

U.S. Sen. Baldwin: Announces Milwaukee educator as guest for President of France Macron's address to joint meeting of Congress

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WASHINGTON, D.C. – U.S. Senator Tammy Baldwin today announced that Gina Bianchi, principal of The Milwaukee French Immersion School, will be her guest for French President Emmanuel Macron's address to a joint meeting of Congress on Wednesday, April 25.

"This is my small way of recognizing all the Wisconsin educators who work hard every day preparing our students for the future and helping to lift them up to their dreams. Through her work, Principal Bianchi has shown a strong commitment to making the French language and culture more accessible to all students, while fostering the development of global citizens in an increasingly interconnected world," **said Senator Baldwin.**

"It is truly an honor to be given the opportunity to attend this historic event and to hear a speech from a world leader like President Macron. Thank you Senator Baldwin for allowing me to represent The Milwaukee French Immersion School, Milwaukee Public Schools and all the educators across our state who value our proud public school tradition in Wisconsin," **said Principal Bianchi.**

Bianchi has been principal at the school for five years where she started as a teacher. She was recognized as *Chevalier dans l'Ordre des Palmes Académiques*—Knight in the Order of Academic Palms in 2016. This honor was

conferred by Denis Quenelle, Cultural Attaché to the French Consulate, and is awarded to individuals who make significant contributions to the expansion of French language and culture.

Founded in 1978, the Milwaukee French Immersion program began as part of desegregation efforts and was initially housed at the 68th Street School alongside the German Immersion program. As the program was experiencing large growth, the French Immersion program moved to the 82nd Street Multi-Language School before establishing the first ever Milwaukee French Immersion School, which is currently located in Milwaukee's Uptown neighborhood.

Students at Milwaukee French Immersion consistently score higher than district test score averages in reading, math, language arts and social studies. The school has also earned the prestigious LabelFrancEducation status from the French Ministry of Foreign Affairs for the excellence of their immersion program and the great contributions to the promotion of the French language and culture. The Milwaukee French Immersion School is one of 200 schools worldwide that earned this honor in 2017 from the French government and one of only 36 schools in the U.S. to be recognized.

Milwaukee French Immersion School students will take the official French language diploma exam for French as a foreign language for the first time this year. This has been made possible through a grant from the French American Cultural Exchange (FACE) Foundation and the Cultural Services of the French Embassy. President Macron inaugurated this French Dual Language Fund last year in New York.