

Lori Bates Gardner

December 17, 1957 ~ June 17, 2023

Lori hired me at Eisenhower. She was a great principal and friend. So sorry for your loss. Hold tight to your memories for comfort.

- Wendy Cochran

I worked with Lori for years at Eisenhower and was always so impressed with her love for the students and how she always did her best for them. She loved the staff and they loved her. We loved listening to her talk about her time in Wyoming, she just had such a "go get it" attitude she inspired us all. Her love for Rob, Matt and Katie was inspiring. My heart goes out to them. Her capacity to love also went to her animals. I'll never forget the dog the students brought in and she tried everything to find the owner but never did. She ended up adopting it, it was the meanest little dog I'd ever seen but she loved Lori. Lori would tell is the best stories. We had so many amazing talks about life, on parent conference nights, lunchtime fun, and dinner with a few of the girls. My heart is so sad for her family. She will be greatly missed.

- Joni Garrett

My prayers and condolences go out to Lori and her family. She was a sweet person. Lori will be missed. God Bless

- Isaiah (Ike) Spencer

My prayers are with the family. Lori was a great professional friend, colleague, and personal friend. This breaks my heart. She was loved and adored.

- Nancy Jadallah

I love her so much. She changed my life by hiring me at Eisenhower so many years ago. I love her sweet Katie as well. I learned so much from this beautiful, amazing woman. I am grateful that she was in my life. I love her and will

miss her forever.

- Norma

As a member of UMLA, I have been very grateful for Lori's guidance and commitment to Utah's students and teachers. She will be missed. Prayers of comfort for you and your family.

- Michelle Willis

I am so saddened by this news. I very fondly remember my time working in Eisenhower with Lori as the principal. She brought stability to the school, and added tremendously to the lives and careers of the teachers and the learning and enjoyment of the students. I'm sorry I can't get to the funeral, but am out of town. James Earl

- James Earl

Katie and Matt, I am so sorry for your loss..I know the pain of losing a parent. I am thinking of you and your family during this hard time.

- Anne Stewart

Always an inspiration to me. I'll always remember how she made everyone feel important and needed. She made people smile, was always kind. I'm so glad our paths crossed at EJHS. The last time I saw her was in Heber and it was as if all those years between melted away. She left the world a much better place. I will miss her greatly but my heart will still be warmed by her memory. God bless her family. DeAnn

- DeAnn Neal

It was a privilege to have worked at Eisenhower under Lori's leadership. Over the course of my career she was clearly one of my most favorite principals and a good friend. Lori loved Eisenhower Junior High, the students, and the faculty and staff. She was an incredible leader and was successful in moving Eisenhower Jr forward. I happened to cross paths with her on a couple of occasions after she retired and it was clear that her priorities were family, kids, and grandkids. She was an outstanding educator, administrator, advocate for education, and a wonderful person. I am so sorry for this loss.

- Larae Thomas

My thoughts and prayers are with Lori and her family. Lori is a true champion of middle school education and has been a tremendous support and help for schools across Utah and the nation. She will be missed greatly.

- Thane Hutchinson

Lori trusted me to switch from elementary to teaching junior high Science. She gave me the job I was born for! She was a great principal and great friend!

- Robin Lyman

Greatness takes many forms. Lori achieved greatness as a leader, teacher, co-worker, human being and friend. May your journey continue Lori and may your family be comforted in this time of sorrow.

- Larry Wilde

Lori was a great educator and administrator and a wonderful friend. She helped many adults and students at Eisenhower Jr High move forward with their hopes and dreams. Thank you Lori for all you did and gave to so many throughout your career and life.

- Clayton Brough

I had the opportunity to work with both Lori and Rob. Lori was a very talented educator who always put her students first. A true pioneer in mid level education. My deepest sympathy to Rob and his family. May the Lord watch over you.

- Mike Fraser

The world is a little less bright today with the passing of Lori. She was an amazing educator, parent, spouse and above all a friend to so many that were privileged to know her. I was honored to work with both Lori and her husband Rob in Granite School District. They are such an amazing couple. Lori will be missed but her influence will live on. I mourn with her family.

- David Gourley

I adored Lori. She was so supportive of me as a teacher at Eisenhower. She cared about the school, the students and the teachers. She has had a profound impact on so many lives through her work in education. She will be missed.

- Marcie Peck

I am so grateful to have had the opportunity to work with Lori with the UMLA Board for the last few years. She has been a positive influence and force in bettering middle level education! I am grateful for her guidance and insights that she has provided. I am grateful for the role she served as my sister's principal, who hired her. Her wisdom, expertise and actions continue to improve many lives.

- April Stevenson

We had the opportunity of working with Lori through Schools to Watch. She expected excellence because it was what the students deserved. I appreciated the way she supported us on our journey. She will be missed. An amazing educator!

- Sandy Ferrell

I’m sorry for the loss of your family and pray that you will feel peace about you in such sad times. I am also sad for her fellow educators. I learned so much from Lori as an educator and friend. She was a supportive leader in the Schools To Watch program. I was a better administrator because of her ideas and encouragement. RIP Lori.

Thanks for making a difference in my life. Kalyn Gubler (Washington County School District)

- Kalyn Gubler

Lori gave me my first teaching job at EJHS, and I always respected and loved her so much. I wanted to leave you with a funny story: I met my husband when I worked at Eisenhower; I was teaching English, and he was hired to help with the ESL department (she hired us both!!). When we were married in January of 2000, our honeymoon was a trip to San Diego, CA. Back in those days, Southwest basically had a free-for-all when boarding, and no one chose the middle seats. For my new husband and I to find two seats together, we ended up in the very last row of the plane. Lori was on the same flight, headed to a conference in CA, and she was also forced to pick a seat in the last row of the plane--right beside the newlyweds. I was young and awkward and a little embarrassed--it's not every day you fly to your honeymoon with your boss! However, Lori handled it so well, and put me at ease. Such a classy lady! But any time I think about that flight, I always think, "Poor Lori!" :) Please know how much I love her. She literally changed my life. She not only gave me a job, she gave me a husband and six amazing kids. I believe people are in our lives for a reason, and I'm grateful Lori was in mine.

- Michelle Marshall

Lori was a great mentor, leader, and friend. She will be missed. There is no greater advocate for middle-level reform than Lori.

- John Goldhardt

I was a student of Mrs. Gardner's at Kearns High School. I also had the privilege of working for her briefly at Eisenhower Junior High many years ago. I just learned of her passing and my heart is broken for your loss. I am truly sorry. To the family, I'd love share a few memories I have. I remember writing an essay for her in AP European History. I remember thinking, "There's no way she reads all of these." In the third to last paragraph, in the middle of my argument, I wrote, "If you read this, I'll buy you a shake." After getting my essay back, I turned to the back page where it read: "A-, Good job, Mario. Well thought out argument. P.S., I'll take strawberry!" That memory still brings a smile to my face. I always wanted her to be pleased with my work. Second, I remember her telling that same class with a humous inflection in her voice that one of the reasons she married her husband was because he was only person in Wyoming who could drink more whiskey than her. We were all laughing, but I also knew she kind of meant it. Lastly, and most importantly, I really struggled after graduating high school for about 7 years. It was probably one of the darkest seasons in my life. I had a sense that I had really made a mess of my life and wasted opportunities that I never thought I'd get back. It was Lori who invited me to work at Eisenhower Jr. High as an aide. She encouraged me to pick up the pieces and get back to work. I will never forget how important that season in my life was and how pivotal she was in showing me support and love. My thoughts and prayers are with you all.

- Mario Alejandre