ELEMENTARY SECTION 2021 ELECTIONS

The Elementary Section Steering Committee (ESSC) members are elected each year to a four-year term. The Chair is elected from with 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.

NATIONAL COUNCIL OF TEACHERS OF ENGLISH
ELEMENTARY SECTION—2021 SLATE OF NOMINEES

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 2020. The Elementary Section Nominating Committee this year consists of Tiana Silvas, P.S. 59, New York, NY, chair; Lori Czop Assaf, Texas State University, San Marcos; and Mukkaramah Smith, Richland School District One, Columbia, SC. 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. The committee’s nominations were printed in the March issue of Language Arts and posted on the NCTE website.

Please vote on the enclosed ballot and return it to reach NCTE, P.O. Box 3097, Champaign, IL 61826-3097, no later than June 1, 2021. Please use the enclosed return envelope.

ELEMENTARY SECTION STEERING COMMITTEE
Term to expire in November 2025

Section Committee members elect a chair who represents 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.

(Vote for two of four.)

CHIRS HASS
Second grade teacher, Center for Inquiry, Columbia, SC. Membership(s): NCTE, ECEA, NCTE Standing Committee on Literacy Assessment. Publication(s): Language Arts. Program Contribution(s): NCTE, WLU, South Carolina Council of Teachers of English, South Carolina International Reading Association.

Position Statement: As an advocate for teacher autonomy, authentic assessment, and education as a means to achieve more just communities for all, I have witnessed how often those outside our profession make decisions that hinder our ability to be responsive to the needs of our students and their families. For this reason, I believe teachers’ voices must be central to any and every decision affecting public education. As a member of the Elementary Steering Committee, I will collaborate with colleagues both near and far to ensure NCTE continues to amplify our voices in Washington as well as support teachers to do the same locally.
WANDA JAGGERS

First grade teacher, JB Atkinson Academy, Louisville, KY. **Membership(s):** NCTE ECEA, PDCRT Cohort 3, Louisville Writing Project, Kentucky Reading Project, Bellarmine Literacy Cohort. **Award(s):** NCEA-The Vivian Vasquez Teacher Scholarship recipient, Jefferson County Public Schools The Model. **Publications:** The Reading Teacher, ECEA Newsletter, Theory into Practice (forthcoming). **Program Contribution(s):** NCTE, WLU, GA DOE, KY Link, KRA.

**Position Statement:** As an elementary school teacher, I strive to create an engaging and equity focused learning environment by implementing student-focused, hands-on, project-based instruction. I center my teaching in culturally sustaining practices; building on students’ cultural, social, and linguistic references as they make sense of the world. I encourage my young students to find their voice through reading, writing, and drawing. As a member of the Elementary steering committee, I will continue to advocate for both students and educators whose voices and stories are unheard.

NANCY VALDEZ-GAINER

Lecturer, Texas State University. **Formerly:** Bilingual & ESL teacher in Austin ISD for 18 years. **Membership(s):** NCTE, ECEA, CLA, PDCRT co-director. **Award(s):** Vivian Vasquez Teacher Scholarship Recipient-Early Childhood Education Assembly. **Publications:** Everyday Stories for Everyday People: Communal Responsibility and Nepantla Literacies in Early Childhood Education Storytelling and story acting: An assets-based literacy practice. **Program Contributions:** NCTE.

**Position Statement:** I am proud to be part of the NCTE community because here I have found a network of professionals who push me to examine my thinking always with an eye towards more equitable literacy practices in the classroom. I believe in culturally sustaining literacy education that centers the linguistically, racially and culturally diverse experiences and histories of students and families—where students use their voices to speak up for change in a society that continues to be filled with injustice. If elected, I will advocate for continued dialogue around equitable literacy education.

BILAL POLSON

Principal, Northern Parkway School, Uniondale, NY. **Formerly:** Assistant Principal, Northern Parkway School; physical education teacher, Bay Shore Elementary School. **Membership(s):** NCTE, ECEA. **Award(s):** NCTE/CEE Diversity Grant. **Publications:** Courageous Leadership; Toward Culturally Sustaining Teaching: Early Childhood Educators Honor Children with Practices for Equity and Change. **NCTE Position Statements:** co-author Shifting from Professional Development to Professional Learning: Centering Teacher Empowerment (2019) Elevating Student Voice: The Role and Importance of Literacy Coaches for K–12 Teachers (2020) **Program Contributions:** NCTE, ECEA, AAC, PDCRT.

**Position Statement:** As an elementary school principal, NCTE serves as my professional home as a practitioner and researcher in the field of early and intermediate literacy. As a member of the elementary section steering committee, I would be committed to supporting NCTE to enhance the organization’s work in helping teachers, students, and their families with equitable and culturally responsive and sustaining literacies, pedagogies, and practices.

ELEMENTARY SECTION NOMINATING COMMITTEE

Term to expire in August 2022

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.
(Vote for three of six.)

**ISLAH TAUHEED**

Fifth grade teacher, P.S. 567, Bronx, NY; District 11’s Culturally Responsive and Sustaining Education (CRSE) Team, NYC Department of Education. **Membership(s):** NCTE; Literacy Consultants Coalition. **Award(s):** Heinemann Fellow; digital innovator, PBS/WNET. **Publication(s):** Heinemann blog. **Program Contribution(s):** NCTE, Decolonizing Education Conference (NYU).

**Position Statement:** As an early childhood educator, I see students as leaders of their own learning. I believe that transformational leadership seeks to advance universal freedom from exclusion, oppression, and violence, by allowing all participants to engage in economic, political, cultural, religious and educational activities equally. I am committed to serving NCTE and the elementary section by ensuring that programs are designed, implemented, and evaluated by members of a diverse group in order to unlock the enormous potential of team collaboration and transformational leadership within this organization.

**CASSIE J. BROWNELL**

Assistant Professor at University of Toronto; Parliamentarian, Literacy Research Association (LRA); ELATE Commission on Family and Community Literacies. **Formerly:** Elementary teacher for five years in New Orleans; NCTE-Assembly for Research (AR) Mentoring Session Organizer. **Membership(s):** NCTE-AR, ECEA, ELATE, CCCC, AERA, LRA. **Award(s):** NCTE-ELATE Research Initiative Grant; NAEd/Spencer Research Development Award. **Publication(s):** Language Arts, The Reading Teacher, Journal of Early Childhood Literacy, Research in the Teaching of English (in press, 2021). **Program Contribution(s):** Invited panelist at NCTE-AR (2020, 2021); Presentations at NCTE, AERA, LRA.

**Position Statement:** As a former elementary teacher and current teacher educator, I am an advocate for anti-racist, child-centered approaches to literacy teaching and learning. NCTE and the Elementary Section are my professional home. If elected, I will forward the Section’s mission while highlighting the work of critical, equity-oriented elementary teachers as essential to society.

**CAMERON CARTER**

First Grade Teacher, Evening Street Elementary (Worthington City Schools, Worthington, Ohio); Elementary Liaison for the Ohio Council of Teachers of English Language Arts (OCTELA). **Formerly:** Elementary Lead Ambassador for NCTE, Second Grade Teacher. **Membership(s):** NCTE, OCTELA, ILA. **Award(s):** Outstanding Student Teacher of the Year (2015), NCTE Affiliate Leadership Development Award (2016). **Publication(s):** Ohio Voices, OCTELA Newsletters, Two Writing Teachers, The Robb Review. **Program Contribution(s):** NCTE (Annual Convention, Member Gatherings), OCTELA, Reading Recovery Council of North America; District Led Professional Development.

**Position Statement:** NCTE is not only my professional home, but it has encompassed years of new connections, life-long friendships, and created a safe space for conversations that must be had. NCTE has been the epicenter for voices to be spread near and far to promote change and challenge our own thinking. I would be honored to serve on the committee to provide our organization with members who have the heart for this challenging, but ever so rewarding work we do as educators and advocates.
EMILY MACHADO

Assistant Professor of Early Childhood Education, University of Wisconsin-Madison; “Writing Matters” Column Editor for Language Arts. Formerly: 1st-grade teacher; 2nd-3rd grade English as a new language teacher. Membership(s): NCTE, LRA, ILA, AERA. Award(s): Language and Social Processes SIG Early Career Award; Critical Perspectives on ECE Outstanding Dissertation Award; Second Language Research SIG Outstanding Dissertation Award. Publication(s): Articles in Research in the Teaching of English, Reading Research Quarterly, Journal of Literacy Research, Language Arts, Reading Teacher. Program Contribution(s): Presentations at NCTE, LRA, ILA, AERA.

Position Statement: As a former teacher and a current teacher educator, I seek to make early literacy classrooms more equitable, inclusive, and humanizing. NCTE has been such a meaningful space for me to learn from and with critical educators who share these goals. As a member of the nominating committee, I would work to uphold NCTE’s mission and vision of literacy as a tool for equity and justice.

LUCY K. SPENCE

Associate professor, language & literacy, college of education, University of South Carolina. Formerly: Elementary school ESL teacher, Arizona; NCTE WLU Board; NWP local director. Membership(s): NCTE; LRA; AERA; Palmetto State Literacy Association. Award(s): Visiting researcher to Japan; co-editor, IAFOR Journal of Education. Publication(s): Language Arts, Talking Points, Reading Research Quarterly, Journal of Adolescent & Adult Literacy, The Reading Teacher, Teaching & Teacher Education. Program Contribution(s): NCTE, WLU, Literacy Research Association, American Educational Research Association.

Position Statement: As the world moves into a post-pandemic era, literacy leaders must provide inspiration, care, and research-based practices to teachers, educators, policy makers, and families. As our society struggles toward equity and justice, educators must lead the way in providing sound information and ethical positions on issues of diversity in society.

PIA PERSAMPIERI


Position Statement: NCTE has supported my development as an educator by providing spaces in which to learn, collaborate, reflect, and push for change. In my roles as elementary dual language bilingual teacher and adjunct instructor, my pedagogical approaches are anti-racist, culturally relevant, and promote educational environments in which students feel seen. If elected to the Nominating Committee, I am committed to furthering the organization’s focus on pedagogy that centers our students’ experiences and identities.