



National Council of  
Teachers of English

## SECONDARY SECTION 2022 ELECTIONS

The Secondary Section Steering Committee (SSSC) members are elected each year to a four-year term. The chair is elected from within the SSSC for a two-year term and serves on the NCTE Executive Committee representing the interests of the secondary membership. The Nominating Committee prepares a slate of candidates for vacancies that occur annually on the Secondary Section Steering Committee and selects candidates for the succeeding year's Secondary Section Nominating Committee. The candidate who receives the largest number of votes in the election will chair the committee.

## NATIONAL COUNCIL OF TEACHERS OF ENGLISH SECONDARY SECTION—2022 SLATE OF NOMINEES

Under the constitution of NCTE, every spring each Section (Elementary, Middle Level, Secondary, College) elects members of its own Section Steering Committee and members of the Section Nominating Committee. The Secondary Section Nominating Committee this year consists of Chair, Jessyca Mathews, Carman-Ainsworth High School, Flint, MI; Byung-In Seo, Chicago State University, IL; and Lindsay Schneider, NC.

## SECONDARY SECTION STEERING COMMITTEE

(Vote for two of four.)

### JACQUAY DURANT (she/her/hers)



High School English/Language Arts (ELA) Program Specialist, San Bernardino City Unified School District; Advisor for Student Achievement Partners. **Formerly:** Middle school ELA teacher 8 years, ELA department chair; High school ELA teacher 2 years; California State University, San Bernardino (CSUSB) Instructor 2 years; Riverside Community College Instructor 2 years. **Area(s) of Expertise:** culturally relevant and responsive pedagogy, antiracist and anti-bias education, educational justice, medieval literature, linguistic justice, young adult fiction. **Membership(s):** NCTE. **Program Contribution(s):** presentations at CATE, CLS.

### How has NCTE provided a professional home for you?

NCTE is a well of educational research and strategies that have benefited me as a classroom teacher and a district curriculum developer. Specifically, the articles and webinars on writing at the secondary level and culturally responsive pedagogies have required me to intentionally develop units of study and lessons that are simultaneously relevant and engaging for my district's student populations and accessible for my teachers.

### How does your current work in your career, community, and/or classroom contribute to NCTE's mission and vision, and demonstrate alignment with NCTE's commitment to

**equity and justice? How have your personal strengths and experiences contributed to making positive change(s) in the profession?**

NCTE's vision of using the power of language to create equitable pathways and access for all students and educators aligns perfectly with my current work. I develop curriculum and offer professional development where students and educators use language to discuss global and current issues through the lens of social justice. My personal experiences have allowed me to center historically marginalized voices in my work so that students and educators can have thoughtful and curriculum-changing conversations.

**What is your rationale for seeking this office? What would you like to accomplish while in office?**

I am seeking office to be a voice for Southern California teachers in urban schools. Being able to voice the unique interests of my students and educators is a passion that I want to continue to advocate for in my work as a member. During my time in office, I would like to accomplish offering more opportunities to support the needs of students and educators around educational justice.

**REX OVALLE** (he/him)



English and Chicano Studies teacher and instructional coach, Cristo Rey Jesuit High School, Chicago, since 2012; PhD student and instructor at the University of Illinois at Chicago since 2020. Member of NCTE's Standing Committee for Global Citizenship. **Specialty Areas:** students of color in American schools, theories of empire, and Chicano studies. **Membership:** NCTE, Latinx Caucus. **Program Contributions:** NCTE.

**How has NCTE provided a professional home for you?**

Because of my membership to NCTE, I am now intellectually and professionally thriving as a teacher and scholar. The community formed through NCTE allows us as thinkers and teachers to work through common problems.

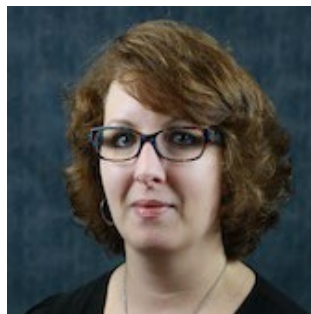
**How does your current work in your career, community, and/or classroom contribute to NCTE's mission and vision, and demonstrate alignment with NCTE's commitment to equity and justice? How have your personal strengths and experiences contributed to making positive change(s) in the profession?**

That connection has been vital to my work as I attempt to decolonize the English language arts classroom for my students of color at both the high school and university levels. I am fortunate enough to teach (at both high school English and university) methods courses for future teachers of English in very diverse spaces. My pedagogy is directly aimed at removing bias from my classrooms.

**What is your rationale for seeking this office? What would you like to accomplish while in office?**

I have been steadily collaborating with different NCTE members on these issues, and my service on the Secondary Section Steering Committee would allow me to further facilitate the decolonization and democratization of our discipline.

**STEPHANIE J. WALLACE** (she/her)



Teacher, East Forsyth High School, NC; teacher, NC Virtual HS, Mentor, Winston Salem/Forsyth County Teacher Academy; Curriculum Writer/Trainer, NC teacher cadet; Forsyth County Association of Educators Executive Board. **Formerly:** Adjunct, DeVry University; Adjunct, Forsyth Technical Community College. **Specialty Areas/Areas of Expertise:** AP language and composition; AP literature and composition; National Board Certification. **Memberships:** NCTE, NEA, Kappa Delta Pi, Alpha Delta Kappa, NC Teacher Leadership Council. **Awards:** 2020 Winston Salem/Forsyth County Teacher of the Year, 2020 East Forsyth High School TOY, 2005 NC Association of Educators Teaching Excellence Award, NC Teaching Fellows.

**Program Contributions:** WSFCS Teacher Academy, NC Teacher Cadet, NC AIM Conference.

**How has NCTE provided a professional home for you?**

As a career educator, I am deeply committed to lifelong learning and changing the narrative of public education through building equity and access for all students. NCTE provides support through professional networking, publications, and conferences to nurture educators' desires to build and deliver a culturally responsive curriculum. I am able to stay current with my teaching practices and participate in professional development opportunities on topics relevant for all my students, both at-risk and Advanced Placement.

**How does your current work in your career, community, and/or classroom contribute to NCTE's mission and vision, and demonstrate alignment with NCTE's commitment to equity and justice? How have your personal strengths and experiences contributed to making positive change(s) in the profession?**

When chosen as my school's Teacher of the Year, my platform for district competition centered on creating equity and access for all students through decolonizing bookshelves, revising curricula, offering more culturally relevant courses, and desegregating schools by revising and revising the district's school choice program. Throughout my twenty years of teaching my school's at-risk population and six years of teaching AP highlights the racial and socio-economic inequity, I have built relationships with students and made a positive impact.

**What is your rationale for seeking this office? What would you like to accomplish while in office?**

As a lifelong learner and avid supporter of education, it is my responsibility to find solutions to the issues facing our students, teachers, and staff. Contributing my areas of expertise to work collaboratively with steering committee members affords me the opportunity to create changes designed to attract teachers into the profession and support those already teaching.

## ADAM COOMBS (he/him)



High school English teacher and co-department head, Walden School, Louisville, KY. **Formerly:** Visiting lecturer, graduate student instructor for eight years, Indiana University; program facilitator and writing tutor, Center for Innovative Teaching and Learning, Indiana University, for five years; graduate teaching associate, University of Tennessee, for two years. **Area of expertise:** African American literature and culture. **Membership:** NCTE. **Publications:** contributor, *Teaching as if Learning Matters* (forthcoming); articles in *Black Camera*, *Callaloo*, and *African American Review*. **Program Contributions:** proposal reviewer, 2021 NCTE Convention.

### **How has NCTE provided a professional home for you?**

NCTE has been a critical resource as I transitioned into my new role teaching English at a small, private high school after teaching college. I have been inspired by the approaches to teaching available in *English Journal*, as well as the resources accessible on the NCTE website. This organization has helped me feel a part of a larger community of professionals, no matter how I have approached or designed learning activities for my students.

### **How does your current work in your career, community, and/or classroom contribute to NCTE's mission and vision, and demonstrate alignment with NCTE's commitment to equity and justice? How have your personal strengths and experiences contributed to making positive change(s) in the profession?**

Currently I have been working as the English/language arts committee chair for my school's self-accreditation process to identify areas of growth for faculty. I have already designed a grading system for high school English students that has created a more equitable learning environment. I have also employed a project-based approach to teaching that empowers students in their own learning.

### **What is your rationale for seeking this office? What would you like to accomplish while in office?**

I would like to identify ways NCTE can sustain active and open dialogue among its members to provide support, as teachers face unprecedented challenges to the material and methods of their teaching. I would like to design NCTE programs that are accessible to members and that provide practical material, related to diversity and equity in particular. Teachers need support identifying equitable teaching practices and also guidance on how to implement these practices on the ground.

## SECONDARY SECTION NOMINATING COMMITTEE

(Vote for three of six.)

### ANTHONY CELAYA (he/him)



Assistant Professor of English Education at Southeast Missouri State University. **Formerly:** secondary ELA teacher, Arizona English Teachers Association (AETA) Diversity Director. **Specialty Areas/Areas of Expertise:** critical pedagogy, culturally sustaining pedagogy, young adult literature, teacher education. **Memberships:** NCTE, ALAN, ELATE, NCTEAR, LRA, AERA. **Awards:** NCTE Early Career Educator of Color Leadership Award, ELATE Geneva Smitherman Cultural Diversity Grant, AETA Service Award.

**Publications:** Articles in *English Leadership Quarterly*, *Writers Who Care*; chapter in *Queer Adolescent Literature as a Complement to the English Language Arts Curriculum*. **Program Contributions:** presentations at NCTE, ALAN, ELATE, NCTEAR, LRA, AETA.

#### **How has NCTE provided a professional home for you?**

NCTE has always been a place where I could learn from and connect with other members to support my teaching and work. Early on, NCTE invested in my professional growth through the Early Career Educator of Color Leadership program, preparing me for leadership roles within local NCTE affiliates and other educational spaces. NCTE has given me a community filled with friendships and professional relationships that continue to support and sustain me.

#### **How does your current work in your career, community, and/or classroom contribute to NCTE's mission and vision, and demonstrate alignment with NCTE's commitment to equity and justice? How have your personal strengths and experiences contributed to making positive change(s) in the profession?**

Across my six courses in the English education program, I center each on equity and justice in the ELA curriculum. Through the course readings and projects, I strive to prepare future teachers to connect ELA standards to the experiences, interests, and cultures of their students. Drawing from my teaching experiences and sharing NCTE resources, including *English Journal* and #NCTEchat, I encourage future teachers to envision and prepare for what's possible alongside their students.

#### **What is your rationale for seeking this office? What would you like to accomplish while in office?**

The nominating committee prepares a slate of candidates to serve on the Secondary Section Steering Committee. These candidates have the tremendous opportunity to guide the program and work of the Secondary Section for the next four years. I am seeking this position to help put forth the best candidates who will continue to advance the section by supporting classroom teachers and students from culturally and linguistically diverse communities.

**JENNIFER D. MORRISON** (she/her)



Clinical Assistant Professor, University of South Carolina; Secretary, Literacy in the Disciplines 6–12; NBCT; National Board Certification Specialist, Education Center 6. **Formerly:** secondary English teacher, Department Chair, Staff Development Teacher; NCTE Awards in Writing state coordinator; Maryland Writing Project; Folger Library Teaching Shakespeare Institute; Board of Directors, Charlotte Bilingual Preschool. **Areas of Expertise:** teacher induction, instructional coaching and leadership, curriculum design, adolescent and multimodal literacy, teacher action research. **Memberships:** NCTE, LLA, NAPDS, AERA. **Awards:** NCTE Paul and Kate Farmer *English*

*Journal* Award; AERA Research in Teacher Induction Dissertation Award. **Publications:** *English Journal*, *JAAL*, *Talking Points*, *International Journal of Critical Pedagogy*, *Educational Leadership*; book contribution: *More Ways to Handle the Paper Load*. **Program Contributions:** NCTE, LRA, LLA.

**How has NCTE provided a professional home for you?**

My district supervisor gifted me an NCTE membership my first year of teaching because membership in this organization “would be a continuous source of inspiration, collaboration, and growth.” And she was right. I conducted my first national presentation at an NCTE conference, and my first major article was published in *English Journal*. For 30 years, NCTE is where I have been challenged to be an excellent—and evolving—educational professional.

**How does your current work in your career, community, and/or classroom contribute to NCTE’s mission and vision, and demonstrate alignment with NCTE’s commitment to equity and justice? How have your personal strengths and experiences contributed to making positive change(s) in the profession?**

Equity and justice practices have been at the heart of my teaching philosophy since early in my career. I have sought to imbue my curriculum, instruction, and research with culturally sustaining and critical pedagogies and carry these ideas into teacher preparation courses and programs. Through my longitudinal research, I have found there are socialization practices within new teachers’ transitions that deconstruct critical pedagogies they are taught. I have worked to strengthen teachers’ CSP durability as a result.

**What is your rationale for seeking this office? What would you like to accomplish while in office?**

Because the Nominating Committee lays foundations for success in all the other areas, it is important to be able to recruit and discern Secondary Section candidates who align with NCTE’s mission and vision. My goal, as when I have served previously in this role, is to develop a slate of high-quality candidates who can steer the organization in meaningful and powerful ways.

**KATHERINE BATCHELOR** (she/her)



Associate Professor of Literacy, Miami University, Ohio; affiliate faculty of Ohio Writing Project. **Formerly:** English teacher for ten years in CA and FL; National Board-Certified Teacher 2008–2018; Gifted K–12; Editorial Review Board, *Middle School Journal*. **Specialty Areas of Expertise:** critical, digital, and embodied literacies, writing, culturally relevant curriculum, YA literature. **Memberships:** NCTE, CLA, AESA, OCTELA. **Awards:** LRA Reading Hall of Fame Emerging Scholars 2014. **Publications:** *English Journal*, *English Education*, *JAAL*, *The ALAN Review*, *Voices from the Middle*, *The Reading Teacher*, *Journal of Language and Literacy Education*, *Middle School Journal*, *LRA Yearbook*. **Program Contributions:** NCTE, ILA, LRA, AERA, AESA, OCTELA.

**How has NCTE provided a professional home to you?**

NCTE has given me opportunities to grow, reflect, learn, and collaborate with educators across the United States. I have reviewed conference proposals, presented on panels, and I am now providing my preservice teachers opportunities to present alongside me at NCTE's Annual Conventions and on "The Future is Now" panels. I also encourage students to join our state affiliation, OCTELA, where they have routinely presented with me and co-authored in their state journal, *OJELA*.

**How does your current work in your career, community, and/or classroom contribute to NCTE's mission and vision, and demonstrate alignment with NCTE's commitment to equity and justice? How have your personal strengths and experiences contributed to making positive change(s) in the profession?**

I have co-led the charge of my teacher education department to make a moral and ethical commitment to centering curriculum on social justice education. In recent years, we have modified curriculum, resigned courses, and provided numerous faculty meetings centered on antiracist, socially-just conversations. This aligns with my research in that I give faculty presentations on implicit bias, how to implement a critical literacy framework and give voice to marginalized folk while utilizing NCTE's position papers.

**What is your rationale for seeking this office? What would you like to accomplish while in office?**

After being a member of NCTE since 2011, I seek to outgrow myself; I want to engage in critical conversations as well as help to implement change in the educational system at a national level. I teach my students that critical literacy must include action. I want to model for them how to be a literacy leader to enact change.

## SUMMER MELODY PENNELL (she/her)



Lecturer, University of Vermont; Past Chair, Genders and Sexualities Equality Alliance (GSEA), NCTE. **Formerly:** Assistant Professor, Truman State University; LGBTQ Advisory Committee; high school English teacher, NC. **Specialty Areas/Areas of Expertise:** LGBTQ+ issues, LGBTQ+ YAL, equity-informed education. **Memberships:** GSEA, ELATE, New England Association of Teachers of English (NEATE). **Awards:** Divergent Award: Excellence in Literary Advocacy (2022), Academic Innovation Award, Truman (2019). **Publications:** contributor, *NCTE Special Issues: Racial Literacy (vol. 1)*; *English Journal*; *Voices from the Middle*; *The ALAN Review*; *Race Ethnicity and Education*; book: *Queering Literacy and Numeracy for Social Justice: Navigating the Course*. **Program Contributions:** NCTE, AERA, AESA.

### How has NCTE provided a professional home for you?

NCTE has been my professional home since I was a doctoral student. The Convention has allowed me to connect with teacher educators, scholars, and practicing teachers invested in one of my personal passions: improving English education for LGBTQ+ people. Seeing how committed NCTE members and leaders are to issues of equity, innovative practice, and collaboration have motivated me to be an active member.

### How does your current work in your career, community, and/or classroom contribute to NCTE's mission and vision, and demonstrate alignment with NCTE's commitment to equity and justice? How have your personal strengths and experiences contributed to making positive change(s) in the profession?

My teaching, research, and work with NCTE centers on equity and justice; I admire NCTE for constantly striving to improve by adjusting policies and practices as needed. I have worked with executive leadership on having gender-inclusive bathrooms, and appropriate signage, at conferences. I helped with the 2019 program through my role in the LGBTQ Advisory Committee. In 2018 I was honored to serve on the committee that revised the Statement on Gender and Language.

### What is your rationale for seeking this office? What would you like to accomplish while in office?

On the nominating committee, I would like to continue working for more diverse representation in NCTE leadership. We must continue to do better representing members from LGBTQ+ and/or BIPOC communities, as well as members with disabilities. I would also like to see more practicing teachers in leadership positions.

## KASEY ANDRADE SMITH (she/her)



Curriculum Instruction and Assessment Coordinator, Harrison School District Two, Colorado; Co-lead, Harrison School District Two District Literacy Committee; Participating Reviewer, Colorado Department of Education Competitive Grants and Awards; Participant, Colorado Department of Education Content and Bias Review (standards and assessments). **Formerly:** middle school language arts and reading intervention teacher for six years; department chair; PLC school lead; high school English teacher; graduate research assistant, University of



Missouri-Kansas City. **Areas of Expertise:** literacy development, educational leadership, and educational practices of equity. **Membership:** NCTE.

**How has NCTE provided a professional home for you?**

NCTE is a new professional home for me. I became familiar with NCTE as an undergraduate student in the late 2000s. Now that demands of education and work-life balance are more manageable for me, I'm thrilled to be a part of this community, albeit at an entry level. I look to this community to gain ideas from others and to entertain and imagine different perspectives while participating through lenses of both teacher and education leader.

**How does your current work in your career, community, and/or classroom contribute to NCTE's mission and vision, and demonstrate alignment with NCTE's commitment to equity and justice? How have your personal strengths and experiences contributed to making positive change(s) in the profession?**

Most of my professional work involves literacy, and all of my professional and personal passions align with all students being provided opportunities necessary to engage fully as informed citizens who are capable of scrutinizing and changing the current status quo. In advocacy for educational practices that ensure equity and access for all and diverse students, I consistently work to ensure beliefs transfer to actions which allow individuals to overcome barriers and modes of suppression.

**What is your rationale for seeking this office? What would you like to accomplish while in office?**

My best hope is to grow my professional expertise to network with others across the country who also have a passion for English/language arts and educational equity. Finding a space where my personal passion for literature and language merges with educational leadership will allow me to get to know the structure of NCTE, while also serving the needs of the community by sharing my experiences.

**JANELLE QUINTANS BENCE** (she/her)



English teacher, 21 years; English Department Chair; unconscious bias trainer. **Formerly:** LPAC Chair, English District Assessment and Curriculum Writer. **Specialty Areas/Areas of Expertise:** civics learning, PBL, interdisciplinary project design. **Membership:** NCTE and NCTE's Promising Young Writers Advisory Committee. **Award:** Outstanding Teaching of Humanities from Humanities Texas (2017–2018). **Publications:** contributing author, *Growing Writers: Principles for High School Writers and Their Teachers* (2021); contributing author, *Everyday Advocacy: Teachers Who Change the Literacy*

*Narrative* (2021); contributing author, *Teaching in the Connected Classroom*; *Academically Oriented Teaching: How Do I Teach What I Do Not Know?* (2014); contributing author, *Teacher Voices: Teaching Young Men of Color* (2014 report). **Program Contributions:** presentations at AERA, NCTE Convention, Deeper Learning, National Writing Project Annual Meeting, New Tech Conference.

**How has NCTE provided a professional home for you?**

NCTE has provided a space where innovative, empathetic educators collaborate to rethink, imagine, and design impactful learning experiences. I have been fortunate to participate in

partnerships where diverse minds have not only had rich and tough conversations about our practices, but have also worked to provide rigorous invitations for learners and teachers alike to understand how literacy is at the heart of active, informed citizens who build agency in our democracy.

**How does your current work in your career, community, and/or classroom contribute to NCTE's mission and vision, and demonstrate alignment with NCTE's commitment to equity and justice? How have your personal strengths and experiences contributed to making positive change(s) in the profession?**

Despite pressure to separate teaching and learning from politics and advocacy, our youth understand their deepest learning and most rewarding educational opportunities stem from authentic purposes of language arts. This is at the forefront of my design. I am a passionate educator-researcher who seeks steady growth through learning from others. I share practices in as many arenas as possible to support the evolution of our field.

**What is your rationale for seeking this office? What would you like to accomplish while in office?**

It is the duty of educators to serve organizations such as NCTE, which develop our profession and teachers. I offer support and advocacy for literacy teachers, so they sustain prolonged purpose-driven careers. This is done by ensuring the voices of diverse educators are heard as powerful advocates for our profession and our youth. Being a member of the Secondary Section Nominating Committee will help continue NCTE's excellence and strength across many of its efforts and initiatives.