

**2024 NEA RA Category I State Delegate Candidates**  
**(In the order as they appear on the official ballot.)**

**Lenelle Gilpin, WENTZVILLE NEA**



I have been a member of the Missouri NEA for over two decades, and currently serve as the Executive Secretary of the Wentzville NEA. I am dedicated to the National Education Association's vision of providing an excellent public education for all students, and I ask for your consideration to represent Missouri at the National Representative Assembly. Public education is under attack and it is imperative that we band together to protect the rights of teachers and students. United, we can fight to ensure students have access to the type of education that can transform our society.

**Michelle Shepard, COLUMBIA MNEA**



Hello! My name is Michelle Shepard. I am a special education instructional aide from Columbia. I am asking for your vote to allow me the privilege of representing our fellow members at the NEA RA. Over the years, I have served as a NEA Leader for Tomorrow, MNEA ESP-at-Large, MNEA PAC Committee, MNEA Public Relations Committee Chair, MNEA Convention Committee Chair, CMNEA Vice President, CMNEA Treasurer, CMNEA ESP Chair, and CMNEA Public Relations Chair. I love advocating for and empowering all students and educators. I would be honored to represent MNEA again in Philadelphia. Thank you for your consideration.

**Mikey Selby, SPECIAL ED EMPLOYEES**



I'm Mikey Selby, I've worked as a Paraprofessional for Special School District of St. Louis County at Marquette High School of the Rockwood School District since 2005. I've served my local, Special Education Employees Association, as an Association Representative for my building, on the Negotiations Committee, as a voting delegate at the MNEA Representative Assembly, the NEA Representative Assembly in Chicago, and now as SEEA President. I hope to be elected to represent Missouri at the 2024 NEA Representative Assembly in Philadelphia. What better way to spend Independence Day 2024 than in Philadelphia, where the Declaration of Independence was signed?

**Hunter Wood, FORT ZUMWALT EA**



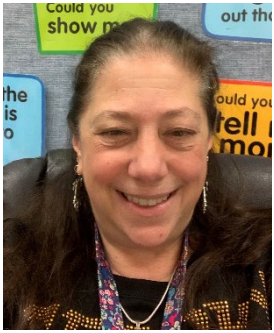
My name is Hunter Wood and I would like you to please consider me as a state delegate for the NEA Representative Assembly. I am a 7th grade special education teacher in the Fort Zumwalt School district and serve as a building representative for our district. I also serve on many different committees such as bargaining team, board member screening, budget, and more. I want to continue to grow as a local leader and help have a voice for my fellow teachers. This will be my second National RA if elected as a state delegate. Thank you for your consideration.

**DeNaé Bush, PARK HILL NEA**



DeNaé lives in Kansas City, MO. This is her 11th year in Education. She works in the Park Hill School District as a Special Education Instructional Coach. DeNaé serves as Membership Chair and Building Rep for Park Hill NEA. DeNaé also serves on the MNEA Board of Directors. She's a proud participant of the NEA Leaders for Just Schools Program, the MNEA Human Rights Committee, and the MNEA Ethnic Minority Advisory Committee. Most importantly, DeNaé LOVES to teach, learn, and celebrate growth in others. She is happy to serve, advocate for, and represent you!

### **Francine Hill, FRANCIS HOWELL EA**



My name is Francine Hill. I am the Second Vice President of the Francis Howell Education Association. I enjoy being involved in the important business of MNEA. If selected to represent Missouri at the national level, I will work to make decisions beneficial to Missouri. It was my honor to serve on the MNEA Board as one of the Governance 10 directors for 7 years. I serve on the state Human and Social Rights committee and LGBTQ+ Caucus. I am a director on the MLL Caucus, and being at the RA allows me to attend their meetings. Thank you.

### **Paulette Luckett, NEA ST LOUIS**



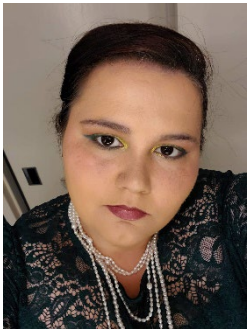
As the call for new leadership in my local has presented itself, I am prepared to answer the call. This past year I have attended trainings locally and nationally to prepare and still have much to learn. If elected as an RA delegate I will proudly make sure that school nurses continue to be represented and have a voice at every table. I will take advantage of every opportunity to learn and be trained. Everything I learn will be taken back to my local to empower, encourage, strengthen, advance our union while we uphold and continue the NEA union mission.

### **Brendan Kearns, ST CHARLES EA**



I'm about to complete my second term as President of the St. Charles Education Association. I also serve as a member of the MNEA Board of Directors for Governance District 10. MNEA has played a central role in my development as a professional and a teacher advocate. They have given me an amazing opportunity to work with passionate and dedicated people fighting for students and education professionals. The National RA is an opportunity to be at the center of what makes our organization great. As a National RA delegate, I intend to advocate for my members and members across Missouri.

### **Anna Strawhun, SPECIAL ED EMPLOYEES**



I have worked as a paraprofessional for six years using my experiences as a home Healthcare aide for the elderly and disabled. Since joining the SEEA, I have been a delegate of the MNEA representative assembly, district representative for Region 2, a local Delegate for the national r.a., I am now the Region 2 organizer, and I work on the constitution and bylaws committee for my local. I am passionate about helping marginalized peoples within the education system and protecting educators. This drive to do good and help the underserved is what will make me a great State Delegate.

### **Leslie Goodwin, FORT OSAGE NEA**



Our field of education is experiencing changes never experienced before. Our voices are not being heard, and it is important that we all ensure they are heard. I bring forth experience as an educator, parent, NEA representative, and member of our community.

I began as a middle school education teacher, then special education teacher, and now am a process coordinator. I have experience as a building representative, local representative, and state representative. I would love to be a representative for all educators at the national representative assembly.

**Moira McCracken, PARKWAY NEA**



Moira is currently the full time released President of Parkway NEA after years of being on the Executive Committee. Prior to becoming President, she was a theater teacher at the middle and high school level for 20 years. She serves on the MNEA Women's Issues Committee, is a regular delegate to state RAs, attends the NEA Leadership Summit, NCUEA national meetings, and is a PAC sustaining member. Last year she attended her first National RA representing Missouri. She's excited about attending her second National RA this summer. It is an invaluable experience to local and state leaders.

**Carmen Hill, NEA ST LOUIS**



I am a proud Educational Support Professional which desires your support with your vote to represent MNEA at the NEA RA 2024. I have worked on many committees on the Local, State and National levels. I recently held the position of NEA ESP At- Large Director. It is my desire to be an advocate for those who have no voice. Thanking you in advance for your vote.

Carmen K. Hill

**Jane Sykes, NEA ST LOUIS**



So here I am again requesting that my state send me back to the RA as a state delegate. Missouri has had a long history of making sure our delegation was inclusive with all of our family members Since COVID we have found that school nurses are really an necessary part of our schools and our RA. Suddenly we are very valuable! I am sure there will be a medical issue to dealt with on the RA floor and I want to be a part of making the decision.. Thank you in advance for your vote!

**Monica Miller, COLUMBIA MNEA**



My name is Monica Miller, and I humbly ask for your vote to represent you at the National RA. Years as an elementary educator have shown me that we need advocates for public education. As local PAC Chair, serving you on the MNEA State PAC committee and serving you as chair of the MNEA Bylaws and Constitution has provided me with a strong voice to advocate for our students, and fellow colleagues. At past NEA RAs, I attended meetings and connected with colleagues across the country, bringing back knowledge I gained to strengthen our union. Thank you for your support!

**Rebekah Messick, WENTZVILLE NEA**



I am completing my first term as the president of the Wentzville NEA. I am passionate about advocating for educators and the students they serve. We are teaching in a uniquely challenging culture, and I believe it is important that we unite our voices and fight for our educational freedoms. I would be grateful for the opportunity to represent Missouri at the National Representative Assembly and be a part of one of the largest democratic assemblies of our nation.



### **Gabriel Livingston, HICKMAN MILLS NEA**



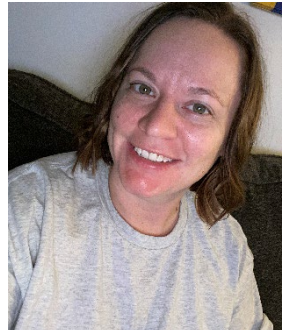
Gabriel Livingston is a third grade teacher at Ervin Elementary in the Hickman Mills School District. Gabriel serves on the Building Leadership Team, District Lead Literacy Cohort, Middle School Redesign Committee and as the Secretary of Hickman Mills NEA. During his time on the executive team, Gabriel has served on bargaining team, political action committee, and been a voting delegate at Representative Assembly. Gabriel currently serves as the Vice Chair of West Central Unit Council and sits on the MNEA Communication and Membership Advisory Committee. Gabriel serves on the Educator Advisory Council for the Kansas City Lyric Opera.

### **Justin Smith, NORTH KANSAS CITY NEA**



I am a library media specialist in North Kansas City Schools with almost two decades of classroom experience. I have been my building rep for about ten years. I also serve as the Secretary of NKC-NEA and have been elected multiple times to the State RA and once to the national RA. I love collaborating with colleagues to solve issues at the building and negotiating for our members at the district level. I would love the opportunity to help you stand up for your rights and advocate for the freedom to read at the RA. Thanks for voting!

### **Katie Smith, FORT ZUMWALT EA**



I, Katie Smith, would be honored to represent FZEA and MNEA for a 3rd time as a state delegate at the National RA this summer. I am a building representative and a part of the negotiations committee for my local. I have attended local and National RAs for the past 6 years. I am passionate about advocating for the rights of my fellow union members and will continue to use this opportunity to make sure the voices of MNEA are heard. I will continue the work to ensure NEA and MNEA are the best and strongest union in the nation.

### **Tresina Alvested, ODESSA MNEA**



My name is Tresina Alvested. I am an educator in Odessa. I am ready to be a voice for Missouri at the Representative Assembly. I am the treasurer of my local. I am currently serving on the Missouri Teaching and Learning Professional Practice committee and the MNEA Board of Directors. At the national level, I am a member of the NEA Disability Rights Resource Cadre. I believe that it is imperative that our voices are heard so we can improve the current state of public education. It would be my honor to represent Missouri Educators at the RA.

### **Seth Tripp, RITENOUR NEA**



Seth Tripp, a seasoned educator with a decade of experience in social studies and alternative education, resides in the Ritenour School District, where he and his wife teach, and their children attend. A member of the local NEA organization for two years, Seth is driven to reach students in overlooked corners of the school system. He passionately advocates for equity within classrooms, aiming to improve working conditions and create a more inclusive, compassionate environment for all educators.

### **Carrie Begemann, ODESSA MNEA**



Please consider me, Carrie Begemann, as a representative to the NEA Representative Assembly. As a member of a small, rural local located near Kansas City I have gained valuable experience. I am local President for Odessa MNEA. I am the chairperson for West Central Governance District and have served on the State Credentials, Membership Advisory Committee, and currently the MNEA Board of Directors and Women's Issues Committee. I have greatly enjoyed all the experiences that NEA provided me at the local, state, and national levels and would be honored to serve MNEA while I expand my knowledge as a delegate.

### **Jim Ressler, PARK HILL NEA**



Hello! I have been an NEA member and building representative my entire 7-year career. I attended national RA before the pandemic, and I am incredibly eager to return to the high energy environment and the important work of the NEA. The National RA provides me with the energy, inspiration, and connection I need to continue my work. The national RA connects me to resources to improve our local and state NEA, as well as myself. I would appreciate your vote to send me back to the RA to represent the great state of Missouri and my local community.

### **Maria Bradshaw, PARK HILL NEA**



Maria Bradshaw has been attending NEA assemblies as PHNEA and MNEA delegate since 2012. She has been a member of NEA for 29 years, a member of NEA Pre-Retired and has been serving as building representative for Hawthorn Elementary for the past 12 years. She also has served on the PHNEA Executive Board as an Elementary Representative for five years. She is an advocate for education and believes that future laws must support teachers and the welfare of ALL students.

### **Kimbala Ellis, SPRINGFIELD NEA**



My name is Kimbala Ellis, Director at Large of Springfield NEA and Women's Issues Committee Member for Missouri NEA. I am asking for your vote to allow me the privilege of representing our fellow MNEA members at the National RA. This is my 5th year as an MNEA member. I aspire to participate in more MNEA/NEA growth opportunities as I advocate for teachers in my local and state. This opportunity would help me to continue my development as a gifted education professional and assist in the progress of making my local stronger. Thank you for your support.

Kimballa Ellis, M.S.Ed

### **Amy Metz, RITENOUR NEA**



I am excited to declare my candidacy as a 2024 MNEA State Delegate to the National RA. Currently, I'm the Vice President and grievance chair for Ritenour NEA. This is my third term. I have enjoyed the experience of two RAs at the state level and look forward to the possibility of my first National RA. Additionally, I have been a member of our district's collective bargaining team five times. This type of advocacy work is so meaningful to me and being part of the national delegation seems like an incredible next step. All of my gratitude for your consideration!

**Jennifer Wofford, NEA ST LOUIS**



I am currently transitioning into a leadership role within our local STL NEA chapter. I want to be a voice that can empower nurses around me, and I strongly believe that the NEA provides that opportunity. I have attended past events and meetings locally, and really want to expand my role within this organization. I believe that serving as an RA would continue to help me learn how to be a better leader and bring this same knowledge to those around me. A nurse's role is vital and I want to ensure that our voices are heard.

**Kate Kraybill, BLUE SPRINGS NEA**



As a first-time candidate for MNEA state delegate, being given the opportunity to represent you is very exciting. MNEA is a huge part of my life since joining in 2013. I have represented local members as BS-NEA building representative, held executive offices of secretary, vice president, president, past president, and MNEA RA delegate, and participated in West Central Governance as secretary and vice president. Statewide, I am a member of Resolutions Committee and past member of Women's Rights. Voting for me offers a delegate with experience and love for our state and union. I would appreciate your vote.

**Alexander Tai, COLUMBIA MNEA**



Nĩ hảo! I am Dr. Alexander Tai from Columbia. I declare my candidacy as a fierce advocate for BIPOC representation at the NEA RA from Missouri. On the state-level governance, I serve as the MNEA Native People and People of Color board director. Locally, I serve as the first vice president for Columbia MNEA. I am a lifetime member of the NEA-LGBTQ+ Caucus and not afraid to advocate for my LGBTQ+ colleagues. I would greatly appreciate your vote to serve our association as a state delegate to bring the BIPOC and LGBTQ+ perspectives to our union's decisions.

**Christina Andrade Melly, RITENOUR NEA**



Hola, familia - hello, union family! My name is Christina Andrade Melly, and I hope to serve as your State delegate in 2024. I'm proud to be the President of Ritenour NEA, chair of the MNEA Resolutions/Legislative committee, and a delegate on the national Resolutions Committee. My experiences as Missouri Teacher of the Year underscored the importance of having teachers' voices at the table every time we make decisions about schools; I hope to continue advocating for our state at the national level again. Thank you for considering me to share Missouri educators' and learners' voices!

**Jenny Smith, MERAMEC VALLEY NEA**



As a Special Educator and an active member of my Local and Missouri NEA, I feel prepared to become a delegate for the NEA Representative Assembly. In my Local, I have served as our Vice President, Chair of Negotiations, and a Representative. At the State Level, I am currently on the Board of Directors. I have completed Future Leaders Academy and attended the MNEA Representative Assembly for many years. It would be an honor to serve as a Missouri Delegate to the be an honor to serve as a Missouri Delegate to the NEA Representative Assembly.



**Alicia Kleoppel, NORTH KANSAS NEA**



With 15 years of teaching experience and nearly a decade as a local leader, I've served as building representative, executive board member, secretary, and currently 2nd Vice President for my local. Passionate about professional growth, I actively engage in NEA trainings, both presenting and attending, to support fellow educators. Proudly serving on Missouri's resolutions committee for two years, I am eager to advocate for members and represent Missouri educators at the National RA in Philly. Your vote would be an honor as I continue my commitment to amplifying the voices of educators.

**Margaret Govero, HAZELWOOD NEA**



Margaret R. Govero received her Master of Science in Education from Rockhurst University in 2004. She has gained experience in Missouri Public Schools (Columbia and Hazelwood), and she taught in a Catholic Elementary School; Co-Ed, All-Girls, and All-Boys Catholic High Schools; and in a Charter Elementary School in St. Louis. Her experience is varied and has allowed her to see first-hand the value of a quality public school education. Her passion is getting rid of vouchers and charter schools, advocating for her LGBTQIA+ students/staff, and creating a positive culture within her current school community.

**Todd Geringer, METROPOLITAN COMMUNITY COLLEGE NEA**



My name is Todd Geringer, I am the Higher Ed Rep on the MNEA Board of Directors, as well as in my 7th year as Local President at the community college in KC. I have been growing my role within my local and within the MNEA. I aim to represent ALL MNEA members, with emphasis on our ten Higher ED locals.

If elected, this will be my first National RA. It will be an opportunity to grow as a leader, as well as continue my advocacy for Higher ED issues at the national level.

**Megan Burns, LIBERTY NEA**



Megan Burns is a 3rd grade teacher for Liberty Public Schools. Previously, she served on NKC-NEA's Executive Committee from 2019-2023, was a MNEA RA delegate from 2017-2023, and has attended the national RA from 2020-2022. Serving as a representative for previous national RAs was an incredible opportunity to unite with others advocating for education and advancing the work of the association. Megan would love the opportunity to continue this as a Missouri delegate to this year's RA.

**Joy Banks, GRANDVIEW NEA**



I have been an ESP for 9 years now. I am the President of Grandview NEA. I have also served as Vice-President, Treasurer & Building Representative. If elected, this will be my 7th year as a NEA RA delegate. I am asking for your vote to allow me the privilege of continuing to represent our fellow MNEA members at the National RA in Philadelphia. This opportunity would help me to continue my development as a local president and educational support professional. I will be able to assist in making my local better and stronger. Thank you for your support.

**Maria Flick, PARKWAY NEA**

I have been a member of the MNEA since I was a student, and continually since 2008. I started teaching when I was 47 years old. I recently became active in MNEA, serving as a Parkway RA delegate. My perspective, as a late blooming educator, is that I should not be financially penalized for choosing teaching as my career. GPO WEP must be passed. In addition, as an ESOL teacher, I also have a unique perspective on how the educational needs of students are changing. I will make sure my voice is heard if selected to represent Missouri.



