

Meet Ms. Jensen, Golden Apple Distinguished Teacher



The Golden Apple Teaching Awards are Illinois' most prestigious awards. In 2024, Courtenay's Kindergarten teacher Lauren Jensen was selected as a **Distinguished Teacher** through a rigorous process involving community members, teachers, parents, and students.¹ Hundreds of candidates are drawn from across the state for this honor; in 2026, 600 were nominated, so it is very competitive.²

It is a testament to a teacher's transformational impact on students in and beyond the classroom.

Ms. Jensen is beloved by her students and their families. She sends home weekly updates and even records personal videos for students on their birthdays. She quickly responds to parent emails, accommodates diverse learning styles, and makes her classroom a compassionate, culturally relevant, and vibrant learning environment kids love.

¹ "2024 Golden Apple Finalists." <https://www.goldenapple.org/golden-apple-awards-finalists-2024>

² "2026 Golden Apple Awards."

<https://www.goldenapple.org/news/2026-golden-apple-award-finalists-teachers>