



National Council of Teachers of English*

ELEMENTARY SECTION 2020 ELECTIONS

The [Elementary Section Steering Committee](#) (ESSC) members are elected each year to a four-year term. The Chair is elected from the ESSC for a two-year term and serves on the [NCTE Executive Committee](#) representing the interests of the elementary membership.

The Nominating Committee prepares a slate of candidates for vacancies that occur annually on the Elementary Section Steering Committee and selects candidates for the succeeding year's Elementary Section Nominating Committee. The candidate who receives the largest number of votes in the election will chair the committee.

About the 2020 Candidates

Under the constitution of NCTE, every spring each Section (Elementary, Middle Level, Secondary, College) elects members of its own Section Steering Committee and members of the Section Nominating Committee. The following nominations were made by a nominating committee elected by the section membership in spring 2019.

The Elementary Section Nominating Committee this year consists of **Janelle Henderson**, Louisville, KY, chair; **Bobbie Kabuto**, Queens College, New York, NY; and **Bilal Polson**, Northern Parkway School, Uniondale, NY.

Names on the ballot are presented in random order. The biographical information concerning the nominee's experience and service to NCTE was supplied by the individual nominee.

View candidate bios below.

Elementary Section Steering Committee

(two to be elected, term to expire November 2023)

Section Committee members elect a chair who will represent section concerns on the NCTE Executive Committee. Through correspondence and meetings once or twice a year, the members identify and explore issues of section concerns. Often the Section Committee will suggest new programs or revisions to present Council programs that may benefit section members. The Committee helps plan section conferences and portions of the NCTE Annual Convention that will be of interest to section members.



AERIALE N. JOHNSON, Second grade teacher, San Jose, CA; associate director, San Jose Area Writing Project (SJAWP). **Formerly:** President Mid-Kuskokwim Education Association. **Membership(s):** NCTE, Build Your Stack Committee, ILA, Rural Diversity Committee, NEA. **Award(s):** Heinemann Fellow; Fulbright Teachers for Global Classrooms, India; Rural Trust Global Teacher Fellowship, Reggio Emilia, Italy. **Publication(s):** Articles in *Literacy Today*; essay in *Game Changer*; NCTE blog. **Program Contribution(s):** NCTE, ILA, NEA, SJAWP, WSRA, Reading Recovery, Scholastic Reading Summit, Opal School Summer Symposium.

Position Statement: As an early childhood educator with experience serving multilingual students of diverse backgrounds in rural, suburban, and urban settings, NCTE has played a critical role in my professional development. I am an antiracist practitioner who teaches young children literacy by implementing student-centered, culturally-responsive/sustaining practices. My pedagogy is one of liberation, serendipity, and listening. Advocating for justice on behalf of all children and educators is the heartbeat of my work.



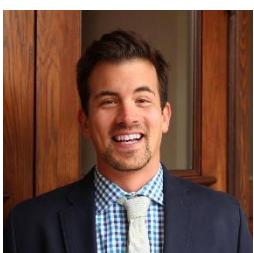
JUSTIN WILLIS, Adjunct professor, learning framework, Tyler Junior College, TX. **Membership(s)**: NCTE Elementary Section Steering Committee, Texas Community College Teachers Association, Texas Oral History Association. **Award(s)**: U.S. Presidents Volunteer Service Award, U.S. Congressional Award, Points of Light Award, W. Stewart Caffey Teaching Award. **Publication(s)**: *Investigating the Establishment and Sustainability of Professional Learning Communities in Rural East Texas: The Principals' Perspectives; Culturally Responsive Teaching Practices through Oral History.*

Position Statement: NCTE has provided learning opportunities for teachers to improve teaching and learning. In general, within the twenty-first-century classroom, teachers across the world now look for ways to form pedagogical spaces to co-create knowledge with their students about collective experiences of the past. I strongly believe that oral history is a teaching tool to help teachers create the pedagogical spaces to co-create knowledge with their students. My current research focuses on examining the impact that utilizing oral history has on student achievement as it relates literacy learning.



YOO KYUNG SUNG, Associate professor, literacy education, University of New Mexico, Albuquerque. **Membership(s)**: NCTE, LRA, USBBY, IRSCL. **Publication(s)**: Articles in *Language Arts; Reading Teacher; Bookbird; Dragon Lode; LRA Yearbook*.

Position Statement: My scholarly interests are built on a commitment to critical perspectives of literacy education and are based in my own experiences growing up outside the U.S. My research foci centered on children's literature of immigrants, diaspora, and other marginalized groups in U.S. and global contexts to advance understandings of children and their cultures. My commitment to this work positions me well to serve in leadership positions to gain ground—and place at the forefront—critical issues facing historically under-represented or misrepresented populations in various texts and to encourage further connectivity with real people and communities. I will work to support diverse learners' journeys to encourage for a better world that aligns with NCTE's vision and make a valuable contribution in pushing the organization forward.



JON M. WARGO, Assistant professor, teacher education, Boston College, MA; AERA Division K Section co-chair, LRA Area chair (Literacy, Media, and Technology). **Formerly**: ELATE Nominating Committee; CCCC Lavender Rhetorics Award Committee; Primary grades teacher, Denver Public Schools. **Membership(s)**: ELATE, NCTE, AERA. **Award(s)**: ELATE National Technology Leadership Initiative (NTLI) Award, 21st Century Divergent Literacies Award, CEE Research Initiative. **Publication(s)**: Articles in *Language Arts, Journal of Literacy Research Literacy*. **Program Contribution(s)**: NCTE, NCTEAR, AERA.

Position Statement: As a teacher educator and former Kindergarten teacher, the elementary section of NCTE has become a professional home. As a member of the steering committee, I will work with members to forward the mission of the section. Collaborating with other elected committee members, I will assist in promoting the work of critical elementary teachers as they advance the teaching of English language arts towards equity-oriented outcomes and cultural justice.

(two to be elected, term to expire November 2024)



VALENTE' GIBSON, Fifth grade teacher, Jackson Creek Elementary School, Columbia, SC. **Membership(s)**: NCTE, ECEA Treasurer, NCTE Standing Committee on Literacy Assessment. **Award(s)**: Social Justice Award – Early Childhood Assembly, PDCRT Cohort 3. **Program Contribution(s)**: NCTE, WLU.

Position Statement: Every year, NCTE provides a space for me to remember, reconnect, and revolutionize my stance in the education world. As an elementary school educator, I am committed to bringing social justice and culturally sustaining pedagogies to build literacy as liberation. If elected, I will continue to advocate for those whose stories are undervalued and commit to equitable literacy practices.



TRACEY T. FLORES, Assistant professor, language and literacy, University of Texas at Austin; co-chair, Latinx Caucus; ELATE Commission on Family and Community Literacies. **Formerly:** K-6 language arts, English language development; Rainbow Strand co-chair; Professional Dyads for Culturally Relevant Teaching. **Membership(s):** NCTE, LRA, AERA. **Award(s):** Promising Researcher, CNV Fellow. **Publication(s):** *Bilingual Research Journal, Language Arts, Journal of Adolescent and Adult Literacy*. **Program Contribution(s):** NCTE, LRA, NWP, AERA.

Position Statement: As a former elementary teacher and current teacher educator, I believe in the collective power of our voices, joy and love in our work alongside the children, families and communities we serve. Together, we must harness our love and expertise to advocate for an equitable, transformative and restorative languages and literacies education for all. As a member of the Elementary Steering Committee, I will collaborate with others to ensure that children, families and communities remain central to our work toward equity, justice and transformation.



KINDEL T. NASH, Associate professor of early childhood education, University of Maryland Baltimore County; NCTE Early Childhood Education Assembly Board. **Formerly:** Assistant professor of language and literacy, University of Missouri Kansas City; reading specialist, classroom teacher. **Membership(s):** NCTE, ECEA. **Award(s):** Hrabowski Innovation Fellow, University of Maryland Baltimore County; American Educational Research Association, Presidential Session Selectee; Sherman Faculty Research Fellow. **Publication(s):** *Toward Culturally Sustaining Teaching: Early Childhood Educators Honor Children With Practices For Equity And Change; The Children Come Full: From High Leverage to Humanizing and Culturally Sustaining Literacy Practices in Urban Schools; Critical Racial Literacy in Homes, Schools, and Communities: Propositions for Early Childhood Contexts*. **Program Contribution(s):** NCTE, AERA, ICUE.

Position Statement: Throughout my career as an educator, NCTE has always been my professional home, a learning, growing space. In my service to this organization, I have collaborated with others to advance strengths-based, sustaining policy, practices, and discourse in literacy--for the sake of children. If elected to the Steering Committee, I will continue to collaborate and advocate for justice and equity in literacy education.



ALICIA ARCE-BOARDMAN, PDCRT Board, elementary bilingual teacher, Uniondale School District, NY. **Membership(s):** NABE, NCTE, ECEA. **Award(s):** Early Literacy Educator of the Year. **Publication(s):** Co-author, *No More Culturally Irrelevant Teaching*.

Position Statement: As an elementary educator for the past 13 years, each year I grow professionally and personally to ensure that I am doing an adequate job of sharing students' stories and their voices. My wish is for the students who are gifted to me each school year, use their experiences and voices to help me in continuing to grow as an educator. All classrooms should be a place where students achieve their highest potential through equity and culturally responsive pedagogies.

[Elementary Section Nominating Committee](#)

(three to be elected, term to expire August 2021)

Members of the Section Nominating Committee choose candidates for the Section Committee and the Section Nominating Committee for the following year. The person receiving the most votes serves as chair.



KAREN CARNEY, Third grade teacher, Campbell K-7, OH; adjunct faculty, teacher education, Youngstown State University; conference planner, OCTELA. **Formerly:** Literacy coach K-12, Campbell City Schools; first grade teacher, Campbell K-7, OH; president, OCTELA; president, MVCIRA. **Membership(s):** NCTE, OCTELA, IRA/ILA, MVCIRA/ MVCOLA. **Award(s):** OCTELA ELA Elementary Teacher of the Year, MVCIRA Celebrate Literacy Award, Outstanding Educator, Beeghly College of Education, Youngstown State University. **Publications(s):** *Ohio Voices*, OCTELA Newsletter, *Ohio Resource Center Adolescent Literacy in Perspective*, OJELA (*Ohio Journal of English Language Arts*). **Program Contribution(s):** NCTE, OCTELA, MVCIRA, MVCOLA.

Position Statement: As a member of the Nominating Committee I believe my responsibilities lie in the consideration of all teachers ensuring that every culture, race, and gender is considered for all nominations. Diversity is the cornerstone of our schools and society, and it is most important that our students have role model teachers that include diversity as well as excellence. It is my pledge to help create a slate of candidates, which has the standards of NCTE as well as multi-cultural candidates that will represent the needs of NCTE's diverse teaching and learning community.



BRANDY SUE ALEXANDER, Intervention and testing coordinator, Cypress-Fairbanks Independent School District; West Houston Area Council of Teachers of English board member; Community Involvement for Texas Association of Literacy Education director. **Formerly:** ELA instructional specialist, classroom teacher, CFISD; literacy specialist, KISD. **Membership(s):** NCTE, CEL, WHACTE, TALE, TCEA. **Award(s):** Distinguished Honors Scholar, University of North Texas. **Program Contribution(s):** NCTE, CEL, TCEA, TASA, ICCTX, TALE, HCDE, TCCA, CFDLC.

Position Statement: NCTE provides a place for educators to expand their perspectives, challenge ideas, and think critically about pedagogy. From participating in the online Twitter discussions to the forums, from attending local events with affiliates to the national conventions, there is not another literacy organization I know that educates and advocates for teachers to be forward thinkers in pursuit of equitable literacy practices. I would be honored to serve the organization and elementary section, committed to ensuring teachers find their voice to better empower and serve their students, fellow educators, and their communities.



TIANA SILVAS, Fifth grade teacher, PS 59, New York, NY. **Formerly:** NCTE Resolutions Committee, NCTE Research Foundation. **Membership(s):** NCTE. **Award(s):** Heinemann Fellow, NCTE Donald H. Graves Award for Excellence in the Teaching of Writing. **Publication(s):** Book, *Companions: Reimagining Reading in the Wake of Violence and Trauma*; articles in *Literacy Today*. **Program Contribution(s):** NCTE, ILA

Position Statement: NCTE is key to my development as an educator by providing spaces to collaborate, learn, and engage in reflection. As a Latinx educator, I am committed to enhancing the organization's focus on antiracist education and liberating literacy practices. I believe that this is critical and essential to establish educational equity.



MUKKARAMAH SMITH, First grade teacher, lead teacher, Comprehensive Remediation Program, Richland School District One, Columbia, SC; NCTE PDCRT Board Member. **Membership(s):** NCTE, Early Childhood Education Assembly. **Program Contribution(s):** NCTE PDCRT Cohort 3.

Position Statement: In the past five years, my dedication to culturally relevant pedagogy and culturally sustaining practices has revived me as an educator. My approach to teaching my early childhood students, as well as working closely with preservice teachers, is culturally centered on my students' self-empowerment, self-awareness, and how social justice issues shape their connections with their community. NCTE via PDCRT has given me an opportunity to merge my voice with other educator's voices, and to make an impact in shifting the conversations surrounding curriculum decisions within my local educational agency.



LORI CZOP ASSAF, Professor of literacy education, Texas State University. **Formerly:** Director Central Texas Writing Project, editor *English in Texas*, reading specialist. **Membership(s):** NCTE, ILA Writing Task Force, LRA International Innovative Community Group. **Award(s):** Fulbright Specialist -Indonesia, LRA International Service Award. **Publication(s):** Book: *Inclusion, Disability and Culture: An Ethnographic Perspective Traversing Abilities and Challenges*; articles in *Reading Teacher*, *JLR*, *Voices from the Middle*, *Teaching and Teacher Education*. **Program Contribution(s):** NCTE, LRA, TCTELA.

Position Statement: NCTE plays an essential role in mentoring and nurturing teachers who strive for innovation and inclusion in the pursuit of social justice and equity. As a member of NCTE Elementary Section Nominating Committee, I commit to equity-oriented literacy teaching and learning that appreciates and sustains cultural and linguistic diversity and provides opportunities for advocacy, inquiry, empowerment, and love. I will advocate for the knowledge, expertise, and leadership of teachers and their power as changemakers in national and international spaces.



KATHY WHITMORE, Department chair and professor, Metropolitan State University of Denver. **Formerly:** NCTE Elementary Section Steering Committee Chair, NCTE Nominating Committee Chair. **Membership(s):** NCTE, LRA, NCTE Early Childhood Education Assembly, NCTE Literacies and Languages for All Conference. **Award(s):** Lifetime Membership Award LLA (WLU). **Publication(s):** *Reading Challenging Texts: Layering Literacies through the Arts* (co-author); *Reclaiming Literacies as Meaning Making: Manifestations of Values, Identities, Relationships, and Knowledge* (co-editor); articles in *Language Arts*, *Talking Points*, *The Reading Teacher*, *Journal for Learning Through the Arts*. **Program Contribution(s):** NCTE, LLA Summer Institute, LRA, AERA.

Position Statement: The Elementary Section needs dynamic leaders from early childhood and elementary classrooms and higher education who will carry forward the mission and commitment to justice, equity, supporting teachers, and community. As recent Chair of the Elementary Section, I am well prepared to identify members for this important service.

Important Information Regarding the 2020 Election

NCTE, ELATE, TYCA, and Section election ballots will be sent by email to current members in April. If NCTE does not have an email for you on file and you would like to receive a ballot by email, please visit "[My Account](#)" and add it to your membership record. (You may also use "[My Account](#)" to change your email address and update your member profile.) You can contact our NCTE Customer Service Department (877-369-6283) and speak with one of our representatives to update this information as well.

Elections will close at 11:59 pm Central Time, Monday, June 1, 2020. Results will be posted mid-June.

Questions: Please contact [Linda Walters-Moore](#) at NCTE Headquarters.