When Lisa Pica was selected as principal of Hayden Meadows Elementary in 2009, her focus was to improve the culture from one of "I" to "we," with a supportive learning environment and culture of trust, collaboration, accountability, and high standards for all students. During these seven years she has led staff, students, and parents through two large philosophical shifts, first establishing Hayden as an International Primary Years Baccalaureate School in 2010 and, when this program was terminated, reconceptualizing the school based on need and opportunity into a school of technological innovation.

In spearheading this transition, Pica wrote grants to secure funding for technologies such as video conferencing, iPads, Chromebooks, a mobile computer lab, and smart boards. Her staff consistently makes data-driven decisions in order to keep student learning at the heart of the school’s mission. Fellow principal Bill Rutherford commented: “When I need one of my teachers to watch great teaching, I turn to the teachers in Lisa’s building, knowing they are highly skilled, constantly motivated, and supported by a great leader.” Pica has a B.S. in Education from the University of Idaho, a M.A. in Administration from Gonzaga University, and is currently undertaking postgraduate studies at the University of Idaho, Moscow.