

News Release

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Five Wisconsin educators named finalists for national award

Teachers nominated for success in teaching math, science

MADISON – State Superintendent Carolyn Stanford Taylor today named five Wisconsin educators finalists for the 2020 Presidential Awards for Excellence in Mathematics and Science Teaching. The award is considered the highest honor bestowed by the U.S. government for math and science teachers.

“Effective teachers not only have expertise in content areas and instructional practices; they also have a great deal of dedication and a special commitment to their students,” Stanford Taylor said. “The teachers nominated for this honor have gone above and beyond to support their students and help them excel in learning.”

The five teachers were selected for their knowledge of the subjects they teach, and for facilitating and encouraging success among students in those areas. Wisconsin finalists for the 2020 PAEMST’s are:

- Marcia Gardner, 4th grade science teacher, Southern Bluffs Elementary, La Crosse
- Sonja Hungness, 6th grade math teacher, Kromrey Middle School, Middleton
- Mary Ellen Kanthack, 8th grade science teacher, Brookwood Middle School, Genoa City
- Leigh Kohlmann, 6th grade science teacher, Rock River Intermediate School, Waupun
- Lois Womack, 4th/5th grade math teacher, Marvin Pratt Elementary School, Milwaukee

Presented annually since 1983, K-12 science, technology, engineering, mathematics, and/or computer science teachers from across the nation are nominated for the award, and states establish committees who select finalists based on criteria required by the national PAEMST program. Applications from Wisconsin’s finalists will be judged at the national level by a committee organized by the National Science Foundation, which administers PAEMST on behalf of The White House Office of Science and Technology Policy. One awardee in mathematics and one awardee in science will receive a \$10,000 award from the National Science Foundation, professional development opportunities, and are honored at an award ceremony in Washington, D.C.

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NOTE: Additional information about the 2020 PAEMST’s can be found online at <https://www.paemst.org>. This news release is available electronically at <https://dpi.wi.gov/news/releases/2020/wisconsin-educators-finalists-paemst>.