

# TEAM

An election publication for members of the Milwaukee Teachers' Education Association

April 2025

## 2025 MTEA Election

### MTEA Officer Candidates

#### **For President:**

Lukas Wierer, p. 2-3  
Ingrid Walker-Henry, p. 4-5

#### **For Vice President:**

Luz Hernandez, p. 6

#### **For Secretary:**

Nicolo Onorato, p. 7

#### **For Treasurer:**

Eric Gullickson, p. 8

### MTEA Executive Board Candidates

#### **For Kindergarten-Primary Seat C:**

Rachel Schlueter, p. 9  
Angela Harris, p. 10

#### **For Intermediate Seat C:**

Joe Brusky, p. 11-12

#### **For Middle School Seat C:**

Maria Guadalupe Serna, p. 13  
Jennifer Lopez, p. 14

#### **For Senior High Seat C:**

John Fleissner, p. 15

#### **For Special Education Seat B:**

Sam Michael, p. 16  
Erin Hallinan, p. 17

This TEAM publication presents the candidates for MTEA Officers and Executive Board, including autobiographical information, views and photos.

This publication can also be found online at [mtea.org](http://mtea.org).

### All MTEA members vote between April 14-21

Elections for MTEA Officers and Executive Board will be held from noon on Monday, April 14 through 5:00pm on Monday, April 21. Elections will be held for MTEA President, Kindergarten/Primary Seat C, Middle School Seat C and Special Education Seat B. Elections for Vice President, Secretary, Treasurer and the Intermediate and Senior High seats each have one candidate running unopposed and therefore no election is necessary. Officer elections are for three year terms. Executive Board elections are for six year terms.

All MTEA members vote in Officer elections. Only teacher unit members at the Kindergarten/Primary, Intermediate and Middle School levels will vote in their respective Executive Board elections.

This publication provides an opportunity to compare the qualifications and views of the candidates. It can help you make informed choices in voting for our union's leaders. All information in this publication was provided directly by the candidates and has not been edited by MTEA in any way.

### Vote online

To participate, you will need a voting code for each election you are eligible to vote in. This information will be sent to you via email before the election starts at noon on April 14. Members without a personal email on file with MTEA will have their voting code mailed to them. Do not share your voting code with anyone. Your code can only be used one time.

This email will come from Election Runner, and the sender will appear as "Milwaukee Teachers' Education Association." The email will also include a link to the secure voting website.

If you have difficulty voting, or for questions about the election process, please contact the MTEA office at 414-259-1990.

### MTEA Election Policies

Here are two important MTEA election policies:

#### **Candidates Responsible for Published Information**

"Without verification and without editing, the MTEA has reprinted all of the information which each candidate has submitted for the MTEA election publication including educational background, professional experience, MTEA activities, and statement of views. Each candidate is solely responsible for the views expressed, the accuracy of the autobiographical information, and the grammar, spelling, punctuation, etc."

#### **Campaigning Policy Statement**

"The MTEA urges all candidates to campaign on the issues and to conduct their campaigns in a manner that will reflect positively on the MTEA and its members."

## For MTEA President: Lukas Wierer



My name is Lukas Wierer, and I am in my 17th year with the Milwaukee Public Schools and the MTEA. I began my career at Milwaukee Custer High School, and spent two years as a social studies teacher. After being laid-off twice in the budget crisis that preceded ACT 10, I was brought back and I spent the next five-plus years at North Division High School. During that time, I became more active in the union, and was elected Building Representative. I helped organize and mobilize members against the “takeover of MPS,” including walk-ins in defense of public schools.

In 2015, I became a Culturally Responsive Teacher Leader as a result of a 2015 Black Lives Matter Resolution, moved forward by the Milwaukee Board of School Directors. Working directly with the district Equity Director, the Office of Black and Latino Male Achievement and the Milwaukee Community Schools Partnership helped to sharpen my critical lens. It was in these spaces that I found other educators committed to challenging an unacceptable status quo.

In 2021, I ran for a High School seat on the MTEA Executive Board on a platform of challenging that status quo. While I and my coalition fell short in those elections, we continued to

advocate for the most marginalized students and families within and outside of our union. Inside the union, I joined the short-lived Race and Equity Committee, where I advocated specifically for traditional northside public high schools, especially as it related to staffing and the equitable allocation of resources. Furthermore, I tried to bring attention to discriminatory enrollment practices in the district, but none of these concerns gained traction with leadership. Outside the union, I regularly spoke at Parent and Community Engagement meetings to address the Office of Civil Rights complaint leveled against MPS related to the disproportionate discipline of Black students.

### **My Vision for the MTEA**

I would like to see a union that encourages participation, and not just in ways that are sanctioned by leadership. This would ideally include the formation and support of affinity groups, caucuses and grassroots campaigns. By doing this, we can prepare rank and file members for leadership in a way that is authentic and doesn’t just allow, but encourages dissent and differing perspectives.

If elected, I will make it my goal to see all of our officer positions and executive board seats challenged in three years time, including mine as President. Over the last 15 years, our leadership has become stagnant and often appears democratic in name only. Instead, we have seen what more closely resembles an order of succession, one that installs former educators into the presidency after years of release work, away from the classroom.

In addition, assuming the presidency has, in practice, indicated a permanent exit from the profession for the last decade-plus. I sincerely hope that I can return to the classroom after my three-year term, having helped revitalize our union, leaving its care in

the hands of other passionate members.

My primary focus within the union, should I be chosen by membership, will be to:

- Establish clear and consistent communication between leadership and the rank and file (including quarterly all-member meetings)
- Give the rank and file a stronger voice in Meet and Confer
- Conduct regular listening sessions in all of our schools (not just to recruit new members)
- Empower future leaders

### **My Vision for MPS**

As the president of the MTEA, I will be responsible for leading our members into the future, especially as it relates to the Long Range Facilities Master Plan. I think it is imperative that we demand transparency of Central Office administration, and our democratically elected school board throughout the process. We cannot afford to have a repeat of the multiple mismanagements that our leadership oversaw in 2024.

My primary focus in working with MPS administration, should I be chosen by membership, will be to:

- Demand full and equitable staffing of our buildings
- Demand that the district work to make our schools safe for students and staff
- Demand that we continue to raise wages for our lowest earners so that no member has to work two or even three jobs to make ends meet

Anyone who has worked closely with me in my time in MPS, knows about my work ethic and my commitment to justice for our students and families. However, I think what sets me apart from others is my constant self-reflection. I am undoubtedly opinionated, and strong-willed, but my

## For MTEA President, continued: **Lukas Wierer**

mind is never closed to new information or new perspectives.

Where other leaders will die on a hill with certainty, I embrace uncertainty.

I look forward to hearing from members, which is why I am including my personal email and cell phone number below. Please reach out to me any time and let me know what you need from your next leader.

Lukas Wierer

[lukaswierer@gmail.com](mailto:lukaswierer@gmail.com)

414-550-4822

## For MTEA President: Ingrid Walker-Henry



Public education is a cornerstone of our democracy, and our collective actions as MTEA members are vital for the survival of public education and our communities. Our students have a right to a fully funded public education and excellent learning conditions, and MTEA workers have the right to good working conditions and fully resourced schools. At a time when the federal government and state officials are doing everything they can to deny ALL students their rights, we must be defenders of our students, families, communities, and fellow workers.

Milwaukee Public Schools has been a part of my life since I entered first grade at Townsend Elementary. I am a proud mom, aunt, and cousin of MPS students who have attended Craig Montessori, MHSA, South Division, MacDowell, Golda, and Burbank. My mother and aunt are retired MPS teachers, and I am proud to have called MPS my home from first grade at Townsend to my twelfth-grade graduation from Riverside University High School with twenty-five years as an MPS teacher.

I am running for election as President of the Milwaukee Teachers' Education Association, and I am asking for your vote. I first became actively involved with my MTEA sisters and brothers

because of the most anti-worker legislation in the nation, Act 10. I personally collected over 500 signatures to recall then Governor, Scott Walker. Recall work and door-knocking with MTEA members radicalized me and made clear the critical role of MTEA members in Milwaukee for workers and students. This experience led to my continued work on MTEA political work and as the co-chair of Schools and Communities United. I previously served as Secretary and Vice President of MTEA.

MTEA members must have an active voice at the table in decision-making in our district and through the power of our union our voice is heard. We are entrusted with the care and development of the students in Milwaukee Public Schools and the well being of fellow members. My experiences in the MTEA and MPS have taught me that with the unified, powerful, and unafraid voice of nearly 5,700 members we can advocate for and win better student learning conditions and member working conditions. Members working together are powerful and can bring about change that is felt by students, families, and MTEA members every day.

MTEA members want the best for the students in the City of Milwaukee. As educators, parents, union and community members, we value strong public schools and what the promise of fully funded public schools means for our students, families, and our city. As someone who has spent countless hours talking with and listening to MPS families about public education and how to improve it, I know that we are partners with our students and families. It is through these alliances, we can win the public schools our students deserve.

The power of MTEA members is through member organizing. As MTEA

Secretary, Vice-President, and President, I was a part of securing wins for early childhood students, such as daily play time, student choice time and second recess. I was proud to organize with members to win more library, art, music, and physical education services, teacher prep time, para substitute pay increases, community schools, a dedicated ACT day, and countless Building Committee wins across this district. I developed and co-led the "Wait and See" campaign with members that resulted in cost of living raises and step increases for all MTEA members.

MTEA's work has been and must be the continued advocacy for our students and their families and our members. We must remain strong in fighting for the well funded public education our students deserve. I promise to continue to be your advocate, and it would be my honor to continue representing my fellow MTEA members as your MTEA President.

Our union matters more than ever as we fight back against the U.S. President and a Republican state legislature that seeks to harm our students and workers. Together as a unified front with students, families and fellow workers we can win. My name is Ingrid Walker-Henry, and I am running for election as President of the Milwaukee Teachers' Education Association. In union solidarity, I am asking for your vote.

### **Professional/Personal Experience**

- MTEA Political Action Committee
- MTEA Constitution Committee
- MTEA Budget Committee
- MTEA Special Education Labor Management Committee
- MTEA Academics Labor Management Committee
- MTEA Safety, Climate and Culture

## For MTEA President, continued: Ingrid Walker-Henry

### Committee

- MTEA Race and Equity Committee
- MTEA Phone Bank Volunteer
- MTEA School-Based Canvass Leader
- MTEA Canvasser
- MTEA School Walk-In Leader
- MTEA Community Schools Lead
- Delegate to WEAC Representative Assembly
- WEAC Community Outreach and Family Involvement Committee

- Delegate to NEA Representative Assembly
- NEA Community Schools Institute Trainer
- NAACP Civic Engagement Leader
- Obama for America Volunteer
- We Are Wisconsin Canvasser
- Yes for MPS Referendum
- Schools and Communities United co-chair
- MPS Teacher- 2000 to present

- Math Coach/SST- Auer, Clemens, Gwen T. Jackson, Hawthorne, Silver Spring

### **Educational Background**

- MA- Instructional Technology, Cardinal Stritch University
- BA- Elementary Education, University of Wisconsin- Milwaukee
- Riverside University High School, Samuel Morse Middle School, Townsend Elementary



## For MTEA Vice President: Luz Hernandez



I am Luz Hernandez. I've been a bilingual elementary MPS teacher for 29 years. I have been an MTEA member for all of my teaching career. Since the inception of Act 10 in 2011, I became much more involved in my Union, becoming part of the Building Committee at Riley Elementary where I taught for 24 years. I was the Building Representative there for three years, and served in various MTEA committees, including PAC, Meet and Confer, Race and Social Justice Committee. In the summer of 2020, I became a Summer Organizer for the MTEA, a position I held for the subsequent four summers. I also became involved in phone banking and canvassing efforts for various political causes and candidates

supported by the MTEA. I am particularly proud of canvassing for the 2020 Referendum that passed unanimously. In the 2020/2021 school year, I transferred to Allen-Field where I continued my MTEA activism, becoming part of the Building Committee. In the spring of 2022, I was elected MTEA Treasurer where the position automatically made me part of the MTEA Executive Board. I taught at Allen Field until going on release as a Teaching and Learning Organizer for the MTEA starting in the 2023/2024 school year. In March of 2024, I was appointed by the MTEA Executive Board as the Vice-President of the MTEA and have been proudly serving the membership of this Union in that capacity to the present day.

As Vice-President, I have been at the forefront of all of the issues facing public education in the city of Milwaukee. I serve on almost all of the MTEA committees and am the lead for the Academics/ SpEd Labor Management Committee. At the beginning of last school year, I took on organizing school board directors Missy Zombor and Xela Garcia around the issue of testing English Language students under the new Act 20 reading law which passed in July of 2023 and unlawfully required all students in the state to be tested in English without taking into account a student's time in the country or their English proficiency levels. We worked

on a resolution that came before the Board in November of 2023 that challenged DPI to put forth reasonable measures for testing EL students as they implemented the new mandates under Act 20. The resolution passed unanimously, and DPI listened. There are now exceptions in place for the testing of ELs for this school year in large part due to the passage of the resolution.

I am a strong advocate for bilingual education and for both students and workers that need bilingual support. I have been able to provide Spanish language support for our members by interpreting when needed as well as translation of various communications that go out to members. This was especially important in the communications that went out in the 2024 Referendum that needed to be understood by the community at large, as well as our membership that are Spanish dominant.

I stand before you as a public education server who strongly believes in workers' rights and as a strong advocate for all of our students and families in the district. I will continue to work tirelessly to ensure MPS provides all students and families with the best public education possible, standing against privatization efforts that seek to due away with the great equalizer, which is and will always be public education.

## For MTEA Secretary: **Nicolo Onorato**



My name is Nicolò Onorato and I am running to be the Secretary of the Milwaukee Teachers' Association.

I have been a special education teacher since 2009, and a proud MTEA Member ever since. Our union is made up of professionals working together for a strong public school system, educating and caring for the students of MPS. Public schools are the cornerstone of our society, making our communities stronger through education, opportunities, and

essential support for all of our families across the city.

I've had the honor of working for our union on a number of levels. As a rank and file member teacher, I participated in school board meetings advocating for the wellness of our staff and students. In 2011, I was one of the tens of thousands of union workers protesting ACT 10. As an elected Building Rep, I learned how to advocate for, and organize with, workers in my building earning their trust and respect while building union strength.

I am currently serving as the Public Education Advocate, a released member organizer position. I have worked directly with the MPS Community Schools, collaborating with building leaders to build the processes and systems to expand shared leadership, address concerns, and mobilize members. I have provided member education, testified at school board meetings to protect the rights of our students and staff, and advocated for strengthening and fully funding the schools in our district. I have served on the Safety

Climate Culture Labor Management Committee, Bargaining Committee, MTEA PAC and Interview Committees, and chaired the Legislative Committee. I have served as a WEAC and NEA delegate for MTEA and have served as the MTEA Treasurer, ensuring that we are meeting our fiduciary responsibilities to our members.

As we face a time of transition in the district and in national politics, MTEA members must have confidence in their elected leaders. For the last year, as I have served as a MTEA Officer, I have seen how well our union is served by its Officers and Executive Board members. Members deserve leaders who ensure our students and staff have people looking out for them, who are empowered to challenge the decisions of MPS Administration, and to oversee the day to day organization of our union.

I am proud of the work that we have done together so far, and I am looking forward to continuing to serve our union as the MTEA Secretary.

## For MTEA Treasurer: Eric Gullickson



### Current MPS Position:

Alternative Education & Special Education Teacher - Milwaukee County Youth Education Center

### Statement Views

I have had the honor of being your elected MTEA Secretary for the last 6 years and a member of the MTEA Executive Board for the past 8. As a member of the MTEA Executive Board I have been a consequential part of the financial decision making of our union. Over those years we have made major strategic changes that have put our union in a strong and secure financial position for years to come. I am now running to be your MTEA Treasurer to help ensure that we are strategically positioned to continue moving forward and take on the forces that want to harm our union and our district. I love our union, Milwaukee Public Schools, and the city of Milwaukee. MTEA has been the architect of positive change for workers in MPS over the past 8 years despite the unprecedented challenges to our union. We have accomplished a lot including winning salary schedules and securing benefits for all job classes in post ACT-10 Wisconsin. The fight continues.

As MTEA Treasurer:

- I will continue to advocate for

Public Education and stand firmly against privatization. Our students deserve fully funded public schools and the resources to meet their needs.

- I promise to continue building up our Union by increasing membership and activating members. We need to be strong and united as the Defenders of Public Education.
- I will also continue to fight for your time, resources, safety, pay, and benefits. It is vital for the district to recognize and act upon the importance of retaining and attracting dedicated professionals.

### Educational Background

Alternative Education Certification - University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee

Master of Science in Exceptional Education - University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee

Post-Baccalaureate in Special Education Early Adolescence to Adolescence - University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee

Bachelor's Degree in Liberal Arts - Martin Luther College, New Ulm, MN

### Teaching Positions

Alternative Ed. & Special Ed. Teacher - Milwaukee County Youth Education Center, 2020-current

Special Education Teacher - The Alliance School, 2016-2020

Special Education Teacher - Project STAY High School, 2012-2016

Special Education Teacher - James Madison Academic Campus, 2008-2012

### Union Activities & Positions

MTEA Secretary, 2019-Current

WEA Academy Classroom Management Course Design Committee, 2020

WEAC Summer Leadership Academy Trainer, 2019 & 2020

NEA Organizing Fellows Lead Organizer, 2019

NEA Organizing Fellows Training Facilitator, 2019

MTEA Bargaining and Meet & Confer Committee, 2019-Current

MTEA Political Action Committee Committee, 2019-Current

MTEA Joint Constitution Committee, 2019-Current

MTEA Joint Budget Committee, 2019-Current

MTEA Balloting Committee, 2019-2022

MTEA Grievance Committee, 2019-Current

MTEA Policy Review Committee, 2019-Current

WEAC Organizing Institute Trainer, 2019

WEAC Community Outreach & Family Involvement Committee, 2018-2024

MTEA Spring Organizer, 2018-2021

MTEA Special Education Labor Management Committee, 2017-2021, Chair 2018-2021

MTEA Executive Board Special Education Representative, 2017-2019

MTEA Summer Organizer, 2017, Lead Organizer 2018-2020

MTEA Fall Organizer, 2016, 2019-2020

MTEA/MPS Safety Task Force Committee, 2016-2017

Delegate to NEA Representative Assemblies, 2016-Current

Delegate to WEAC Representative Assemblies, 2016-Current

Building Representative for The Alliance School, 2016-2017

Building Representative for Project STAY High School, 2014-2016

Building Representative for James Madison Academic Campus, 2011-2012

Volunteer and Activist, 2011-Current

Vote Eric Gullickson for MTEA Treasurer.



## For Kindergarten/Primary Seat C: Rachel Schlueter



My name is Rachel Schlueter and I am running for a second term on the MTEA Executive Board. Continuing to represent our K3-3rd grade colleagues and students would be an honor. I am passionate about our profession and will represent your voices at the table when decisions are being made, because our teaching conditions are our students' learning conditions.

I received my bachelor's degree from UW-Madison and my master's degree from National-Louis University. I have been a proud MTEA member since 1990 and have experience with students, staff, and administrators from several different settings. I have taught at Garden Homes, Siefert, Phillis Wheatley, Forest Home Avenue, and Morgandale School. These experiences have given me the opportunity and privilege to work with staff, children, and families from various racial, ethnic, and socio-economic backgrounds.

My priorities are to address the unhealthy lead levels in our schools, fair pay and benefits for all MPS staff, lowering class sizes, creating safe conditions to teach and learn, less testing, and more teaching time. I am also passionate about growing our union. We need to recruit and retain staff through fair wages and benefits and treat them with respect and professionalism. We must grow our union and continue to fight for public schools as the Department of Education and public education are being decimated. I am 100% pro-public education and have been fighting back against unaccountable school voucher programs and speaking up for more funding in our public schools.

As a member of the Early Childhood Cohort, we were able to work with the School Board to restore staggered start for K3-K5 children, a daily Wellness Break (2nd recess) for K3-3rd grades, get rid of computerized assessments for K4 and mandated 45 minutes of uninterrupted play in K3-K5 classrooms daily. The Kindergarten/Primary Executive Board members have held meetings to work with members on issues that are important to them. We have also been able to get involved and work with school board directors on the issues members were concerned about.

As an active member of our union, I have worked endless hours to grow our union and encourage other members to participate and engage in actions that support our students and

bargaining units. I was active in the fight against the MPS Takeover and continue to fight against the privatization of our public schools. I know what Wisconsin educators lost after Act 10 and continue to stay involved in fighting to win it back.

As a spring and summer organizer, I was able to meet and get to know many members across the district, and sign up new members. As a canvassing captain, I connected with members to get out the vote, encouraged early voting, and the importance of signing up to canvass or phone bank for pro-public education candidates.

As a building leader, I have been working hard to engage members to actively participate in our union. I served as the Building Representative at Morgandale and am currently a building committee member. I am also involved in our school Family Learning Organization (FLO) and a member of the MPS/MKE Early Childhood 1,825 Initiative.

I have the experience and commitment needed to continue to be an effective voice on the Executive Board. I am always willing to productively discuss any concerns or questions you have to look for solutions. I will proudly serve as a voice for my union siblings and **ALL** children in MPS. I am not afraid to participate in "good trouble" for our students and my union siblings! Please vote for me, Rachel Schlueter for MTEA Executive Board.

## For Kindergarten/Primary Seat C: Angela Harris



As a proud **14-year union member**, a **former Summer Organizer with MTEA**, and recipient of the **Sid Hatch Outstanding Service Award**, I have dedicated my career to advocating

for educators, students, and our communities. I am honored to have been recognized as the **WEAC Tenia Jenkins Activist of the Year**, a **Herb Kohl Teacher Fellowship recipient**, and a **WEAC Equity Ambassador**—all reflections of my deep commitment to equity, justice, and collective power in education.

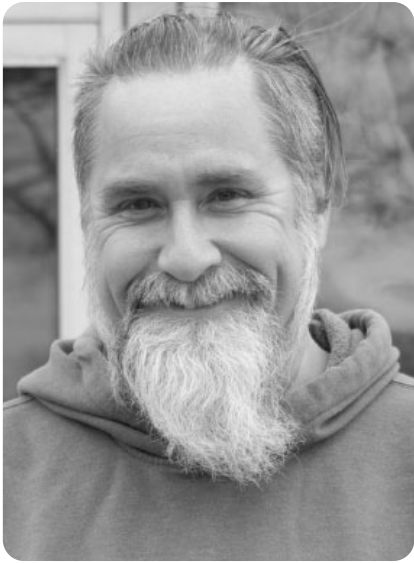
I believe that **our union holds the power to transform our schools and communities**. When we organize, when we stand together, and when we refuse to accept anything less than the schools our students deserve, we create lasting change. But to do this, we need a **union that is truly democratic**, where **every rank-and-file member feels heard and valued**—not just those who are next in line. We need a union

that **actively cultivates the next generation of leaders** and one that ensures that the phrase “**our working conditions are our students’ learning conditions**” **actually means something** in practice, not just in words.

I am running to represent you as your **Kindergarten Primary Executive Board Member** because I believe in the power of our collective voice. I believe in a union that fights tirelessly for our students, educators, and communities. And I believe that together, we can build a stronger, more inclusive, and more just future.

**Elect Angela Harris—because real change starts with us.**

## For Intermediate Seat C: Joe Brusky



“United we stand, divided we fall, an injury to one is an injury to all!” Our union and the very existence of public education faces a growing existential fight that demands us as workers to organize and build a better future for our students, families, classrooms, and profession.

As a former elected Building Representative at 81st Street School with 100% union sign up in his building, an Executive Board member, and our union’s current full-time release Social Media Membership Organizer and photographer, I’m proud of the last six years I’ve spent on the board helping our union overcome challenge after challenge. We’ve defeated multiple attempts by privatizers and politicians to take away democratic control from Milwaukee Public Schools or co-locate private schools in our buildings. We’ve passed two funding referendums that ensured our students receive full-time art, music, physical education, and library. We’ve elected a pro-public education and pro-union school board majority, held the line on teacher prep time, healthcare costs and co-pays, and secured salary schedules that have enabled significant raises the last five years in a climate where most districts

have not. Our work however, is far from over, which is why I’m asking members for a second term on the board.

The election of an authoritarian in the White House dead set on defunding and dismantling public education, attacking LGBTQ+ students, students of color, and immigrants and refugees and whitewashing curriculum has called us to even greater action. I intend to continue to help our union strengthen our vision to protect students, fully fund public education, ensure better working and learning conditions for students and staff and build greater union democracy. We need to work with the community to hold MPS administration accountable to address dangerous concerns like lead and mold in our buildings. We must fight for state public education funding that keeps up with inflation, and a 90% special education reimbursement rate for public school districts, which would reduce the need to fund critical services for students with special needs out of general education funds. This is especially important in a district that has a much higher special education population due to private, unaccountable voucher schools expelling those students after they’ve pocketed state funds for them after third Friday.

As our union’s released Social Media Membership Organizer and photographer, I’ve visited every school in the district, helping our union build power and better understand and respond to member priorities and concerns. My position has also helped build up, scaffold, and train inexperienced Building Committees as well as identify and train new Building Representatives. In my current organizing role and as a lead Summer Organizer, I have signed up over 1,000 members in the last three years. I’m especially proud that our union has

increased our member density in every unit of workers, including over 80% membership in the Teacher Unit. My experience has given me a unique perspective on the board, contributing to our shared commitment to growing an organizing model that builds strong worker networks, empowers members, and engages fellow members in a more meaningful bargaining and meet and confer process.

The Social Media Membership Organizer position has allowed our members to tell the story of MPS educators and their students. Our union’s social media content and reach has greatly improved our ability to communicate our message to a wider audience than ever before. Our Milwaukee Teachers’ Education Association public Facebook page just surpassed 20,000 likes/followers, up from 1,200 likes/followers when I assumed control of the page. This has increased our ability to reach a wider, more diverse audience. We’ve expanded to multiple social media platforms and our union is now actively educating the public about what school privatization and underfunding means for our classrooms and students. We’re putting pressure on privatizers and politicians who push privatization schemes, and for the first time we’re on the offensive with our messaging and campaigns to win the public schools our students deserve. Photos I’ve taken and archived on our Flickr page during my tenure have over 2 million views.

I’ve served on our union’s Constitutional Committee the last six years to make sure our constitution is clear and upholds the shared values and ideals of our members. I have also recently worked with the MTEA Ceasefire Committee to educate members about the ongoing genocide in Palestine and Gaza. The Ceasefire

## For Intermediate Seat C, continued: Joe Brusky

Committee also hopes to ensure students and staff are afforded their democratically protected right to speak up against controversial issues in our communities and our buildings, without fear of retribution from administration, politicians, or other outside influences. This is especially important as we experience increasing authoritarianism leading to the silencing of dissent and opposing viewpoints. These efforts also take on increased significance as we adjust to a new superintendent.

I've helped forge alliances with other community groups, labor unions, and organizations like Voces de la Frontera, Youth Empowered in the Struggle, Amalgamated Transportation Union (ATU Local 998), Leaders Igniting Transformation (LIT), and the Coalition for Justice. I've used my position to collaborate with these other groups to organize art builds in

support of movement work. In 2024, I wrote and secured a \$10,000 National Education Association grant that enabled us to organize our most recent state budget art build. My position has also been used to document marches and rallies, and amplify the work of educators, activists, and other leaders uniting to demand a better future for Milwaukee and our country. Mine and other's photo documentation of Milwaukee's Black Lives Matter protests in 2020 were awarded a first-place award from the Milwaukee Press Club for "Visual Journalism: Best News Photography for a collective photomosaic of George Floyd". Our union has allowed me to provide solidarity assistance in the form of photo and video documentation to other unions on strike across the country in Portland and Chicago and issue campaigns in Santa Fe,

Colorado Springs, and Seattle.

We're stronger together, and my hope is we will continue to use the next six years to further forge these alliances as we build a mass movement that lifts up students and workers, fully fund public education, protect and create a safe space for ALL students, and build a lasting democracy that empowers and prioritizes people over billionaires. With your vote, I will continue to represent you in board meetings and fight alongside you in your schools and on the streets to do this. I'm proud to continue to stand with you and our union siblings to demand a better future for our students and public education.



## For Middle School Seat C: Maria Guadalupe (Lupe) Serna



My name is Maria Guadalupe (Lupe) Serna, I am the Middle School Math Teacher at Kagel School, and I have held a Middle School Seat on the

MTEA Executive Board for the past few months.

I began teaching in MPS in 2019. My work in the classroom has put a lot of things into perspective as I reflect on my educational journey. I am particularly reminded of the dire need for continued support and representation of our diverse student population within Milwaukee Public Schools. As a Spanish-speaking, Hispanic immigrant growing up in the south side of Milwaukee, I witnessed and experienced what I now know to be racial and social injustices in education. Despite that, I received the best possible education, thanks in part to the countless of dedicated teachers fighting for me and my future. Although many years have passed, the fight continues.

I am seeking to remain a Middle School Representative on the MTEA Executive Board for an opportunity to continue voicing the needs of our families, our students, and our staff. My direct work with emergent bilinguals, especially with families new to the United States, has continued to highlight the need for continued support as educators to meet our students' needs. I believe my experiences and perspectives as a bilingual middle school teacher in a dual-language program can add valuable input to matters taken on by the MTEA Board.

As we face important issues greatly affecting our teachers, students, and the greater community, I hope, together, we can continue fighting for our union.

## For Middle School Seat C: Jennifer Lopez



My name is Jennifer Lopez, and I've been a part of the Milwaukee Public School community since I was five years old. I am currently teaching in the 6th and 7th grade as a reading and ELA teacher at Manitoba School. I've seen the district both at its finest and lowest points. My childhood

dream was to become a teacher. I've achieved that and so much more at MPS. I know it is a place that can thrive and inspire others with the right collaborators in place.

Although I've worn many hats in this district, my greatest joy is being in the classroom and being a voice for my colleagues. I've been a teacher for grades K4 through seventh grade. I have acquired many skills from each grade level. I have also been a reading interventionist, school support teacher, and an interim assistant principal. I've been at 5 different schools within the district and have gained so much experience and support from my colleagues both in the past and present. I have served as a MTEA Building Representative in 3 of those schools and continue to serve in my present position.

I believe that teacher burn out is a serious issue and is presently being ignored by the district. More

and more tasks are being put on teachers' plates with little to no support. Teacher and student safety is a serious issue that keeps getting brushed aside with little to no solutions. The district administration has taken a minimal accountability stance for some school administrators. Our class sizes are unmanageable without support and less resources to help us in our daily endeavors.

I hope to serve our teachers and students of the district to be a voice of accountability, realistic reasoning, and drive solution-based collaboration to improve outcomes for a safe working and learning environment. Teachers are the ultimate backbone of inspiring the minds that will lead our future. However, they are not robots! It is time for the district to respect a realistic work-life balance so that we can truly give our best in our classrooms every day.

## For Senior High Seat C: John Fleissner



Over the next five years it's important that our union builds power to both fight for our wages and working conditions and unite with workers and students across Milwaukee. Our power lies in our ability to leverage a demand, and that takes all of us being ready to take action in our schools. I am committed to organizing greater participation of rank and file members

in campaigns. It is important that workers understand how decisions are made in our district so we can use our power to influence positive change. Together we can build a stronger Milwaukee where workers and students have real power. Contact me via my personal email, [fleissnerj@gmail.com](mailto:fleissnerj@gmail.com)

## For Special Education Seat B: Sam Michael



Hello, my name is Sam Michael, and I am running for the MTEA Executive Board Special Education Seat B. First, I want to thank you for considering me as a candidate.

As someone who was born and raised in Milwaukee, I have witnessed firsthand the profound impact that public education has on our community. Simply put, it is the cornerstone of ensuring that people thrive. As a product of public education myself, I am deeply committed to giving back to the system that helped shape me. From math to science, I can't overstate how much the education I received

prepared me for college. Growing up, I attended Humboldt Park and Reagan High School, where I received special education services due to my epilepsy.

At the age of 11, in 5th grade, I became involved in activism when my mom participated in the Act 10 protests in Madison. I have seen firsthand the effects of policy decisions on education and workers, and that experience motivates me to run for this position. I believe in worker empowerment and the importance of fair compensation for teachers. I view teacher unions as a vital force in fighting against the privatization of education.

In this statement, I want to share my views on some critical issues facing our education system and discuss how we can collectively apply pressure on the school board to hold them accountable.

### **Policy Positions**

I firmly believe that our union must stand strong against the closing and merging of schools, such as the proposal pushed by Perkins Eastman. Schools in our community should be supported, not shut down. We need to direct more funds to struggling schools, ensuring that every student,

regardless of their background, has access to the resources they need to succeed.

Additionally, we must continue to advocate for the restoration of collective bargaining rights and work to repeal Act 10, which has undermined the power of workers and educators. Act 12 also needs to be addressed as we fight against policies that contribute to the school-to-prison pipeline. Our union should be a strong advocate for marginalized communities, ensuring that all students, especially those who have been historically underserved, are represented and supported.

Furthermore, the issue of lead contamination in schools is a serious concern. We must ensure that our schools receive the necessary resources to address this health crisis.

As we move forward, it is crucial that our union remains vocal, proactive, and unyielding in our fight for the education system that every student and educator deserves.



## For Special Education Seat B: Erin Hallinan



My Name is Erin Hallinan and as a special education teacher with 13 years of experience, including 12 years at Bradley Tech, I bring a wealth of practical knowledge and dedication to our profession. Over these years, I have gained a comprehensive understanding of special education procedures, paperwork, and best practices. I have worked in both cross-categorical and self-contained classrooms, which has allowed me to develop a deep understanding of the diverse needs of our students and the unique challenges we face as educators.

In addition to my teaching experience, I have served as the Building Representative for 7 years and have represented our union at both the WEAC RA and NEA RA. As Building Representative, I have worked diligently to maintain consistent and effective communication between staff and administration, ensuring that concerns are addressed and solutions are found. I have also mentored my school's newest Building Representative, teaching him how to navigate union meetings and procedures to ensure our collective voices are heard.

What makes me a strong candidate for the Executive Board is not only my experience but my commitment to continuous learning. I have built strong relationships with district leaders and other special education professionals, which enables me to quickly gather information and clarify any questions I may have regarding policies and procedures. I am always looking for ways to improve and streamline our work, especially in terms of paperwork, so that we can spend more time focused on our students.

Finally, I am passionate about

advocating not only for my students but for high school special education teachers, a group that has not had representation on the Executive Board for the past six years. I believe that high school educators deserve a voice in decision-making at the district level. I am ready to bring the skills I have developed mentoring and supporting teachers within my building to a broader platform.

I am asking for your vote to help bring much-needed representation to high school special education teachers. Together, we can ensure that our voices are heard, our concerns are addressed, and we continue to provide the best possible education for our students.

Vote Erin Hallinan for Special Education Seat B