



# MFT Educator

Minneapolis Federation of Teachers & ESPs, Local 59

Special Edition

*A Union of Professionals*

[www.mft59.org](http://www.mft59.org)

## Local 59 Officer Candidates • 2016-2018

### ELECTION NOTICE MFT Teachers and RSPs Union Members

An electronic ballot for the offices of President, First Vice President, Second Vice President, Secretary, Treasurer, ten (10) Executive Board Members, a Minneapolis Regional Labor Federation (MRLF) Chair, and seven (7) MRLF delegates will be conducted online through VoteNet.

**VOTING OCCURS BETWEEN: Tuesday, May 3 and Wednesday, May 18, 2016.**

**VOTE OPENS:** 7:00 a.m. Central Time on Tuesday, **May 3, 2016.**

**VOTE CLOSES:** 12:00 p.m. (noon) Central Time on Wednesday, **May 18, 2016.**

If there are individuals who do not receive an e-mail generated by VoteNet from [electioncomm@mft59.org](mailto:electioncomm@mft59.org) within one hour of the vote opening with specific login credentials for the VoteNet login site, and you believe you are a full member of the Union, MFT Staff can check your status if you call the Union office at 612-529-9621. Full members who did not receive an e-mail will be able to vote using a paper ballot by coming into MFT during regular office hours Monday through Friday from 8:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. **ID will be required.**

All full dues paying members are eligible to vote. Fair share members may sign up to become full members and vote in this election period with a paper ballot at the MFT office during the hours listed above.

Thank you!

MFT Election Committee, 67 8<sup>th</sup> Avenue NE, Minneapolis, MN 55413

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## President: Sue Backus



**School Site:** Seward Montessori  
**Grade Lvl/Subj:** 1<sup>st</sup>–3<sup>rd</sup> grades  
**MPS Teacher:** 22 yrs  
**MFT Member:** 22 yrs  
**Union Activities:**  
**First Vice President:** 4 years; **Executive Board:** 10 years;

**Union Steward:** 14 years; **EdMN Convention Delegate:** 6 years; **Negotiations Main Team and Sub-Committees:** 2007-2009; 2009-2011; 2011-2013; 2013-2015; 2015-2017 (sub-committee); **ATPPS Committee:** 6 years; **Calendar Committee:** 10 years; **Other MFT labor/management committees and activities:** Teacher Union Reform Network participant; PAR Committee (Peer Assistance and Review); TTTTL Committee (Time to Teach, Time To Learn); Member Mobilization Chair; PLT (Professional Leadership Team); Creation of “New” MFT Website; Strategic Plan Oversight Committee; Stewards Leadership Team; Communications Committee Chair; Editor of Educator; MFT Website Creator/Editor; Community Partnership Schools; MFT Facebook Administrator; Personnel Committee; Constitution Committee

**Candidate Statement:** My story and vision for MFT 59

I’m Sue Backus and I’m running for President of the MFT to represent you with integrity and dedication for our students. We are faced with many challenges, but I have the experience it takes to help face those challenges. I have been a site steward for 14 years, an Executive Board member for 10 years and I am currently and have been the First Vice President of MFT for 4 years. I have taught in this district for 22 years and have been involved in the union for all of those 22 years. I have been on numerous committees – Negotiations, Calendar, Constitution, PAR, and Communications as well as many others. I have the experience it takes to move our union forward and into the 21<sup>st</sup> Century because I’ve been on the front line facing our challenges for many years.

Our union needs an update, we need to shift gears and focus on the students and what they need. Morale is low across the district, but I am optimistic because there are more than 3,000 educators who come to work to improve the lives of students everyday. It is imperative that our union doesn’t react to district initiatives that add more to our plate, but we advocate for our students, organize ourselves, and democratize our union to get better solutions.

Our challenges are felt at our schools across the district. We have taken on and dealt with

## President: Steven J. Smith



**School Site:** South  
**Grade Lvl/Subj:** 9–12/Science  
**MPS Teacher:** 27 yrs  
**MFT Member:** 27 yrs  
**Union Activities/Involvement:** Steward for seven years; **Executive Board member** for two years;

**Minneapolis Relicensure Committee member** for 17 years, current Chair for the past 8 years

**Candidate Statement:** As a candidate for Union President and a Minneapolis teacher for the past 27 years, I believe that I have a responsibility and obligation to give back to the next generation of teachers the benefits of being a union member that were afforded to me, back when the union was a strong and viable organization.

In the last contract vote, less than 1,000 members voted to ratify the current contract out of a membership of roughly 3,000. This lack of union interest or belief that the union no longer serves the needs of the teachers in providing better working conditions and wages, is a concern that must be addressed if the union is to move forward. Many young people believe that the time of unions has passed, that the organization has outlived its purpose and usefulness.

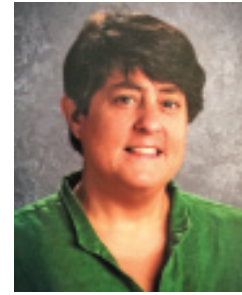
As teacher assaults increase, as the responsibilities placed on teachers continue to rise and interfere with the education of young people, as mandatory testing increases, the teacher’s working conditions continue to erode. We are a highly educated group of professionals whose integrity and professionalism continues to be attacked both in and out of the classroom.

We are a group of people who willingly fund our classrooms, who spend more time assisting students than the hours in our contract state, we give of ourselves, sacrifice our time and money, and have a deep belief that we are not simply “doing a job”, but rather, fostering the hopes and dreams of the next generation.

My goals as your Union President are:

1. Stop the district practice of coerced resignation of non-tenured teachers; a most despicable practice denying unemployment benefits under the threat of not being rehired.
2. Implement a more progressive union dues system instead of the current regressive format.
3. Put an expiration date on any Memorandum of Agreement
4. Focus on what we can control best: improving working conditions, fair compensation and the well being of the students we serve.

## President: Michelle Wiese



**School Site:** Emerson Spanish Immersion Learning Center  
**Grade Lvl/Subj:** classroom teacher grades 1, 3 & 4, math resource, math specialist, TOSA  
**MPS Teacher:** 18 yrs  
**MFT Member:** 18 yrs  
**Union Activities/In-**

**volvement:** Executive Board member, Negotiations Team member, Building Steward, MFT59 Educators of Color Chair, MFT59 Member Mobilization Committee, Delegate to the NEA Convention, Delegate to the AFT National Convention, AFT TEACH, National Council of Urban Association Conference, Teacher Union Reform Network of AFT & NEA Locals National Meeting, Delegate to Ed. MN Conferences, Ed MN Policy Development Committee, Ed MN Members Rights Advocacy Training, Ed MN-MFT59 Media Response Training, Minnesota Union Women’s Retreat, CPS L.A. Design Retreat, Joint Conference on Concerns of Minorities and Women, MFT-MPS Q Comp Governance Board member, Q Comp Teacher Advisory member, PAR Committee, Behavior Steering Committee/ PSWE, School Board phone banking, Minneapolis City Convention Delegate, Senate District Convention Delegate, Precinct Caucuses phone banking

**Candidate Statement:** Countless nights in my childhood home, professors Paul Wellstone, Maria Lugones, and Fred Easter to name a few, sat around our kitchen table discussing local, state, and national politics, philosophy, religion, and activism. My home sat at the foot of the hill that led up to Carleton College where the aforementioned social justice activists worked alongside my mother as part of the college faculty. Fulfilling my mother’s dream, I would later graduate as a strong, bilingual, bi-literate Latina activist with a degree in Political Science from Carleton. The Carleton community played an integral role in the development of my character, so it was no surprise that I became a politically active person at a young age.

As a junior high student, when there was no softball offered through our Parks and Rec for girls, I organized and later presented to the Northfield City Council the disparity of this and achieved the realization of softball for girls. In high school, I ran for and was elected Student Council Vice President. I also started working with Wellstone on his grassroots campaign fighting power lines in Northern Minnesota. By the time I entered college, it was clear that I was willing to fight for what I believed in and I became a Political Science major with Paul Wellstone serving as my academic advi-

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## President: Sue Backus

initiative after initiative knowing that it wasn't right for our students. We know what is best for our students because we are the trained professionals. The use of standardized tests and interim assessments have taken the control away from our trained, experienced, and professional educators expertise. We need to bring the decision making process back to the educators and be allowed to teach our students the way we know they learn best.

There are reasons some of our students don't do well. What if the district treated our students like human beings? Or we gave them enough time for recess to burn off energy so they could focus better? What if we truly valued fine arts? What if we brought technical education back to create doorways to union jobs with living wages? What if we, as educators, determined the culturally relevant curriculum? Or, we led the way for educators of color to be truly supported so the 67% of students of color would see more teachers that look like them? We would have a better city, profession, and schools.

I know our union inside and out. I have spent the last fourteen years in union leadership positions advocating and learning. I am running for President because I know the answers to my questions are within our members and we need a union that listens, leads, and builds power for our students.

Our union needs to continue to change and progress with the changing times of education, of unions, union members and students. As leaders, we have to create the conditions that foster activism on the part of our members. The union needs to demonstrate to the members that their active involvement is necessary for our success. When union members are active, we can succeed in changing the conditions of our profession. Fostering activism and a member driven union are a top priority for me.

We have a long and difficult journey ahead of us and it needs constant examination and attention. Unions and teachers are under attack with many forced changes to the profession coming at us from all directions. We need to create change instead of sitting idly by and letting others create that change for us. We need to be actively involved in how our profession is being shaped. We need our voices to be united and heard. We need to come together and lead the way to the future of teaching that is best for children and society as a whole.

*"The leaders who work most effectively it seems to me, never say "I" and that's not because they have trained themselves not to say "I". They don't think "I". They think "we"; they think - "team". They understand their job to be to make the team function. They accept responsibility and don't side step it, but "we" gets the credit.... This is what creates trust, what enables you to get the task done." —Peter F. Drucker*

It has been an honor to serve as your First Vice President for the past four years and I look forward to many more years of being able to work with a truly amazing group of people who are dedicated to improving the lives of children. I would like to continue to serve you again but now, as your President.

VOTE 21<sup>st</sup> Century Unionism for MFT!

To learn more about our campaign, visit our website at: [21stcenturyunionism.org](http://21stcenturyunionism.org)

In solidarity, Sue Backus



## President: Steven J. Smith

5. Compress the Salary schedule. The current schedule creates division and temptation on the District's part to find ways to keep who is less costly to the district.

6. End PAR process for punitive reasons. This is the job of administration not teachers. We will also put an observer on anyone who is there to document teaching practices of tenured teachers for punitive reasons. Due process will be followed; grievances will be filed if it is not.

7. Not engage in risky business partnerships. Unions should not be landlords. We have a fiduciary responsibility to protect your resources.

8. Allow senior teachers a onetime bid without having to go through Interview and Select.

Our Union must also examine the policies and spending practices of the District, and shine a light on spending and policies that do not further the goals of educating students. I have been a full time teacher for 29 years and have volunteered my time on the Relicensure Committee. I have witnessed District practices that should be challenged. If you elect me to be your President, I promise you, I will challenge when needed.

## President: Michelle Wiese

While in college, I fought for women's rights and social justice, co-organizing the first Take Back the Night Rally and helped establish the Women's Awareness House. I also worked two summers alongside Maria Lugones helping to co-found La Escuela Popular Norteña, a small folk school that has social justice at its core.

Upon graduating from college, I became a union carpenter, again pushing the boundaries for women. I was a 15-year member of Local 1644 and served as steward on many job sites. Then, through St. Thomas's Collaborative Urban Educator Program, I sought my teaching license and became an elementary education teacher. My entire tenure as a teacher has been with MPS. At my first position at Northrop there was a need for a building steward. I volunteered for the position, got it, and have been actively engaged in MFT59 and union activities ever since, serving as building steward 17 of my 18 years in the MPS system.

Previous and current MFT59 leadership have built a strong foundation, fighting for and winning much for our members. I want to build on and strengthen that foundation. I will work as a grassroots organizer at every building. My mission will be to educate members of their contractual rights, and organize members so they are poised to advocate for themselves and their colleagues. A primary focus will be on ensuring all teachers, RSPs, and students have safe working and learning conditions. Once buildings are well organized, I will seek to organize parents and deepen community ties.

As a current Executive Board member, and having just served on the Contract negotiations team, I am acutely aware of and have fought for the voice of teachers to be included in discussions and decisions pertaining to class size, curriculum, SOEI observations, assessments, standardized testing, and school safety, issues that directly impact our day-to-day lives. I serve on several committees at the site, district and state level. My work on these committees demonstrates my ability to communicate well with stakeholders at every level to get real work done. I am a solutions-oriented leader. As president, I will work to ensure teachers have a strong voice at the table and that the contract is followed.

Our students deserve to be in schools with teachers and role models that mirror their cultural and racial backgrounds. My work as chair of the MFT59 Educators of Color group has focused on creating pathways to increase diversity in our teaching ranks. Similarly, I believe our union leadership should be as diverse as possible, allowing for a richness and depth of voice. Our slate represents the diversity we need in our

## Pres.: Michelle Wiese

schools, including diversity of race, cultural backgrounds, and gender. We are a collection of not only mid-career and seasoned teachers but also newer members, acknowledging that our newer members offer a fresh perspective and youthful vitality. All fourteen members are progressive activists. Collectively we represent K-12 regular education teachers, related service professionals, early childhood educators, early childhood parent educators, early childhood special educators, elementary and post high school special education teachers, specialists and TOSAs.

With diverse representation comes a diverse perspective on issues. While we won't always agree on everything, all members of our slate will steadfastly and respectfully advocate for their beliefs while respectfully listening to and considering all points of view.

Our ultimate goal is to ensure we create the best working conditions possible from which we deliver the best education possible.

Our platform is about striving to bring more members into interactive union work, strengthening our parent and community partnerships, diversifying our teaching ranks, and strengthening our professional voice so that we can get education right, in our district. We will focus on these priorities so that we can close the opportunity gaps for our students and enable them to take full advantage of the first-class education our teachers offer. I ask for your vote and a vote for the great team that makes up our leadership slate.

**This slate is endorsed by Lynn Nordgren.** The members of our slate are: Michelle Wiese, Anne Lewerenz, Soraya Valedón López, Greta Callahan, Kim Pickens, Rebecca Miller, Robert Kohnert, Michelle Bove', Mathew Collier, Michelle Urevig-Grilz, Lyle Young, Marium Toure', Tim Leach, and Caroline Long. Together we are the Union!

YoU are the U in Union! Please vote for me and vote for the UCubed Team.

[Ucubedteam.com](http://Ucubedteam.com)

## First Vice President: Anne Lewerenz



**School Site:** GISE and GEMS District Program Facilitator  
**Grade Lvl/ Subj:** K-8

**MPS Teacher:** 21 yrs

**MFT Member:** 21 yrs

**Union Activities:** MFT59 chair to MRLF, MFT59 Legislative Chair, 2016 MFT59 Referendum Lead

**Candidate Statement:** I am a third generation union member and public school teacher, plus a long-time resident of the city of Minneapolis. More than twenty years ago as a new teacher to Minneapolis, I raised my hand and volunteered to serve on the district staff development committee. I was non-tenured only in my second year of teaching here. At that meeting I heard from the President of MFT a call for teachers to have a voice in their profession, a say in their professional development, and seat at the table where decision are made about teaching and learning. I love teaching and knew I had found the right place to spend my career but also knew that I wanted to have a say in my profession.

As I look ahead to all of the challenges both MFT and MPS face, I know I made the right decision: to get involved, be active, speak up, build relationships, volunteer and in doing so, gain the experience the 1<sup>st</sup> Vice President of MFT needs to be a strong advocate for all Minneapolis Teachers and our students. I currently serve as the 1) MFT chair to MRLF- our collaboration with other local unions- an executive board position, 2) MFT Legislative Chair and 3) 2016 MFT Referendum Lead. I have been a sub and main committee member of our negotiating team several times, participated in many MFT and other union actions, and just about anything else that needed teachers doing the work.

Even my charitable contribution are connected to my work- I give to 2<sup>nd</sup> Harvest because my students families use the food bank and I volunteer at *People Serving People* because many of my students and their families have stayed there.

I am out on the streets or on the phones when those in power need to hear from the community or be held accountable. I have worked every election supporting pro-la-

bor and pro-public education candidates. At every community and political event, I attend: I share the stories of my students and their families so people understand the strength, creativity, courage our students bring to school in addition to the struggles and difficulties of urban education.

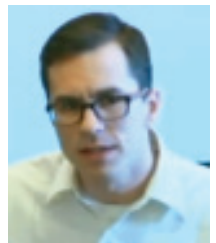
It takes a special kind of teacher to teach in Minneapolis. I know because in my current position as the GEMS & GISE DPF, I spend part of everyday out in schools across the district visiting classrooms. I wish our critics (both within and outside the district) could see what I see. I see teachers making a difference in students' lives.

I am an active member of MFT because teachers who work that hard and do that much, have a right to be respected and heard when we speak. Teacher unions exist to provide a counterpoint for those who see numbers not lives. MFT is one place where teacher voices are respected and heard.

I support Michelle Wiese for President and I ask for your vote. YoU are the U in Union! Please vote for the UCubed Team!

[Ucubedteam.com](http://Ucubedteam.com)

## 2<sup>nd</sup> Vice President: Alex Hoselton



**School Site:** Southwest  
**Grade Lvl/ Subj:** 9<sup>th</sup>  
Grade AP Human Geography  
**MPS Teacher:**

**er:** 8 yrs

**MFT Member:** 8 yrs

**Union Activities:** COPE/Legislative Committee, MRLF Delegate, See below for more involvement

**Candidate Statement:** I'm Alex Hoselton and I'm running for 2<sup>nd</sup> Vice President of MFT 59. This officer position is in charge of member organizing. I want to update how our union builds power to stand up for our students, families, and members. More specifically, I want to stand up with our parents, students, and educators to change our schools together.

MFT 59 has been stuck in a

union model that is like an insurance policy; it's nice if something goes wrong. Instead, educators should see MFT 59 like a gym membership; the more you use it the stronger you become. I'm running to help educators use the power of our union to improve our classrooms for students.

Social justice is changing the system. My vision for organizing our union is nurture future leadership leaders through organizing at schools with members. Climate in our schools is directly related to how well organized it is. Each site has its own challenges so we must start there. One-size-fits all doesn't work for our students and I don't expect it work for organizing. This is how we, in part, change our education system.

We have to elect someone with a strong union background with organizing experience. I'm a life

long learner of how to organize because what impacts students outside the classroom influences what happens inside our classrooms. That means we must stand up with parents and students and push back against education reforms that reduce our students to numbers.

Dedication to organizing also takes training. I have been trained by the AFL-CIO, Camp Wellstone, and through the experience of trial and error. Currently I'm the 2016 MFT59 member earning my Masters in Advocacy and Political Leadership (MAPL) with a focus on labor organizing. Here is an incomplete list of my activities:

- COPE/Legislative Committee, writing and implementing campaign plans, 4 years
- Campaign manager for Jim Thomas

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## 2<sup>nd</sup> VP: Alex Hoselton

- Minneapolis Regional Labor Federation, 2 years
  - Support educators organizing at their sites
  - New Teacher Orientation, membership and COPE, 3 years
  - Safe and Supportive Schools Act
  - Voter turnout in school board elections
  - Testified to defeat House Bill 2 that would have ranked teachers at sites by test scores
  - Organizing to pass legislation to make African American History graduation credit
  - Caucus for Change Canvasser in St. Paul
- Relationships count in the classroom and in organizing. I have strong relationships within the community organizers in our twin cities, other unions and community organizations such as Neighborhoods Organizing for Change, CTUL, and Minneapolis Rising. I have been bridging the gap between our union and communities of color, low wage workers and parents.

Teachers are leaders and we know you need experience to be a good teacher and the same is true for organizing. I hope I have earned your vote and trust when I say you should also support Sue Backus for president and Lindy Frederickson, Karen Sorensen, and Angie Evenson for executive board as well.

In solidarity, Alex Hoselton



## Treasurer:

### Mark Johnson (Incumbent)



**School Site:** Transition Plus  
**Grade Lvl/Subj:** 9-12+ Work Coordinator  
**MPS Teacher:** 22 yrs  
**MFT Member:** 22 yrs  
**Union activities:** Union Steward since 1996, Labor/Mgmt.

Staff Development Committee 1998-2002, Minneapolis Regional Labor Federation Representative 2004-2016, Education Minnesota Representative Convention 1997-2016, Minneapolis Federation of Teachers and Educational Support Professionals Local 59 Treasurer 2010-2016.

**Candidate Statement:** I would like to represent my fellow Union Members as Treasurer for 2 more years. Please vote Mark Johnson as your MFT and ESP Local 59 Treasurer. Thank You.

## 2<sup>nd</sup> V.P.: Soraya Valedon-Lopez



**School Site:** Andersen United Community  
**Grade Lvl/Subj:** 1<sup>st</sup> grade bilingual teacher  
**MPS Teacher:** 8 yrs  
**MFT Member:** 5 yrs  
**Union Activities/In-**

**volvement:** School Steward, Women and Minority Leadership Program. Vice-President League of Latino Educators

**Candidate Statement:** My name is Soraya Valedón-López, I am a 1<sup>st</sup> grade bilingual (Spanish) teacher at Andersen School. I am running for the MFT Second Vice President as a member of U Cubed.

I am currently a Union Steward at my school. I work alongside 5 other stewards and together we create a collaborative environment between teachers, SEAs and our administrator.

I also serve as the Vice-President for The League of Latino Educators. The League advocates for all Latino and minority educators by working on issues that affect both our work and our students' achievement.

I am joining this group because I believe that together we can create a stronger Union. A Union that supports all teachers equally, a union where all voices are heard and accounted for. A Union that advocates with justice in all areas of our labor.

Personally, I want to participate in a Union that is continuously educating and empowering us.

I support Michelle Wiese for President and I ask for your vote. YoU are the U in Union! Please vote for the UCubed Team!

[Ucubedteam.com](http://Ucubedteam.com)

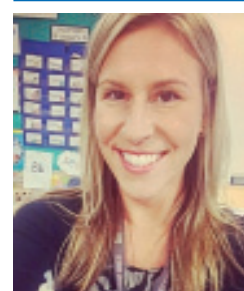
## Treasurer: Kim Pickens



**School Site:** Roosevelt High School  
**Grade Lvl/Subj:** Grades 9-12/English  
**MPS Teacher:** 20 yrs  
**MFT Member:** 20 yrs  
**Union Activities:** Union Steward, Delegate to the NEA National Convention, Delegate to AFT Teach, Delegate to the AFT National Convention, Delegate to EDMN Convention, Attended the Joint Conference on Concerns of Minorities and Women, Delegate to the Minneapolis City Convention, Delegate to the Senate District Convention, MFT Legislative Dinner Participant, Outfront Dinner

**Candidate Statement:** I grew up and live in the Powderhorn Park neighborhood of Minneapolis, graduating from Minneapolis Central.

## Secretary: Greta Callahan



**School Site:** Bethune Community  
**Grade Lvl/Subj:** Kindergarten  
**MPS Teacher:** 3 yrs  
**MFT Member:** 3 yrs  
**Union activities:** AFT TEACH 2015 delegate, ED MN R.C. 2016 del-

egate, AFT 2016 delegate, building steward, published advocate for MFT educators, Member Rights Advocacy Training, MFT legislative dinner participant, volunteer for MFT-hosted MPS School Board Candidate Screening, ED MN-MFT 59 Media Response Training.

**Candidate Statement:** Whether you know me from my op-ed piece, *Walk a Mile in My Teaching Shoes*, or we have worked together, you know who I am because of my inability to contain it. I was not born with the capability to stay quiet when people are repressed. I cannot help but stand up for what I believe in. There is a name for this kind of person among my kids at Bethune, "Upstander." I believe in our teachers, I believe in our schools, I believe in our district and above all else, I believe in our children.

I am running for Secretary because I am the best candidate for the job. I have a strong record of taking on increasingly impactful leadership roles in my building, and getting along well with my coworkers and administration. I love my kids and have built strong relationships with their families. Not only am I deeply passionate about public education, but I'm equally passionate when writing about the issues that affect us. As Secretary I'm ready to articulate and clearly explain our issues and their potential impacts. I ask for your vote and I support Michelle Wiese for President. Vote the UCubed Team!

## Treasurer: Susan Urness



**School Site:** Cityview Com.  
**Grade Lvl/Subj:** Para Professional/ASD program  
**MPS Teaching:** 1 yr  
**MFT Member:** 1 yr  
**Union activities:** I have 18 years of experience working as a Union Activist with AFSCME Council 5

and Local 66 in Duluth, MN. Local 66 is the second largest local of Council 5.

During my tenure with AFSCME, I served as Chairperson for the Para Professional bargaining unit, working diligently on the negotiation team for 14 years. While on the negotiation team, we increased union membership from fee payers to full share members by 30%.

**Treasurer: Kim Pickens**

I am committed to living and teaching in the city and have taught English at Roosevelt High School for almost 20 years.

During my tenure at Roosevelt, I have played integral roles with regard to school finance. For three years, I served as the Open Program Coordinator. In this role I advocated for spending that directly impacted students and teachers. I also oversaw the program's small supply budget. I am now Roosevelt's yearbook advisor. In this role I oversee the yearbook's budget including collecting money from

books to ensuring payments are made to the publisher.

MFT59 is ready for a treasurer with a fresh set of eyes. I believe that I'm perfect for this role because I have considerable financial prowess, 21<sup>st</sup> century technological skills, and a deep passion for our students. I will ensure that the budget is transparent to all members and that spending is fiscally responsible and meets the needs of all teachers.

I support Michelle Wiese for President and I ask for your vote. YoU are the U in Union! Please vote for the UCubed Team!

*Ucubedteam.com*

**Treasurer: Susan Urness**

I also served as Secretary for Local 66 and as an e-board member for Council 5.

My AFSCME activities included:

- Serving on the Day on The Hill Committee
- Serving on the Finance Committee
- Chief Steward of the Para Bargaining Unit for 14 years
- ASCME Financial Responsibility training
- Lost time for the Organizing Department working a various campaigns to organize new members
- Working with the Political Department to in-

crease the PEOPLE (Public Employees Organizing and Promoting Legislative Equality) members- both as a lost timer and during the State Conventions

- Political activism – door knocking, phone banking and attending political rallies
- Attending 6 State Council 5 Conventions
- Attending International Conventions in Boston, MA and Los Angeles, CA.
- Volunteering as an Election Judge

**Candidate Statement:** Even though I am new to

Education Minnesota, Local 59, I know I can make an immediate impact on the board and will hit the ground running as your new Treasurer. My past experience, coupled with my dedication to fairness, democracy, economic opportunity, healthcare and high-quality public education in Minneapolis, make me the ideal candidate for the Treasurer position.

I welcome the opportunity to serve on the board and help make Education Minnesota, Local 59, stronger and more impactful in our community.

**Executive Board Candidates**



**Matthew Collier (Incumbent)**



**School Site:** Elizabeth Hall  
**Grade Lvl/**

**Subj:** 5<sup>th</sup> grade  
**Yrs/wMPS:** 19  
**MFT Member:** 19 yrs  
**Union Activities:** Currently serving as Second Vice President; Negotiations Team Member; Building Steward; Delegate to the NEA National Convention; NEA Regional Minority Leader-

ship Training; National Council of Urban Education Associations Conference; Delegate to the AFT National Convention; AFT TEACH; Delegate to ED MN Convention; 2015 Co-moderator of ED MN town hall meeting with NEA and AFT National Presidents; Founding Member and Past Chair of ED MN Minority Affairs Committee; Teacher Union Reform Network of AFT & NEA Locals National Meeting; Grievance Committee; MFT Teacher of Color

Committee; Referendum phone banking; Contributor Author of *Will Universal Pre-K Close the Achievement Gap?* In the TC Daily Planet

**Candidate Statement:** Many times I've sat down to reflect on my day. Often I find myself asking "is it worth coming back the next day." The issues of competency, commitment, and passion for the job seem to be always in question from reformers, administration, and the district. The inappropriate

behavior from some of our students and lack of support leaves me drain. So what keeps me coming back to this daunting profession? It's the realization that no matter how small my contribution may seem to be, it means the world to my students! When I see my students smile when they finally grasp a concept, given me a hug in the morning, or come to visit after being promoted many years prior, I know that I have made a difference! That difference is

being made countlessly across our district by many of you every day. You, pour your heart into your work, care for and teach students. You provide your colleagues a shoulder to cry on. This is the type of compassion and leadership the U in Union Slate is asking for. We need your vote to continue an era of collaboration, member driven leadership, and a reason to come back every day.

**Jill Jacobson (Incumbent)**



**School Site:** Roosevelt  
**Grade Lvl /**  
**Subj:** Social Studies

**Yrs w/MPS:** 20  
**MFT Member:** 20 yrs  
**Union Activities:** MFT Joint Executive Board Member 2014-2016, Building Steward 2012-2016,

Delegate to the NEA RA 2014-2016; Member NEA BAT Caucus, NEA Urban Educators Conference, Delegate to EdMN State Convention 2014-2016, Contract Negotiations Team 2013-2014, Constitution and Bylaws Committee, Grievance Committee, Member Mobilization Committee, Member of Rank and File Educators Advocating Change (REACHmpls.org)

**Candidate Statement:** I

have been honored to represent Teachers and RSP's on MFT's Executive Board these last 2 years and am excited to continue the work I began to lead our union towards a more transparent, democratic, member driven, social justice focused union. I am running for Executive Board because I am concerned about the many negative impacts Corporate Reforms have been having on the learning

experiences of our students. I am concerned about the attacks on our professional autonomy and the narrowing of curriculum.

While I have found my work on the Executive Board to be rewarding on many levels, I have learned that our Union is powerful only if our members are empowered. It is essential that officers and members of the Executive Board encourage and support member activ-

ism at the building level. As a union it is imperative that we raise our voices in strong and visible support to our students and their families as they fight for social, economic and racial justice. I want to continue my work on the Executive Board to try and make it more nimble and effective in advocating for our members as they fight for justice in our classrooms and our communities.

## Executive Board Candidates (continued)

### Tim Leach (Incumbent)



**School Site:** Windom Dual Immersion

**Grade Lvl/Subj:** 2<sup>nd</sup> grade  
**Yrs w/MPS:** 22

**MFT Member:** 22 yrs  
**Union Activities:** Union Steward 14 years, Education Minnesota Credentials Committee 6 years, EdMN Representative 12 years, AFT & NEA National conventions, AFT Trainer of Trainers

**Candidate Statement:** I am running for the Executive Board of the MFT59. I have been working for you for the past six years

and I think we are heading in the right direction. With all the outside attacks against us we need to stand united and continue to work for a good contract that supports our students' and our members' needs. We must have a strong union to beat this force, and I believe that we aon the board have been doing that for many years. I have

represented you in national conventions, both AFT & NEA. I have been at the EdMN Conference and have been a building steward for the past 14 years.

I believe that having this knowledge and consistency on the board is what we need for us to stay a strong force in our district and city. We have set goals for our union and have

started making great progress to reach them. Please give me your vote so I may continue to support you on the Executive Board. I support Michelle Wiese for President and I ask for your vote. YoU are the U in Union! Please vote for the UCubed Team!

*Ucubedteam.com*



### Chandra Meach (Incumbent)



**School Site:** Hmong International Academy

**Grade Lvl/Subj:** 5<sup>th</sup> Grade Teacher

**MPS Teacher:** 19

**MFT Member:** 19 yrs

**Union Activities:** MFT

Union Member, MFT meetings, Founding Member of Rank and File Educators Advocating for CHange (REACH), MFT Executive Board Member, NEA conference, NPE Conference, Member Mobilization Committee

**Candidate Statement:** The most important reason why I am running for Executive Board is to continue to bring a voice from the Southeast Asian Com-

munity to ensure that all voices are heard through our collaboration between the union, district and community. The time is now, to believe that ALL voices from many diverse backgrounds is the essential KEY ingredient to promoting new changes and Equity to our Union for the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

I am also running for Executive Board because giving back to the community

that I have served in the past nineteen years is important to me. I believe that all students, especially students living in poverty and students of color deserve teachers with the highest teaching experiences. In the past several years, I've noticed a significant decline in experienced teachers and teachers of color in our public schools. My commitment as a member of the Executive Board is

to level the educational field by restoring and preserving experienced teachers and teachers of color where students need them the most.

I stand strongly behind my voice, along with the diverse voices of our members. Together, we are stronger. Together, WE ARE THE UNION!

### Valerie Olsen-Ritter (Incumbent)



**School Site:** Southwest

**Grade Lvl/Subj:** NBCT Social Studies

**Yrs w/MPS:** 26

**MFT Member:** 26 yrs

**Union Activities:** I have served as a union steward, and currently serve as a member of the MFT Executive Board. I am a member of the Communications Committee. My work on the committee includes organizing press trainings for the executive board and union stewards; updating the MFT website and the

MFT Educator; and developing the communications plan.

**Candidate Statement:** I am a proud graduate of the Minneapolis Public Schools. I have worked in the District as both a social worker and a teacher, and am in my twenty-sixth year of service.

My work in the District includes an internship at

Kenwood, service at Folwell, Anwatin and Southwest High. I earned National Board certification in 2014 and teach Social Studies. I have three children, one of whom graduated from MPS, and two who attend our schools.

I am a dedicated to democratizing the Minneapolis Federation of Teachers

and opening up avenues where teachers are allowed to, and encouraged to organize. I believe we need to work on moving our union toward a social justice union that is committed to standing with our most vulnerable communities. I would be honored to continue to serve as a member of the Executive Board.

### Jolinda Simes (Incumbent)



**School Site:** Lake Harriet Community: Upper

**Grade Lvl/Subj:** Grades 4-8, Instructional Specialist

**Yrs w/MPS:** 38

**MFT Member:** 38 yrs

**Union Activities:** MFT Executive Board (2014-present); MFT Communications Committee (2015-present); Media Response Training (2016); Member Rights Advocate I Training (2016); MPS/MFT Q-Comp Governance Board (2013-present); EdMN Summer Seminar (2014); MPS/MFT Teacher Advisory Group (2014-present); Main Con-

tract Negotiations Team (1999-2001, 2001-03, 2003-05); Contract Negotiations Sub-committees (Professional Development, Special Education, SOEI/Teacher Evaluation); Building Steward (Seward and Sullivan); PDP Steering Committee (2000-2003) MPS/MFT Joint Career-In-Teaching Panel (2001-2003) Special Edu-

cation Labor/Management (SELM) Committee (Chair, 1999-2004); EdMN Special Education Committee (1999-2005); EdMN Presentation: Special Education Toolkit (2003, 2004) Delegate to Education Minnesota Representative Convention (many times); AFT-QUEST conference; Many rallies, marches, legislative campaigns, and

other events that support family and community involvement, education, and union solidarity; Founding member of Rank-and-file Educators Advocating for CHange (REACH) Caucus ([www.reachmpls.org](http://www.reachmpls.org))

**Candidate Statement:** I am a proud longtime MFT member who believes the time is ripe to  
**CONTINUED ON NEXT PAGE**

## Executive Board Candidates (continued)

**Jolinda Simes** — CONT. FROM PREVIOUS PAGE —

revitalize public education and truly democratize our union. In order to reclaim our profession and be a positive force in the lives of students, I am energized to mobilize forward-thinking, collaborative and solution-oriented MPS professionals who stand up for educator and student dignity and well-being. During my 38 years with MPS I have held many different teacher and leadership roles in the general, multi-lingual, and special education classroom, building, district and union settings. This ex-

perience gives me a historical and professional perspective that serves to bridge understanding between educators working within these same settings.

I would be honored to have your vote to continue my service on the Executive Board and Communications Committee. I promise to:

- fight for equity and social justice;
- advocate for a transparent, democratic, member-driven union;
- encourage inclusive shared leadership;

- develop avenues for clear and concise communication with members;
- champion developmentally/culturally appropriate curriculum and mental health and behavior supports;
- campaign for effective and worthwhile teacher evaluation and professional development;
- support initiatives to recruit and retain teachers of color;
- promote teachers' voices, rights, professionalism and solidarity.

**Ken Beck**



**School Site:** Sanford Middle

**Grade Lvl/Subj:** Math

**Yrs w/MPS:** 14 (Aug '01)

**MFT Member:** 14 yrs

**Union Activities:** Union

steward for 12 years.

**Candidate Statement:** I've served the students of Minneapolis for 14 years and I've served the teachers in my buildings as union steward for 12

years. With your support I can have an opportunity to serve all of the teachers of Minneapolis by serving on MFT's Executive Board in 2016.

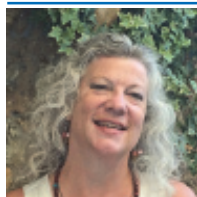
I've been proud to serve the students and teachers in my buildings (Olson Middle School from 2001 – 2010 and Sanford Middle School since 2010). I've worked alongside some amazing teachers, passionate and supportive administrators, fantastic ESPs, and wonderful students. I'm also a proud parent of two MPS

students (Northeast Middle School and Henry High School) and resident of North Minneapolis. It's an amazing district to work for!

In my 12 years as union steward, I've seen the union passionately stand up for both teachers and students. Our union can continue our advocacy by working together and listening, mobilizing, and communicating with our members.

I hope to earn your support and serve you and our union on the Executive Board!

**Michelle Bové**



**School Site:** Pillsbury

**Grade Lvl/Subj:** K-8/3<sup>rd</sup> grade classroom teacher

**Yrs w/MPS:** 2001-2006 full-time sub, 2006-Present classroom teacher

**MFT Member:** 9 yrs

**Union Activities:** Union Member, Phone Bank, Site Steward, Mpls. City Convention Delegate, Senate District Convention Delegate

**Candidate Statement:** I've been a resident of Minneapolis for 35 years. My children were raised

here, attending MPS ECFE through High School graduation. I'm invested in the quality and accessibility of public education for all children.

I've been an MPS teacher since 2001, starting as a full-time substitute until achieving licensure in 2004. I've served as an elementary classroom teacher since that time.

As a first-generation college graduate, I realize the opportunities afforded me as a result of my education far exceeded those available to my parents.

I want all people, adults and children alike,

to have access to the endless possibilities that an education will provide and I strongly believe the pathway there is a public education.

I view the work I do with, and for teachers as a way to amplify the empowered voice of educators and students. Teachers are the Union and I will be a great representative, advocating how to best meet the needs of you and our children.

I support Michelle Wiese for President and I ask for your vote. YoU are the U in Union! Please vote for the UCubed Team!

*Ucubedteam.com*

**Angela Evenson**



**School Site:** NE Middle

**Grade Lvl/Subj:** Math Interventionist 6-8 and Test Coordinator

**Yrs w/MPS:** Since 1994

**Union Activities:** SOEI Think Tank, PAR committee member, Building Steward, PDPLC coordinator and Committee of Thirteen.

**Candidate Statement:** If elected, I would be

honored to serve on the Executive Board of MFT59. The changes and challenges of our school district and our profession have never been more critical to our students and staff than they are now.

I have been and will continue to be an active listener and work hard for all MFT members. I understand the value and importance of our union's leadership to the educators of Minneapolis. Collaboration and active problem solving will help address the concerns and educa-

tion problems we encounter each day within our own school and our district office. I would like to work toward equal access for all students. We must work as a team! The union must continue to take an active role and be a positive voice for our students and our educators.

With your support, I will continue working with the new President and the new team to continue to make our union stronger for the students and educators of Minneapolis.

**Linda Frederickson**



**School Site:** Burroughs

**Grade Lvl/Subj:** LMS

**Yrs w/MPS:** 13

**Candidate Statement:** I have been a teacher for twenty-two years. I started my teaching career as a social studies teacher, at Richfield Junior High. I taught social studies for eight years. I have a

BA in History and a Secondary Social Studies degree. While teaching and starting a family I earned a Masters in Library Media Sciences. My first LMS job was at Edison PPL, in Minneapolis Public Schools. It was an important experience in my education career.

During my time teaching at Kenwood I had the opportunity to teach overseas, in Japan, for the Department of Defense Schools. I returned

to Minneapolis Schools because I love our students. It was wonderful to see how another, completely foreign, school system worked. I have worked at Edison PPL, Kenny, Lake Harriet Upper, Seward and am currently at Burroughs. I have three sons that have attended Minneapolis Public Schools. I am committed to making our union stronger for our students and families. I am willing to listen, work hard, and make an impact.



## Executive Board Candidates (continued)

### Robert Kohnert



**School Site:** Southwest High  
**Grade Lvl/Subj:** 9<sup>th</sup> grade  
Social Studies Teacher

**Years w/MPS:** 5

**MFT Member:** 5 yrs

**Union Activities:** Community Partnership School Advisory Committee, Senate District Delegate, Assistant Precinct Chair, Community Partnership Schools Los Angeles Design Retreat, Transformational Teacher Leadership Program

**Candidate Statement:** My name is Robert Kohnert and I am a Social Studies teacher at

Southwest High School. I am running for the MFT Executive Board as a member of Ucubed.

I am currently on the CPS Advisory Committee, a role I have found important in understanding the dynamics of hierarchical systems of governance within the district. Through my experience on the committee, I have also realized that many schools are organized with vision statements and SIPs that have limited to no teacher input or buy-in.

My hope is that the union becomes a stronger support in each building for teachers to have a voice in the operations of their individual

buildings. It is far too common that new initiatives are started and mandated with no teacher or student voice involved in the process.

Communication between buildings is vital in order to achieve this. Contracts must be adhered to and we must provide a safe working environment for our teachers and a safe learning environment for our students.

As a union, we must work with our students and the community to organize and advocate on their behalf. Only through organization can we address systemic inequities.

YoU are the U in Union!

### Caroline Long



**School Site:** Jenny Lind  
**Grade Lvl/Subj:** Elem.  
Sp. Ed. Resource Teacher

**Yrs w/MPS:** 9

**MFT Member:** 9 yrs

**Union Activities:** 2 years as building Steward, MFT

Teachers of Color Group, Stewards Training-Orientation, Stewards Training- Member Advocacy

**Candidate Statement:** I am running for a position on the Executive Board to make sure that

the voice of teachers is heard. I believe that collective bargaining and a union is the way to make sure that teachers will be heard. As in the old fable, one stick is easy to break, but a bundle of sticks cannot be snapped in two. Just like that bundle, teachers working together in a union will be strong and effective.

I would like to see teachers respected and able to make decision for their students and classrooms. Teachers in public schools are required to be very educated and to continue their train-

ing to keep up their licenses to teach. But often they are not allowed to use their skills but must follow procedures that do not work.

As a special education teacher I have worked at listening to all members of a child's team to develop a plan for student success. I will continue to use these skills to listen and consider all perspectives of the union membership. I hope to earn your support as a candidate who will listen, take advice, and work hard to make sure teachers can succeed.

### Mary Manor



**School Site:** South High  
**Grade Lvl/Subj:** 9-12 English

**Years w/MPS:** 4

**MFT Member:** 4yrs

**Union Activities:** member of MFT since 2012, delegate to Education Minnesota RA, 2014 and 2016; delegate to

AFT Convention, 2014 and 2016; founding and continuing member of Rank-and-File Educators Advocating for Change (REACH) caucus; attended NPE conference in 2014 and 2015, attended Labor Notes conference in 2016; steering committee member of national United Caucuses of Rank-and-File Educators

**Candidate Statement:** I believe that all workers deserve a strong, democratic, social justice-focused union that recognizes the value of racial, economic, and social equity. I am running for MFT59's executive board to fight for a member-driven, democratic union that is an active agent for positive change in our community.

I believe that all students deserve quality public education that develops authentic skills for their education, their workplaces, and their communities. I will fight for an end to standardized testing and against reform movements that threaten educator autonomy and promote standardization of learning.

I believe that all students learn best when given opportunities to explore interests outside the core curriculum. I will fight for recess, art, music, world languages, computer science, and industrial technology to be a part of every student's day.

I believe that safe, supportive spaces are essential for all educators and students. I will fight for culturally relevant curriculum, racial equity, and education and hiring practices that respect the diversity of our students. I will fight for all educators and students to be treated fairly in their places of work and learning, for the safety of students and staff, and for restorative justice practices in all areas of MPS.

### Corinth Matera



**School Site:** South High  
**Grade Lvl/Subj:** 9-12 English

**Yrs w/MPS:** 17

**MFT Member:** 17 yrs

**Union Activities:** member of MFT since 1999; served on MFT Executive Board

from 2008-2010; served on negotiations team for 2009-11 contract; steward at South High School from 2010 to present; delegate to Education Minnesota RA, 2014 and 2016; delegate to AFT Convention, 2014 and 2016; founding member of Rank-and-File Educators Advocating for Change (REACH) caucus

should become a more powerful agent of social justice and a more vigorous defender of public education. I want to help create a more democratic and transparent union by giving rank-and-file members more voice. A strong union supports the autonomy and professionalism of teachers and works with families and communities to educate the whole child.

As a member of the Executive Board, I will advocate for the following:

- more effective engagement and support for probationary teachers.
- initiatives to recruit and retain teachers of color.
- a campaign for more recess and less testing.
- union-led professional development around

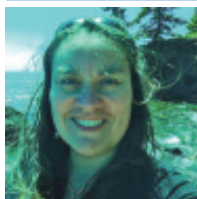
racial equity and culturally relevant curriculum.

- work in coalition with parents and other community members on social justice issues that affect our students.
- greater involvement of stewards and members in organizing around all of these important issues.
- ending ties with charter-authorizers like the Guild and organizing against the spread of charters in our district.
- protection of tenure and seniority and an end to teacher evaluation based on student test scores.

I am excited to serve on the executive board and to be part of a collaborative effort to make our union the best it can be.

## Executive Board Candidates (continued)

### Shannon (Edberg) Nordby



**School Site:** Anishinabe  
**Grade Lvl/Subj:** Grades 6-8 Science  
**Yrs w/MPS:** 19  
**MFT Member:** 19 yrs  
**Union Activities:** MFT59 Recording Secretary June

2012-2014 Founding member of REACH Caucus Represented MFT59 on the Twin Cities Social Justice Education Fair Planning Committee 2012-2015 Represented MFT59 at the Network for Public Education Conference 2014 Represented MFT59 at the MLK Day March and Rally for Jobs Housing and Justice 2012

**Candidate Statement:** Everyone deserves equal social and economic rights and opportunities.

Our union is central in the work to bring resolution to the inequalities in our city. I want to bring an active anti-racist, feminist voice to our union leadership. United we stand, divided we fall. [www.reachmpls.org](http://www.reachmpls.org)

### Karen Sorensen



**School Site:** Armatage Montessori  
**Grade Lvl/Subj:** ECSE  
**Yrs w/MPS:** 1 + 4 as an AE/SEA  
**MFT Member:** 5 yrs  
**Union Activities:** Union

steward when I was an associate educator

**Candidate Statement:** I became a teacher because I enjoy collaborating with families and

professionals to build an inclusive learning environment for kids. It takes a village to teach children and support teachers. As a newer educator with a diversity of experiences in our union I will be a strong voice on the Executive Board.

After graduating The College of Saint Benedict, I served for a year in AmeriCorps VISTA in 09-10 with Minneapolis Public Schools. I was then hired on as a Transporta-

tion Coordinator (AE) and Community Education Teacher and worked in that role for 4 years. In that time I also served as my building's ESP Union Steward. I then wanted to pursue a career in teaching. I enrolled in St. Thomas's Early Childhood Special Education Masters Program and was admitted into the Collaborative Urban Educator Cohort. I gained experience as an SEA before becoming a licensed ECSE Teacher at Armatage Montessori.

### Jane Swatosh



**School Site:** Hall Int'l  
**Grade Lvl/Subj:** Elementary Reading Specialist  
**Yrs w/MPS:** 21  
**MFT Member:** 21 yrs  
**Union Activities:** Network for Public Education, Education MN, Union Steward

**Candidate Statement:** Twenty-one years of diverse teaching experience in MPS gives me the clarity to represent you on the executive board. I have been teaching in Minneapolis Public Schools in the intermediate elementary level since 1995. I also have taught middle school social studies and elementary reading.

Supporting teachers as a Union Steward seven years has been rewarding and eye opening to the concerns of teachers. I am running for executive board to increase my level of commitment and apply my experience to the needs of our union. I believe we need to protect the bread and butter issues of unionism while at the same time fighting for social justice for our students.

Union leadership should work to engage members creating an inclusive and transparent culture. Members should be encouraged to communicate with and be supported by all levels of union leadership. Core values of tenure and seniority need to be maintained while promoting social justice policies such as income

and housing stability for our students. Building coalitions with other bargaining units and parent groups that share our values is essential. People that believe empowered members, excellent teachers, and social justice for our students and families are fundamental to student success. We need to support our members by taking stronger stances on the issues that impact members and students and also give the leaders at the building level the tools and support they need to be empowered to protect the rights of members. We are the union and together we can work for social justice for our students and members.

### Marium Touré



**School Site:** Bethune Community  
**Grade Lvl/Subj:** K-5 Math Specialist  
**Yrs w/MPS:** 26  
**MFT Member:** 26 yrs  
**Union Activities:** I am an

ER&D Thinking Math Trainer, represented Local 59 at the Anniversary of the Brown v. Board of Education in Washington, DC, served on Sabbatical Committee and I am the PDPLC Coordinator at my building.

**Candidate Statement:** I'm running for the Executive Board. I believe in the idea of a strong union that represents both teachers and students. I've taught in Minneapolis for 26 years, of those 26 years, 10 of them were spent in the Math Department as an Elementary Math Specialist and the last 5 years at Bethune Community School as their K-5 Math Specialist.

I've also been fortunate enough to be supported by our union being trained by AFT's National ER&D professional development program in Thinking Math 1, 2, 3 and Thinking Math for the Middle School courses, which resulted in being able to train many MPS teachers in effective research-based mathematics teaching. Teachers are always under pressure to improve their practice, however, we need to make sure we are improving our practice with proven research-based practices. We also need to make sure we are approaching our students from a culturally relevant equity lens making learning appropriate and also rigorous to meet today's standards. It is not enough that our children just get by with the minimum basics.

Please vote for me and the Ucubed Team and join us to help make MFT a stronger member-driven union! U are the U in Union!

### Michelle R Urevig-Grilz



**School Site:** Early Childhood Education  
**Grade Lvl/Subj:** Early Childhood birth-five and Parent/Family Education  
**Yrs w/MPS:** 15  
**MFT Member:** 16 yrs (college member)

**Union Activities:** I have been a continuously active ECFE building Steward for 7 years; I have participated in the Equity march and rally dinner; I have participated in various Union related phone calling and mailing events; I have participated in the TURN conference in St. Louis; I have been elected to be a representative to our Education MN Representative convention; I have been an elected member of our MFT Teacher Contract negotiation team for the recently passed 2015-2017 teacher's contract years

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## Executive Board Candidates (continued)

### Michelle R Urevig-Grilz

**Candidate Statement:** I believe that we need an inclusive and responsive Teachers Union. Having been an active Union member, I understand the importance of being heard and represented accordingly. Currently we don't have

an Early Childhood/Parent Education teacher on our executive board; I am an Early Education teacher and I know that the teacher I represent deserve a voice on our Executive board.

My teaching position and my Union involve-

ment allows me to not only represent an underserved population of teachers; it also allows me to increase the support that all teachers receive through my direct involvement with our Minneapolis community.

### Martha M. Williams



**School Site:** Contract Alternative Programs, VOA High School

**Grade Lvl/Subj:** 10-12, Special Education

**Yrs w/MPS:** 7

**MFT Member:** 7 yrs

**Union Activities:** MFT

member since 2009, delegate to National Education Association Representative Assembly 2014 and 2016, delegate to American Federation of Teachers national convention 2016, delegate to Education Minnesota state convention 2015 and 2016, union steward for 3 years,

founding member of the REACH caucus

**Candidate Statement:** I am excited to be running for Executive Board of MFT 59! I look forward to promoting a democratic, transparent, member-driven union that includes all voices. We are at a critical point in the world of public education. "Reformers" are actively attempting to privatize public education thereby eroding students' rights as learners and teachers' rights as workers. Teacher unions have the power to organize and advocate for the learning conditions of students and the working conditions of teachers.

It is important to ensure the voices of young

teachers are heard and represented in our union. As a young teacher, I am invested in promoting teacher rights and professionalism so I will some day get to become a veteran teacher myself. When we have a union in which novice and veteran teachers work side-by-side, it serves to strengthen the union and elevate the classroom experience for all students.

It is important that the union hears and represents the voices of special education teachers. Our students and our jobs are unique. We have a keen awareness of the need to educate the whole child. I am motivated and committed to the cause of preserving public education for all children.

### Lyle Young



**School Site:** Transition Plus

**Grade Lvl/Subj:** 12+, Carpentry, online credit recovery

**Yrs w/MPS:** 26

**MFT Member:** 25 yrs

**Union Activities:** Steward

22 years, previous Executive Board Member 3 years, Contract negotiation team member, EMAC committee member, Teach Conferences, AFT/NEA Delegates, EdMN Delegate 20 years, Member of Educators of Color, Phone banking for referenda, Leaflet dropping for referenda, MTA/MEA merger talks

**Candidate Statement:** At age 18, I was given the opportunity to work as a pre-trained teacher. Over 35 years later, having taught in Jamaica, Bermuda and now in Minneapolis, I still have the same passion. I possess a diploma in education, a B.S., an M.S. and a Education Administration K-12 License. I was trained at the Royal Military Academy in Sandhurst, England as a 2<sup>nd</sup> Lieutenant while serving in the Bermuda Regiment.

As an executive board member, I will work assiduously to serve our members without bias and perform my fiduciary duties to the best of my abilities. My focus will be to increase ac-

tive unionism, and improve teaching and learning environments.

Today, public education unionism is up against strong opposition from corporate reformers et al. Therefore, we need union leaders who are experienced, articulate and have the intestinal fortitude to work for the prosperity of our union. I possess these qualities and drive to accomplish these goals.

I support Michelle Wiese for President and I ask for your vote. YoU are the U in Union! Please vote for the UCubed Team!

*Ucubedteam.com*

Carol Dallman and Deborah Martel are also running for the Executive Board

## MRLF

### MRLF Chair: Rebecca Miller



**School Site:** ECSE at Wilder

**Grade Lvl/Subj:** Early Childhood Special Education/Speech Clinician

**Yrs w/MPS:** 23

**MFT Member:** 23 yrs

**Union Activities:** I have

been a member of the MFT Executive Board for 6 years. I am and have been a Building steward for three of the four buildings where I have worked (Bryn Mawr, City View and ECSE). For the last 9 years I have been an active member of the Legislative/COPE Committee and COPE treasurer (8 yrs.). I volunteer as a member of the Organizing committee during 2 contract negotiations. I am currently a delegate to the Minneapolis

Regional Labor Federation representing MFT (4 years) and recently became MFT's representative on MRLF's COPE board. I have been an MFT delegate to several Education Minnesota conventions. I have had the opportunity to attend both the AFT and the AFT TEACH convention representing MFT.

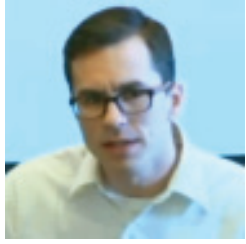
**Candidate Statement:** I am excited about the possibility of continuing my work on the MFT executive board as the MRLF chair. It is very important that MFT continue to have strong relationships with out fellow unions in our Minneapolis Community. This relationships encourages support for our members and our MPS schools. It also provides us with opportunities to engage in social justice activities in our area in support of our MPS students'

families. In order for our students to have the best chance to reach their full potential their families need a livable wage, sick and safe time, and access to quality food, housing and healthcare. These are all things we can work for through our MRLF connection. I have had the opportunity to work on these issues through being a contact person for CTUL, organizing support for the Postal Worker food drive and by participating on the MRLF COPE board working on local elections.

Please vote for me and the Ucubed team and join us to help make MFT a stronger member driven union! U are the U in Union!

# MRLF Delegates

## Alex Hoselton



**School Site:** Southwest  
**Grade Lvl/Subj:** 9<sup>th</sup> Grade AP Human Geography  
**MPS Teacher:** 8 yrs  
**MFT Member:** 8 yrs  
**Union Activities:** COPE/Legislative Committee, MRLF Delegate, See below for more involvement

**Candidate Statement:** Please see Alex's candidate statement on page 4 of this publication.

## Mark Johnson



**School Site:** Transition Plus  
**Grade Lvl/Subj:** 9-12+ Work Coordinator  
**MPS Teacher:** 22 yrs  
**MFT Member:** 22 yrs  
**Union activities:** Union Steward since 1996, Labor/Mgmt. Staff Development Committee 1998-2002, Minneapolis Regional Labor Federation Representative 2004-2016, Education Minnesota Representative Convention 1997-

2016, Minneapolis Federation of Teachers and Educational Support Professionals Local 59 Treasurer 2010-2016.

**Candidate Statement:** Please see Mark's candidate statement on page 5 of this publication.

## Anne Lewerenz



**School Site:** GISE and GEMS District Program Facilitator  
**Grade Lvl/Subj:** K-8  
**MPS Teacher:** 21 yrs  
**MFT Member:** 21 yrs  
**Union Activities:** MFT59 chair to MRLF, MFT59 Legislative Chair, 2016 MFT59 Referendum Lead

**Candidate Statement:** Please see Anne's candidate statement on page 4 of this publication.

## David Nolde

## Kim Pickens



**School Site:** Roosevelt High  
**Grade Lvl/Subj:** Grades 9-12/English  
**MPS Teacher:** 20 yrs  
**MFT Member:** 20 yrs  
**Union Activities:** Union Steward, Delegate to the NEA National Convention, Delegate to AFT Teach, Delegate to the AFT National Convention, Delegate to EDMN Convention, Attended the Joint Conference on Concerns of Minorities and Women, Delegate to the Minneapolis City Convention, Delegate to the Senate District Convention, MFT Legislative Dinner Participant, Outfront Dinner

**Candidate Statement:** Please see Kim's candidate statement on page 5 of this publication.

## Michelle Wiese



**School Site:** Emerson Spanish Immersion Learning Center  
**Grade Lvl/Subj:** class-room teacher grades 1, 3 & 4, math resource, math specialist, TOSA  
**MPS Teacher:** 18 yrs  
**MFT Member:** 18 yrs  
**Union Activities/Involvement:** Executive Board member, Negotiations Team member, Building Steward, MFT59 Educators of Color Chair, MFT59 Member Mobilization Commit-

tee, Delegate to the NEA Convention, Delegate to the AFT National Convention, AFT TEACH, National Council of Urban Association Conference, Teacher Union Reform Network of AFT & NEA Locals National Meeting, Delegate to Ed. MN Conferences, Ed MN Policy Development Committee, Ed MN Members Rights Advocacy Training, Ed MN-MFT59 Media Response Training, Minnesota Union Women's Retreat, CPS L.A. Design Retreat, Joint Conference on Concerns of Minorities and Women, MFT-MPS Q Comp Governance Board member, Q Comp Teacher Advisory member, PAR Committee, Behavior Steering Committee/ PSWE, School Board phone banking, Minneapolis City Convention Delegate, Senate District Convention Delegate, Precinct Caucuses phone banking

**Candidate Statement:** Please see Michelle's candidate statement on page 2 of this publication.

## REMEMBER

An electronic ballot for the offices of President, 1<sup>st</sup> Vice President, 2<sup>nd</sup> Vice President, Secretary, Treasurer, ten (10) Executive Board Members, a Minneapolis Regional Labor Federation (MRLF) Chair, and seven (7) MRLF delegates will be conducted online through VoteNet.

**VOTING OCCURS BETWEEN:**

**Tue., May 3 and Wed, May 18, 2016.**

**VOTE OPENS:**

7:00 a.m. Central Time on Tue., **May 3, 2016.**

**VOTE CLOSSES:**

Noon Central Time on Wed, **May 18, 2016.**

