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## **Six Idaho educators nominated for nation's highest STEM teaching honor**

(BOISE) – Idaho students in kindergarten through fifth grade are learning to love mathematics, science and engineering thanks to skilled, dedicated teachers, and six of those Idaho teachers are in the running to receive the national Presidential Award for Excellence in Math and Science Teaching (PAEMST).

Six finalists, selected by a panel of Idaho PAEMST awardees, have been submitted to the national competition.

“This is the nation’s highest honor for teachers in STEM (science, technology, engineering and math) fields, and these talented teachers have proven themselves worthy of that honor,” Superintendent of Public Instruction Sherri Ybarra said. “STEM skills are essential for Idaho students to continue to higher education and career success, and they are hard skills to learn without early interest and expert guidance. That’s where elementary school teachers are particularly important, sparking children’s joy in learning the basics and building on them.”

The annual PAEMST awards alternate between elementary teachers and secondary teachers. This year’s awards are for elementary education.

### **Science finalists:**

- Gina Kwid, K-5 engineering teacher at Galileo STEM Academy in Eagle, West Ada School District.
- Madeleine Johnson, fifth grade teacher at Washington Elementary School in Boise, Boise School District
- Courtney Greene, 3-5 advanced learning teacher at Fernan STEM Academy in Coeur d’Alene, Coeur d’Alene Public School District

### **Math finalists:**

- Rebecca Charvoz, third grade teacher at Farmin-Stidwell Elementary School in Sandpoint, Lake Pend Oreille School District
- Leigh Wilson, fourth grade teacher at Potlatch Elementary School, Potlatch School District
- Angela Tweit, kindergarten teacher at Juliaetta Elementary in Juliaetta, Kendrick School District.

According to the [PAEMST national website](#), the award recognizes educators who have “deep content knowledge of the subjects they teach and the ability to motivate and enable students to be successful in those areas.”

National awardees receive a certificate signed by the president, recognition events and professional development opportunities, and a \$10,000 award from the National Science Foundation.

Winners are expected to be announced this spring.

The nomination process is already underway for the next PAEMST cycle, honoring secondary school teachers. Anyone -- principals, teachers, parents, students, or members of the general public – [may nominate](#) exceptional STEM teachers who are currently teaching in grades 7-12 for the 2020–2021 award year. The nomination deadline is March 1, 2021. Teachers may apply directly by visiting the [PAEMST website](#).

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