

Nomination: First Year Teacher Of The Year

Nominee: Christa Larsen, Farr West Elementary

Christa Larsen is a 1st year teacher in 6th grade at Farr West Elementary.

If I didn't know she was a 1st year teacher, I would never have believed it. Everything Christa does shows a high level of skill, drive and style. The moment you walk in her room you can tell it is a great place to be! From the classroom set up to the interactions she has with students, Christa makes her room feel like a safe and engaging place to learn. On top of all of this, even with all the great things she brings, Christa is constantly looking for opportunities to learn and grow in the profession.

I am very grateful that Mrs. Larsen is a teacher at Farr West! I look forward to seeing the great things she does throughout her career!

Because you shouldn't just take my word for it, I have collected a sample of messages from others who know that Mrs. Larsen is deserving of the "First Year Teacher Of The Year Award"!

Lori Rumsey, Instructional Coach:

Christa's passion for teaching is evident in everything she does. She goes above and beyond to ensure that her lessons are engaging, informative, and tailored to meet the diverse needs of her students.

What sets Christa apart is not only her knowledge and expertise but also her genuine care and concern for her students' well-being. She takes the time to get to know each student individually, providing support and encouragement every step of the way. Her approachable demeanor and willingness to help creates a supportive learning environment where students feel valued and empowered.

In addition to her teaching responsibilities, Christa works tirelessly to continuously improve her craft. She seeks feedback from students and colleagues alike, always striving to enhance her teaching methods and incorporate innovative techniques into her lessons.

When you watch Christa teach you would never know that she is a first year teacher. She is a great asset to her team and to our school. We are lucky to have her here at Farr West.

Jayden Rasmussen, Student

Tyler and Lindsay Rasmussen, Parent:

I am so happy that she is being nominated for a new teacher award! She is an amazing teacher! She is patient with us and tries her best.

-From Jayden

Mrs Larsen has been wonderful for the kids this year. She hit the ground running and didn't miss a beat. I know she had a lot of the boys from our neighborhood in her class and (because I know many of these boys personally) I know that was not an easy thing to contain. She showed an immense amount of care and grit throughout this year. I know she set goals and worked with our son daily to help him succeed.

Mrs. Larsen has been absolutely wonderful! We're so grateful we were blessed to have her as his teacher this year. She was a positive and valuable addition to the staff at Farr West Elementary. Thank you doesn't even begin to express our gratitude! ♥👉

Sincerely,

Tyler and Lindsay Rasmussen

Alex Payne, Parent:

We have loved Mrs. Larsen! Not only has our son been learning and growing academically, but he looks forward to coming to Mrs. Larsen's class. She is fun, organized, and has great communication with parents. We couldn't ask for a better way for our son to end his time at Farr West Elementary than having such a great experience in Mrs. Larsens' class.

Holly Stoker, Parent:

I have been really impressed with Mrs. Larsen. She is kind and respectful to her students, and she expects the same in return. She has fun with her class, yet she also holds them accountable - something that I feel is really important. She has a good balance of hard work and having fun. We have been really blessed to learn from her this year.

Stacey Hoesel, Parent

I am surprised that she is a first year teacher. 6th grade is a transition year and having that understanding of, its not Elementary anymore and Junior High can be a shock. She has set clear expectations like a junior high teacher would with autonomy of the student to engage or not but has built individually a relationship to connect and support each student. She has the students fill out a self reflection. My child filled hers out and the discussions with Mrs. Larsen is spot on. To have a great connection and understanding of my child only benefits her learning and connection to class with has helped her succeed.

I applaud this nomination as she has been a wonderful attribute to Farr West Elementary and I hope continues for years to come.

Virginia Garner, Parent:

Mrs. Larsen has been amazing this year. Kaylor my daughter comes home everyday with something great to say about her. She feels so comfortable with Mrs. Larsen and tells us about conversations they have and help she received. 6th grade has been really good for Kaylor and I know Mrs. Larsen is a big part of that for her.

Stacie White, Parent:

Everyone needs a teacher like Mrs. Larsen. She's given Kyler so much confidence in a short amount of time. He feels loved and important in his classroom. She's made him feel like his presence is needed and that he can be a leader.

Mrs. Larsen has invested so much time and energy into providing a safe classroom that feels happy every time they walk in. She cares not only about her students academic success while they are in her classroom, but also as they continue on through their academic careers. She's instilling habits now that will help them be successful long term.

Mrs. Larsen cares about her students' mental health and how her kids feel while learning. She's paid for food all year so the kids have snacks and don't have to learn hungry. She wants everyone to feel safe while at school. She's been quick to problem solve and to stop any bullying immediately. I've seen first hand while volunteering how she has the kids respect. When she speaks they listen because they know how much she loves them. She's constantly going above and beyond for every student.

She's put her heart and soul into this job and you can see it. These kids are so incredibly lucky to have a teacher that cares as deeply as she does about teaching them.

Thanks,

Stacie White

Katie Price, Parent:

I wanted Christa (oops, Mrs. Larsen) to be Gibby's teacher not only because I knew that she would push him academically, but because she would take the time to show she was invested in getting to know him. Gibby is emotionally intelligent enough to know when people are faking it, and it takes some patience to develop a relationship with him. I knew he would sense genuine care and attention from her.

And that was BEFORE I knew how she was as a teacher. She has done a great job with motivating him and pushing his boundaries, while still keeping him in line. When he gets discouraged, she notices and finds a way to bring him back on track. I'm sure there are unique challenges in the first year of teaching, but none of the kids have suffered because of it. She absorbs the blow so the kids can keep learning, and most of all - so they feel safe. Her classroom has the best feeling to it, and even as Gibby gets tired of school, he doesn't get tired of Mrs. Larsen's class. He gets excited to see her outside of class and seems shocked that she's not a celebrity.

I'm so thankful for her open communication with parents, for her tactfulness in handling problems in the classroom, and most of all for her commitment to education. It's a special kind of gift to give parents, to provide peace of mind that their children are as safe as possible at school with a teacher who understands their quirks and loves them for them. I've never once worried about how Gibby will feel in the classroom, and that's such a weight off our shoulders as parents.

Now I'm just sad I don't have any more kids coming through to have her as a teacher.