast at her church, bingo night at school, a raffle, an online fund, and \$1 hat days where kids were able to donate to Camila. In total we raised more than \$7,000 for her family during this difficult time. It was amazing to see people work together to support a child in need. Today she is a healthy preteen, and it is a joy to watch her grow and thrive!

My husband I volunteer in our community by facilitating a Bilingual Cub Scout troop. This group is made up of both Spanish- and English-speaking boys from two high-poverty schools who are entering second grade. We meet several times a month and go on field trips, complete team-building activities and learn life lessons. As scout leaders, we hope to teach the boys to be trustworthy, loyal, helpful, friendly, courteous, kind, obedient, cheerful, and brave, while fostering friendships. Volunteering with the Cub Scouts has been a rewarding opportunity to guide children outside the classroom.

## **V: Philosophy of Teaching**

Teachers have the most important job in the world: we shape the minds of the next generation. All children have the right to an exceptional education. All children can learn, grow and succeed. I believe it is important for teachers to be lifelong learners, to reflect on the teaching practice and to be empowered, well trained and appreciated. I believe that all students can learn with systematic, thoughtful instruction and through building a strong relationship with their teacher so they feel secure to take academic risks.

In my classroom, students are part of a safe learning environment. I work hard to foster strong relationships with students and emphasize teamwork skills by modeling respectful behavior and requiring respect for all adults and students. My classroom behavior expectations are positive, clear and attainable for students. And I have found they are best supported by partnerships between parents and me, so I make sure we have ongoing two-way communication.

My classroom is a positive work environment. Students are confident, unafraid to take risks in order to learn something new. Students are empowered as we celebrate successes encourage each other to always exert our best effort, no matter what the task.

I use developmentally appropriate strategies in my classroom. Fourth-graders are moving from concrete to abstract concepts and still need hands-on experiences to make the learning meaningful. We use manipulatives, both digital and three-dimensional, in solving math problems. All students need time to process, think about and share their math insights as they learn new concepts, so we use structured protocols to ensure all students have equal voice. Using math manipulatives and structured talk time helps students to learn to work cooperatively, as well as how to agree/disagree with others in a productive manner. The protocols we use also help students meet rigorous speaking and listening standards, while allowing all students to share ideas in a safe environment.

Inclusion and acceptance of all students are essential to building a strong classroom community. I support inclusion of all students by providing scaffolds to core instruction. I work hard to meet the needs of multiple learning styles while holding students accountable to high standards. Providing options enables all students to show what they know and understand.

As we all know, parent engagement is critical to classroom success. I communicate with parents via email, classroom website, newsletters, open houses, field trips, and invitations to the classroom several times a year for literacy, technology Showcase Events, and the culminating Juniper Film Festival. I welcome parents as both volunteers and guests. Because I speak Spanish, I am able to communicate with our many Spanish-speaking parents, allowing them to feel at home in our classroom. They also enjoy some good laughs when I misspeak, which is a way to show that we all make mistakes. Each summer, I spend several days at our school district's Lunch and Learn program nearest to Juniper. It is a wonderful opportunity to meet families and emphasize the importance of reading. My own children like to interact with families from my school. I can observe the growth of my previous students and greet incoming students during the summer.

Overall, my educational philosophy is simple: work hard and love every child. I want each child that I teach to be successful in class and in future endeavors. I am tenacious in ensuring students have the skills they need for success. Positive attitude and honesty become important to my students, and they work hard to meet my classroom expectations. The most meaningful part of teaching is getting a letter from former students years after having taught them and discovering that I positively influenced them and provided important skills that have impacted their lives.



## **VI: Education Issues and Trends**

The need for high quality teachers with staying power and proper professional learning opportunities is a significant issue facing schools today. Highly skilled teachers are by far the most important factor in student learning and success. In order to become highly skilled and reflective educators, teachers need to receive relevant professional development throughout their teaching career. The first five years of teaching are the most crucial for school districts to further educate and support their teachers. In addition, another issue we face in our profession is the slow journey teachers make to higher levels of compensation. As a profession, we need to find ways to accelerate compensation for skilled teachers so that salaries are more comparable to those of other professions with similar educational requirements.

The new Bend-La Pine Schools' Professional Advancement System (PAS) is a program whose design and development I am helping to lead. This revolutionary system is designed to align compensation/advancement with demonstrated teaching skill and to provide the high-quality professional learning opportunities teachers need throughout their career. In this new system, teachers will participate in high-quality, differentiated professional learning activities, and then provide evidence of their instructional proficiency, application of professional learning, and the use student achievement data to drive instruction. The structure of the Bend-La Pine Schools PAS consists of three major tiers of salary advancement: Early Career Educator, Professional Level Educator, and Master Level Educator. Advancement through each tier is contingent on submission of a successful Portfolio of Evidence that is reviewed by a panel, a process modeled on National Board Certification. Teachers who show advanced skills can "accelerate" through each of the three tiers. Our teachers, union leaders, building and district administrators have collaboratively designed this program.

Another way to increase and maintain high quality teachers in every classroom is through National Board Certification (NBCT). Numerous studies have shown that having

National Board Certified teachers in classrooms can increase student learning. In collaboration with Oregon Education Association, I support candidates to become highly effective practitioners using the NBCT process. In addition, I help support our teachers in this process. Currently, our district is on track to double the number of NBCT's, both as a result of additional support and active recruiting efforts. It is extremely important to have highly skilled and dedicated teachers in all of our classrooms.

I believe much of the success I have experienced in my career can be linked to two things: first, the ongoing, high-quality professional learning I participated in as a beginning teacher in Montgomery County Public Schools; and second, the collaborative work I have done with teachers in Bend-La Pine Schools, both at my school sites and at the district level.

As the sole teacher of seventh-grade language arts at Three Rivers School from 2006-2011, I needed to reach out to colleagues, not just in the district but throughout the nation, as well. In addition, I had to put into practice the skills I had learned at Broad Acres. The good news is that those efforts were effective in helping my students succeed. We saw the percent of seventh-grade students meeting or exceeding state standards in English language arts jump from 71% to 95% during my tenure (2006-7 to 2010-11).

At Juniper Elementary School, I have worked closely with my intermediate colleagues to help all students be successful. In my math class alone, students meeting or exceeding standards on the Oregon Assessment of Knowledge and Skills (OAKS) math assessments increased from 56% to 70% in a single year. And our collective work at Juniper Elementary School helped us earn Oregon's highest rating of 5 on the Oregon Report Card for the 2013-2014 school year, making us one of the state's Model Schools, the top 10% of Title I schools. Additional key academic highlights from the 2013-14 school year included 6.3 percentage points in ELA, from 75.2% in 12-13 to 81.5% in 13-14 and 5.4 percentage points in Math, from 68.8% in 12-13 to 74.2% in 13-14.

## **VII: The Teaching Profession**

### ***Strengthen Teaching Profession***

I work to strengthen the teaching profession in several ways. I am a literacy leader in our district, training teachers in teaching to Common Core State Standards, ELA standards, text complexity, close reading, literacy programs, opinion writing, narrative writing and informational writing. I also train teachers how to integrate technology into reading, math and writing.

As stated earlier, I am also a committee chair of the district's Professional Advancement System, an innovative way to assess teacher progress based on proficiency and reflective practice, rather than years of service and the accumulation of credits. As teachers grow in their own learning and experience, they need differentiated professional development, support and feedback. This system rewards teachers for being successful, applying professional learning to classroom performance, and giving back to the teaching community by taking on leadership roles and responsibilities.

I also influence the profession by facilitating National Board Candidate support (NBCT) for the teachers that pursue this national professional growth program. I lead a summer Jumpstart program with OEA across the state of Oregon to help prepare teachers for the rigorous expectations of the NBCT process. I also facilitate and coach Bend-La Pine Schools' NBCT candidates in monthly cohort meetings.

### ***Accountability in the Teaching Profession***

Accountability in the teaching profession is not exclusively about test scores. While assessment is important and meaningful to assess our work as a school and a district, I do not believe that high-stakes testing should be the only means of accountability in the teaching profession. Accountability also includes forming trusting relationships with students, motivating children to demonstrate social and academic growth, empowering students and creating

lifelong learners and thriving citizens. These traits are not often reflected in high stakes testing. I believe that teachers need to work hard every day. Our children's futures depend on having strong teachers in every classroom.

Unlike summative assessments, formative assessments are critical to teachers and teams in guiding classroom instruction. Teachers need to assess students and meet their needs, then teach, then reassess and celebrate progress. Teachers need to use data effectively to monitor students and show growth academically during the year.

I believe teachers should also be held accountable for meeting high standards on evaluations. In order to grow, teachers should be analyzing and reflecting on their own teaching practice. I videotape a few lessons each month and then examine the video to determine my strengths and weaknesses. Recording is a powerful tool for teachers, as we don't often notice some aspects of our teaching. I find it helpful to determine areas for improvement. For example, teaching my class of fourth-graders to have meaningful student-to-student conversations in which they disagreed on a topic, such as a debate, was a challenge for me. I began videotaping the process and watched my lessons to improve my skills. I learned to ask more open-ended questions, encourage students to talk to one another and not to me, and used a "talking stick" as a scaffold to teach them how to have a discussion in a polite and effective manner.

### **VIII: National Teacher of the Year**

If I am chosen as the Teacher of the Year, I will spread the message of the importance of having highly skilled teachers in all schools and supporting teachers with relevant professional learning. I spent my first 5 years of teaching at JoAnne Leleck Elementary School at Broad Acres in Silver Spring, Maryland. When I began teaching, our school had one of the highest poverty rates and lowest achievement levels in the state, in danger of being taken over by the state of Maryland. The school began providing mentor teachers for those of us in the first two years of teaching. We also participated in relevant professional learning to help build our skills. As a school, we created effective systems such as data meetings, educational book studies, curriculum planning Wednesdays, vertical alignment teams, learning walks, after school clubs, and intervention supports. In my five years at JoAnne Leleck Elementary and Broad Acres, test scores have improved dramatically. Now this school serves as a national model for both closing the achievement gap and sustaining success and was part of a Harvard study on the issue. The skills I learned at JoAnne Leleck Elementary at Broad Acres provided me with strong understanding and leadership skills to improve challenging schools. Presently, at Juniper Elementary, I utilize most of the same systems that I helped create in my first years of teaching in Maryland and the results are paying dividends in student achievement.

Having excellent teachers in all schools means that districts need to support all teachers, especially in the first five years. The innovative advancement model that I have helped shape in Bend-La Pine Schools is a new path to the future of teacher retention and support. I will share this story, assisting teachers and administrators throughout the country as they explore ways to ensure *every* child in *every* classroom has a highly skilled, engaged teacher.

August 6, 2015

Re: Heather Anderson for Oregon Teacher of the Year

To: Whomever it May Concern

I can think of no one even comparably qualified for recognition as Oregon Teacher of the Year for 2015 than Heather Anderson. Heather was honored as Bend-La Pine Schools' Teacher of the Year in 2014 for her outstanding teaching in the classroom, her teacher leadership at the building and district levels, her leadership on two major district innovation initiatives, and her statewide leadership in advocating for and preparing teachers for National Board Teacher Certification. Heather is a classroom teacher who has excelled, then taken it to the next level in giving back in a huge way to the teaching profession.

The most important quality that should be recognized in a teacher of the year is a record of demonstrated success as a classroom teacher. Heather is a highly regarded, child advocate, and engaging teacher at Juniper Elementary School. She utilizes the most up-to-date technology tools to enhance her instruction and connect her students with the outside world. Her student performance results demonstrate her effectiveness.

Her advocacy for teaching excellence is unusual for a classroom teacher, then, she is not the "usual" classroom teacher. Heather had established herself as a highly motivated and successful teacher before joining our district following her start in Montgomery County, Maryland. Seeing how a team of teachers working together to change a school's results and raising their own competence by working for national board certification could make such a difference led her to being an immediate advocate in our district for the highly regarded certification. In her seven years in Bend-La Pine Schools she has been a leader in advocating for the higher certification, offering training and support to others pursuing it, and working with OEA to endorse and provide support to teachers throughout Oregon seeking National Board Teacher Certification. She and a colleague have taught the prep sessions for OEA in our region.

Heather has been a district teacher leader serving as co-facilitator of the Language Arts Common Core State Standards task force, a member of the district Writing Focus Team, and an Instructional Coach/Curriculum Leader. She also has facilitated one of the district-wide work groups working to develop the criteria for a new teacher advancement and compensation system to replace the out-of-date but widely used salary schedule based on education and experience. The new system being developed will promote teachers base on evidence of effective teaching and completion of professional development directly related to what makes the most difference in teacher effectiveness. Bend-La Pine's work in this area has been supported and widely recognized by the Chalkboard Project.

Perhaps, most significant is Heather's ability to work teachers and administrators from across the district towards achieving excellence. She is a wonderful person to work with, although a person with strong convictions. I continue to be amazed at her ability to think outside of the box to find solutions. She is an exceptional example of all of the qualities that I look for in a great educator.

I retired as superintendent of Bend-La Pine Schools at the end of the 2015 school year, but would not want to miss the opportunity to advocate for recognizing a true superstar as Oregon's next Teacher of the Year. You cannot go wrong with Heather Anderson.

Sincerely,



Ron Wilkinson  
Superintendent (Retired)  
Bend-La Pine Schools

August 1<sup>st</sup>, 2015

To Whom It May Concern:

It is my pleasure to write a letter recommending Heather Anderson for Oregon's Teacher of the Year. As the assistant superintendent of a district with 17,000 students, I don't know all of our more than 700 teachers as well as I would like. However, because of Heather's active and ongoing leadership at her school and throughout the district, I can speak from experience about her contributions to both student and adult learning.

Since Heather began working in Bend-La Pine Schools, she has actively sought positions at schools with diverse student populations and high levels of poverty. Before the 2012-13 school year, she applied for a voluntary transfer to Juniper Elementary School, the school with our second-highest ELL population. Heather joined the staff that year and has emerged as a leader within a strong school staff. I have had the pleasure of conducting multiple observations in her class. Without fail, the students are actively engaged in high-cognitive tasks. On my last visit, most students were working independently on supporting their interpretations with textual evidence. Each student I queried was able to explain what the students were working on and why it was important. While these students stayed on task, Heather worked with a small group of English language learners on the same activity, but with scaffolding provided to help them formulate their ideas and express these clearly.

Beyond Heather's work with her own students, she has emerged as one of the most influential elementary teacher leaders in the district's work on teaching to the Common Core State Standards in English language arts. The list of her contributions is too long to include everything, but a few examples follow: she facilitated the district team from 2011-2013 and has remained a part of the district's strategic team (five teachers from across the district); she was one of three or four teachers who volunteered to pilot new reading materials this year; she has helped lead the planning of monthly trainings for all elementary teachers; she has personally trained teachers at numerous school sites across the district; and she has helped to develop a new elementary report card aligned to the CCSS.

In addition to her district work on the CCSS, Heather has also emerged as both a district and state leader in preparing teachers for success in the National Board Certification process. Because Bend-La Pine Schools believes highly skilled and engaged teachers are the key to student success, our district actively supports National Board Certification. Together with a colleague, Heather conducts monthly coaching sessions for teacher applicants. Currently, our district has 12 board-certified teachers, and Heather is working with a group that, if successful, will double that number. Her skill in this area has attracted the attention of the Oregon Education Association, who has asked her to lead trainings for other teachers in the state.

Heather is absolutely deserving of this recognition, and I give her my highest recommendation. If you have any questions, do not hesitate to contact me (541-355-1027 or [lora.nordquist@bend.k12.or.us](mailto:lora.nordquist@bend.k12.or.us)).

Sincerely,



Lora Nordquist, EdD

August 5, 2015

To Whom It May Concern:

It is my utmost pleasure to write a letter of recommendation on behalf of Heather Anderson for the Oregon Teacher of the Year. It is very challenging to express on one page the impact Heather has had on Juniper Elementary, Bend-LaPine Schools, and the community where she grew up. I was fortunate enough to hire her when I became principal three-years ago. During the interview, I knew immediately that she would be a key component in moving our historically low performing school forward academically and professionally.

What I admire most about Heather is her tenacity and high expectations for herself and her students. She knows all kids are capable of reaching their goals and her very high and appropriate expectations are within reach. She has turned around a number of students by instilling a belief in them. For example, one student she had last year, had a track record of not trying, being below grade level, and consequently, a discipline record that reflected her unengaged history. Moreover, mom supported this and blamed the school. With a firm and supportive approach, Heather would not waiver on her expectations and maintained a belief that the student could succeed. I am happy to say this student made significant growth academically and did not have one single referral last year. Heather made a sustainable impact on this student that gave her not only the tools to succeed academically, but also the self-esteem and confidence to be successful. These are the essential skills of college and career readiness.

Heather's in-depth knowledge of instruction, delivery, grade-level and building leadership, has led to gains in academics that have moved Juniper from a low performing school to a high performing school. Last year, Juniper attained a Level 5 on the Oregon Schools Report Card, the highest level a school can achieve and was also recognized as a Model School. This measurable growth is a testament to Heather's significance at Juniper.

Having had the opportunity to work with Mrs. Anderson over the last three years in many capacities, I know the qualities and skills that she brings to education. These skills are a reflection of her love of learning and natural ability to reach children. Additionally, she is a critical cog in the flywheel that continues to move our school forward in helping students become life-long learners. Please call if I can answer any further questions (541-355-1802 or dan.wolnick@bend.k12.or.us).

Sincerely,



Dan Wolnick  
Principal