



Listen. Learn. Lead.



2015 IDAHO MIGRANT FAMILY LIAISON OF THE YEAR

CHRISTINA ALVAREZ
BLACKFOOT SCHOOL DISTRICT

Christina Alvarez is the current Migrant Family Liaison in the Blackfoot School District. Christina has 31 years of experience with the Migrant Education Program. She also serves as the Regional IDR Coordinator in Regions 5 & 6. Christina's passion and commitment to the district's migrant families is a major strength in the Migrant Education Program. Her drive and desire are most impressive. Vicki Johnson, Blackfoot Federal Programs Director says, "...she has been an outstanding professional, mentor, teacher and colleague as I have learned about the Migrant Program. I believe she is an outstanding leader in the Migrant Program."

Christina goes above and beyond with every migrant family/student that enrolls in the Blackfoot School District. She greets them at the schools to make sure that the children get registered. She meets them at their homes to make sure that they get settled and that the families' needs are met. She communicates the services in the Blackfoot Community that will be useful to the families. She checks in and follows through with the various needs of the families on a regular basis. Christina does not only work during the school hours to meet the needs of the families. Many days she works evenings and weekends. Her hours are truly 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. She is truly deserving of this award!

"I recommend wholeheartedly the nomination of Christina Alvarez whom I know since February of 1998 in the Blackfoot School District community as an exemplary individual who is focused, honest, respectful and very dedicated to her work. Besides being a very sociable person she is fluent in both languages which to us, the parents and Latin students, is a tremendous help especially when it comes to communicating our needs. Personally I hope she continues working in our district for a very long time."

- Alicia Alba

"I Aurelia Perez, mother in the family, nominate Christina Alvarez because she always helps with my children's school work and gives us relevant information of the school programs available for a better education of our children. She always supports us with matters of our children's education willingly."

- Aurelia Perez

"I Rosa Ortiz as mother in the family assert that every time I sought Christina Alvarez' help for any school related problem and ask other questions she was always there to help us with our needs. She is always available for any questions regarding the orientation of school programs and interpreting our concern to other teachers in meetings and my children's counselors; she is always there willing to help. Thank you Christina for your support and keep up your excellent work."

- Rosa Ortiz

"I Alvin R. Alba wish to acknowledge that I know Dr. Christina Alvarez since the year 1986 when I was a student in the local area in which now my children are receiving their education and the help they need for learning successfully all thanks to the excellent service and performance that she brings to the community in general."

- Alvin R. Alba



2014 NATIONAL BLUE RIBBON SCHOOL OF EXCELLENCE

PRAIRIE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL COTTONWOOD SCHOOL DISTRICT

We are a team of professionals at Prairie Elementary. We work as a group to solve problems and provide solutions for kids.

When you enter our campus you see a sign that reads, "Prairie Elementary School: Every Child Learning Every Day". We utilize our data to drive our decisions and to provide support in the classrooms. We believe, "Kids are Worth Whatever it Takes." (Spence Rogers)

We keep our routines, such as hallway procedures, exiting classrooms, assembly behavior, and going to and from recess consistent. Our staff collaborates to share what educational and behavioral routines and ideas work and what does not. All staff have a voice and a sense of pride knowing that we are together and value each other.

Our teachers teach to their strengths; some like social studies, some math, others science. Teachers attend professional development trainings and educational conferences to update their practice and stay current with changes. Diverse teaching styles reach each student at his or her own learning and comprehension level.

Technology is available in all classrooms with near one to one devices. We have teacher experts who support iPads, Chromebooks, and a teacher who is our software support technician for our Accelerated Math and Reading programs. Another staff member organizes our data and still another organizes our testing schedules and routines. After the data is organized it is shared with all. Our Response to Intervention (RTI) group has regularly scheduled morning meetings and shares the data. Our staff provides interventions for students who show need by providing curriculum and support at the level at which the student is currently functioning. Students that are above the classroom average and have data that shows advancement, are offered enrichment and acceleration opportunities. Programs such as Khan Academy and Idaho Digital Learning courses are examples of these opportunities. As you can see our teachers wear many different hats. By teachers being involved in all aspects of the data collection, they take more ownership. This is what makes us all work as a professional group providing the best education for our kids."

We share information with our parents regularly through email, PowerSchool, articles in our local paper, phone calls and documents sent home with students in backpacks. Our doors are always open and we welcome parents into our classrooms.

Our Open House attendance and Parent-Teacher conferences are well attended. Most often we see 90-100% of our parents during fall conferences. Our overall attendance each year is about 95.8%.

In kindergarten through second grades, teachers focus on reading and math techniques while intertwining it in all disciplines. The morning routine provides direct instruction that is consistent each and every day with small group, large group and individual activities. Paraprofessionals support is also provided.

Teachers in grades three and four share their expertise by teaching to their strengths. Science and Social Studies are taught by the same teacher in both grades. Collaboration time is built into their schedules by having music and PE worked in the daily routine.

Students in grades five and six are in differentiated groups throughout the day that are designed to fit the needs of each student. Teachers teach to their strengths in different subject areas. Inside the daily routine, students are exposed to music, art and physical education. Each student is assigned to an enrichment time during the week to either concentrate on remediation, homework and study skills, or advancement in certain areas.

The teaching staff at Prairie Elementary has an average of 12.1 years of experience in the Cottonwood School District; paraprofessionals have 15 years and administration 14 years revealing a wonderful commitment of the staff to the community and the community to the staff.