ALLISON JONAS

A Broken Bow elementary teacher has been hired as a new Dudley Elementary principal.

During a special meeting early Thursday morning, the District 20 board hired Allison Jonas to fill a position which will be vacated at the end of the school year.

One of the two Dudley principals, Teresa Messersmith, will be the new special education director for Lexington Public Schools next year.

Jonas said she wanted the job because Gothenburg has always had a reputation for having an excellent school system.

“After interviewing, it was apparent that the system is not only excellent but exceptional,” she said. “The staff, administration, students and community are all top-notch and our family is honored and excited to be a part of it.”

For the past six years, Jonas has taught science and language arts to sixth graders. She’s also the school improvement coordinator and secondary response- to-intervention coordinator.

A Sidney native, Jonas graduated from the University of Nebraska at Kearney in 2006 with a bachelor’s degree in education and elementary endorsement.

From UNK, she received a master’s degree in education administration pre-kindergarten through eighth grade in 2011 and a 7-12 education administration endorsement in 2012.

Jonas said she became serious about education as a career while she was a high school senior.

There, as a teacher's assistant, she met a little girl who was lacking an advocate in her life.

"She changed my life and from that moment on, I knew advocating for children was my ultimate goal," Jonas said.

While she has enjoyed advocating for children as a teacher, Jonas said she looks forward to advocating for children as a principal.

Jonas said she also believes in continuous improvement and finding ways to optimize learning while building character.

With a strong background in the school improvement process and collecting and analyzing data, she said she's had a positive experience as a teacher implementing research-based strategies that increase student engagement and achievement.

"With a strong team of teachers and administrators, I'm confident that we can continue to develop our children to be adaptable citizens in a changing society," Jonas said.

For educators, she said standards-based education has been a major change.

"Finding a way to balance a quality education with accountability will continue to be an area where educators and administration work to find balance while ensuring we are doing what is best for kids," Jonas said.

Jonas and her husband, Andy, have two children: Kiarra, 4; and Koehn, who will be 1 year old in May.

Andy is manager of the new Trotter's Service Center in Broken Bow.

Jonas will officially begin principal duties in Gothenburg on Aug. 1. The couple is looking for a home in Gothenburg.

Superintendent Dr. Mike Teahon said the administration team received 28 applications for the position and interviewed eight candidates.

Applicants were from Nebraska, South Dakota, Colorado and Oregon, he said.

Teahon said Jonas was passionate about education and would be a great addition to the administrative team.

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