



# Presidential Awards for Excellence in Mathematics and Science Teaching

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## **ATLAS PREPARATORY SCHOOL TEACHER CHOSEN AS COLORADO FINALIST FOR PRESIDENTIAL TEACHING AWARD**

Erin Wahler-Cleveland, a seventh-grade mathematics teacher at Atlas Preparatory School in Colorado Springs, has been selected as a 2023 Colorado Finalist for the Presidential Awards for Excellence in Mathematics and Science Teaching (PAEMST).

Wahler-Cleveland, a 16-year veteran teaching in Harrison School District 2, is now one of two Colorado mathematics teachers eligible to receive a PAEMST award for the 2022-2023 awards cycle, the nation's highest honor for U.S. K-12 science, technology, engineering, mathematics, and/or computer science teachers. The awards program is administered by the National Science Foundation (NSF) on behalf of the White House Office of Science and Technology Policy.

State finalists represent the most outstanding teachers Colorado has to offer and serve as both a model and an inspiration to students and fellow teachers.

"I am incredibly excited and honored to be named a finalist," says Wahler-Cleveland. "This recognition has led me to reflect deeply on the magnitude of support I've gotten from my colleagues and students." Wahler-Cleveland's PAEMST application highlighted her knowledge of effective approaches to teaching mathematics. "All students can and will think mathematically if we can provide the right conditions," says Wahler-Cleveland. "I find joy in the experience of guiding students to new connections and satisfaction in fostering habits and mindsets that will serve students in the long term," added Wahler-Cleveland. "Erin displays her leadership as a role model for content knowledge, instructional practice, data analysis, and continuous improvement," says Aaron Pomis, Wahler-Cleveland's principal at Atlas Prep. "I cannot think of another teacher who is as consistently a positive representation of our organization and our teaching profession as a whole."

Wahler-Cleveland joins a prestigious group of recent Colorado mathematics teachers who all await award announcements from the White House, including Sidney Cerise of Greeley-Evans School District 6 (2022-2023 7-12 finalist), Amanda Perkins of Denver Public Schools (2021-2022 K-6 finalist), Amanda Sutton of Poudre School District (2021-2022 K-6 finalist), Natalie Sprigg of Douglas County Schools (2020-2021 7-12 finalist), and Aaron Thompson of Adams 12 Five-Star Schools (2020-2021 7-12 finalist).

Each year, a national committee of prominent mathematicians, scientists, mathematics/science education researchers, district-level personnel, and classroom teachers recommends up to 108 teachers to receive PAEMST awards. Up to two teachers—mathematics or science—from each state, the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico, the U.S. Territories as a group (comprising American Samoa, Guam, the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, and the U.S. Virgin Islands), and schools operated in the United States and overseas by the Department of Defense Education Activity (DoDEA) receive the award. Teachers who are selected as PAEMST awardees receive a trip to Washington, D.C., where they attend a series of recognition events and professional development opportunities. They also receive a \$10,000 award from NSF, a Presidential certificate, and join an elite cohort of award-winning teachers who can influence state/jurisdiction and national STEM teaching.