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Idaho Department of Education Seeks Outstanding Educator Applicants for 2026 CapEd Credit Union Idaho Teacher of the Year

(BOISE) – The Idaho Department of Education is again seeking nominations for the state’s top honor for teaching talent, the CapEd Credit Union Idaho Teacher of the Year. Applications to nominate a teacher are [now open](#).

The award is open to all Idaho traditional and charter school educators teaching any subject at any grade level. **Nominations are due to the Idaho Department of Education by March 16.**

“Each year I have the distinct pleasure and honor to take part in this selection process, and seeing the amazing teaching talent fostered statewide is such a privilege,” said Superintendent of Public Instruction Debbie Critchfield. “With this in mind, I once again make an appeal to anyone – students, parents, teachers and administrators – to think of an educator who has gone the extra mile and nominate them for this prestigious honor.”

All nominated educators will be notified the week after the nomination deadline and will have until May 9 to submit their applications. A blue ribbon selection committee will then review each application with the winning educator announced in the fall.

2025 Idaho Teacher of the Year Heidi Cornell was selected for her outstanding dedication to student-centered education and ability to give learners the educational space they need to learn, grow and explore their futures. The Orchards Elementary community in Lewiston has benefitted directly from Cornell’s ability to combine solid best practices with innovation and creativity to meet the needs of each individual student.

The 2026 Idaho Teacher of the Year will receive a cash award of \$10,000 courtesy of CapEd Credit Union and will travel across the state to engage with educators, legislators and policymakers on topics such as teaching, curriculum and more. They will also serve as Idaho’s

nominee for [National Teacher of the Year](#) and represent Idaho at several national Teacher of the Year events.

Please visit the Idaho Department of Education's [Teacher of the Year](#) webpage to learn more and to access the online nomination form.

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