

## Candidate Statements

**VERONICA AINSA (WEA, NEA)**

I have worked in education administration for 12 years, in both the private and public sectors. I participated as a virtual delegate at both the WEA and NEA RA's in 2022. I understand the responsibility and time commitment required of delegates, and I will do my best to vote in alignment with the needs expressed by my colleagues and constituents.

**DAVID CORLISS (WEA)**

I have many years of union organizing experience, and am excited to be a part of SEA. I joined when I was a student teacher last year, and am now a full time sub. I am excited to get further involved with SEA by being a WEA delegate. I think it's very important that subs be represented in these larger conversations, and I would be honored to help be a voice to those issues. Thank you for your vote.

**BENJAMIN DAVIS (WEA, NEA)**

I, Benjamin Davis, am asking for your vote to represent SEA at the WEA and NEA. Through my leadership experience I will represent YOU and YOUR VOICE on a local and national level.

**DAZANNE DAVIS PORTER (WEA, NEA)**

I am a 40+ year educator. I have never been afraid to speak up and speak out. I am a true social justice warrior and a voice of reason! Let me be your voice.

**CHARNJIT DHOOT (WEA, NEA)**

Being part of Seattle Education Association for over 4 years and being involved in Union work in various capacity I have enjoyed learning the hard work it takes to unite our members and filter the true and clear information to them. I would love the opportunity to serve my community on a larger scale and be their Representative to share information between all channels.

**ANDREW ECKELS (WEA, NEA)**

I am running because I want to see our union take a more active role in bargaining for the common good in our community and particularly interested in our union partnering with students and community organizations fighting for climate justice and green new deal investments in our communities and school buildings. I want to represent SEA at RAs to share the good work we are doing on this front and push for our parent unions to engage similarly.

**ANTOINETTE FELDER (WEA, NEA)**

As a working RA and SAEOP member, I am committed and determined that our issues and voice is heard within our Union. Currently, actively working with WEA as Act representative and Nea cadre. Please vote for me.

**VALLERIE FISHER (WEA, NEA)**

Happy New Year's my fellow SEA Colleague's,  
it would be my honor to represent your voice once again as a delegate to the WEA & NEA annual Rep. Assembly.  
I pledge to be fully present, and ask the hard question's regarding all educator's career's.  
"I have been here working consistently along side you, and for us as a union".  
"I ask for your vote"!

**PAUL FRANKLIN-BIHARY (WEA)**

As a first-time participant at the WEA Representative Assembly, I hope to learn much while promoting agenda items that will make real change. WEA has done good work to boost equity and improve education for staff and students, but we need much more; smaller class sizes, solving our funding problems, and equity for students furthest from educational justice will be my primary goals. Finding consensus in these areas will improve our union and directionalize our efforts. All that SEA works for to make positive change in Seattle will help educators all over the state!

**MAKENA GADIENT (WEA)**

I have been a building rep or a para dept rep for the last 3 years. It has been an honor to hear and learn from my members that I represent, as well as advocate for their needs. We are truly stronger together. I am a special education IA of 7 years and think it's important that we have special education IAs represented in our union. I think it's important that SEA is represented so that we can advocate for teaching truth on a larger scale.

**OTIS GOLDEN (WEA, NEA)**

Hello my name is Otis Golden and I'm ready to get to work for our students

**JENNIFER HALL (WEA, NEA)**

I believe in standing up for all education employees, and calling out all "elephants in the room" when our students and our members are treated with disregard and not supported. These "elephants..." were raised up in white supremacy, and they include tacit racism, misogyny, homophobia, transphobia and out and out age discrimination. I've worked in the Seattle School District, starting as a substitute twenty six years ago. I joined the union then, and I have never looked back. Let's stand together; support each other when we falter, and FIGHT when a fight is due.

**PETER HENRY (WEA, NEA)**

I'm the past President of the Seattle Substitutes Association. My passion is working to uplift substitute educators at the state and national levels. We are truly fortunate in the organization we have in Seattle, and I continue to advocate for Union representation for all subs!

**IBIJOKE IDOWU (WEA, NEA)**

I'm very passionate about union work. I believe that unions are very important; and that they give us a great deal of purpose, and belonging in the workplace. I love getting new information and learning about how to serve my community better. I believe that we need to put our words into action and that's what I am willing and ready to do.

**SCOTT JETTON (WEA, NEA)**

As a special education teacher, I have a passion for supporting my students with inclusion. Students in special education are often some of the most marginalized and should have strong advocates.

**PRICE JIMERSON (WEA, NEA)**

Hello! My name is Price Jimerson and I am a second year teacher! I am luckily not new to our lovely Union. I am a second generation NEA/WEA/SEA member. I am a member of our SEA Board of Directors and throughout my time in college I served as the President and VP of SWEA our student equivalent of SEA. I am running to keep that train going and support and serve our students the best way that I can! So please vote for me Price Jimerson to represent SEA on the State and National level!

**WHITNEY KAHN (NEA)**

We can't keep doing more with less. We need a strong union to unite nationally to tax the rich to equitably fund schools to a level we never have before. The only thing that can save and expand public education is union power. If you elect me, I will fight like hell for every effort to get our union to stand against all forms of oppression, and the right to teach truth to our students. We can't go back.

**CHARITY KAMAU-KISANGA (WEA, NEA)**

For 22 years, I have been a Special Education teacher. I have witnessed over those years some of the positive things that have happened in education. On the flip side, I have also witnessed some of the injustices, such as inequality, in the education system. My whole career, I have been an advocate of equality for all students. I believe every child has potential and should get an equal chance to fulfill that potential. I would like to be an NEA delegate to continue advocating and to be a voice for students, teachers, and families, especially those who are marginalized.

**CHRISTINE LAMBERTZ (WEA)**

As the newly elected President of the Seattle Substitute Association, I hope to bring my energy and best foot forward in representing substitute issues and interests.

**CONNOR LEE (WEA)**

Over several years as an AR (and as a general SEA member before that) I have worked collaboratively to grow a transparent and democratic union that centers equity and fosters economic, racial, and social justice in our schools and community. Rank-and-file SEA members consistently elect me to represent them as their association rep at the local and state level, in addition to my service as BLT and BST representative. I am committed to maintaining safety for everyone in our learning and working environments. I would be honored to serve again as your delegate to the WEA Representative Assembly.

**MATTHEW LEGACKI (WEA, NEA)**

I have been working as a sight based representative for the 5 years, a picket captain, and grievance review committee member. As someone who has committees to strengthening the union I would be honored to represent you this spring and summer.

**JOYCE MCDONALD (WEA, NEA)**

I am an experienced, strong, effective leader and advocate for students members and public education. Please give me your vote!

**JEFF PAUL (WEA)**

I am a paraprofessional who believes in the need for quality public education that is accessible and available to everyone. After decades of attacks on public education that continue to this day, the only way we will get that is by fighting for it. I believe we can only get so much by fighting at the local level, I look forward to the opportunity to represent SEA as a delegate to the WEA convention, where I can connect with others in our state to build a strategy that will get our educators and students the school system that we deserve.

**RACHEL PENDERGAST (WEA, NEA)**

I would like to represent our membership at SEA and NEA to make sure our interests are heard. I will work to fight for the interests of dual language schools and multilingual learners, as well as all other schools in our union.

**SARAH POTTER**

**(WEA)**

This is my second year as an AR for Cascadia Elementary, and this year I was also the picket captain for my building and organized strike actions with schools across my region. I attended the WEA rep assembly as student AR in Spokane in 2018 on behalf of UW. I am looking forward to joining the rest of the SEA reps in Spokane to help advocate for more equitable, anti-racist and democratic school system that supports the needs of all rank-and-file members and makes it easier for all of us to support our student's needs.

**SHANNON RATNER**

**(WEA, NEA)**

I am asking for your vote to be a WEA and NEA Delegate.

I am a proud SEA member and have held several leadership positions within SEA. I am currently a SEA Board of Director and represent our middle schools. I am also on the SAEOP Board. I was part of the summer bargaining team and several of the most recent bargains.

Last year was my first year as a delegate and I was so proud to represent SEA on the state and national level. I take the responsibility of being a delegate seriously.

Thank you for considering me.

**JOAQUÍN RODRIGUEZ**

**(WEA, NEA)**

I would be honored to receive your vote to become your SEA Delegate to the WEA and NEA RAs. I come to this work to elevate all voices within our community, specifically those of my BIPOC colleagues who often feel unseen, unheard, and unsupported in the face of inequity. As SEA CRSJ Coordinator I have had the opportunity to work with SEA members, SPS, students and community partners to build systems of collaboration and communication around our shared points of advocacy. I know when we work together to raise our collective voice we can address the needs of our community.

**ELIZABETH RUIZ-PUYANA**

**(WEA, NEA)**

Last year I was fortunate enough to serve as a delegate at both the WEA and NEA RAs. I made some incredible connections across the state and the country and got to participate in the humbling and inspiring democracy of our union. I would be honored to reprise my role a second year.

**LINDSAY STATES**

**(WEA, NEA)**

Representing you at the WEA and NEA RAs would be an honor, and I would appreciate your vote. This is my 24th year in SPS, and I have had the privilege of working at Nathan Hale, Franklin, and now Cleveland High School, where I am an ML teacher. My main goal as a delegate would be to uplift your voices, especially the voices of my Paraprofessional and SAEOP colleagues. We are connected in this work and when we collaborate, transformational change is possible! I would be proud to serve as your delegate.

**SOREN STEWART-MACTAVISH**

**(NEA)**

Having served my first ever role as a delegate for both NEA and WEA last year, I would be honoured to be chosen to represent educators again.

**STAN STRASNER**

**(WEA, NEA)**

Public education is under attack in the US. Right-wing bigots are succeeding all over the country in passing racist legislation that tries to silence anti-racist teaching. We need to take action to reverse this trend everywhere.

The struggle for high-quality public education for all students needs to be kicked into high gear. In Washington state, we need to tax the rich to fund our schools, but big business interests won't let this happen without a fight. Educators need to be ready to take collective action.

**SUSAN TALLEY (NEA)**

I am the new 2022-2024 SAEOP Vice President. I have worked for Seattle School District for over 25 years and have worked at two schools during that time.

If elected to the RA position I am excited to be able to go work with people from other districts around the US. There is a lot I can learn from them and what they can learn from my experiences in Seattle.

Thank you.

**TERESITA TOBON (WEA, NEA)**

Our SEA is a leader in our state and country , and we, as members of our union have the opportunity to continue this legacy. I am a Latinx teacher that has devoted her 22 years career to our profession and our students. We can all make a difference in "Education " if we work as a team together. "Si se puede!" Yes we can!

**MEESH VECCHIO (WEA, NEA)**

Participating in the WEA and NEA RAs last year was an incredible experience that allowed me to collaborate with local and national EAs for SEA and other shared interests. I was also a part of a great team as a member of the SEA delegation that fought for educators, for our civil rights, and funding for our schools. I am hoping to continue this work, now as Vice President, and with the new connections across SEA, NEA, and WEA in my new role, in continued representation for our members at the state and national assemblies.

**MARY VESTER (WEA, NEA)**

Esteem colleagues, I am asking for a vote to be your voice to advocate through the upcoming changes in our educational field. I have worked with our union in several different positions. Please vote for Mary Vester. Thank you.

**ELIZABETH WARD-ROBERTSON (WEA, NEA)**

I'm a SAEOP who is also an SEA board member who believes in the power of our membership. I love engaging with others union member to work on common issues that reflects our local as well as our state. I'm loyal to this work and ask for your vote as WEA and NEA delegate