



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

School Specialty Celebrates Exceptional Educators with 2025 Crystal Apple Awards

Five outstanding teachers honored for going above and beyond to touch the lives of their students

(GREENVILLE, Wis.) April 22, 2025 – [School Specialty](#), a leading provider of learning environments and supplies to the pre-K-12 education market, is proud to announce the five winners of its 11th annual Crystal Apple Awards ahead of Teacher Appreciation Week (May 5-9). The award program aims to celebrate teachers who embody exceptional inspiration, leadership and passion in teaching.

Each year, students, parents, administrators, fellow teachers, family and friends nominate educators who demonstrate outstanding influence, vision and devotion, with over 500 nominations submitted this year. School Specialty selects 16 finalists from the nominees, and five winners are then selected by public vote. Each winner receives a personalized trophy, a \$500 merchandise certificate from School Specialty for personal use and a \$250 School Specialty merchandise certificate to support resources for their school.

The 2025 honorees demonstrate an unwavering commitment to their students, going above and beyond to foster a positive and impactful learning environment. School Specialty is honored to celebrate the following educators as this year's award winners:

- **Sophia Hedrington**, Dothan City Early Education Center – Dothan, AL
- **Michelle Krehl**, The Nurtury Preschool – Sherman Oaks, CA
- **Mindi Maturin**, Brabham Middle School – Willis, TX
- **Amy Moran**, Edward R. Martin Middle School – East Providence, RI
- **Dan Schmidt**, North Harrison Middle School – Ramsey, IN

"School Specialty is proud to champion the vital work of those who share our passion for improving student outcomes and helping school communities thrive," said Dr. Sue Ann Highland, Lead National Education Strategist at School Specialty. "These educators play a crucial role in shaping the future, and this award is our way of supporting their relentless dedication in the classroom."

Finalists for the Crystal Apple Awards also receive a \$100 School Specialty merchandise certificate for themselves and an additional \$100 certificate for their school. This year's finalists are:

- **Donna Clark**, Miguel Juarez Middle School – _____, WI

- **Andria Devlin**, Lawrence Arts Center Early Childhood – Lawrence, KS
- **Lauren Finizia**, New Milford High School – Belleville, NJ
- **Cecelia Gillam**, Benjamin Franklin High School – New Orleans, LA
- **Amina Khan**, Astronaut Jose M Hernandez Academy – Stockton, CA
- **Amy Klein**, Apple Creek Elementary – Bismarck, ND
- **Jenn McElveen**, Batavia High School – Batavia, OH
- **Erin Merrill**, Pennington Traditional School – Manassas, VA
- **Tanna Nicely**, South Knoxville Elementary – Knoxville, TN
- **Priscilla Sanchez**, Ferdinand Herff Elementary School – San Antonio, TX
- **Andy Yung**, P.S 244Q The Active Learning Elementary School – Flushing, NY

To learn more about this year's winners and finalists, visit <https://www.schoolspecialty.com/crystal-apple>.

About School Specialty, LLC

With a 60-year legacy, School Specialty is a leading provider of comprehensive learning environment solutions for the pre-K–12 education marketplace in the U.S. and Canada. This includes essential classroom supplies, furniture and design services, educational technology, sensory spaces featuring Snoezelen®, science curriculum, learning resources, professional development, and more. School Specialty believes every student can flourish in an environment where they are engaged and inspired to learn and grow. In support of this vision to transform more than classrooms, the company applies its unmatched team of subject-matter experts and designs, manufactures, and distributes a broad assortment of name-brand and proprietary products. For more information, go to [SchoolSpecialty.com](https://www.SchoolSpecialty.com).

Media Contact

Stephanie Grau
press@schoolspecialty.com