

Chris Speck

Garfield STEM Magnet & Community Middle School
Albuquerque, NM



Chris grew up on the Nebraska banks of the Missouri River in South Sioux City. He moved to Albuquerque, New Mexico when he was in high school and after graduating attended the University of New Mexico for his bachelor's and master's degrees in elementary education. After ten years in the elementary grades, Chris switched to middle school and began a two-summer stint in the Research Experience for Teacher's Program working in Sandia National Laboratory's Advanced Materials Lab. After switching to mostly biology teaching, he setup the coral reef ecosystem, aquaponics, and biotechnology programs as well.

His passion for coral was boosted by a month working at the Gates Coral Lab at the Hawai'i Institute of Marine Biology. He currently teaching 7th grade science and ELA at Garfield STEM School in Albuquerque, New Mexico. He became a National Geographic Certified Educator in 2018 and an expedition to Svalbard and Norway's fjords in 2023. His work with students has been recognized several times. In 2018 he was awarded the Golden Apple Award for Excellence in Education by the Golden Apple Foundation of New Mexico and in 2023 he was selected as a state nominee for the Presidential Award for Excellence in Mathematics in Science Teaching.

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