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Second Place Winners Announced in *Making a Difference* Contest *Four \$500 Contributions Made by IEA Through the Idaho Public Teachers Campaign*

Boise, ID—Four Idaho public schools have received \$500 contributions from the Idaho Education Association as second place winners in the **Making a Difference** contest, which was an important component of the *Idaho Public School Teachers: Dedicated to the Ones We Love* awareness campaign. Teachers, parents and community members from around the state submitted online entries this fall through the campaign website, www.idahopublicteachers.org.

“We had so many outstanding entries on behalf of so many deserving schools that we felt compelled to expand our contributions to additional schools,” said Idaho Education Association President Penni Cyr. “We know that education resources can be scarce in Idaho, and we hope that these contributions will provide some measure of assistance to our great public schools and professional educators.” The first prize of \$1,000 was presented on October 15 to Jefferson Elementary School in Pocatello.

The second place winners are:

- **Highland Elementary School, Craigmont.** The winning entry was submitted by parent Kristen Wright, who requested that the money go to “the Highlands special education department to ensure quality education for my children as well as the other amazing children in our area”.
- **Mullan Trail Elementary School, Post Falls.** There were multiple entries on behalf of this school, including parent Michelle Garrett, who shared the growth experiences of her children over the last nine years and said that “with this prize the school can continue doing what it does best—put our kids first and ensure that Mullan Trail Elementary is maintaining momentum in preparing our children for their continued education”.
- **Borah High School, Boise.** Teacher Pamela Atkins submitted the winning entry, which praised a program called “Lions’ Den” that keeps the school library open after school so that students have a safe and productive environment for doing homework. She notes that Borah HS has a large refugee student population and that more than 40 different languages are spoken at the school.
- **Desert Springs Elementary, Vallivue.** Librarian/Media Specialist Katie Wiese submitted this entry highlighting the school’s Lunch Bunch Book Club and other efforts to make sure that kids (especially in low income neighborhoods) have access to reading materials.

The *Idaho Public Teachers: Dedicated to the Ones We Love* initiative has featured advertisements on radio and television stations around the state, as well on a variety of websites, showcasing the compelling stories of Idaho’s amazing public school teachers. The website also features resources about public school teachers and public education, including what Idahoans can do to support public education, troubling statistics about education funding in the state, and myths/misconceptions about professional educators.

Highlighting the campaign is a series of video vignettes featuring Idaho public school teachers sharing their thoughts and personal stories, including:

- **Public Education Matters.** Idaho teachers discuss the importance of public education and the impact that it can have on children and communities.
<https://vimeo.com/idahoea/review/136414635/c8d8256f7f>
- **Job Description.** Focuses on the many and varied roles that teachers play in the growth and development of students—well above and beyond just academics.
<https://vimeo.com/idahoea/review/136414868/c1276476d8>
- **Why We Teach.** Heartfelt answers to questions about why Idaho public school teachers chose to become professional educators. <https://vimeo.com/idahoea/review/128272986/da8b63d6e8>
- **The Best Place You Can Be.** A great personal story about how one Idaho teacher connected with a student, helped him learn to read, and inspired his confidence.
<https://vimeo.com/idahoea/review/136465018/d23c3120d4>

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The Idaho Education Association is the leading organization for education employees in Idaho and is the largest professional organization in the state. The IEA and its members have worked together for more than 120 years to advocate for children and professional educators, and to promote strong public schools as the foundation of Idaho's future.

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