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Teacher Appreciation Week: Superintendent Ybarra, SDE staff sub for Idaho educators

(BOISE) – Next week, 22 teachers in the Treasure Valley and Magic Valley will get time off as part of the State Department of Education’s celebration of Teacher Appreciation Week.

Ten SDE staff members, all certified teachers, will guest-teach to provide a day off for educators selected by their schools. And Superintendent of Public Instruction Sherri Ybarra, also certified, will guest-teach for about an hour each at Nampa’s Willow Creek Elementary School on Monday and Mountain Home’s West Elementary on Thursday. The Mountain Home stop, in particular, will be familiar territory for Ybarra, a longtime third-grade teacher and principal at West.

“It’s a joy for me and my staff to get back in the classroom, and a great opportunity for schools and districts to reward hard-working teachers with well-deserved time off,” Superintendent Ybarra said. “This is the first year we’ve embarked on this project, and we’re already planning to expand it to other parts of the state next year.”

For the initial year of the Idaho Teacher Appreciation Project, districts and schools in Regions III and IV were asked to nominate teachers for the project, and those nominees were matched with SDE staff qualified to teach at that grade level and content area. Each district or school set its own nomination process for determining which teachers to nominate.

All schools that requested guest teachers were assigned at least one. In addition to Superintendent Ybarra’s guest stints at Willow Creek and West elementary schools, here are the school and staff pairings for each region, by date:

Region III

Monday, May 7

Curricular Materials Coordinator Elizabeth James will fill in for Kim Cadwell at Roosevelt Elementary, Boise. Multi-Tier Support Coordinator Alayna Gee will fill in for Linda Langley at Fruitland Elementary.

Tuesday, May 8

Driver Education Program Director Audra Urie will fill in for Chelsea Anderson at Meridian Medical Arts Charter School.

Wednesday, May 9

Math Coordinator Nichole Hall will fill in for Kalynda Pearce at Lake Ridge Elementary, Nampa.
Advanced Opportunities Coordinator Tina Polishchuk will fill in for Susie Briggs at Garden Valley Elementary.

Thursday, May 10

Health Education Coordinator Rhonda Heggen will fill in for Carie Staub at Meridian Medical Arts Charter.
Early Childhood Coordinator Shannon Dunstan will fill in for Alissa Lenz at Desert Springs Elementary in the Vallivue School District.

Hall will fill in for Bob Stefanakos at Les Bois Junior High, Boise

Friday, May 11

Humanities/ Fine Arts Coordinator Peggy Wenner will fill in for Leslie Minshall at Payette Lakes Middle School in the McCall School District.

Hall will fill in for Theresa Giery at Emmett Middle School.

Certification and Professional Standards Director Lisa Colon Durham will fill in for Dave Winkelman at Meridian Medical Arts Charter.

Gee will fill in for Tom Runyan at Discovery Elementary in the West Ada School District.

Assessment Coordinator Heidi Arrate will fill in for Maggie Stover at Caldwell's Syringa Middle School.

Region IV:**Monday, May 7**

Math Coordinator Nichole Hall will fill in for Vickie Smith at Oakley Junior High School.

Health Coordinator Rhonda Heggen will fill in for Kimberly Whitaker at Burley Junior High School.

Certification and Professional Standards Director Lisa Colon Durham will fill in for Gala Bortz at Twin Falls High School.

Early Childhood Coordinator Shannon Dunstan will fill in for Jennifer Schafer at Burley Junior High School.

Assessment Coordinator Heidi Arrate will fill in for Kali Connell at Wendell Elementary School.

Tuesday, May 8

Hall will fill in for Vicky Prien at Minico High School.

Thursday, May 10

Advanced Opportunities Coordinator Tina Polishchuk will fill in for Lisa Frost at Idaho Virtual Academy.

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Reporters, editors: To arrange to visit a school during its guest-teaching day, check with the school or call Kristin Rodine at SDE, 208-332-6807 or cell 208-863-4545.