

# A Moment of Science from ISTA

Idaho Science Teaching Association President's Newsletter

September 2023



## A Word (or two) From Your ISTA President!

Greetings once again from the Idaho Science Teachers Association!

As we reunite after a restful and productive summer break, we extend our warmest welcome back to school. We hope you've had the chance to recharge and are ready to embark on a new academic journey filled with endless possibilities. I am excited to take over from Melyssa Ferro as your new ISTA president. I currently teach chemistry at Borah High School in Boise and I am looking forward to a great year!

Our excitement grows as we continue our mission to inspire and cultivate young minds through the marvels of science. Together, let's embark on this adventure of learning, exploration, and growth, where each lesson becomes a gateway to curiosity and discovery.

Reflecting on the past year, we take pride in the strategic planning efforts that have shaped the future of our association. This roadmap ensures that our organization remains vibrant and dedicated to serving science educators across our great state.

The cornerstones of our plan – forging partnerships, offering professional development, and nurturing networks – underscore our unwavering commitment to elevating the standard of science education. This commitment will undoubtedly ripple through classrooms, fostering a love for science and fostering a strong support network among educators and students alike.

To stay connected and informed, we encourage you to explore our monthly newsletter, follow our engaging social media channels, and visit our dynamic website. These platforms will serve as your windows to the exciting developments and initiatives that the ISTA has in store.

We extend our heartfelt gratitude to you for being part of this journey to advance science education. Your dedication empowers educators and amplifies the impact we can make collectively. Your enthusiasm inspires us to drive toward a future brimming with ingenuity, collaboration, and educational triumphs.

As we set forth into this new year, let us all embrace the boundless opportunities that lie ahead. Here's to a year of inspiration, collaboration, and transformative growth. Together, we'll illuminate the path to an even brighter future!

Warm regards,  
Tanya Elmer  
President  
Idaho Science Teachers Association



Your 2023-2024 ISTA Board of Directors

At our annual business meeting last month during our fall conference, we elected [new board members](#) to represent each region and several special focus groups of members across the state.

Here is the geographic breakdown of our state so find your rep and send them a little email to tell them hi!

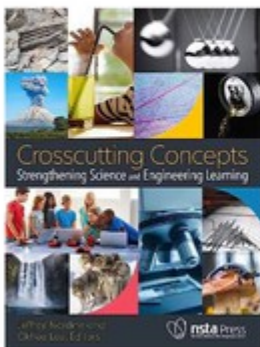
- District 1. Boundary, Bonner, Benewah, Kootenai, and Shoshone Counties
- District 2. Latah, Clearwater, Idaho, Nez Perce, and Lewis Counties
- District 3. Adams, Washington, Payette, Gem, Canyon, and Owyhee Counties
- District 4. Blaine, Camas, Gooding, Lincoln, Cassia, Minidoka, Twin Falls, and Jerome Counties
- District 5. Bear Lake, Franklin, Oneida, Power, Bannock, Caribou, and Bingham Counties
- District 6. Clark, Fremont, Lemhi, Custer, Butte, Teton, Madison, Jefferson, and Bonneville
- District 7. Valley, Boise, Ada, and Elmore Counties

You can also visit [our Bylaws on the website](#) to find out more about what these reps do for you!

## Crosscutting Concepts: Strengthening Science and Engineering Learning Book Study

Want to learn how to support students in thinking about science in constructive ways and making sense of phenomenon?

Join us in reading Crosscutting Concepts:  
Strengthening Science and Engineering Learning by  
Jeffrey Nordine. This six-part book study will meet  
online on October and November.



Interested? Follow this QR code to get more info and the registration form sent to you in September. Or go to: [bit.ly/44sYjjH](https://bit.ly/44sYjjH)



### Details:

- FREE for all Idaho teachers
- Sections for elementary, middle, and high school teachers
- Six meetings October-November at 5pm MST / 4pm PST
- One PD credit available through College of Southern Idaho

*Hosted by Idaho Science Teaching Association and the Idaho State Department of Education*

## Cross Cutting Concepts: A Book Study

One of our goals in our strategic plan involves increasing our professional development opportunities for members in our state. We have formed a partnership with the State Department of Education to provide a free book from the NSTA Press on how to use cross cutting concepts and sense making to increase student understanding in a science classroom to our members. All of you who attended our fall conference have already received your copy of the book. Consider joining us this fall for a book



study and earn some PD credit from CSI for being a part of conversations with other science educators from our state!



**Dr. Becca Wills  
Outstanding Science  
Educator Award**

Administered by the Idaho Science Teaching Association  
To apply or to nominate a colleague:  
<https://forms.gle/6DkmNW1ndeKMywrm8>

SCAN ME

## Dr. Becca Wills Outstanding Science Educator Award

We officially announced this new award at our fall conference last month and had intended to close the applications yesterday and make an announcement of our winners. However, we realize that August was a crazy busy month for all of you and we want to make sure that you have time to nominate yourself or someone that you work with for this awesome award so we are extending the application date until September 15th.

The Dr. Becca Wills Outstanding Science Educator Award is given to two Idaho Science Teaching Association members who create unique opportunities for students to experience the fun and excitement of science by integrating real-world experiences and hands-on activities into the classroom. Do you know an ISTA member who not only creates unique opportunities for students to experience the fun and excitement of science, but who also integrates real-world science examples and hands-on activities into their classroom? Nominate them today!

Educators from two award categories will be selected, one from K-6th and 7th-12th grades. These Idaho educators with a strong commitment to going above and beyond in science will be chosen by a subcommittee of the Idaho Science Teaching Association's executive board.

Who's eligible: ISTA members that currently work in a K-12 classroom setting. Self-nominations are encouraged.



**Creating a Positive Classroom Culture**

Inspiring Science Teachers • Aug 18, 2023

00:00 33:39

**Creating a Positive Classroom Culture**

Aug 18, 2023

This episode is a series of short interviews with teachers at the 2023 Idaho STEM conference. They were asked one question: what do you do at the beginning of th...

See more 33:39

# Inspiring Science Teachers Podcast: New Episode!

Check out the [latest edition of Inspiring Science Teachers](#), an awesome podcast for science educators, by science educators (including our own ISTA president-elect Chris Stoker)! This episode was recorded at our fall ISTA conference last month and is full of great tips from ISTA, ICTM, and IdEEA members on how to create a positive classroom culture.



**FREE!** **TUESDAYS** 60 mins Sept - Nov

## Outdoor Learning Fall Virtual Workshop Series!

Date	Topic	Image
September 19	Naturally Inclusive: Engaging Children of All Abilities Outdoors	
October 17	Connecting Children to Nature through Indigenous Teachings	
September 26	Wild Learning: Practical Ideas to Bring Teaching Outdoors	
November 7	L'éducation en plein air: Apprendre et enseigner dehors en tous lieux et en toutes saisons	
October 3	Outdoor Learning through Patterns in Nature	
November 14	BE OUT - A New Outdoor Learning Tool for Teacher Success	

**THE OUTDOOR LEARNING STORE**

**TAKE ME OUTSIDE**

**OUTDOORLEARNINGSTORE.COM**

## Outdoor Learning Virtual Workshop Seasonal Series

Idaho Environmental Educators Association (IdEEA) was a partner of ours for the fall conference last month and they shared with us a great opportunity to attend some [free virtual workshops](#) this fall from the Outdoor Learning Store. Visit the website for more information on each workshop and to get signed up for these awesome sessions!



## STEM Flights

STEM Flights is a national nonprofit organization that combines STEM education with a free flight experience for middle and high school students. If you are a 6th-12th grade student (or you teach students in that age range) interested in the world of STEM or aviation, [apply today!](#)





## eCybermission

Registration for the 2023-2024 eCYBERMISSION competition is officially open! Head over to [the website](https://www.ecybermission.com/register) and complete your registration today. We can't wait to see what community-changing projects you complete this year!



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If you are not already familiar with our neighbor Paul Anderson from Montana, you should be! He posts a ton of great content about sense-making and science and engineering practices and learning mindsets. Check out his [latest video at Bozeman Science](#) about engaging our students in practicing and performing mindsets!



# October 14, 2023 Solar Eclipse

**An annular solar eclipse  
will cross North,  
Central, and South  
America**

Idaho will experience between 70%-90% totality,  
depending on location!

Contact ISGC to request eclipse glasses!  
(never look directly at the sun without proper safety lenses)



Search for resources and information from NASA  
[www.solarsystem.nasa.gov/eclipses/2023/oct-14-annular/](http://www.solarsystem.nasa.gov/eclipses/2023/oct-14-annular/)



## Solar Eclipse Information from the Idaho Space Grant Consortium

Eclipse Information!

Did you know there's a solar eclipse in October

NASA has significant resources for K-12 Educators, citizen scientist, and any other group with interest in this awesome celestial event!

Check out [their website homepage](#) to find resources about eclipses and why scientist are so interested in studying them!

Note: They are no longer able to accept requests for eclipse glasses due to high demand.



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## On Grizzly Grounds - Idaho Museum of Natural History

IMNH invites you to join them for the screening of "On Grizzly Grounds" hosted by [Kris Millgate](#) of Tight Line Media on Sept. 14 at Frazier Hall at 6 p.m. Millgate spent summer 2022 working out of a Toyota Tundra following federally protected grizzlies through the Greater Yellowstone Ecosystem. The film explores grizzlies in Yellowstone National Park and Grand Teton National Park plus portions of Idaho, Montana and Wyoming.

This event is free and family-friendly. Details include: screening, Q&A with Millgate, and reception at the Museum.

To ensure that they can provide the best experience for all their guests, they kindly request [your RSVP](#) by Sept. 12th. Your response is incredibly important as it helps them make accurate arrangements for the food orders.





**Forget the guinea pig...**

# **Adopt a cow for your classroom!**

- »» FREE
- »» YEAR-LONG
- »» COMMON CORE STANDARDS

»» **[discoverdairy.com/adopt](https://discoverdairy.com/adopt)**



## **Adopt a Cow!**

Educators, how about adopting a cute calf for your classroom mascot this year? The photos and stories [Discover Dairy](https://discoverdairy.com) will send you about her life on the farm will make her come alive for your students!

[Register](#) before September 15th to join on this adventure.





## Space Apps Challenge

Join [NASA - National Aeronautics and Space Administration Space Apps Challenge](#) on Oct 7-8 to Explore Open Science Together!

At #SpaceApps, there's always space for one more. This year's theme with #NASATOPS emphasizes the importance of #OpenScience in reducing barriers of entry. Have an idea? [Sign up here!](#)

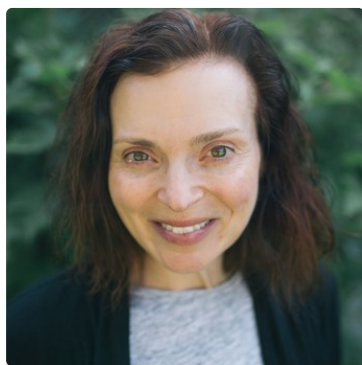


## Women Innovators (W.IN) Community Survey

Women Innovators (W.IN) is a 501(c)(3) Nonprofit based in Boise, Idaho. With the mission to make Idaho the place for women and girl innovators to succeed, W.IN is uniting the collective community toward bold change in advancing women and girls in STEaM, and elevating women to academic and professional excellence for positive economic impact.

They're inviting everyone with an interest in Idaho STEM, gender equity, and W.IN to participate. Whatever your gender, and whether you're a student, in a STEM career, a sponsor, a volunteer, or someone else, they want to hear from you so please weigh in.

The survey's purpose is to understand your experiences and interests, so they can improve programming. It includes questions about what you do in the STEM community, your experiences, and some demographic information. Click [HERE](#) to take this short 5 minute survey!



Tanya Elmer



Facebook



@IdahoScience

Idaho Science Teaching Association President  
2023-2025



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