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For Immediate Release

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### **USB E Announces Finalists for 2025 Utah Teacher of the Year**

SALT LAKE CITY – The Utah State Board of Education is pleased to announce the five finalists for the 2025 Teacher of the Year.

- **Andrea Settle:** English teacher at Juab High School in Nephi in the Juab School District.
- **Andru Jones:** Special Education teacher at Viewmont High School in Bountiful in the Davis School District.
- **Sayre Posey:** 8th grade U.S. History teacher at Northwest Middle School in Salt Lake City in the Salt Lake City School District.
- **Seyyed Sharifi:** Post-high Special Education teacher at Hartvigsen School in Taylorsville in the Granite School District.
- **Shari Payne:** Kindergarten teacher at Wasatch Elementary School in Provo in the Provo City School District.

“Each of these candidates has been selected for demonstrating an outstanding commitment to their students and the future of Utah. Each is a pillar of excellence in education and contributes in unique ways that add diversity and value to the community,” said Katie Jones, Educator Development Specialist for the Utah State Board of Education.

For example, Andrea currently works on the Juab High School Leadership Team representing the English Department; she serves as the faculty advisor to the JHS Writing Club, the Juab Chapter of the National Honor Society, and the Sterling Scholar Advisor. She also oversees the student-led Juab High Writing Club. Andru is a 10th-grade special education teacher and the head football coach at Viewmont

High School; he makes sure that every student is involved and doesn't turn anyone away from his team. Sayre comes from a family of teachers and got her start as an educator volunteering with at-risk students in after-school programs throughout college. She began her teaching career in Baltimore before moving to Utah. Seyyed also comes from a family of teachers. Both his mother and father had a love for education in Kabul, Afghanistan before leaving the country as refugees. Seyyed loves creating a space in his classroom where students have real-world learning opportunities. Shari is a lifelong learner and has earned her English as a Second Language Endorsement, and microcredentials in Formative Assessment, Teacher Clarity, Classroom Dance and Movement, and Online/Blended Learning.

Every year, across the state of Utah, districts and charter schools have the opportunity to celebrate public education and the vital role of excellent teachers by selecting and honoring a teacher of the year for their local education agency (LEA). Each of these teachers of the year is then considered for selection as a finalist for the Utah Teacher of the Year program. Five finalists are selected and interviewed by a volunteer selection committee. Each finalist will receive a \$2,000 cash prize as a token of appreciation for their hard work and impact on their students and communities.

In the fall, an awards banquet is held to celebrate all nominees and to announce the Utah Teacher of the Year.

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