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For Immediate Release

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Utah State Board of Education Announces the 'Fab Five' Finalists for 2027 Utah Teacher of the Year

SALT LAKE CITY – The Utah State Board of Education (USBE) is proud to announce the five finalists for the 2027 Utah Teacher of the Year award. After a rigorous selection process that reviewed nominations from across the state, these five educators have been distinguished for their exceptional dedication, innovative practices, and profound impact on the lives of their students and communities.

The 2027 Utah Teacher of the Year Finalists are:

- Danielle Carter | 5th Grade Special Education | Delta Middle School, Millard School District
- Talia Casares | 6th Grade Spanish DLI | Moroni Elementary, North Sanpete School District
- Sondra Knudsen | Kindergarten | Adams Elementary, Logan City School District
- Daren Lentz | 7th Grade Mathematics | South Cache Middle School, Cache County School District
- Megan Morrison | 7th-9th Special Education | South Jordan Middle School, Jordan School District

These finalists, dubbed the 'Fab Five,' represent the pinnacle of teaching excellence in Utah, demonstrating an unwavering commitment to student growth, exemplary teaching, and professional leadership. They are master teachers who not only deliver exceptional instruction but also create learning environments where every student feels seen, valued, and empowered to succeed.

In the coming weeks, these five finalists will participate in an in-person interview with the 13-person Utah Teacher of the Year Selection Committee, which is composed of representatives from the Utah State Board of Education, the Utah Education Association, Utah PTA, and other education and community stakeholders. Additionally, they will have the opportunity to engage in several professional learning opportunities including an educator roundtable event.

The 2027 Utah Teacher of the Year will be announced at an awards banquet on September 3, 2026. The winner will go on to represent Utah in the National Teacher of the Year Program. We extend our heartfelt congratulations to all finalists and wish them the best of luck in the next phase of the selection process.

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