

Wyoming’s 2026 District Teachers of the Year

All 48 Wyoming School Districts are encouraged to annually recognize a District Teacher of the Year (DTOY). Educators selected by their districts in Spring 2025 are officially designated as 2026 District Teachers of the Year.

Garrid Halsey - Albany County School District #1



Garrid Halsey is a STEM teacher at Laramie Middle School, where he leads hands-on, project-based courses like Flight and Space, Medical Detectives, and Automation Robotics. A 2020 University of Wyoming graduate with degrees in biology and secondary education, he’s passionate about helping students build confidence and problem-solving skills through engaging, real-world learning. As co-lead of the school’s MTSS team, he supports student success through structured interventions and staff development. Garrid also coaches Nordic skiing and swimming, and is currently pursuing a master’s in educational leadership to further his impact both in and beyond the classroom.

Patricia Casey - Big Horn County School District #1



Patricia Casey teaches Family and Consumer Science and Art for grades 6–12 at Burlington Schools, where she also coordinates the after-school program and serves as an adjunct Career and Technical Education teacher for Wyoming Connections Academy. With degrees in Dietetics and Health Education from the University of Wyoming, she’s worked across Pre-K–12 settings, including roles in preschool, after-school programs, and online instruction. Her mission is to create a welcoming, connected school environment through strong relationships and real-world learning. Casey was honored as Wyoming FCCLA New Adviser of the Year in both 2023 and 2025.

Jodi Storm - Big Horn County School District #2



Jodi Storm, a 3rd grade teacher at Lovell Elementary with 26 years of experience, is known for creating joyful, high-expectation classrooms where every child feels valued. A University of Wyoming graduate with a focus in Early Childhood Education, she brings learning to life through engaging technology, strong relationships, and a deep commitment to student growth. Jodi has taught grades K–3, mentored colleagues, supported school tech needs, and helped lead community events. Outside of school, she enjoys sewing, 3D printing, and spending time with her three sons and three grandchildren. Her passion for teaching remains as strong as ever.

Jonathan Cauffman - Big Horn County School District #3



Jonathan Cauffman is a Math and Science teacher at Greybull High School,, where he's taught for 8 years. A Cum Laude graduate of the University of Wyoming with degrees in Chemistry and Math Secondary Education, he also holds endorsements in Biology and Earth Science. Jonathan began his career in middle school math and has since taught computer science, general science, and chemistry. Inspired by a high school teacher and his missionary experience, he strives to connect with students through kindness and encouragement, helping them believe in themselves and become the heroes of their own stories.

Nicolette Alexander - Big Horn County School District #4



Nicolette Alexander is a dedicated 1st grade educator and student council advisor at Laura Irwin Elementary in Basin. A Basin native and graduate, she returned to teach at the very school she once attended. Over the past 12 years, Nicolette has served in various roles—from paraprofessional to Spanish and Title I teacher—before settling into her current position as a first grade teacher, which she's held for the past 8 years. She also leads grant writing efforts to support district literacy initiatives and remains passionate about growing and improving in her profession.

Beth Faubion - Campbell County School District #1



Beth Faubion teaches Spanish at Thunder Basin High School in Gillette, bringing a rich background in education and leadership. She holds degrees from the University of Wyoming and Black Hills State University and has earned honors including the Peabody Energy Leaders in Education Award and RE/MAX Teacher Leader Award. A former Miss Wyoming, she has championed impaired driving education at the state level. Beth believes all students can succeed through strong relationships and student-centered learning.

James Johnston - Carbon County School District #1



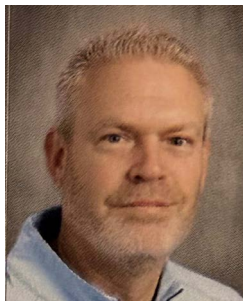
James Johnston has spent 21 years teaching 5th grade at Rawlins Elementary School, where he leads all core subjects with a focus on student engagement and motivation. A University of Wyoming graduate, Jim was honored with the Crystal Apple Award in 2021 after a student nominated him for his kindness and support during a challenging time. He's committed to creating a safe, inspiring classroom where every child feels valued and empowered to grow.

Janice Peterson - Carbon County School District #2



Janice Peterson, a 4th grade teacher at Encampment K–12 School, brings 28 years of experience and a strong dedication to helping students grow. With degrees from the University of Wyoming and Western Governors University, she fosters a student-centered classroom built on problem-solving, accountability, and confidence. Known for her innovative teaching and tireless support of students and staff, she co-created a peer review program focused on impactful instruction and has earned national recognition, including the Sallie Mae Award for outstanding first-year teachers. Beyond teaching, she serves as head volleyball coach, athletic director, mentor, curriculum trainer, and youth advisor, all while championing the power of “not yet” to inspire resilience and lifelong learning.

Bill Pearson - Converse County School District #1



William Pearson, a seasoned educator and department chair at Douglas High School, has been teaching mathematics since 1998. He earned both his Bachelor’s in Mathematics and Master’s in Education from Montana State University–Billings. In addition to his classroom leadership, William has coached basketball for over 20 years and achieved National Board Certification in 2018 in Mathematics for Adolescence and Young Adulthood, reflecting his commitment to excellence in education and student development.

Miranda Haskell - Converse County School District #2



Miranda J. Haskell is a veteran educator and coach at Glenrock Junior/Senior High School, where she teaches 7th and 8th grade Social Studies with a focus on World and American History. With over 20 years of experience, she’s known for creating engaging, student-centered lessons that connect historical events to modern life, fostering critical thinking and global awareness. Beyond the classroom, Miranda has coached junior high volleyball and basketball, and currently serves as the assistant girls’ high school basketball coach. She’s passionate about mentoring student-athletes, emphasizing teamwork, leadership, and perseverance. Through both academics and athletics, Miranda is dedicated to helping students become confident, responsible, and well-rounded individuals who thrive in and beyond the Glenrock community.

Amber Burch - Crook County School District #1



Amber Burch is a passionate 4th grade science and social studies teacher at Moorcroft Elementary. Raised in an agricultural community, she brings hands-on, real-world connections to her lessons, fostering curiosity and critical thinking. Amber holds a Master’s in Educational Technology and Instructional Design from Western Governors University and a Bachelor’s in Elementary Education from Black Hills State University, with endorsements in multiple middle school subjects. Recognized in the WDE Educator Spotlight and named Crook County School District’s 2026 Teacher of the Year, she engages students through interactive experiments and outdoor learning. Outside the classroom, she enjoys gardening, ranch life, camping, and fishing, inspiring students to explore and appreciate the natural world.

Alanna McGilvray - Fremont County School District # 1



Alanna McGilvray is a dedicated 7th grade math teacher at Lander Middle School, where she's served students in various roles since 2016. A graduate of the University of Wyoming, she enriches her classroom with meaningful connections and tailored instruction that supports diverse learners. Beyond teaching, Alanna sponsors math competitions, co-leads the art club, directs the after-school study hall, and contributes to summer school planning. She's an active member of the behavioral intervention team, guiding coalition, and Sunshine Committee, consistently volunteering to enhance the school community. Her belief in making students feel seen and valued drives her commitment to helping them thrive.

Jessica Schooner - Fremont County School District #6



Jessica Schooner, a 3rd grade teacher at Wind River Elementary in Pavillion with 12 years of experience and a master's in Curriculum and Instruction, creates a supportive, inclusive classroom that fosters confidence, risk-taking, and growth. Her data-driven approach led her class to tie for first in math and place third in ELA on the 2025 WY-TOPP among small schools. Jess also serves as a PLC facilitator, mentor, and partner with the University of Wyoming to implement research-based practices. Outside the classroom, she supports school culture as a sports photographer and promotes a local figure 8 race association with her husband—reflecting her deep commitment to student success and community connection.

John Gookin - Fremont County School District #21



Dr. John Gookin teaches Biology, Environmental Science, and Physics at Fort Washakie High School, where he also leads monthly enrichment trips and seasonal learning carnivals. With a PhD in Education focused on experiential learning, he brings a hands-on, adventure-based approach to teaching, drawing from his extensive background in outdoor education and leadership. A former Marine Corps Special Operations Instructor and Search & Rescue Commander, Dr. Gookin has authored numerous publications on outdoor learning and previously developed leadership training for U.S. astronauts during his tenure at NOLS. His work reflects a lifelong commitment to transformational education and service.

Annie Good - Fremont County School District #24



Annie Good is a dedicated educator celebrating 29 years of service, currently teaching Special Education at Shoshoni Schools. Her career spans high school Social Studies and over two decades in elementary education, where she's known for crafting individualized instruction to help students thrive. She holds degrees from Northern Arizona University, Bellarmine University, and the University of Wyoming, and is certified in 7–12 Social Studies, Elementary Education, and K–12 Special Education. Originally from Arizona, Annie moved to Shoshoni in 2015 with her husband and two daughters. Outside of school, she enjoys traveling, art, music festivals, and exploring the outdoors with her family.

Ashley Whipp - Fremont County School District #38



Ashley Whipp is a passionate 7–8th grade English Language Arts teacher at Arapahoe Schools with over a decade of experience. She creates a supportive classroom where students explore diverse literature through novel studies, independent reading, and meaningful discussions. Ashley integrates technology, hands-on activities, and differentiated instruction to build strong literacy foundations. Outside the classroom, she mentors new teachers, sponsors events, and fosters strong relationships with students and families. A University of Wyoming graduate with certification from the University of West Florida, Ashley believes reading empowers critical thinking and opens doors to new possibilities. In her free time, she enjoys ranch life, horseback riding, kayaking, hiking, and snowmobiling with her family.

Cheryl Trimble - Goshen County School District #1



Cheryl Trimble teaches special education at Compass Academy in Torrington, supporting students aged 18–21 in employment, independent living, and social-emotional growth. Inspired by a teacher who made her feel seen, she's committed to creating safe, empowering learning environments. Cheryl holds degrees from Saint Cloud State University and the University of Northern Colorado, plus a generalist endorsement from Western State College. She also leads Cotant's Totes of Hope Backpack Program and serves on the district's Advisory Committee for Special Services, advocating for inclusive, high-quality education.

Kristin Ryan - Hot Springs County School District #1



Kristin Ryan is a 1st grade teacher at Ralph Witters Elementary in Thermopolis, where she champions equity, inclusion, and literacy for all learners. With degrees in Elementary and Special Education, a Reading Specialist endorsement, and a Principal Certificate, she brings deep expertise to her classroom. A two-time Voya Unsung Heroes Grant recipient, Kristin is also certified as a Structured Literacy Dyslexia Interventionist. Her teaching is rooted in real-world connections—transforming lessons into immersive experiences like mock hospitals and community partnerships—to spark engagement and make learning meaningful for every student.

Billy Farris - Johnson County School District #1



Billy Farris is a veteran educator at Cloud Peak Elementary in Buffalo, currently in his tenth year teaching 4th grade. With over 20 years in the classroom, he's taught 1st and 3rd grades and holds degrees from the University of Northern Colorado and Grand Canyon University. A National Board Certified Teacher since 2012 in Literacy for Early and Middle Childhood, Billy continually refines his practice through reflection and innovation. He plays a key leadership role in the Wyoming RIDE Initiative, leading K–5 workshops and presenting statewide to promote educational transformation. Passionate about Project-Based Learning and equity-focused instruction, Billy is committed to creating meaningful, student-centered learning experiences and advancing public education across Wyoming.

Christina Mayle - Laramie County School District #1



Christina Mayle is a veteran educator with over 22 years of experience in Laramie County School District #1, currently teaching 6th grade Math and Science at Meadowlark Elementary in Cheyenne. Having helped open the school a decade ago, she proudly calls the 5th/6th grade campus her home. Christina holds degrees from Laramie County Community College and the University of Wyoming, and is currently pursuing dual master's programs in Middle Level Math and Learning, Design, and Technology. Passionate about hands-on learning and student agency, she encourages her students to treat math as a puzzle, not a problem—making learning joyful, engaging, and meaningful at every level.

Zachary Ley - Natrona County School District #1



Zachary Ley is a dedicated 5th grade Math and Science teacher at Pineview Elementary in Casper, where he's helped drive a 51% increase in student math proficiency over the past three years. Beginning his career as a tutor in 2015, he now leads instruction in his specialty areas and actively contributes to school improvement through leadership roles on teams focused on math, SEL, and data analysis. A two-time Subaru Loves Learning Grant recipient and nominee for the 2024 Presidential Award for Excellence in Math and Science Teaching, Mr. Ley also sponsors the Yearbook Club, Math Club, and a mentorship program for young boys. He fosters student ownership, critical thinking, and real-world application in his classroom, believing that rigorous learning, strong relationships, and reflective practice build lasting academic success.

Karla VandeBosschek - Niobrara County School District #1



Karla VandeBosschek is the K–6 Math Interventionist at Lusk Elementary Middle School, bringing 35 years of experience to her role. She began her career as an elementary teacher and later taught middle school science before focusing on math intervention, where she provides targeted support to build student confidence and success. Karla holds degrees from Black Hills State University and is National Board Certified, reflecting her commitment to excellence and growth. Known for her flexibility, she stepped in to teach 6th grade during a staffing shortage, ensuring continuity for students. Her whole-child approach emphasizes hands-on learning, curiosity, and brain-based strategies that lead to lasting understanding.

Luke Robertson - Park County School District # 1



Luke Robertson is a physical education teacher at Westside Elementary in Powell, where he inspires K–5 students to move, grow, and thrive through dynamic, experience-based learning. With degrees in Physical Education and Kinesiology from the University of Wyoming and National Board Certification, he brings excellence and innovation to his teaching. Robertson's signature initiative, the Adventure Awaits Challenge, connects students with their community through real-world activities like fishing, disc golf, biking, snowshoeing, and gardening with long-term care residents. His philosophy centers on educating the whole child, building strong relationships, and promoting lifelong wellness through meaningful, hands-on experiences.

Sean Murray - Park County School District # 6



Sean Murray is a veteran educator with 31 years of experience, currently teaching Science at Heart Mountain Academy in Cody. He works with 10th–12th grade at-risk students, offering courses like Biology, Astronomy, and Entrepreneurial Design, while supporting online learning. With degrees from the University of Wyoming and Grand Canyon University, plus endorsements in Math and Administration, Sean brings depth and versatility to his teaching. He integrates tools like 3D printing, laser engraving, and podcasting to foster creativity. Formerly an assistant principal, he returned to the classroom to build safe, supportive environments—believing you must “Maslow before you can Bloom.”

Autumn Duncan - Park County School District #16



Autumn Duncan teaches grades 7–12 science at Meeteetse Schools, covering Biology, Chemistry, Physics, and Earth Science. She holds a Bachelor of Science in Rangeland Ecology and Watershed Management from the University of Wyoming and a Master of Science in Teaching Science Education from Western Governors University, where she earned 11 exemplary awards. Autumn began her teaching career in her own classroom under a conditional license, an experience that shaped her hands-on, movement-based approach to learning—rooted in her years of homeschooling her four sons. She is now helping lead the district’s transition to a project-based learning model, emphasizing real-world experiments and outdoor exploration as the heart of science education.

Lisa McIntosh - Platte County School District #1



Lisa McIntosh is a versatile educator currently teaching grades 6–12 at Glendo Schools, covering all high school core subjects and middle school Mathematics. Previously, she taught Agriculture and Math at Wheatland Middle School, where she founded the Laramie Peak FFA Chapter and led students to win the 2025 Wyoming FFA Middle School Sweepstakes. She also built a 600-square-foot greenhouse to support hands-on STEM learning. Lisa holds degrees in Secondary Education and Mathematics, Curriculum and Instruction, and Educational Leadership, along with a graduate certificate in Mathematics. Her teaching emphasizes conceptual understanding, mathematical reasoning, and problem-solving to foster deep, lasting learning.

Melinda Kelley - Platte County School District #2



Melinda Kelley teaches secondary business at Guernsey-Sunrise High School, offering courses like Entrepreneurship, Personal Finance, and Marketing—many with college credit. She also introduces middle school students to Career Exploration and Intro to Business. Outside the classroom, Melinda advises FBLA, sponsors Close-Up, and supports military-connected students as the Purple Star liaison. She holds degrees from Valley City State University and Western Governors University, and serves as president of the Wyoming Business Educators Association. Her classroom emphasizes ownership, creativity, and real-world learning through hands-on, career-focused instruction.

Steven Hanson - Sheridan County School District #1



Steve Hanson is the U.S. History, World History, and Government teacher at Tongue River High School in Dayton, where he serves as the sole social studies instructor for all grade levels. Originally from Montana, he studied Constitutional Law at Montana State University while competing as a scholarship athlete in football and track. A U.S. Navy veteran, Steve served as a Corpsman with Navy and Marine Corps units, deploying five times to Iraq and Afghanistan and earning multiple commendations and meritorious promotions. He holds a Bachelor of Science in Secondary Education from Grand Canyon University and a Master's in Educational Leadership from the University of Wyoming. In the classroom, Steve emphasizes literacy and critical thinking, guiding students through historical analysis, governance structures, and the movement of people and ideas.

Erica Jensen - Sheridan County School District #2



Erica Jensen is a 1st grade teacher at Sagebrush Elementary in Sheridan, where she fosters inclusive classroom communities that celebrate each learner's individuality. With 15 years in education, she began as a paraprofessional before teaching 3rd grade at Indian Paintbrush Elementary in Laramie, where she was named Teacher of the Year in 2018. Erica holds degrees from the University of Wyoming and Walden University. She helped launch Girls on the Run at Sagebrush and now serves as Sheridan's Regional Coordinator, expanding the program to nearby schools. Her work centers on relationship-building and empowering every child to recognize their limitless potential.

Dawn Knudsvig - Sheridan County School District #3



Dawn Knudsvig has taught K–12 art at Arvada–Clearmont Schools since 2003, focusing on self-expression and creative growth. A Wyoming native and Doane College graduate, she emphasizes process over product, encouraging exploration and reflection. Her students have earned state recognition, and she's also led award-winning yearbook classes. Outside school, Dawn enjoys time with her husband, three daughters, and three granddaughters—sharing a love for Wyoming and the arts. Her lasting impact reflects a deep commitment to student growth and artistic confidence.

Karin Unruh - Sublette County School District #1



Karin Unruh teaches kindergarten through 3rd grade at Bondurant Elementary, a one-room school in Bondurant, where she's spent 12 of her 13 years with the District. She holds degrees from Illinois Wesleyan University and the University of Wyoming, including a Doctorate in Learning, Design, and Technology. Passionate about rural education, Karin mentors preservice teachers through the University of Wyoming's Rural Teacher Corps and has contributed research on improving educator preparation for rural schools. Her teaching emphasizes personalized instruction, strong community connections, and lasting relationships with students and families—helping each child thrive academically and socially.

Cole Clifford - Sublette County School District #9



Cole Clifford is in his first year serving as the Activity Director and also leads as the High School Wrestling Coach. At Big Piney High School, he teaches Mathematics to students in grades 10–12 and Study Skills to 9th-grade students, bringing energy and dedication to both the classroom and extracurricular programs.

Tracey DeCora-Burton - Sweetwater County School District #1



Tracey DeCora-Burton teaches English Language Arts, Science and Social Studies 5th grade at Eastside Elementary in Rock Springs, where she brings 19 years of experience in education. A Rock Springs native, she holds dual degrees in Elementary and Special Education from the University of Wyoming. Her career spans junior high and elementary special education, along with leadership in professional development. Named Rock Springs' Chamber of Commerce Inaugural Teacher of the Year in 2024, Tracey creates a student-centered classroom focused on collaboration, goal-setting, and holistic growth.

Andrew Trumble - Sweetwater County School District #2



Andrew Trumble, a veteran educator, teaches multiple subjects to 9-12th grade students at Green River Expedition Academy, including, math, business English and mountain biking. With 32 years in the classroom and 34 years coaching, he's known for building strong relationships and creating a supportive, high-expectation environment. His approach centers on meeting students where they are—academically, socially, and emotionally—to help them grow into confident, capable individuals.

Michelle Roundy - Teton County School District #1



Michelle Roundy teaches 10th grade English, AP Preparation and 12th grade AP Literature and Composition at Jackson Hole High School, where she also serves as an instructional coach supporting diverse learners. A National Board Certified Teacher with 15 years of experience in Wyoming, she holds degrees in Liberal Studies and Teaching from Oregon State University, graduating with honors. Michelle's approach centers on building authentic relationships and fostering literacy, student agency, and curiosity—creating a classroom where meaningful learning thrives.

Crystal Peterson - Uinta County School District #1



Crystal Peterson teaches 8th grade pre-algebra and high school algebra at Evanston Middle School, where she's served for 36 years. She's coached MATHCOUNTS teams to state and national success, mentored new teachers, and led curriculum development. Her students consistently exceed state benchmarks, thanks to her dedication and belief that every student can do hard things. Crystal finds joy in the "AHA" moments when students grasp new math concepts and treasures hearing, "I became a teacher because of your influence and example."

Bridget Brinkerhoff - Uinta County School District #6



Bridget Brinkerhoff teaches kindergarten at Urie Elementary in Lyman the very school where she once dreamed of becoming a teacher. Her classroom is filled with rhyming, dancing, and hugs as she helps students grow strong, problem-solving brains. A University of Wyoming honors graduate with a master's in K-6 Mathematics Education from Western Governors University, Bridget is passionate about STEM and regularly brings University Outreach programs to her school. She also fosters staff wellness by organizing weekly workout groups. Bridget believes in kindness, laughter, and the power of play to help young learners master their ABCs and 1-2-3s.

Jeana Croft - Washakie County School District #1



Jeana Croft recently retired after a diverse and impactful career in education. She began teaching Family and Consumer Science and Economics in Mesa, Arizona, before moving to Wyoming, where she served as a health educator and later taught FACS at Worland Middle School. Her journey continued in Park County as a Title 1 Reading Specialist at Powell Middle School, and for the past five years, she taught vocational courses at Worland High School. Jeana holds a bachelor's degree from Brigham Young University and a master's in Secondary Education from Northern Arizona University, with an emphasis in Reading Education.

Jason Thoren - Washakie County School District #2



Jason Thoren teaches welding, woodworking, drafting, computer science, and work-based learning to grades 7-12 at Ten Sleep School. With degrees from the University of Wyoming, Casper College, and a computer science endorsement from Northwest College, he has transformed the school's CTE program to align with industry standards. Jason created a work-based learning initiative connecting students to local job experiences and developed the "New Teacher Care Package" to support incoming CTE educators. A passionate mentor and advocate for hands-on, project-based learning, he prepares students with practical skills and real-world readiness.

Allen Von Eye - Weston County School District #1



Allen Von Eye teaches 9th grade geography and cultures and 10th grade American government at Newcastle High School, where he's completed 21 years in social studies education. A University of Wyoming graduate, he's contributed to statewide initiatives like the Wyoming social studies review committee and the James Madison Legacy Project. He uses the We the People curriculum to promote civic engagement and even created a local competition based on the program. Named Wyoming Coaches Association President-Elect in 2024, Allen believes the social studies classroom is a powerful space to challenge students as citizens and foster critical thinking on real-world issues.

Rebecca Kelton - Weston County School District #7



Rebecca Kelton teaches agricultural education to grades 7–12 at Upton High School, where she leads a hands-on, student-driven program rooted in real-world applications. She holds degrees in Agricultural Education and Animal Science from the University of Wyoming and Liberal Arts from Polk State College. Under her leadership, the Upton FFA Chapter was named Wyoming's top chapter in both 2024 and 2025, and her students launched a rural leadership conference to inspire peers across the region. Serving around 60 students, her curriculum spans animal and plant science, ag mechanics, and natural resources—fostering career readiness, leadership, and a strong connection to Wyoming's agricultural heritage.