



MEDIA RELEASE

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Contact: Alandra Johnson, Communication Specialist; 541-355-1005,
alandra.johnson@bend.k12.or.us

Photo: Monet Biancucci, fifth grade teacher at Pine Ridge Elementary School, is a finalist for the Presidential Award for Excellence in Mathematics and Science. [Read this story online](#)

Pine Ridge Teacher Earns Top Math Honor

Monet Biancucci is finalist for Presidential Award for Excellence in Mathematics

Walk into Monet Biancucci's classroom during a math lesson and you'll see fifth-graders energetically talking, reasoning with each other and justifying their methods as they work to understand how to solve a problem. The Pine Ridge Elementary School teacher says you won't see students working in solitude, silently calculating answers on a worksheet. Math, she says, is a subject that's ideal for student collaboration, reflection and questioning.

"My goal is to help students become mathematicians and feel confident in their abilities and understanding. It's about having number sense and not about memorizing something," said Biancucci. "I want them to listen, ask questions, make connections and dig in!"

Biancucci's passion and commitment to math instruction recently earned her an honor of distinction. She is a finalist for the Presidential Awards for Excellence in Mathematics and Science Teaching, the highest recognition that teachers receive for outstanding teaching in the areas of science, technology, engineering, math or computer science.

"We are thrilled to see Monet earn this distinction, which honors her tremendous skills as an instructional leader in mathematics," said Assistant Superintendent Lora Nordquist. "Monet's skills go beyond her own classroom. She has been instrumental in helping further develop math instruction with fellow educators at Pine Ridge and in elementary schools throughout our district."

Biancucci fell in love with math when she started teaching it. As a student, she struggled with math, in part because of the way it was taught — through memorization. Now, she is passionate about helping her students understand the concepts behind math in a variety of ways.

"I get my students to talk. They are sharing ideas, reasoning with each other. They listen to others and justify where they are coming from," said Biancucci, who says many of her students report that math is their favorite subject. "I love my job because I feel like I am making an impact on the world each day."

Learn more about the Presidential Awards for Excellence in Mathematics and Science at www.paemst.org.