

# MCEA ADVOCATE

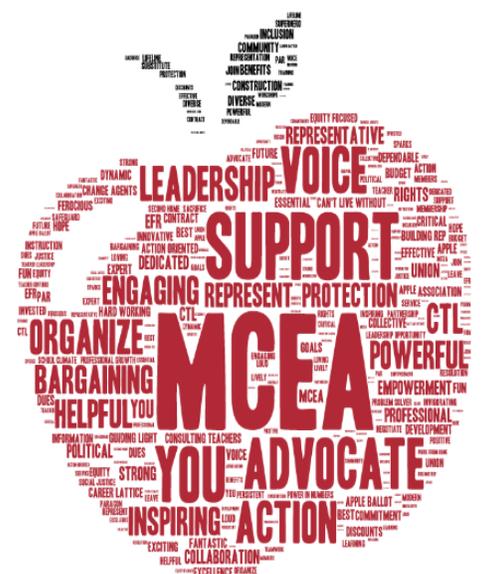
Candidates for MCEA Board of Directors

Special Edition April 2017

Between April 10th and May 1st, MCEA members will elect colleagues to serve on the MCEA Board of Directors. Positions up for election include: 1 Elementary School Director, 1 High School Director, 1 At-Large Director, 1 Non-School Based Director and 1 Retired Director.

Those elected will serve from July 1, 2017 through June 30, 2020. The election will be conducted online. You will be sent a secure link and must vote by 5:00p.m.on May 1st.

If you do not receive an online ballot, contact Kiwana Hall at [khall@mceanea.org](mailto:khall@mceanea.org) before May 1st. Statements from all declared candidates are included on the following pages. All members vote in all races.



# Meet the Candidates!



## David Airozo

### At-Large Director

Elementary Teacher/Forest Knolls Elementary School

I am running for the At-Large Director position. I am a 4<sup>th</sup> grade teacher and MCEA representative at Forest Knolls Elementary School in Silver Spring. Before becoming a teacher, I was a business reporter for almost 20 years. I enjoyed that job, but after volunteering in my son's 2<sup>nd</sup> grade classroom, I was hooked on teaching.

I quit my job, earned a Master's in Education from the University of Maryland and, upon graduation, joined MCPS. Several years ago, I was on the contract negotiating team. We produced a solid contract, but one key issue was left on the table, unresolved—planning time.

That unresolved issue has become increasingly problematic as more demands have been placed on our time. I'm still happy with my decision to switch careers. I've learned a lot over 17 years in the classroom. But as I told legislators during a recent lobbying night in Annapolis, there are days when I feel I am a less effective educator now than I have been in the past, because I simply don't have adequate time to prepare and implement lessons I know my students will find engaging.

Of course planning time is just one issue on which teacher voices are now routinely disregarded. Bell times, final exams, MIRL, and, more recently, the school calendar, are all examples of changes made without meaningful consideration of our views.

If elected I will work to reverse this troubling trend and ensure our voices are again heard.



## Owen Owunwanne

### At-Large Director

Substitute Teacher

I have been teaching for over 20 years. I am an active member of MCEA. Also, I am a member of NEA, NASP and APA. With many years of teaching experience, as a school teacher I understand very much the issues and challenges facing our school system. I will do my best to motivate and promote the interest of the MCEA members. With more than 10 years' experience as a community resource president I will maintain an ongoing internal and external public relations program and provide a two-way communication network with members and the public. I believe that these are the most important issues in our educational system:

- Budget issues
  - School attendance
  - Public school education
  - PTA Association
  - School funding
  - Parent accountability
  - Career and Technical Education
  - Community relations
  - Teacher involvement in the PTAs
  - Quality of education for all students
  - Multi-cultural program
  - Supplementary program for students
  - Teachers Rights and Responsibilities
  - Instructional staffing and class size
  - Retention and promotion issues
  - Student discipline issues
  - Dropout rates
  - Testing in school
  - Recruitment and Retention of teachers, and
  - General policy of the MSEA members.
- I will provide suitable plans to deal with, and solving the above issues.



## **Melissa Porter Parks**

### **At-Large Director**

ESOL Teacher/Richard Montgomery High School

Hello! My name is Melissa Porter Parks. I am an ESOL Teacher at Richard Montgomery High School. I have had the pleasure of being an MCEA Building Representative, Elected Faculty Representative, the ESOL High School CTL representative, a co-chair of the ESOL Collaboration Committee, and I am one of the trainers for MCEA's Montgomery Institute. I was in the SPARKS class of 2016, attended this year's MCEA retreat which focused on leadership and engaging. On top of that I am pursuing a doctorate in Education Leadership and Management at Drexel University.

I want to be a part of the Board of Directors to advocate for educators and students throughout the county. Our strength as a union comes from our collective voice, and I believe that we need to strength our collective voice by mobilizing all of our 12,000 members through targeted outreach programs for educators at all levels of their career. I am running for the Board of Directors to ensure our voice is 12,000 strong. With a strong collective voice we can ensure that teachers are in the room where it happens, regardless of whether "it" is discussions over the hotly contested calendar, contract negotiations, professional autonomy, or simply what is fair for educators and our students.



## James Ransome

### At-Large Director

Reading Teacher/ Col. E. Brooke Lee Middle School

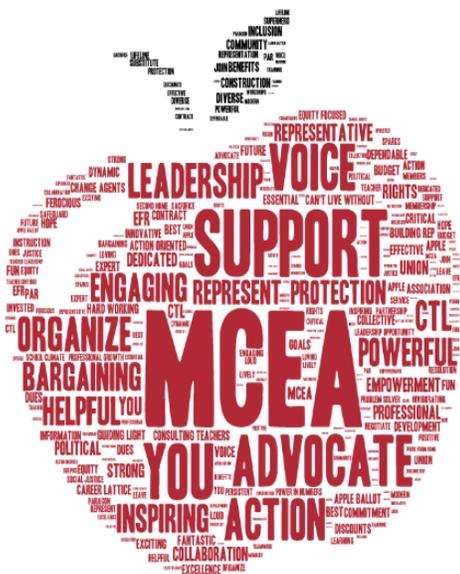


I have served as a member of Montgomery County Public School/George Washington University Advisory team (2012-2013).and Former President for the GW /DC Chapter of The CEC (Council for Exceptional Children)

Freud has influenced me because I believe that we all reach a point The Superego is formed as the child reaches the stage where they realize what society wants from them and what rules there are. I try to instill in my teaching strategies exercises that are socio-friendly. I try to plan assessments or lessons that are going to help the students move forward in the next stage of socio-growth.

After examining readings and my own classroom experiences, I would say that the absence is culturally diverse planning is still an obstacle to learning. What causes my greatest concern is that even though the minority levels have risen to their present numbers , educators are not being held accountable for supplemental training, classes in bi-lingual instruction, ESOL training and the other resources that are available or being taught in their disciplines, all..."Because I don't have to."

I feel that the issues that must be considered creating and implementing assessments are the core ones of cultural standards, validity, reliability, parental considerations, impact, testing environments, and modifications for students with disabilities, collection, curriculum requirements, and legal implications. (i.e. State , local and Federal requirements) I will support all of these contentions if elected.



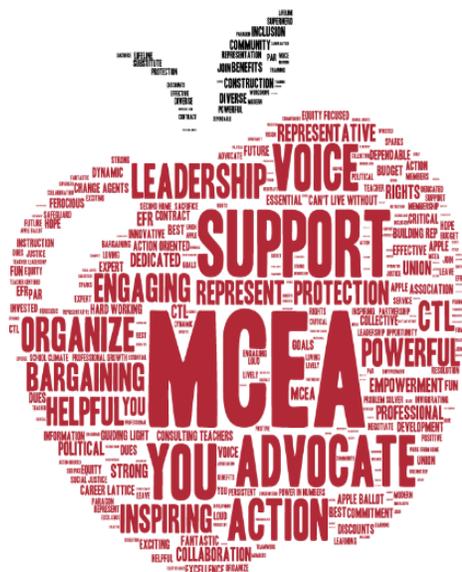
## Chad Wilson At-Large Director

Special Education Teacher/Gaithersburg High School



My name is Chad Wilson and I am a 10th year Special Educator in Montgomery County Public Schools, working at James Hubert Blake High School and Gaithersburg High School respectively. I have also coached Football, Indoor, and Outdoor Track for the past 10 years. I was born into a family of educators that stressed the importance of education as the key to opening doors for all people. Throughout my life, I have felt a calling to educate and advocate for the most vulnerable students in our society. I have worked with students with emotional and learning disabilities in self-contained and inclusive settings. It is my passion to show that an educator is not just someone who stands in front of students, an educator is a mentor, a coach, a counselor, a parental figure, and a role model. I have served as a Building Representative, MSEA Delegate, lobbied for educators in Annapolis, participated in a life changing leadership retreat through MCEA, and will serve as a delegate to the NEA Convention.

These are tough times, and in these times we must come together and fight for what is right. I am running for Board of Directors in order to ensure that education is supported. I am running to ensure that we are recruiting teachers that have the passion and background to energize all of our students. I am someone who is not afraid to walk door to door, or school to school, and engage with educators from all backgrounds and walks of life. I want to Show Up, Stand Up, and Speak Up for our future.



## Maryellen Wolfinger

### At-Large Director

Science Teacher/North Bethesda Middle School

I currently teach eighth grade science at North Bethesda Middle School where I have also been the head building rep for three years. I began my twelve years in MCPS at Neelsville Middle School and also taught math and science at Takoma Park Middle School where I was the Elected Faculty Representative. I have been involved in the National Board network since 2012 through coaching National Board Candidates and establishing the Teacher-Powered Schools workgroup that is pursuing alternative leadership structures in our schools to improve teacher autonomy and teacher voice in the school decision making process as well as their own professional growth.

In addition to classroom teaching, I enjoy creating unique opportunities for my students by sponsoring extracurricular activities including math team, girls' softball, final frontiers, yearbook, National Junior Honor Society and minority scholars.

As an elected MCEA board member, I would represent our members to build upon the success we have in making Montgomery County a better place for teachers, students and families.

I am passionate about:

- engaging members in my building and across MCPS
- establishing and maintaining parent community relationships
- joining forces with parent groups toward common goals
- systematic efforts to close the opportunity gap
- increasing respect for the teaching profession
- keeping effective teachers in the classroom
- support for early career educators
- improving working relationships between administrators and teachers
- better roll-out of new curriculum



## L. Karen Greene-Turner

### Elementary School Director

Reading Specialist/Greencastle Elementary School



L. Karen Greene-Turner's education career began with receiving a Bachelor of Science degree in Early Childhood and Elementary Education from the State University of New York, College at Old Westbury. Karen continued her studies and completed a Master of Science degree from Adelphi University; in Reading with an endorsement in Special Education. Later, she earned a Certificate in Non-Profit Management from the University of Delaware, and recently completed an additional certificate in Organization and Administration from McDaniel College. Karen has taught grades Pre-Kindergarten through University level and has had extensive experience as a reading specialist; at the Elementary School level. As a university adjunct professor, Karen taught foundational courses in elementary education and reading. Her belief was teaching during the day and teaching at the university level would bring practical real life experiences and situations that could be applied to theories and practices to those studying educational coursework.

Karen has taught in Montgomery County Public Schools for over 15 years at both the elementary and secondary levels. As an Elected Faculty Representative, she has advocated for daily schedules that support time for instructional planning and increase ownership of school improvement initiatives. In the capacity of Building Representative, she served on the Political Action and Legislative Support Committee (PALS), Apple Ballot candidate interview committee, and volunteered at local and state activities linked to advocating interest of educators related to teaching and learning.

A vote for Karen would ensure continued commitment to high quality education that MCEA members and students at the elementary school level deserve.

# Susan Loftus

## Elementary School Director

Physical Education Teacher/Burning Tree Elementary School

### Qualifications:

- Physical Education teacher for 32 years, 19 years in MCPS
  - Burning Tree ES, Einstein HS, Takoma Park MS,
  - 2003 Maryland High School PE Teacher of the Year
- Served 3 years on MCEA Board of Directors
- Served on 2 Contract Bargaining Teams
- Co-chair of Elementary CTL, Physical Education Rep on CTL
- Served as Building Rep, , MSEA Delegate, NEA Delegate,
- Member of Political And Legislative Support (PALS) committee
- Member of Montgomery County Council of PTAs: Health and Safety Committee; Physical Activity Subcommittee



### I am committed to

- Improving and expanding avenues for educators to have strong and respected voices regarding teaching and learning. I am interested in exploring organized work actions to help voice our concerns and make sure we are heard.
- Fighting for resources to meet our students' and schools' diverse needs.
- Advocating for timely and adequate resources necessary for implementing Curriculum 2.0 and Common Core *within the teacher work day*. Time and workload issues are a priority.
- Advocating for reasonableness regarding student assessments. Teachers need time to teach. Students need time to learn.
- Protecting our pensions, negotiated salaries, steps, COLAs, and benefits.

Whether in Annapolis (e.g., pension protection), County Council (e.g., school funding), MCPS Board of Education (e.g., Time to Teach/Time to Learn), or at the MCEA Board table, I speak up and take action. I ask for your vote for Elementary Director. I will listen with an open mind, learn, and act strategically. Please feel free to contact me at [susanjloftus@gmail.com](mailto:susanjloftus@gmail.com)

## Java Robinson

### Elementary School Director

Elementary Teacher/Greenwood Elementary School

I am a National Board Certified second grade teacher at Greenwood Elementary School. I have 26 years of teaching experience (19 in MCPS) in elementary schools spanning three states (NY, GA & MD). I'm passionate about my work with educators and have served as EFR and MCEA Building Representative in my school. In addition, I have served as an Ambassador for MCEA's Montgomery Institute and a facilitator of the Jump Start Training for National Board Candidates. I'm also an active member of the Teacher-Powered Schools workgroup whose intent is to pursue an alternate school structure for educators in Montgomery County.

Some of my other qualifications include:

- Recruiter and coach of National Board Candidates
- MCEA NBCT Association Leadership Fellow
- Completed MCEA Leadership Institute modules
- Attended 2016 MCEA Retreat  
[#LeadingTheWayMCEA](#)
- PAC Captain at NEA RA and MSEA RA
- MCEA Organizing Captain-2014 Elections
- Blogger for National Board for Professional Teaching Standards
- Capstone Reviewer for NEA, CTQ, and NBCT

I am committed to increasing teacher autonomy, member involvement in the association at the local, state, and national level, racial justice for our students, closing the opportunity gap, advocating for less standardized testing in our school, and reducing teacher workload. Being elected as the elementary school director for MCEA would support my desire to continue the work of advocating for teachers and students in MCPS.







# Heather Hunter

## Treasurer

Social Studies Teacher/ Northwood High School

I am running for MCEA Treasurer because I believe I am highly qualified for the job. Did you know that I started a career in the banking industry before I became a teacher? Or served as Treasurer for a local Rotary Club? As a current member of the Board of Directors, we've spent time looking at how our dues money is spent and how we can improve our budget. I believe these experiences make me a great candidate!

I have 19 years' experience teaching in MCPS. My background includes being a classroom teacher in grades 3, 4, and 6, a technology teacher in grades K-5 and most recently as a K-5 STEM teacher.

### Involvement:

- MCEA Board of Directors: Elementary Director
- EFR and MCEA Building Representative
- Completed MCEA Leadership Institute Modules
- Co-Chair of Political Action and Legislative Support Committee (PALS)
- Delegate and PAC Captain: 2015 NEA RA and 2015 and 2016 MSEA RA
- MCEA Organizing Captain – 2014 Elections
- Ambassador for the Montgomery Institute
- Featured in MSEA's Less Testing, More Learning campaign
- Served on MSEA's Membership Organizing Committee



# Jennifer Jones

## Treasurer

Guidance Counselor/ Lake Seneca Elementary School



As Treasurer, I would continue to demonstrate colleagues can trust me to represent them and their concerns as we find solutions together.

- MCPS employee 25 years: substitute teacher, teacher, counselor
- MCEA Building Representative (initially in 1996)
- MCEA groups: Council for Teaching and Learning (CTL), Political Action & Legislative Support (PALS) Committee, Budget Task Force, Collaboration Committee
- Delegate: MSEA, NEA, MCCPTA
- Ph.D. in Public Administration and Public Policy, minor: Economic Development dissertation - community engagement
- Graduate coursework: Public Finance, Economics, Organization Theory
- Appointed to County Executive and County Council Commission and Advisory Committee
- Annual budget testimony and ongoing contact with Board of Education and State Legislators advocating for important MCEA issues
- Organized colleagues past 6 years resulting in 30 additional .5 positions over 3 years
- Treasurer: one state and one local Association (May 2015 - Jan. 2017; 2014 - present) budgets: \$20k and \$2.2M with 600+ members and 3,200+ households – responsibilities: set, monitor annual budget; gather, track, analyze, and report monthly expenses, deposits, and overall financials to accountant; manage PayPal account; write, record, and deposit checks; reimbursements; pay contractors and invoices; identify cost savings; identified and investigated \$300+ in fraudulent charges resolved with the bank; identified \$300+ accidental charges to Association resulting in reimbursement; and strategic decisions about financial investments, grants, and funding sources.

I will help address member concerns including equitable staffing ratios, quality benefits, retirement, salary steps, adequate planning time, smaller class sizes, data collection, curriculum implementation, grading and reporting, reduce standardized testing, and utilize a fair evaluation system among other issues.

## Anzer “Nikki” Woodward

### Non-School Based Director

Infants and Toddlers Program/ Shady Grove Middle School



Anzer N. Woodward, commonly known as Nikki, has worked as a special educator for the past sixteen years. During this time, she has been an advocate for all educators to have the respect, support, and resources needed to provide the best education available. By emphasizing and vocalizing the importance of the work we each perform daily, regardless of the capacity in which we support education for all learners. Nikki has worked in Montgomery County Public Schools for the past 10 years; currently serves as is an Early Childhood Intervention Specialist with Montgomery County Infant and Toddler Program (MCITP).

Some of the work she is most proud of is her commitment within the greater Montgomery County community. Having volunteered at various community events and currently serving on the African American Student Achievement Action Group, which works to combat the disparity and eradicate the achievement gaps found in so many of our schools.

Nikki has a wealth of experience working on your behalf at MCEA. She is a SPARKS graduate former co-chair of the Political and Legislative Support committee(PALS) , and currently as the chair of the Community Engagement Committee (CEC). At the state level she has served as the Maryland PAC chair at the National Educators Association Representative Assembly.

Nikki is pursuing the position of non-school based Board of Director to serve and unite teachers across Montgomery County.

