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InterMountain ESD Board of Directors Appoints Aimee VanNice as Next Superintendent

Veteran educator with 26 years of experience as a teacher, principal, and central office leader will guide the regional agency

PENDLETON, OR. — The InterMountain Education Service District (IMESD) Board of Directors has named Aimee VanNice as the agency's next superintendent, effective July 1, 2027. VanNice has served IMESD as Director of Human Resources since 2021 and as Assistant Superintendent since 2023. She brings 26 years of experience in education to the role.

"Aimee is a natural fit for this position," said IMESD Board of Directors Chair, Joe McElligott. "She brings the experience, the vision, and the trust of the people she serves, with resounding support from students, families, colleagues, and the broader community. She has shown she is ready for this next step, and we are excited to welcome her."

A Career Built in Classrooms and Schools

VanNice began her career as a teacher at Cielo Vista Elementary in Palm Springs Unified School District in California, where she taught from 2000 to 2005 during a state-directed school turnaround effort. She was named Teacher of the Year in 2004. She then taught at Lava Ridge Elementary in Oregon's Bend-La Pine School District from 2005 to 2012, serving as curriculum and instructional leader from 2008 to 2012, and was again named Teacher of the Year in 2012.

VanNice moved into school leadership in the Pendleton School District, serving as principal of McKay Creek Elementary from 2012 to 2015. In 2015, she was selected to lead the new Washington Elementary School, bringing together students, families and staff from three schools to build one school community.

She led Washington Elementary through 2021, focusing on school climate, establishing consistent expectations and systems, and improving academic achievement, attendance, and engagement.

During her time in Pendleton, VanNice's school participated in the School Wide Integrated Framework for Transformation (SWIFT), one of 20 schools nationwide selected to implement the framework in partnership with University of Kansas leaders. She also led development of a master schedule that served as a model for SWIFT schools nationwide.

Leadership at IMESD

VanNice joined IMESD in 2021 as Director of Human Resources. In that role, she led human resources strategy, recruitment, retention, and workforce planning, as well as labor relations, including collective bargaining and contract administration. She built a team and service structure that expanded access to human resources services across districts.

As Assistant Superintendent since 2023, VanNice has overseen the agency's Information Technology, Instructional Services, and Facility Directors, and partnered with the Cabinet on organizational structure, staffing, financial decisions, and resource allocation. She also led development of IMESD's "Look to the Future" initiative, which established the agency's short and long-term planning and direction.

Regional, State and Community Engagement

From 2023 to 2025, VanNice served as the Eastern Oregon Regional Coordinator and as an instructor for the Lewis & Clark College Principal Program, recruiting and developing aspiring school leaders and teaching leadership preparation courses.

At the state level, she serves on the Oregon Association of Education Service Districts (OAESD) Program Cabinet and the OAESD HR Job Alike Committee. Locally, she serves on the Golden Circle of Champions Board, the CHI St. Anthony Hospital Advisory Board, and is a member of Pendleton Rotary.

VanNice holds a Bachelor of Science degree from Eastern Oregon University, a Masters degree in Teacher Education from California State University, San Bernardino, and administrative licenses through the University of Oregon and Lewis & Clark College.

"It's an incredible honor to be named the next superintendent," said VanNice. "Working for the IMESD over the last five years has shown me how special the organization and people we serve are. I look forward to continuing to build on the strong work of the agency."

Transition

To ensure a smooth transition, Dr. Mark Mulvihill will continue his work as IMESD's superintendent through June 30, 2027, and will assist VanNice as she prepares to step into the role.

Mulvihill said, "The IMESD board is to be commended for its process and selection of Aimee as the next IMESD superintendent. Aimee is a unique talent who combines skill and experience with a relentless work ethic. She is an outstanding education leader who will make a significant impact on the region. Aimee is the right choice at the right time."

IMESD Board of Directors Vice Chair, Jocelyn Jones, added, "Aimee has demonstrated leadership skills that have not only earned the trust of staff, but also fit what member district leaders have identified as essential. Aimee has knowledge of the systems and processes that the IMESD uses to support and serve each of our unique member district's needs quickly and efficiently. Her background as an exceptional administrator has given her the foundation to keep what's best for kids at the center of every decision."

About InterMountain Education Service District

InterMountain Education Service District is a regional K-12 educational service district in northeastern Oregon. IMESD provides special education, technology, school improvement, and administrative service support to its component school districts across Umatilla, Morrow, Baker, and Union counties and surrounding areas. Learn more at www.imesd.k12.or.us.

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