

Kim Yasui named principal at Mid Valley Elementary

BY TRISHA WALKER
News staff writer



Kim Yasui

When longtime Mid Valley Elementary principal Dennis McCauley retires June 30, his replacement won't need any introductions.

Kim Yasui, who becomes Mid Valley's principal this summer, not only taught English Language Learners (ELL) and migrant students there for 12 years, but attended the school as a student in the 1980s.

Yasui graduated from Hood River Valley High in 1990. From there, she attended the University of Oregon, graduating in 1993 as a Spanish major, and from Pacific University in 1994 with a master's in education.

Her student teaching was completed at White-

er Elementary in Eugene, where she was introduced to the concept of a community school.

"They sent all the high poverty, homeless, (and) kids with social workers to one school and housed all sorts of services on site," she said. "I think it is

where I first learned about the idea of a community school, where all sorts of supports are available at a school to best meet the needs of the kids."

Mid Valley, with its extended hours both before and after school, as well as during breaks and non-school hours, is another such community school. Parenting and nutrition classes, Spanish GED classes, Zumba, Spring Break Camp, summer library, OSU Extension Office, SMART (Start Making A Reader Today), a computer lab, Mid Valley Preschool and St. Francis House are all held within its walls.

Many of the programs were established in the 11 years McCauley has served as principal.

"I love the feeling of

community that Dennis has created at Mid Valley," Yasui said. "The building is never really closed. There are always groups offering great classes to our students, families and community ... Parents who might have been marginalized at other schools feel comfortable coming to (Mid Valley) and sharing their hopes for their children."

Yasui taught in Monmouth and Pilot Rock before coming to Mid Valley in 2002. But she would return to Odell to teach summer school each year.

"It always felt like it was home, and the kids and families were so appreciative of the extra support," she said. "Summer school seems to be the best of everything about education: Academic support, en-

SCHOOL CHANGES

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which is funded in part by a federal grant.

"The schools qualify based on poverty, second language, and established partnerships with community agencies ... The federal program piece encompasses a lot of things I am passionate about: ELL, second language, poverty, migrant, homeless — all those kids who are supposed to be getting more and extra, but that we frequently forget about," she said.

This year, she's served as HRCSD coach and AVID director, and is ready to get back to Mid Valley.

"I am looking forward to continuing on the great things they have already done and working with the wonderful staff and families to build even more academic success," Yasui said.

richment activities, family connections and a staff who chooses to give up vacation to be with kids."

She received her administrative license from Portland State University in 2010, and has worked as summer school administrator for the past three years. In 2013, she moved to the District Office to set up the EXCEL afterschool programs at Mid Valley, Wy'east and Parkdale,

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