



AWARDS & RECOGNITIONS

April 21, 2026

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.**

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MORE
TOGETHER
POCATELLO/CHUBBUCK
SCHOOL DISTRICT 25



PCSD 25 believes a safe, supportive, caring, and respectful environment is essential to learner success. The School District 25 Education Foundation, in partnership with the Johnson Family McDonald's, sponsors the C.A.K.E. Award to recognize one elementary and one secondary learner each month from October through May. C.A.K.E. stands for Character, Attitude, Kindness, and Encouragement. Nominations are submitted by teachers who observe these qualities in their learners and are approved by each school's principal.

Recipients are recognized at the Board of Trustees meeting, receive a gift card for both the learner and their nominating teacher, and a \$50 book donation in the learner's name for their school library, courtesy of the Johnson Family McDonald's.

Elementary School Learner-of-the-Month

Gordon Darrington 2nd Grade, Wilcox Elementary School

Nominated by:
Nora Wilkes

We are pleased to recognize Gordon Darrington, a 5th-grade learner at Wilcox, as our Elementary C.A.K.E. Award recipient. Gordon was nominated by his teacher, Nora Wilkes.

In her nomination letter, Ms. Wilkes describes Gordon as an exceptional example of character, attitude, kindness, and encouragement. Each day, he comes to school excited to learn and eager to connect with those around him, bringing a positive energy that is felt throughout the classroom.

He is often the first to invite others to join him, making sure no one feels left out. Gordon looks for opportunities to build connections and goes out of his way to help others feel valued and included. His teacher shared that he finds thoughtful ways to lift others up, often noticing what might bring a classmate joy and acting on it.

Gordon's kindness is genuine and selfless. He offers help quietly, without seeking recognition—sometimes assisting a classmate behind the scenes so they can experience success on their own. His peers recognize this quality as well, even identifying him as someone who demonstrates true selflessness.

In addition to his character, Gordon approaches learning with enthusiasm and effort. He consistently gives his best, takes joy in discovering new ideas, and encourages his classmates to share in that excitement. His positive attitude toward learning helps create a classroom environment where others feel motivated to do the same.

Through his compassion, encouragement, and love of learning, Gordon makes a meaningful impact on those around him each day.

Please join us in congratulating Gordon, our April Elementary C.A.K.E. Award recipient.



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.

Secondary School Learner-of-the-Month

Ellis Axford **8th Grade, Franklin Middle School**

Nominated by:
Michael Helman

We are pleased to recognize Ellis Axford, an 8th-grade learner at Franklin, as our Secondary C.A.K.E. Award recipient. Ellis was nominated by his teacher, Mr. Michael Helman. Ellis is described by Mr. Helman as a learner who consistently exemplifies kindness and a cheerful attitude. Over the past three years in band at Franklin Middle School, Ellis has demonstrated commitment, perseverance, and a willingness to grow.

Mr. Helman shared that Ellis began as a trumpet player in 6th grade, where he quickly found success while also supporting those around him. Even when he discovered that trumpet was not his passion, Ellis remained committed and finished the year strong. As an 8th grader, he transitioned to percussion, putting in significant effort outside of school to develop the necessary skills and fully embrace a new challenge.

Ellis approached this transition with determination, quickly becoming a supportive member of the section. Despite being new, he consistently volunteered to help others and contributed positively to the group dynamic.

One of the most notable highlights of Ellis's journey came this year when he composed an original piece for the band titled "Storm the Castle." The piece was performed at the winter concert, marking a first in Mr. Helman's 21 years of teaching. This accomplishment reflects Ellis's creativity, initiative, and dedication to his craft.

Mr. Helman noted that Ellis is both a learner who benefits from being part of the band and one who strengthens the program through his presence. His positive attitude and encouragement contribute to a supportive and uplifting environment for his peers.

Through his perseverance, creativity, and consistent encouragement of others, Ellis makes a meaningful impact on the Franklin Middle School community.

Please join us in congratulating Ellis Axford for his positive contribution to his school culture.

APRIL 2026



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.

Kym Matkin **6-8 Pass Room Teacher, Irving Middle School**

Nominated by:
Ellen Laggis

This month, we recognize Kym Matkin as our PIES Award recipient. Ms. Matkin serves as the heart of the PASS Room at Irving Middle School—supporting learners in grades 6 through 8 through detention, credit recovery, in-school suspension, and academic support. As her nominator, Assistant Principal Ellen Laggis, shared that what truly sets Kym apart is the way she connects with learners, especially those who need it most.

Students often come to the PASS Room on difficult days, and Kym meets each one with calm, respect, and genuine care. She listens first, helps learners reset, and guides them to reflect and make better choices without shame or judgment. Because of this, students feel safe—and when students feel safe, they are more willing to grow.

Kym builds strong, meaningful relationships by noticing what others might miss. She recognizes when learners are struggling—academically, emotionally, or personally—and follows up with intention. She celebrates small successes, checks in regularly, and ensures students know they matter. For many of Irving's most at-risk learners, she is a key reason they remain engaged in school.

Her kindness is evident in both big and small ways. Whether quietly making sure a student has something to eat or offering support while preserving their dignity, Kym creates an environment where learners feel welcomed, valued, and capable of starting fresh.

At the same time, she holds students accountable—supporting them in completing work, recovering credits, and learning from mistakes, while reinforcing that one decision does not define them. Her positive, solution-focused approach models patience, respect, and encouragement every day.

Ms. Laggis shared that Kym does far more than manage a space—she changes the way students see themselves. Through her compassion, consistency, and belief in learners, Kym Matkin has made a lasting impact on the Irving school community.

Please join us in congratulating Kym Matkin, our May PIES Award recipient.



PCSD 25

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