



AWARDS & RECOGNITIONS

February 11, 2025

THINK LEARN BE
MORE
TOGETHER
POCATELLO/CHUBBUCK
SCHOOL DISTRICT 25



Tonight we will recognize several individuals who,
through their actions, support and embody our
District's Mission to THINK MORE, LEARN MORE,
and BE MORE TOGETHER.

THINK LEARN BE
MORE
TOGETHER
POCATELLO/CHUBBUCK
SCHOOL DISTRICT 25



PCSD 25 believes a safe, supportive, caring, and respectful environment is critical to student learning. The School District 25 Education Foundation, in partnership with McDonald's, supports the Learner-of-the-Month award to recognize one elementary learner and one secondary learner from our district, from October through May. The C.A.K.E. Award celebrates positive character, attitude, kindness, and encouragement toward others. Nominations for the C.A.K.E. Award are submitted by a teacher who has observed the nominee's behavior and are approved by the school's principal.

C.A.K.E. Award recipients receive recognition at the monthly Board of Trustees regular meeting; a gift card for the recipient and their teacher, and a \$50 donation to purchase books in the recipient's name, both courtesy of the Johnson Family McDonald's.

Elementary School Learner-of-the-Month

River McGregor 5th grade, Gate City Elementary School

Nominated by:
Kallie Lopez

Mrs. Lopez wrote in her nomination letter, "River is truly one of the most thoughtful and deep thinkers I have ever met. I learn a lot from my students, just as much and probably even more than I teach them, but I have learned a tremendous amount from River. We often do a "tell them why they're awesome" day in class. What I mean by this is I randomly pull a name stick for each student and they then have to write that student a note to tell them why they are awesome. When we are done they stand up and read aloud to the class and to that student why they are awesome. When River reads his note about the student I gave him, I have never ever heard something more beautiful and profound. For example, he wrote this to one of his classmates: " Dear I wish I could put every reason why you're terrific on one sticky note. (there [are] too many reasons.) But I can say this you are truly remarkable. Someone as terrific as you comes once in a lifetime. Thank you, , I'm so glad you're in my class. Continue to be awesome buddy!" Who wouldn't want a note like that?! He goes above and beyond to make his classmates, and anyone he meets, feel special and seen. We all can learn a lot from River and I am so thankful I've gotten to be a part of his journey this year! His future is so tremendously bright!"





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Secondary School Learner-of-the-Month

Russell "Gabe" Pyne

12th grade, Century High School

Nominated by:
Katie Cooper

In her nomination letter, Mrs. Cooper wrote, "I would like to nominate Gabe Pyne. My nomination is a little different because Gabe isn't currently enrolled at Alameda Middle School, where I teach, but over the last five years, has continued to have an impact on me and others. I am lucky to have had the opportunity to teach Gabe in my 6th, 7th, and 8th grade Lego Flex classes. During that time period, he has made a huge impact on my life and the lives of his peers as I have watched him interact with others over the years. Gabe is determined and hard working. He is a dedicated learner and wrestler. He goes above and beyond to lift up those that are struggling. An example of this is in 2021, I lost my son to suicide. I will forever have etched in my mind, the moment I looked up at his viewing to see Gabe there with his family to support my broken heart. That memory is forever cemented in my heart.

I have had the chance to watch Gabe with his teammates on the mat in wrestling over the last five years. His tenacity, grit, and resilience to get back up despite physical and mental challenges is awe inspiring. He never settles to be mediocre and is continually working towards being his best self. He cheers on his teammates and boosts them up with his positivity and never ending praise to endure, especially when things get hard. Gabe truly deserves to be considered for this award as he is a leader and an example of true kindness towards others."





FEBRUARY 2025

The Employee-of-the-Month P.I.E.S. award recognizes our employees who Positively Influence Educational Success. The award is for employees who go above and beyond in that effort.

PIES Award recipients receive a \$50 gift card from Lookout Credit Union, our educational partner for this award.

Tara Jensen

Executive Assistant to Director of Elementary Education
and Director of Student Support Services

Nominated by:
Shawna Sprague

In her nomination letter, Shawna Sprague wrote, “I would like to nominate Tara Jensen for the Employee of the Month Award, as she truly embodies the P.I.E.S. (Positive Influence on Educational Success) values through her exceptional dedication, hard work, and positive attitude.

Tara has worked as the executive assistant to the director of elementary education for nearly 20 years. Throughout her service, Tara has consistently demonstrated an unwavering commitment to her role and to the district as a whole. She is, without a doubt, one of the hardest working and most dedicated employees at the District Office. Tara continually goes above and beyond in everything she does – coming in early, staying late, and working through her lunches to ensure that projects are completed on time.

Tara’s position as the elementary executive assistant is one of the most demanding roles, yet she manages to handle it all with grace and a smile on her face. Tara is constantly asked to take on additional duties and responsibilities that are outside the scope of her role, and she does so without hesitation. She is always willing to lend a hand, whether it’s stepping in to support colleagues or helping with tasks that need to be done to keep things running smoothly.

Tara’s ability to work with elementary principals, teachers, staff, and families is unparalleled. She is a calm and compassionate presence for parents who come in or call with concerns, providing them with support and reassurance. Her knowledge of how Infinite Campus works is invaluable, and she consistently demonstrates exceptional problem solving skills.

Beyond her work ethic and expertise, Tara is a welcoming and friendly face in the front office. She fosters a positive atmosphere in the office, always bringing laughter and joy, even on the busiest of days. Her positive energy is contagious, and she helps maintain a lighthearted yet efficient work environment.

In short, Tara is a true asset to the team, and her contributions are immeasurable. There is no one like her, and she truly deserves to be recognized for her tireless efforts and unwavering dedication.”



Presidential Award for Excellence in Mathematics and Science Teaching (PAEMST)

Ashlee Scherer
Highland High School

Ashlee Scherer, who teaches at Highland High School, has been selected to receive a Presidential Award for Excellence in Mathematics and Science Teaching (PAEMST).

The PAEMST program, administered by the National Science Foundation (NSF) on behalf of the White House Office of Science and Technology Policy, recognizes outstanding teachers for their contributions to the teaching and learning of science, technology, engineering, and mathematics.

Each awardee will receive a certificate signed by President Biden and a \$10,000 award from NSF. Awardees will also travel to Washington, D.C., for an awards ceremony at a future date.

The application process included documenting evidence for 5 Teaching Dimensions:

1. Mastery of content
2. Use of effective instructional methods and strategies to support student learning
3. Effective use of student assessment to evaluation, monitor, and improve student learning
4. Reflective practice and lifelong learning to improve teaching and student learning
5. Leadership in education inside and outside of the classroom.

When asked about the award, Ashlee wrote: "About 8-10 years ago, the District wanted to switch its secondary math program to an integrated task-based curriculum. As teachers, we said we needed professional development in order to implement this new curriculum effectively and the District listened. Chuck Orr, Director of Curriculum at the time, brought in the authors of the chosen curriculum (MVP) and we had multiple PD opportunities to learn from them on every single unit for all three years as we rolled out the new program.

Because of this training when MVP became more well-known, the authors asked several of the math teachers from our district to work for them and help them facilitate PD workshops around the country. I have been doing this as a side job for the past six years along with other math teachers from this district. Without this experience, I would not have qualified for this award.

I'll forever be grateful to Chuck Orr for listening to us math teachers and providing us with the PD we needed and for the MVP authors who encouraged me and challenged me to learn and grow in my own mathematical identity."



PCSD 25

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