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Five Educators Named Idaho’s Nominees for Nation’s Highest STEM Teaching Honor

(BOISE) – Five dedicated elementary school math and science teachers have been named as state finalists for the national Presidential Award for Excellence in Mathematics and Science Teacher ([PAEMST](#)).

Idaho’s nominees will compete with others from around the country to be recognized as national PAEMST winners. This prestigious award is considered to be one of the nation’s highest honors for science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) educators.

“This award highlights Idaho educators who have gone above and beyond in opening doors in STEM for our youngest learners,” said Superintendent of Public Instruction Debbie Critchfield. “These remarkable instructors have created a space for students to explore STEM topics with comfort and curiosity, and I’m excited to see them honored for this important work.”

PAEMST awards alternate between secondary and elementary school instructors. This year’s finalists are:

Mathematics:

- Amanda Holland – Washington Elementary, Second Grade, Boise School District
- Justin Pickens – Maple Grove Elementary, Sixth Grade, Boise School District
- Tamara McMorro – Indian Creek Elementary, First and Second Grade, Kuna School District

Science:

- Jeffrey Blauer – Hillcrest Elementary, Second Grade Dual Immersion, American Falls School District
- Gina Kwid – Galileo STEM Academy, Second Grade, West Ada School District

Awards are given to science, technology, engineering and mathematics teachers from each of the 50 states, the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico, the Department of Defense Education Activity

Schools and the U.S. territories. Awardees are selected based on content knowledge and the ability to motivate students and enable ongoing student success.

Since the program's inception, more than 5,200 teachers have been recognized for their dedication to high quality STEM education.

Nominees who advance to the national competition will be recognized by the White House and will receive a paid trip to Washington D.C., a certificate signed by the president and a \$10,000 award from the National Science Foundation. National winners are expected to be announced by the White House this summer.

The nomination process for the next PAEMST cycle will open this fall and will honor secondary school teachers. Anyone, including principals, teachers, parents, students and members of the public, are encouraged to [nominate](#) STEM instructors who are teaching grades 7 - 12 for the 2024-2025 school year. Teachers may also apply for the award directly using the [application on the PAEMST website](#).

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