

# Education Focus

## Creative Campaigning

By Doug Folks

**L**awrence “Train” Lane keeps a stack of voter registration forms in his trunk. He uses them to register coworkers at his part-time job and newly turned 18-year-olds in his classroom.

Heather Davis’s daughter is a college student still registered to vote at home. So, Heather set up a Zoom meeting for college-aged kids to meet a candidate and talk about election issues.

Campaigning in the time of COVID has taken away some of the traditional shaking-hands-and-kissing-babies events for politicians. Instead, volunteers are employing creative ways to support their favorite candidates.

“It’s doubly important to be involved, in some shape or fashion,” said Lane, a government and history teacher at Checotah High School. “There are still things we can do even in this time of coronavirus. Anyone can take signs and put in someone’s yard. With all the things we’ve got

going right now – from social injustice, coronavirus, the vaccine – we just have to be involved.”

Lane is a veteran volunteer of many political campaigns over the years. This year, he’s helping with the re-election campaign of Lori Dexter-Wright, Tulsa City Councilwoman for District 7. He has put out campaign signs, wrote an endorsement letter and will take part in phone banking for Dexter-Wright.

But he doesn’t stop there. He makes sure his coworkers at his part-time job at Ross Dress for Less in Tulsa are registered to vote and provides registration forms. At school, he has the same conversations with his students and has registered more than a dozen this year.

“That’s my birthday present to them – a voter registration form,” he laughed. “I tell them they need to be informed, know what’s going on.”

In Bartlesville, Davis is volunteering for House District 11 candidate Emilie Tindle. They have dropped a lot of literature on doorknobs around town. They aren’t doing the usual door-knock and vis-

it for the candidate, but they keep masks handy in case they come upon someone on the porch or in the front yard.

Like Lane, Davis tries to get others involved in the campaign. She posted her literature drop schedule on social media and encouraged her friends to join her. A couple of them took her up on her offer, and now Davis is cheering them on to stay involved.

“I’ve been involved in enough campaigns to know there is work to be done,” said Davis, a seventh grade English teacher at Bartlesville’s Central Middle School. “(Candidates) want to involve the public, they want volunteers. Just reach out to the candidate. They are going to be so eager to hear from someone.”

Davis said another benefit of volunteering is that the candidate will remember that you were there when they needed support and will be eager to hear your opinion of issues after they are elected.

*If you need help getting involved in a political campaign, contact OEA’s Legislative and Political Organizing Center at 405/523-4310.*



## Volunteering safely

*Friends and colleagues of Shawna Mott-Wright gathered – with masks in place – to help with her campaign on Sept. 12 in Tulsa. While some traditional campaign activities aren’t possible in a pandemic, volunteers take precautions and do what they can. Mott-Wright, president of Tulsa Classroom Teachers Association and OEA’s NEA Director, is running for SD 39. (Photo by Carrie Coppernoll Jacobs.)*

# Big events highlight Marty's career

By Doug Folks

**W**hen Marty Bull retired from the OEA at the end of May, she couldn't help but feel her career was sandwiched between the association's two biggest events.

She was hired in 1988, just in time to be part of the Four Days in April march in support of the historic HB 1017 education reform bill. She leaves just a couple of years after 2018's massive teacher walkout that produced well-earned raises for teachers and support staff and an influx of money into the classroom.

While Marty had several responsibilities during her tenure at the OEA, it was the big events that she enjoyed most. She was a driving force in the production of big association meetings, including Delegate Assembly, Summer Leadership Academy and the annual Convention, which at one time attracted thousands of teachers to a day of nationally-known keynote speakers and professional development workshops.

"I saw those meetings as a stage production," she said. Marty credited a lot of her confidence and ability to her days as a speech and drama major at Oklahoma State University where she learned stagecraft. The highlight of her undergrad days was coordinating the music for a campus performance of the Alvin Alley dance troupe.

Marty started as a UniServ director at OEA before moving to the Communications Center in the mid-90s. For the last eight years, she has been the organizing specialist for the Tulsa Metro team. She served as the staff liaison for the Education Support Committee for several years.

"My favorite time working at OEA was when I was part of the communications team. I enjoyed the creative part," she said. "I would often say I was doing what I wanted to do when I grew up, but just didn't know it (when I was younger)."

Marty earned a bachelor's and a master's at OSU, and then earned a certificate of Clinical Competence from the America Speech-Language-Hearing Association. She was a speech pathologist at Waurika, Wewoka and Shawnee public schools prior to joining the OEA.

"I believe in public education, and I believe that people working together is the best way to get things done," Marty said of



*Marty Bull retired in May after 32 years with the OEA. (Photo by Doug Folks.)*

working for the association. "I've enjoyed knowing not only OEA members and staff but NEA colleagues from around the country whom I'm still friends with. I enjoyed being active in our staff union, OPSO.

"I've had the opportunity to work with a lot of great individuals that really want to help public education," she said. "I've always said that I didn't make a difference – it was the members I worked with that made the difference."

Marty's plans for retirement include a move to Bartlesville to be near her son and his family, which includes her four grandchildren.

## The Education Focus

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# Lessons learned from a distance

This March, many educators and support professionals said goodbye to students before Spring Break without knowing it would be the last in-person goodbye of the school year. The statewide shutdown was unprecedented – like so much of the COVID-19 world we live in. Districts scrambled to connect with students, and teachers and support staff found creative ways to teach, feed and support students from home. As school resumed this fall, classes are resuming in person, online, or both. Some OEA members shared what lessons they learned this spring when schools shutdown statewide. Some responses have been lightly edited for clarity and/or length.

**“Teachers are creative and ready for any challenge.** I also believe it forced those who are not tech friendly to venture out of their comfort zone. Also, it highlighted the need for teachers and equity in technology. Parents, **our jobs are not easy,** and not everyone can do them.” – *Emma Speer, school counselor and member of the Seminole Association of Classroom Teachers*

“I learned that **you have to expect the unexpected.** While there were parents and students that put their all into the lessons we gave them, there were those who we never heard from. Of course parents are not teachers, but most of mine were very creative and willing to do the work. There were many times myself and fellow teachers had to call, email, run off papers, and even read the lessons to the parents. **As teachers, we did what needed to be done.** This has been hard on everyone. What I have learned most: it’s hard to work with the unexpected.” – *Terrie Keck, elementary teacher and member of the Marlow Association of Classroom Teachers*

“My students learned in a new way. I learned that **I provided more than just education to the students and families.**” – *Kelly Vilner, first grade teacher and member of the Tulsa Classroom Teachers Association*

“I learned to be flexible and a lot of **cool ways to integrate technology** into education.” – *Abigail Dale, first grade teacher and member of the Tulsa Classroom Teachers Association*

“I learned that distance teaching/learning takes some getting used to and many adjustments, not only in how things are done, but also in our thought processes. If it’s difficult for us to focus when at home with home distractions, **how difficult is it for the students?**” – *Theresa Wilson, middle school teacher and a member of the Jay Professional Association of Classroom Teachers*

“How flexible and adaptable teachers are. How quickly we can make something work. And how **there isn’t anything teachers won’t do for their students.** I found donated laptops for six of my students.” – *Melissa Howard, teacher and member of the Liberty Mounds Education Association*

“I learned **the importance of building relationships with students far beyond academic needs** and to be patient as we are all maneuvering new technology and learning environments.” – *Jordan Foshee, self-contained special education teacher and member of the Tulsa Classroom Teachers Association*

# Perseverance and Passion

Oklahoma schools started fall classes in three different ways: full-time in-person teaching and learning, full-time distance learning, or a hybrid of the two. Here is a snapshot of how

three OEA members – one from a rural school, one from a suburban district and one from an urban school – started 2020 in this uncertain time of a worldwide pandemic.



## Kayla Mullally

5th grade, self-contained, Will Rogers Elementary, Edmond, 11th year in the classroom

**Edmond’s Teaching and Learning Plan** – Blended learning on the A/B schedule. One half of a teacher’s students come to school on Monday and Tuesday, and the other half attend on Thursday and Friday. Students have online assignments for days they are not at school. On Wednesdays, teachers plan the next week’s lessons.

### What did you do to prepare for this school year?

“I made sure that I did all of my trainings for Canvas (an online learning platform) because I knew we’d be using it and I wanted to be prepared. I thought about my ‘why.’ ‘Why am I teaching? Why am I coming back?’ That was important. I have a very supportive family, so that was never an issue. I’m excited to be back around the kids. I love what I do and I wanted to be here.”

### What were your concerns coming into this fall?

“I was nervous about how we were going to manage all of it. Was I going to be able to build relationships with half my class at a time? Were they going to build relationship

with each other? And, of course, are we going to be safe? But once we got started, we have been. We’ve been safe. The kids are enjoying being back in the building, even with fewer kids. I think they kind of enjoy that – they get more attention. It’s gone a lot smoother than I thought it would.”

### What has happened that you didn’t expect?

“The learning curve (for technology) has been big, not only for myself but for my students. I just assumed the students would pick it up really quick – they’re pretty techy. Canvas has been kind of tricky to learn. We’re getting there. The parents have been very gracious, very kind. I know they are frustrated, but I’ve yet to receive an email that said anything but ‘thank you for your time.’”

### How are the kids adapting?

“They are doing great. They took on the challenge. Wearing masks has not been an issue. That was a concern I had coming in, that I would be fighting that battle all day. It’s not been a battle at all. We take mask breaks, but they don’t even ask for one, I just provide them.”

### What are you looking forward to?

“This is going to be a learning year. Just embracing that, getting to know all of my kids. Hopefully, we get to all be in one room at some point this year. My words this year are ‘flexibility’ and ‘grace.’ I can’t be too hard on myself and I definitely can’t be too hard on the families or their kids. They’re extending grace to me as well. And flexibility – it is what it is. Just don’t get frustrated. Just say, ‘OK, this is what we’re doing now’ and go with it.”



## Angelia Franke

8th Grade Pre-Algebra, Nowata Middle School  
18th year in the classroom

### Nowata’s Teaching and Learning

**Plan** – Full-time in-person teaching and learning, with the option for families to choose distance learning. About 10% of the district’s eighth graders have chosen distance learning.

### Biggest concerns starting the year?

“Getting a calculator and Chromebook in each student’s hands. We have not been a one-to-one school until this year. We do have a standard calculator that is used

# How did you come back?

## Tyree Fihol

2nd grade, Burroughs

Elementary, Tulsa

7th year in the classroom

### Tulsa's Teaching and Learning Plan –

Full-time distance learning for at least the first nine weeks.

#### What did you do to prepare for starting school this year?

“I had to keep an open mind. For a while, I think I put out of mind that my kids weren't coming back (in person). I was just in the gear of trying to learn what it is that we'll need to do and what we'll need to have. Of course, when the day comes and they aren't here, it's not the same. I need to have that closeness and being with the kids.”

#### What were your biggest concerns coming into the semester?

“My biggest concerns had to do with them showing up. In the spring, I had a good turnout of kids (for distance learning). Most of my kids showed up for our meetings. Now it's getting ready to be different. In the spring we didn't count grades, but now they are required to do certain assignments. We are grading this time around.”

“I don't know what I don't know. The other concern I have in distance learning is the loss of the human touch. Throughout the day, when the kids are here in person, even if it's not directed to the them, they are hearing affirmations, hearing corrections. They're learning all kinds of things just by physically watching and hearing what's going on around them.”



#### Is there a positive aspect to your situation this fall?

“One of the benefits I do see in distance learning is that the kids are getting exposed to technology whereas they might not have been. Other communities may be used to using technology. Some of our kids don't get that same time with technology. Now, they're getting exposed to it. This particular situation has provided our kids (equity) because the district has supplied them with the technology they need so they can be successful. It's going to help them in the future. And it's going to help their parents, too.”

on our end-of-the year test, so I wanted to make sure that the students had that particular calculator, because we want to practice as we're actually going to take the test.”

#### How are the kids adapting to all of the changes?

“The kids are adapting very well. They are very respectful about wearing their masks. When we're on our feet walking around, we always have on the masks. If it slips off, just a gentle reminder and they put it back on. They are doing very good about using hand sanitizer. We talked about hand washing procedures. The Caring Van is coming to give flu shots (in late September) and we've encouraged the kids to plan on taking it.”

#### Does it feel like a normal school year?

“I think it feels very normal to be back in the classroom, however, I miss having the facial expressions from the students. I'm very animated when I'm giving my lesson and it's kind of hard to sometimes read the students' understanding of the material. Plus, you just like to see the smile. You have to be very expressive with your eyes to convey your emotions.”

#### Nowata made some changes in class schedules that made for smaller classroom sizes. How is that working out?

“It seems like the interpersonal relationships have happened quicker because there is a smaller number of kids in the class. I've heard a lot about how football

practice is going and how excited the boys are for the first game. The better the positive relationships we can build with the students, the more they believe in what we're trying to do and can reach out if they need help.”

#### What advice would you give a brand new teacher in this time of COVID?

“Have patience with yourself and encourage the kids to do the same. We're all on a different schedule and a different routine this year, so problems will work out and we'll find solutions over time. And reaching out to your fellow teachers is the best place to start to find the answers.”

# Manage your contact information through NEA360

OEA members now have the ability to keep their association contact information up-to-date with NEA360. Members can update banking information if they pay dues through electronic funds transfer (EFT) or change pay methods. They can also add or change email addresses, mailing addresses and phone numbers.



To check your account, visit <https://edues.nea.org/eDues/righthere.jsp>. You will need your OEA/NEA membership number, which appears on your membership card, and your home zip code. If you need assistance, contact Brenda Snider at [bsnider@okea.org](mailto:bsnider@okea.org) or 405/523-4357

An important benefit of OEA membership is access to association messages through a number of vehicles.

**The Education Focus** – If you’re reading this, you’re reading the *Focus* (obviously). If you would like to opt out of the printed version for a digital version, complete the short form at <http://form.jotform.us/form/51754716044152> and hit submit. You can also read past issues at <https://www.okea.org/stay-informed/the-education-focus/>.

**The Education Edge e-newsletter** – A digital publication sent to every primary email address we have in the system. It is full of short notices about upcoming OEA events, opportunities for education employees and students (like grants, professional development and contests), upcoming meetings, and more.

**The Legislative Update** – This electronic newsletter is emailed every Saturday year-round to home email addresses only. Make sure we have your home email by adding it to your account through the NEA link listed above or send it Scout Anvar at [sanvar@okea.org](mailto:sanvar@okea.org).

**Hustle texting program** – This communications vehicle is a quick, popular way to share information with members. We periodically “Hustle” members with notifications of events or issues. The messages are sent by OEA staff, elected leaders or local leaders (not a machine!), allowing for a two-way conversation. We send Hustle texts to every cell phone number in our system. You can opt out of receiving these quick communiques, but we will not be able to re-add you in the future.



**Pop-Up PD** is the OEA Teaching and Learning Center’s latest effort to help educators teaching in the time of COVID-19. T&L Specialists Heather Cody and Laura Miller will host Facebook Live events at 4 p.m. every Tuesday on the OEA Facebook page. The sessions will spend about 20 minutes covering a tip or trick to help you overcome issues of distance and virtual teaching and learning. Learn more at [okea.org/tricks](http://okea.org/tricks).

## Write down these dates...

### October 2020

Oct. 2 – Filing for State OEA offices closes

### November 2020

Nov. 7 – Committee Saturday  
– OEA Board meeting  
Nov. 16-20 – American Education Week  
Nov. 18 – National ESP Day

### December 2020

Dec. 1 – Zone Rebate Application Due  
Dec. 5 – OEA Board meeting

### January 2021

Jan. 25-26 – OAEA Racial and Social Justice Symposium  
Jan. 29 – OEA Awards Entry Deadline

### February 2021

Feb. 1 – OEA elections filing period opens  
Feb. 6 – OEA Committee Saturday  
Feb. 19 – OEA elections filing period closes  
Feb. 20 – OEA Board meeting  
Feb. 26-27 – OEA Organizing Conference

### March 2021

March 5 – Outreach To Teach  
March 6 – OAEA Spring Convention  
March 12-14 – NEA National Leadership Summit  
March 15 – OEA Delegate Credentials Due  
March 22 – Online voting opens in OEA elections  
March 30 – OEA Election Day (tentative)

### April 2021

April 2 – Online voting closes in OEA Elections  
April 10 – NEA RA Credentials Due  
April 29 – OEA Board meeting  
April 30 – Delegate Assembly

### May 2021

May 1 – Delegate Assembly  
May 3-7 – Teacher Appreciation Week

### June 2021

June 11 – OEA Board meeting

### July 2021

July 2-6 – NEA RA, Denver  
July 15 – OEA Summer Leadership Conference

# Flatley, Jarvis join OEA's Organizing Center

**B**riana Flatley and Brendan Jarvis are the newest members of the OEA Organizing Center, both coming on staff as organizing specialists in August.

Flatley brings a unique skillset to the Oklahoma City Metro Team. She worked as a paraprofessional in Western Heights and as an English as a Secondary Language teacher assistant for Bethany Public Schools. Most recently, she served as the

AmeriCorps Summer Enrichment Leader for Putnam City Public Schools.

She was named a Gates Millennium Scholar as a student at Western Heights High School. She created the Gates Millennium Scholars Association as a student at the University of Oklahoma where she received a bachelor's in global literary analysis. Her degree included studies abroad, in Brazil, Ireland, Germany and Tanzania.

"The education of our children and youth is not something I take lightly. These are critical times for a public education system burdened with challenges," said Flatley, who speaks English and Spanish. "As a young educator and advocate, I believe I can bring a fresh perspective to OEA with extensive knowledge of educational policies, both locally and nationally. I find satisfaction in confronting tough challenges and working tirelessly to overcome them."

As a member of Tulsa Metro Team, Jarvis will be well-known to members not only in the region but also statewide. While teaching at Union's 6th/7th Grade Center in Tulsa, he volunteered for the Bixby Parent Legislative Action Commit-

tee and for numerous political candidates, both Democrat and Republican. Local media called on Jarvis frequently to comment on education issues in the news. His political work earned him the OEA's 2018 Gene Rochelle Political Activist Award.

Jarvis was elected in 2017 as the zone director for Tulsa Metro D. As a member of the OEA Board of Directors, he was elected to the Internal Concerns Committee and served on the Forces on Education Committee. He was also elected to the OEA Fund for Children and Public Education Steering Committee.

Born in New York City, Jarvis grew up in Winfield, Kansas. He received a bachelor's in secondary education of social studies from Wichita State University. He taught seven years at Winfield Middle School to start his teaching career. Since 2004, he's taught seventh grade history and geography at Union.

"I have enjoyed teaching middle school for the last 25 years but have come to understand that while I do see working with children as a calling, my larger calling is supporting teachers and support staff," Jarvis said. "The mission of the OEA aligns with my own personal mission. My heart is with those who are on the front lines in our public schools, and I plan to work very hard to support, encourage and counsel them as I have done over the past few years, as well as helping them learn how to build their power in their districts and statewide."

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*Briana Flatley*



*Brendan Jarvis*

# Recommended Candidates

The Fund for Children and Public Education recommends 25 candidates in the November 3 election. Candidate recommendations are driven by local associations and interview teams comprised of OEA members who are voluntary FCPE political action committee donors and who live in or near the candidate's districts. Some recommended candidates are OEA members, but OEA member candidates are not automatically recommended. Please note: Additional candidate recommendations may be made.

## SD 3: Blake Cowboy Stephens

Stephens is a career public school counselor and OREA member. His wife is a librarian. **This seat:** He defeated incumbent Wayne Shaw in the Republican primary.



## SD 9: Dewayne Pemberton

Pemberton worked as a career educator and coach. He's a champion for school funding, fair pay and pensions. **This seat:** Pemberton has served for four years.



## SD 21: Tom J. Dugger

Dugger has repeatedly stood up to vouchers and voucher tax credits. He coauthored the cost-of-living adjustment. **This seat:** Dugger has served for four years.



## SD 35: Jo Anna Dossett

Dossett is a career English language learner teacher and OEA member. She is a strong education advocate. **This seat:** Sen. Gary Stanislawski is term-limited.



## SD 37: Allison Ikley-Freeman

Ikley-Freeman is a therapist. She consistently supports public education and funding core state services. **This seat:** Ikley-Freeman has served for four years.



## SD 39: Shawna Mott-Wright

Mott-Wright is a speech and drama teacher and president of the Tulsa Classroom Teachers Association. **This seat:** She faces Sen. David Rader, who has served four years.



## HD 4: Matt Meredith

Meredith has routinely voted in support of public education, including coauthoring the cost-of-living adjustment. **This seat:** Meredith has served for four years.



## HD 26: Dell Kerbs

Kerbs' voting record shows consistent support for public schools. He has also opposed vouchers and voucher tax credits. **This seat:** Kerbs has served for four years.



## HD 30: Mark Lawson

Lawson has strong relationships with educators in his district and repeatedly supports public schools with his votes. **This seat:** Lawson has served for four years.



## HD 34: Trish Ranson

Ranson is a career music teacher and OEA member. She has authored bills to balance safety and student discipline. **This seat:** Ranson has served for two years.



## HD 45: Merleyn Bell

Bell consistently votes for public schools. She has a good relationship with OEA members and engages them on education issues. **This seat:** Bell has served for two years.



## HD 46: Jacob Rosecrants

Rosecrants is a social studies teacher who advocates for public schools in his district and in the Legislature. **This seat:** Rosecrants has served for three years.





### HD 62: Daniel Pae

Pae is incredibly accessible to his constituents, including OEA members, and works to understand education needs. **This seat:** Pae has served for two years.



### HD 66: Jadine Nollan

Nollan has authored many pro-public education bills and has chaired the Higher Ed Committee. **This seat:** Nollan has served for 10 years; this would be her last term.



### HD 78: Meloyde Blancett

Blancett consistently votes in support of public schools, and she is accessible to OEA members in her area and at the Capitol. **This seat:** Blancett has served for four years.



### HD 79: Melissa Provenzano

Provenzano has authored legislation to address the teacher shortage. She also seeks teacher input when writing bills. **This seat:** She has served for two years.



### HD 83: Chelsey Branham

Branham supports education funding and pro-public education legislation. She serves on the Banking & Pensions Committee. **This seat:** She has served for two years.



### HD 85: Cyndi Munson

Munson is a tireless advocate for at-risk children, and she has written bills to address challenging issues our students face. **This seat:** She has served for five years.



### HD 87: Collin Walke

Walke is a firm supporter of public schools. He is quick to reach out to get feedback from OEA members. **This seat:** Walke has served for four years.



### HD 89: Jose Cruz

Cruz is an attorney who has committed to supporting public education issues. **This seat:** Rep. Shane Stone resigned his seat last year, leaving the seat open.



### HD 93: Mickey Dollens

Dollens is a former high school English teacher. He has written several bills that support public schools and educators. **This seat:** Dollens has served for four years.



### HD 94: Andy Fugate

Fugate authored a pay raise bill for support employees. He is a strong public school advocate. His wife is a teacher. **This seat:** Fugate has served for two years.



### HD 95: Kelly Albright

Albright is a career elementary school teacher. She has written many bills addressing challenges in the classroom. **This seat:** Albright has served for two years.



### U.S. Senate: Abby Broyles

Broyles is an investigative journalist and attorney who supports public schools. Broyles has met with OEA members many times and has consistently said she will vote to protect and properly fund public education. **This seat:** Broyles faces Sen. Jim Inhofe, who has only met once with OEA members at the U.S. Capitol during his 25-year tenure.



### CD 5: Kendra Horn

Horn consistently votes in support of public schools, including bills to increase funding for early education programs. She's also supported schools near military bases and tribal lands, and fought for ESL and professional development funds. **This seat:** Horn has served two years. She faces State Sen. Stephanie Bice, who has voted to increase voucher tax giveaways.



# Honoring excellence in education

**R**ecognizing a great teacher, a dedicated education support professional or a local organization that supports public schools shines a spotlight on the good in education.

The goal of the OEA Awards Program is to honor excellence in education. The association is now accepting nominations for all awards. The deadline is 5 p.m. Jan. 29.

All OEA awards are listed on the OEA website ([okea.org/oeaawards](http://okea.org/oeaawards)). Each nomination form can be filled out online before printing and mailing.

Nominations must be received at OEA Headquarters by the deadline. Send nominations to OEA Awards, 323 E. Madison, Okla. City, OK, 73105.

Following is an overview of OEA's many awards.

## Board of Directors Awards

Nominations for the following awards must come from a current member of the OEA Board of Directors.

**Friend of Education** – OEA's highest award, the Friend of Education, honors a person who has made significant contributions to the betterment of public education.

**Claude A. Dyer Memorial Award** – Given to an Oklahoma educator who has worked to bring about legislative action for equitable salaries and desirable working conditions, and has rendered leadership and direction in efforts to protect and advance the civil and human rights and responsibilities of educators.

**Political Activist Award** – Given to an individual or organization who exhibits a willingness and determination to promote the goals of the OEA through activities in the political arena.

**Outstanding Legislator** – Presented to legislators for outstanding support of public education and education employees.

**NEA Foundation Award for Teaching Excellence** – NEA's most prestigious award is designed to recognize, reward and promote excellence in teaching and advocacy for the profession. Five national awardees are selected for The Horace Mann Awards for Teaching Excellence and receive \$10,000 each. One of the five will be selected to receive The NEA Member Benefits Award for Teaching Excellence, an additional \$25,000 cash prize, and a commemorative gift.

All current members of an NEA local affiliate or bargaining unit are eligible for nomination, including teachers, education support professionals and higher education faculty and staff.

## Human and Civil Rights Awards

**Kate Frank Award** – Presented to the OEA member and/or local association rendering outstanding and significant service to advancing the cause of member welfare, rights and professionalism.

**Tuskahoma Brown Miller Award** – Presented to a business or group that has contributed significantly to the improvement of education.

**F.D. Moon Educational Award** – Presented to the person who has contributed significantly to the advancement of education for students.



**Glenn Snider Human Relations Award** – Presented to the school district, individual or organization best exemplifying the practice of effective human relations and concerns for human rights.

## Instructional Excellence in Education

**Teachers Teaching Teachers and Teachers Teaching Students** – To recognize individual OEA members for outstanding contributions in instructional excellence, both with students and colleagues. The awards acknowledge the fact that the quality of education in this country can rise no higher than the quality of teaching.

## Miscellaneous Awards

**Advocate For Academic Freedom** – Honors a person or organization whose contribution to the safeguarding of academic freedom has had a significant impact on the public schools in Oklahoma and the nation.

**OEA Collective Bargaining Award** – Presented to an individual or group making a significant contribution to the advancement of education through the collective bargaining process.

**Education Support Professional Award** – Honoring an individual ESP member whose activities reflect the contributions of an educational support professional to public education.

## Communications Awards

**Marshall Gregory Awards** – Recognizing Oklahoma reporters and broadcasters and their newspapers, radio and television stations for significant efforts to provide continuing and accurate coverage of public schools, current education issues and the OEA. Categories for professionals and for high school journalists are offered.

**Golden Apple Awards** – Recognizing OEA local associations for their consistent efforts to provide quality communications to all of their audiences, including members and other education personnel, local school administration, parents and the community in general.

# Statement of Ownership, Management and Circulation

(Required by 39 USC 3685)

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# Passing the torch

## Philly science teacher Becky Pringle elected NEA president

**W**hen Becky Pringle was elected as NEA's next president earlier this summer, it marked the culmination of a long and distinguished career as a classroom teacher and a tireless advocate for public education, and for racial, social, and economic justice.

Pringle succeeded Lily Eskelsen Garcia on September 1. Garcia had served two terms as NEA president after two terms as NEA Vice President and Secretary-Treasurer. She was the first Latina to lead the NEA and one of the country's most influential Hispanic educators.

Joining Pringle on the new NEA leadership team will be NEA Vice President Princess Moss of Virginia and new Secretary-Treasurer Noel Candelaria of Texas. NEA elections are usually conducted in-person at NEA's Representative Assembly, but due to the coronavirus pandemic, this year they were held remotely with nearly 6,000 elected NEA delegates casting mail-in ballots.

The delegates also reelected Hanna Vaandering, an elementary physical education teacher from Ridgewood Elementary in Beaverton, Ore., to the NEA Executive Committee.

As a science teacher in Philadelphia, Pringle served as a local president and steadily rose through the ranks of NEA leadership, serving on the NEA Board of Directors, the Pennsylvania State Education Association board, and as a member of NEA's Executive Committee.

When Pringle was elected NEA secretary-treasurer in 2008, her stewardship helped navigate the association during one of the worst economic downturns – and the devastating cuts to public education that came with it – in the nation's history. She went on to serve six years as NEA vice president.

Introducing her successor, Eskelsen

García called Pringle “exactly the person that every student needs, that every educator needs, on their side... She will grab the baton and run with it.”

As NEA president, Pringle is not only the leader of the nation's largest union representing 3 million educators, but also the highest-ranking African American female labor leader.

Pringle's acceptance address to NEA delegates in July was a stirring call to action for educators to confront and finally defeat the forces that have jeopardized the education and lives of too many students.

“We cannot – we will not – put off for one more second creating schools that serve the needs of all our students regardless of their race, ethnicity, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, immigration status, or language,” Pringle said. “Now is the time to address the systemic inequities that beset our most vulnerable students.”

Pringle ended her remarks invoking late Rep. John Lewis' famous call for activists, when fighting for justice, to get into “good trouble.”

From tearing down the inequitable systems that exclude millions of students, to confronting the sexist, racist, and homophobic power structures that banish countless others to second-class citizenship, to keeping every student and educator safe, Pringle vowed that “NEA, we will get into good trouble every day, in every state, in every community all across this nation.”

VP Moss is an elementary music teacher from Louisa County, Va. Prior to her two terms as NEA secretary-treasurer, she served two terms on the NEA Executive Committee and was the president of the 62,000-member Virginia Education Association.

Secretary-Treasurer Candelaria is a special education teacher and former teacher's aide from El Paso. Candelaria previously served as president and vice president of the Texas State Teachers Association.



*President Becky Pringle*



*Vice President Princess Moss*



*Secretary/Treasurer  
Noel Candelaria*



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# The Last Word

with Pres. Alicia Priest



President Alicia Priest

**W**hat a Spring Break! We had a Mapril, Junly, and are now in the throws of Augtember. Whew! Will the gift of 2020 ever stop giving?

As we have headed back to our classrooms, offices, bus routes, cafeterias, no matter what school looks like, the constant is YOU! You continue to do what it takes to make things right for your students. THANK YOU!

I hope you took time to celebrate the 100th Anniversary of the 19th Amendment giving some women the right to vote – native and black voting rights, as you know, came later. As I reflect on the significance of this amendment, I am grateful for all that the suffragists endured.



Historically, those in the dominant culture with the power, in attempts to hold tightly to that power, have used force, arrests, violence, fear and intimidation to control those with whom they disagree. Suffragists were beaten as they marched peacefully. They were ultimately imprisoned, fed worm-ridden food, tortured and when they went on peaceful hunger strikes, they were force fed – sometimes to the point of killing them.

Yet, they continued to advocate for their cause. They advocated in varying ways – from smashing windows and arson to picketing President Wilson at the White House. Still, those brave women persisted and, in 1920, Tennessee became the 36th state to ratify the 19th Amendment. Thus, it became codified in the Constitution.

I am eternally thankful for those who have come before me, stepped up to injustice and made sacrifices so that my grandmother, mother, daughter, and my voice counts. But I will not stop at being thankful. In reading and researching, I see over and over again the same patterns of the denial of basic human rights that keep a section of our nation from experiencing the rights that we are ALL guaranteed in the Constitution. WHY?!? For the sake of power? Money? Is it greed? Is it simply out of spite and hate for those who are different?

One thing history teaches us is that we are doomed in this circle of insanity unless we study the past and learn from it. Imag-

ine if we learned to look at issues from another's perspective. Ultimately, we are called on to DO something about the injustice we see in the world. That is what the suffragists did. They acted on injustice and then they voted! ACT and VOTE.

ACT – volunteer for a candidate who supports issues that you believe in, like public education. Make a donation to candidates you believe in. Every dollar counts. You don't need to donate thousands to make a difference. Make a plan. Get friends together to make sure childcare is covered in your group. Make it a fun event.

Finally, VOTE! Vote for issues that help our kids, our future, and our professions – vote for public education candidates. Let's learn from history and make a brighter future, full of possibilities, for our kids, grand kids, great grandkids.

See you at the polls.



Alicia (second from left) and her daughter Kenna (left) were joined at January's Women's March by three generations of Ewings – Sharon Ewing, mother of Associate Executive Director Amanda Ewing (second from right) and her daughter Adelaide.

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