



**Emily
(DuPree)
Christensen Ed. D.
EHS Class of 2003**

“Being an administrator brings joy, challenges, something new all the time, and conversations I could never have in another profession.”

ELKHORN ALUMNI SPOTLIGHT

2003 EHS graduate Emily (DuPree) Christensen returns to the District as the Assistant Principal of Elkhorn North High School.

What are some of your best memories while at Elkhorn High School?

Elkhorn High is where I met my best friends to this day, learned that I liked school, had teachers influence me in my career path, and asserted some confidence. I loved Homecoming Week when everyone came together in the name of school spirit. I loved singing at graduation all four years and sending the seniors off in a meaningful way. EHS was a place where you could do school, sports, music, drama, and clubs. The building was okay but the students, staff, and activities inside EHS is what made it so special to me.

What school activities and athletics were you involved in?

Cross Country four years, Swimming (part of the first EVER swim team that co-oped with Westside HS my junior and senior years), Soccer four years; Choir, Swing Choir, and Musical all four years; NHS, Junior Class Board, SADD, FCA, the E-Club, Pep Club... I was the female recipient of the Norlinger Award when I graduated in 2003.

What educational journey did you take after graduation from EHS?

After high school graduation, I went to the University of Nebraska-Lincoln for my freshmen year and then finished my bachelor's degree at the University of Nebraska-Omaha. I earned a Bachelor of Science in Education with an emphasis in English and Language Arts 7-12. I had my student teaching and very first teaching position at Omaha North High Magnet School in Omaha Public Schools in 2007. There I coached soccer and taught English 9-12 and Humanities. I was then recruited by the Avenue Scholars Foundation to be a Talent Advisor at Omaha Bryan High School. I did this from 2010-2016. During this time, I had the opportunity to work with at-risk high schoolers to improve school attendance, grades, behavior, career exploration, navigating legal and health care systems, etc. There was a large emphasis on college and career readiness during the high school portion of the program. After completing high school, my students got a full ride at Metro Community College with college advisors continuing to help them navigate their young adult lives. I feel so honored that I got to be a part of this program and with these students. I still keep in touch with many of my Avenue Scholars, thanks to social media. While I was at the Avenue Scholars Foundation, I earned my master's degree in Educational Leadership. After this, I waited about a year before beginning my doctoral degree. In the midst of this degree, I applied and earned the position of Administrative Coordinator (dean of students) at Elkhorn High School in the fall of 2016. In August 2018, I earned my doctorate in Educational Administration with a national certification in superintendency. Then in 2020, I got to open the newest Elkhorn Public Schools' high school, Elkhorn North, as the assistant principal.

What inspired you to return to Elkhorn as an educator?

I fell in love with urban education when I worked at Omaha North and Omaha Bryan High Schools; but the opportunity to move into administration was presented when I applied in Elkhorn. I loved the impact I could make on students in the classroom, but felt I had a different purpose as an administrator to influence the people and systems that help students prosper. Therefore, I knew this door was opening for a reason and I had to step through the threshold.

In a time of life when I needed it, Elkhorn had been a place of respite for me. Little did I know it would be a place of joy and growth for me as an adult too. I treasure that I get to work in Elkhorn Public Schools. I think the vision and leadership truly puts students first and places focus on what matters most.



Elkhorn Public Schools

ALUMNI

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What is your position at Elkhorn North and your career background before taking this role?

Currently, I am the assistant principal at ENHS. I get to work every day next to counselors, teachers, and students regarding instruction and learning, curriculum, student management, physical building needs, student safety and discipline, developing relationships, and advocating for the needs of my current students for their best possible future.

Elkhorn has changed quite a bit since your years at EHS. Is there anything you notice in the Elkhorn schools and community that remains the same today?

Elkhorn today is so very different from the Elkhorn I knew 20 years ago. I love that downtown Elkhorn is still a destination to go visit, that Ta-Ha-Zouka Park still hosts so many youth/community sports, and that good people have always lived and worked in Elkhorn.

What is life like for you outside of your career?

I live in Elkhorn with my three children and dog. Steen is 12 and attends ERMS. Adeline, age 10, and Soren, age 5, both attend Spring Ridge. We often can be seen at ENHS sporting events, musicals, or activities when we are not at their own wrestling, cheer, or soccer practice and games. We attend church at Lifegate Church and have for the past 7 or 8 years. Personally, I do enjoy reading as my escape and place of serenity. In the summer, I love trying to have a green thumb, though I often fall short, by having a vegetable garden and many flowers. I like hiking, long walks, and hot summer days! Good music, good food, and the chance to travel every once in a while, fill my soul. I couldn't imagine doing a different career path. Being an administrator brings joy, challenges, something new all the time, and conversations I could never have in another profession. I especially love working with adolescents because they are old and wise enough to know about the world in general, but young enough to still ask incredible questions and explore the many avenues it may take them.