



Maine Education Association

2019 MEA ELECTIONS

Members set the course for the MEA deciding the issues the Association supports and the ways to achieve success for every Maine student. Delegates are elected to speak for the nearly 24,000 MEA members they represent on important issues. MEA candidates may publish a biographical sketch in the Maine Educator according to the Standing Rules. Candidates for the MEA Board of Directors and the NEA Representative Assembly (RA) appear on the following pages. Election information and forms are available online at www.mainea.org/mea-elections.

Board of Directors



Suzen Polk-Hoffses – Board of Director – District B

My name is Suzen Polk-Hoffses. For the past 18 years I have taught at Milbridge Elementary School, 14 years as a kindergarten teacher and currently as a pre-k teacher. Presently I am serving as your District B Board of Director.

In my local association I am active as a building rep, have been an elected delegate for several years to the MEA RA and currently serve on our teacher negotiation team. At the MEA state level I am serving as a board of director liaison on the Human Civil Rights Cultural Affairs Committee and have served on the MEA's Membership Committee. I have also attended N/EA Minority and Women's Leadership Trainings and a NEA sponsored RaceForward Training around racial and social justice.

As the District B Board of Director, I was able to bring the issues of Food Shaming and Bomb Threats that some schools in District B were dealing with to the attention of the MEA Board of Directors. I look forward to continue serving as your District B Board of Director



Mallory Cook – MEA Board of Directors – District C

Mallory Cook teaches college preparatory, technical, and dual enrollment English courses at Hermon High School, where she also serves as the English Department Chair. A seventh-year teacher, Mallory identifies co-teaching with a special educator as the most influential experience she's had as an educator. Since obtaining her Master's Degree in Educational Leadership, Mallory has become more involved in her local association and now serves as a Building Representative. She is currently representing District C on the MEA Board of Directors, finishing a one year term. Mallory is passionate about identifying and organizing relevant, timely, and engaging professional development opportunities for educators in the state of Maine. She lives in Bangor, with her husband Jordan. They are expecting their first child, a baby boy, in May.



Gerry French – MEA Board of Directors - ESP

Beginning 20+ years ago, I began serving my local as its ESP Vice President. Since that time, I have served in many appointed and elected positions. These positions include RSU 71 ESP Vice President, RSU 71 Grievance Chair, RSU 71 Building Representative, MEA Leadership

Development Committee, MEA Statewide Bargaining Committee, MEA Representative Assembly Delegate, MEA ESP Committee, Board Liaison to the MEA ESP Committee, MEA President's Cabinet, MEA President's Advisory Council, MEA Board of Directors District D Representative, MEA Board of Directors District ESP Representative, NEA Representative Assembly Delegate and Graduate - NEA Leaders for Tomorrow.

Beyond my Association work, I have also served education on the RSU 20 Board of Directors as Vice Chair, RSU 20 Facilities Committee as Chair, RSU 20 Personnel Committee as Vice Chair, RSU 20 Policy Committee as Chair, RSU 20 Finance Committee as Vice Chair and as a WCTC Board member.

I am eager to continue my service to the Association and education. My vision for the ESP of our Association includes building strength, visibility and a stronger voice among our membership.

If I can answer any questions or listen to any concerns, please contact me at gfrench70@yahoo.com.



Cedena McAvoy- MEA Board of Directors - District D

I have been fortunate to be a special education teacher since 1997! I have taught K-12 and appreciate all ages and have learned a lot from my students, their families, and my co-workers. I have been an active member of

my local EA and the MEA throughout my teaching career in Maine. I believe strongly in representing the members' concerns and supporting each other in any way possible. I have served my local as a building representative, membership chair, negotiator, and chief negotiator. I have served the MEA as a member of the structures and bylaws committee in the past, and currently as a Board of Directors member representing District D.

Board of Directors Cont.



Indriana Demers – MEA Board of Directors – ESP

As a former English Instructor at Diponegoro University in Semarang, Indonesia, former Substitute Teacher at the Wiscasset Primary School, then ESL Teacher in Portland currently a SPED Para Professional (Ed. Tech.)

in Portland, I would like to represent the Educational Support Professional (ESP) on the Board of Director at the MEA.

In addition, as an active member of the MEA I also served (two-terms) as President of the Portland EA Ed. Tech. unit, now the Vice President and negotiator. I was one of the members of the MEA Human & Civil Rights and Cultural Affairs Committee (HCRCA) and received the MEA HCRCA Award in 2018. For a year, I was also serving in the MEA ESP Committee, currently in the MEA Resolutions Committee. As an MEA RA delegate for the PEA, I have also been delegate representing Maine at the NEA RA.

A newly elected School Board member for the Wiscasset school district and an elected member of the Maine State Democratic Committee as one of the Executive Committee members.

It is my hope to represent Educators as one of the MEA Board of Directors for District ESP. Please, vote for me!!

NEA REPRESENTATIVE ASSEMBLY AT LARGE



Robert "Bo" Zabierek - NEA REPRESENTATIVE ASSEMBLY AT LARGE -DELEGATE

I am a member of the MEA Government Relations Committee and have been an active local delegate for 10 years at the Representative Assemblies in Portland and again this year. I have been honored to represent all Maine CTEs (Career and Technical Education: as well as academic schools on the MEA Board of Directors and as an academic teacher at the Region Two School of Applied Technology in Houlton.

It is important that all facets of the Maine educational landscape be present and represented at the NEA-RA. I work hard to make sure all Maine teachers have a strong voice advocating for their issues at the national level.

It is equally important that voices from all corners of our state be heard at our national conference. I reside and work in Aroostook County, where all of our students are rural and most are on the free and reduced lunch program. I hope to bring a fresh and unique perspective to the conversations at the NEA-RA and am asking you for your vote for one of the NEA-RA at-large delegate slots. If you cast just one vote, please make it for Robert "Bo" Zabierek for at-large delegate to NEA-RA

NEA Representative Assembly At-Large Cont.



Tom Walsh NEA REPRESENTATIVE ASSEMBLY AT LARGE -DELEGATE

I have been an active union member for most of my fourteen years as high school Social Studies teacher including for the last eight years working in Maine. For several years I served on the MEA's Government Relations

Committee, and I am now serving on the MEA's Structure & Bylaws Committee. The MEA Board of Directors honored my organizing work on behalf of the Stand Up For Students referendum campaign by making me the 2017 recipient of the Anne Sheehan Political Action Award. Locally, I served for several years as a Building Representative on the board of the Falmouth EA, and I am now Falmouth EA President.

By serving as a delegate to NEA Representative Assembly I will make sure the interests, values, and needs of the MEA are represented at the national level. At the same time, the effectiveness of my future work on behalf of MEA's membership will only be enhanced by talking to and exchanging ideas and experiences with my fellow delegates from the around the country. I thank you in advance for your support.



Terry Martin – NEA REPRESENTATIVE ASSEMBLY AT LARGE -DELEGATE

My name is Terry Martin. I am an MEA member and teach in RSU 75, where I am also a member of the Merrymeeting Teacher's Association. I have served as a member of the MEA Representative Assembly for the

past 15 years, on the Board of Directors for the past six years and for the past four years I have served as a member of the NEA Representative Assembly. I have also at various times served on different committees at the MEA including Resolutions, Government Relations, Strategic Budget and Structure and By-Laws. I think these experiences make me very qualified for a seat at the NEA Representative Assembly. My experiences at the local, state and national level gives me connections to people to supplement my own ideas and to be able to push through new ideas at this level. Two years ago I was able to push through a resolution on transgender bathroom use. Despite the success of pro-education candidates in the 2018 elections, there are still many politicians who, especially at the national level, seem hostile to improving public education and we must fight back against this.



Samantha Garnett Sias - NEA REPRESENTATIVE ASSEMBLY AT LARGE

I am eager to represent Maine again at our national representative assembly! I have been advocating for our profession and educators in my home district of Lewiston and making great strides locally. I hope to reignite

my state and national advocacy and look forward to the great work that will be accomplished on the RA floor with incredible Maine delegates on either side of me.

NEA Representative Assembly At-Large Cont.



James Ford - NEA REPRESENTATIVE ASSEMBLY AT LARGE -DELEGATE

I am excited about the opportunity to be a candidate for NEA/RA at large seat. I have been an active in the MEA for many years, and have not attended the NEA/RA. Last year I was in Minneapolis as a presenter about the

School to Prison Pipeline at the Racial Justice Seminar. I presented at Massachusetts' EMAC conference about Restorative Practice. I have been a member of HCRCA for 6 years and last year I was chair. I have participated in "Taking the Lead" and "ACES". Last year I won the Golden Apple Award for my work in Racial and Social Justice. The MEA has sent me to the Women's and Minority Conference. The Racism Symposium and The Equity Summit. I am a certified Circle Keeper, and was trained by the NEA. I am the Restorative Practice Coordinator at Lewiston High School and I run circles at MEA conferences. Next month, I will attend NEA's first cohort of "Leaders for Just Schools. I believe if I get to attend the NEA/RA, I will establish many networking opportunities that can be used in improving our educational practices in Maine.



Marie Dickson - NEA REPRESENTATIVE ASSEMBLY AT LARGE -DELEGATE

My name is Marie Dickson and this is my 30th year teaching in Maine. Most of my teaching has been in special education resource rooms ranging from Kindergarten to 12th grade. I've worked in small schools

in West Gardiner and Wiscasset, and have spent the last 12 years at McMahan Elementary Scho9ol in Lewiston. My educational background is varied as well. I have a B.S. in Elementary Education, a M.S. in Exceptionality, a M.S. in Educational Law, am currently pursuing ELL certification, and recently became a Nationally Board Certified Teacher

Once in Lewiston, I joined the Union and never looked back. Working as a building rep, running monthly meetings, and sitting with staff as they meet with administrators on disciplinary matters are all part of my "job." For the past two years, I've taken on the role of Chair of the Instructional and Professional Development Committee. In this capacity I promote educational opportunities for teaching staff and paraprofessionals. For example, last year I served as the Union rep on the district planning committee for our InspiEd workshop day where we draw largely on in-house talent. I look forward to joining with other reps in moving education forward!



Rebecca Cole - NEA REPRESENTATIVE ASSEMBLY AT LARGE - DELEGATE

A lifelong Mainer and 23- year veteran teacher, Rebecca currently serves as local President for the Sebago East shore Education Association and on the MEA Board of Directors representing District I. she is also a former

Chair and now a Board Liaison for the MEA Instruction and Professional Development Committee, co-chair of the RSU#14 Supervision and Evaluation committee, and has served on past and current NEA work groups, studying professional development and student advocacy needed to support implementation of the ESSA standards. She has attended both the MEA and NEA Representative Assemblies, testified before the Education and Cultural Affairs committee here in Maine, participated in Lobby Days at our State House, and actively seeks every opportunity to further strengthen her leadership skills and advocate for public schools. When she isn't working for Maine's school communities, Rebecca enjoys photography, kayaking, reading, traveling, and performing at several Maine community theaters.



Stacie Cocola - NEA REPRESENTATIVE ASSEMBLY AT LARGE - DELEGATE

For the past four of five years I have been fortunate to attend the NEA-RA as an At-Large Delegate. It is always an amazing experience and a powerful reminder of the work educators do beyond the walls of their schools. I have

been a high school English teacher for almost two decades, teaching literature, writing, public speaking, and myriad electives, and earned my National Board Certification in 2014. At the local level I have proudly served as a building rep, vice president and president, at the state level I have been a Representative for the MEA-RA for the past seven years, served two years on the Government Relations Committee, two years on the Instruction and Professional Development Committee and am currently serving on Budget and Finance. Beyond my classroom and union work I am a PLCSS mentor and facilitate PD opportunities on using technology in the classroom.

Teaching is an art and a science and it is my goal to continue to advocate for our profession at the local, state and national levels; your vote for me as an NEA-RA At-Large Delegate will allow me to continue that work on behalf of us all. Thank you for your consideration!



Indriani Demers - NEA REPRESENTATIVE ASSEMBLY DISTRICT 22 – DELEGATE

My name is Indriani (Ina) Demers and I am running as one of the District 22 NEA RA delegates. A first generation immigrant I'd like to represent Maine at the NEA RA working on comprehensive immigration reform to assist

our DREAMERS and the undocumented families to stay together! I need to be the voice of ALL my students and staff, some of whom speak languages other than English.

Maine is considered as a State still in need of cultural diversity especially in terms of education and opportunities for employment for people of color.

An English teacher in Indonesia, before immigrating to Maine in 1974, I earned my second bachelor degree from USM, attended USM ETEP programs, and earned my Masters in Teaching and Learning, from USM, in 2005 while teaching ESL in Portland.

Currently I am an Ed. Tech. serving/supporting students with special needs who are native English speakers and also those whose first languages are other than English.

For all my educational experiences I would like to represent students and staff alike at the National level to move forward.

Thank you for your support.

Wm. Howard Ellis – NEA NEA REPRESENTATIVE ASSEMBLY DISTRICT 24 - DELEGATE

Wm Howard Ellis is the name by which I am known. I grew up in N.Y.C, went to Colby and then graduated from University New York @ Buffalo with a M.S. Learning @ Behaviors Disorder. I started teaching in 1984 in Santa Cruz CA. I have been teaching Special Education students in Lewiston since 1993. I have been actively involved with state level service at least 2000, and within my local since 1994 at the state level and have been a long term member of the state wide Bargaining committee.

David Adams - NEA REPRESENTATIVE ASSEMBLY DISTRICT 24 DELEGATE

Currently I am an ed tech who is in the process of finish a degree to become a teacher. I have been doing this for several years. My ultimate goal is to become a teacher and eventually move on up into an administrative role. The love and the passion I carry as a teacher or as an ed tech will always have one focus. That focus being on the students we serve. That why it is important that we take care of the educators that we have. Because as we all know the numbers of teacher are dwindling. The key reason is the pay that they receive if far under what they deserve. I have worked in my current school for the last four years. Have seen my mentor get burned out because she was putting in over 80 hours per week for her children in the resource room while only getting paid for half the hours she was putting in. The bottom line is that educators across the board deserve higher wages and better work environments. We need to have guide lines for how teacher can be successful.