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## **PAEMST National Finalists Announced for 2021, 2022 and 2023**

(BOISE) – Educators nationwide will now have the opportunity to be honored as recipients of the prestigious PAEMST awards after the White House recently announced the 2021, 2022 and 2023 national awardees for the top honor bestowed by the U.S. government to K-12 science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) educators. The White House announced the honors on January 13.

Early in 2024, Superintendent Debbie Critchfield joined other state leaders in appealing directly to the White House to expedite the process so that these deserving teachers could be honored for their achievements:

“As school districts and economies are recovering from the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, support for mathematics and science education is paramount,” wrote Critchfield in a January 2024 letter to the White House. “Please ensure that these educators receive the commendation they richly deserve and that the backlog of cohorts does not cause teachers to lose confidence in this program.”

In addition to the superintendent’s letter to the White House, Idaho’s congressional delegation took steps to ensure that these teachers would be honored for their service to STEM education.

PAEMST awards alternate between secondary and elementary school instructors. State and national 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.

Every spring, each state announces its state or local finalists for the award. Of those finalists, two – one for math and one for science – are chosen by the White House as national-level awardees.

The following educators were announced as national awardees in science and mathematics for the 2021 award cycle. This cycle focused on secondary-level instructors:

**Debbie Critchfield, Superintendent of Public Instruction**  
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- Meg Fleischmann – Science educator, Century High School, Pocatello
- Ashlee Scherer – Math educator, Highland High School, Pocatello

These Idaho educators were recognized as national awardees for the 2022 award cycle. This cycle focused on elementary-level instructors:

- Joshua Langenbach – Math educator, Lowell Elementary School, Boise
- Shanna Marshall – Science educator, Sorensen Magnet School of the Arts, Coeur d’Alene

These Idaho educators were recognized as national awardees for the 2023 award cycle. This cycle focused on secondary-level instructors:

- Kameron Yeggy – Science educator, Timberline High School, Boise
- Natalia Woods – Math educator, Thunder Ridge High School, Idaho Falls

Idaho’s 2024 PAEMST state awardees [were announced in April](#).

“I’m grateful that the White House was able to take action to address this important program and honor our deserving STEM educators,” said Critchfield. “Our evolving world has put these subjects front and center when it comes to student success, and I’m happy to see educators who go above and beyond held up as examples to be celebrated nationwide.”

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**Attached:** Superintendent Critchfield’s January 2024 letter.