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High school science teacher selected as Wisconsin's 2024 National Teacher of the Year representative

Brian Collins, of Unity School District in Balsam Lake, has more than two decades in education

MADISON – The Wisconsin Department of Instruction today announced the state's representative to the National Teacher of the Year Program is Brian Collins, a science teacher at Unity High School in Balsam Lake.

Throughout his more than 22 years at Unity, Collins has taught general biology, AP biology, environmental biology, human anatomy/physiology, ecology, zoology, and ornithology. He was selected to be the state's representative for [the Council of Chief State School Officers' National Teacher of the Year Program](#) by a committee composed of educators, representatives from partner organizations, and past Wisconsin Teachers of the Year.

"Brian is an exemplary educator, and I am so excited that he will be Wisconsin's representative to the National Teacher of the Year program," State Superintendent Dr. Jill Underly said. "His energy, passion, and commitment to his students and community are inspiring. He would be the first to say that he is just one part of the interconnected ecosystem that is his school; I would respond that he plays a key role in fostering such an inclusive and rich community. I am grateful to him for his leadership in the Unity School District, in Wisconsin, and now at a national level."

Earlier this year, [Collins was named one of five 2024 Wisconsin Teachers of the Year](#) in a surprise ceremony surrounded by students, colleagues, family, and community members. [A video](#) and [photos from the ceremony](#) can be found on [the DPI's Facebook page](#).

"I am so very honored to represent our state on the national level as Wisconsin's National Teacher of the Year representative," Collins said. "Good teaching and learning ultimately comes from trust, teamwork, and a sense of safety as we build strong relationships in the classroom and across the school community. I love seeing education at work in the quality of a person's life and in the strength of the

(more)

community. I am eager and excited to serve as our state's representative, both as a teacher and as a lifelong learner."

Outside the classroom, Collins helped found Unity's Ojibwe Language Revitalization Club, has coached football and powerlifting, and has chaired the Professional Staff Development Committee. He continues his passion for birds and photography every summer as a contract biologist working all over Wisconsin for the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources, which he shares in his classroom.

As Wisconsin's National Teacher of the Year representative, Collins will participate alongside other state representatives in various professional learning opportunities provided by the CCSSO. A National Teacher of the Year is selected from the group and travels nationally and internationally as a spokesperson and advocate for the teaching profession. For more information on the program, [visit the CCSSO's website](#).

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