



COALITION OF
OREGON SCHOOL
ADMINISTRATORS

Vote

Every Voice Matters

2024 OACOA Election Candidates

COSA President-Elect:

[Kimberly Miles, Principal, East Gresham Elementary/Gresham-Barlow SD](#)

OACOA President-Elect:

[Felicia Holt, Special Programs Coordinator, Medford SD](#)

Region B Representative:

[Melissa Glover, Special Education Director, Salem-Keizer SD](#)

[Creighton Helms, Director of Student Services and Federal Programs, Gervais SD](#)

Region D Representative:

[Annemarie Polignano, Student Services Coordinator, Canby SD](#)

[Ashleigh Walters, Program Administrator, Multnomah Early Childhood Program, David Douglas SD](#)

Region F Representative:

[Neely McKay, Director of Special Programs, Hermiston SD](#)

At-Large Representative:

[Sean Aker, Student Success Coordinator, Willamette ESD](#)

[Stephanie Allen-Hart, Director of Student Services, Three Rivers SD](#)



Kimberly Miles, Principal, East Gresham Elementary/Gresham-Barlow SD

Running for the position of COSA President-Elect presents a unique opportunity to contribute significantly to the advancement of education in Oregon. Being a part of COSA provides a platform to collaborate with other passionate education leaders, share best practices, and drive positive change in the educational landscape. Ultimately, running for this position aligns with my commitment to serving the education community and making a meaningful difference in the lives of students and educators across Oregon.

As COSA President-Elect, my primary goal is to further the mission of COSA by facilitating collaborative planning of professional learning experiences for Oregon administrators. These opportunities will serve as platforms for educators to connect, exchange ideas, and enhance their leadership skills. By fostering a culture of shared learning and leadership, we can continue to advocate for schools, support staff, and ultimately, improve outcomes for students across the state.

As a learner who leads, I have held various leadership roles and served on several committees, showcasing my dedication to education and continuous improvement:

Current President of OESPA, demonstrating my commitment to advocating for educational excellence at both the state and local levels.

Experience as a School Improvement Collaborator, where I have worked collaboratively with colleagues to identify and implement strategies for enhancing school performance.

Shared Leadership Facilitator, facilitating collaborative decision-making processes to empower stakeholders and foster a culture of shared responsibility.

Early Reading Systems Specialist, specializing in implementing effective reading programs and interventions to support early literacy development.

Successful facilitation of a federally funded turnaround school through the Oregon Department of Education, showcasing my ability to lead transformative initiatives and drive positive change within schools.

These roles and experiences highlight my diverse skill set, passion for education, and commitment to serving students, educators, and communities.



Felicia Holt, Special Programs Coordinator, Medford SD

I am running for the OACOA President-Elect as I desire to further collaborate with stakeholders state-wide to develop and enhance initiatives for supporting our Oregon educators in serving our Oregon students. Together, we can make a positive difference in the lives of others while strengthening our contribution to our communities.

As an executive committee member my hope is that we accomplish goals that align with strengthening our state as a whole. I believe that this can be done through serving as the OACOA President-Elect by helping to create outcomes that are driven by our strong partnerships among our schools, parents, students, and connections with one another. I want to be more involved in the process of sharing and contributing to pertinent state priorities and initiatives that allow for greater outcomes for our Oregon students.



Melissa Glover, Special Education Director, Salem-Keizer SD

I appreciate having COSA as a support organization for administrators across our state, and I would like to continue to be a liaison between districts in our region and COSA leadership through this position. I want to continue to maintain and build our connections with COSA, so that the organization can continue its efforts to support educational leaders. The work OACOA does to provide opportunities for cross-district networking and professional growth opportunities for Central Office Administrators is critical when most of these positions have only a single person within a district doing the same work.

I believe the OACOA Executive Committee is a trusted space where issues Central Office Administrators face are heard and valued, and where we can work together to identify trends across the diverse districts of our state to tackle common issues together. It's powerful to have representatives from varying districts come together to identify needs, and to learn from each other about how similar challenges are experienced and handled in different regions of Oregon.



Creighton Helms, Director of Student Services and Federal Programs, Gervais SD

The majority of the districts in our state are small and rural, and as such, the Central Office Administrators in these districts often have a wide variety of roles and responsibilities. Our needs are unique and opportunities to connect with others and grow professionally can often feel limited. I believe it is imperative, therefore, that when goals and directions are being established for COSA, the needs of all districts and the voice of all COSA's members must be actively and proudly represented. With humility, I am seeking this position because from a rural district myself, I am excited to hear your options and confidently represent everyone's voice.

OACOA has the powerful mandate of empowering its members to better serve their districts through a suite of options that work for everyone, from increasing networking and communication to relevant professional learning opportunities, from diverse degree and licensure opportunities to advocacy and equity toolkits. As an executive committee member, I would seek to leverage the strengths that already define COSA/OACOA and use your feedback to help introduce and transform new opportunities to be representative of COA needs statewide.

I currently help lead over ten different programs, including Special Education, English Language Development, Early Learning, Title Programs, Student Health/Nursing, Counseling, Migrant/Newcomers, Welcome Center/Registration, Foster Care/McKinney-Vento, summer school, and more. I carry both pHCLE HR proficiency and ASBO School Finance Officer certifications. I am a 2018 ASCD Emerging Leader and served on the Oregon ASCD Board of Directors. I was a member of the NAESP '17-'18 National Panel of New Principals, a 2019-2021 statewide Steering Committee Member for the Oregon Farm to School and School Garden Network, a member of the 2023-2025 ODE English Language Development Advisory Group, a member of the 2021-2022 ODE Science Content and Assessment Advisory Group, and I have served on several Willamette ESD working groups. I carry Ed.D in Educational Leadership and Interdisciplinary Studies from Creighton University and a Certificate in School Management and Leadership from the Harvard Graduate School of Education.

Annemarie Polignano, Student Services Coordinator, Canby SD



I look forward to continuing OACOA's work statewide in supporting the development of administrators and engaging stakeholders in communication to move forward the field of education in ways that add innovative technologies, support student learning, increase efficiency for staff and nurture the social emotional development/ health of all across the field. My perspective as a coordinator/ AD adds to the depth of conversations brought by those to OACOA at the director level. Additionally, I am hoping my administrative experience in both large and medium sized districts will add a valued voice to OACOA conversations and work.

As an Executive Committee member I plan to continue the work of OACOA in creating a vibrant community of central office administrators who support each other through sharing common experiences, information, needs and solutions. I will continue the work to keep equity and inclusion at the forefront of all conversations. Finally, I am eager to work with teams proactively and in response to State legislations.

My 21 year educational career with 8 years in leadership includes:

- Coordinator of Student Services: Canby School District
- Assistant Director of Special Education: Beaverton School District
- Coordinator of Special Education: North Clackamas School District

Teaching Experience Includes:

- Behavior Specialist/ New Teacher Mentor
- Positive Behavior Intervention and Support District Lead
- Autism Consultant
- Learning Specialist: Resource Room
- Learning Specialist: Structured Learning Center for Academics
- Learning Specialist: Structured Learning Center for Behavior

Ashleigh Walters, Program Administrator, Multnomah Early Childhood Program, David Douglas SD



I would be honored to bring the voices and perspectives of OACOA members in Multnomah and Clackamas counties to the OACOA executive committee as the Region D Representative. I have served communities in this region for the past 10 years as an early childhood special education professional, and I am excited about the opportunity to bring an early childhood perspective to the committee's work.

I'm very interested in elevating the needs and of the early childhood community both within Region D and across the state, especially as it relates to the transition from early childhood to the K-12 setting. I'm also interested in supporting COSA members with addressing the needs of a multidisciplinary workforce within special education.

As a former early childhood special education direct service provider, I held the role of peer coach to support early childhood best practices within my program, and I was a team member for one of our leadership & data teams. In 2021, I co-developed and co-facilitated a statewide ECHO Therapy in Educational Settings session (hosted by Douglas Education Service District) titled "Eligibility for Orthopedic Impairment". In years past, I've also served my community as a committee member of Go Baby Go Oregon and the Oregon Pediatric Special Interest Group.



Neely McKay, Director of Special Programs, Hermiston SD

I have been a part of OACOA since I began a district office level position. This organization does great work for our profession and I would like to be a part of this valuable work.

I would like to continue the work of OACOA through strong professional development for our members. I would like to see professional development geared toward the job responsibilities of it's individual members which can vary widely among our districts.

Director of Special Programs - Hermiston SD, Director of Curriculum and Instruction -- Hood River SD, Chairperson -- Umatilla Morrow Head Start Board, Hermiston Lions Club, local Regional Inclusive Services Board, Hermiston FFA Alumni member



Sean Aker, Student Success Coordinator, Willamette ESD

As a former school administrator, teacher, and ELL assistant, and now offering technical assistance to 21 school districts and collaborating with statewide partners through the implementation of the Student Success Act, I bring a well rounded perspective of supporting educational leaders and state initiatives at the building, district, and regional level. By operationalizing equity through increasing the use of multiple forms of data and increasing inclusive and deferred decision-making, I believe my experiences and skill sets would significantly contribute to the OACOA Executive Committee and advance COSA's equity stance. Additionally, through my regional work in improved data access, supporting outcome mapping, reducing chronic absenteeism, and increasing language access, a few examples of ways in which I have contributed to systemic improvements, I would be honored to support these or similar equity initiatives at a broader level.

As an Executive Committee Member I would like to contribute to the increase and improvement of equitable practices, procedures, and policies. I would also like to contribute to ongoing efforts to improvements of data access, data justice, and authentic constituent engagement to improve our educational systems. As we enter into an Integrated Planning year, I believe that I can help strengthen partnerships between school districts, ODE, and education service districts that will advance equity and student outcomes by improving procedures and policies that operationalize deeper partnerships.

- ACCUPLACER National Advisory Board
- Oregon Career Information Systems Board of Directors
- OregonASCD Executive Board



Stephanie Allen-Hart, Director of Student Services, Three Rivers SD

I have really enjoyed being a part of OACOA as an executive committee member. It has been wonderful to get to know other members and work closely on important decisions that impact our staff and students. As a director that oversees special education, having a voice in who we bring to our conferences and what important topics need to be a part of the agendas has been wonderful.

I would like to continue to grow the supports we have in place for our new special education directors. I would like to see a structure that includes pairing experienced directors with those new to the position for on going support. I also look forward to continuing to support COSA conferences, especially the Fall Sped conference.

Board Member Pacifica, Committee member Josephine Suicide Prevention Coalition, Early Literacy Advisory Committee, Equity Directors Committee member, Josephine County Cross Systems Advisory Committee, Josephine County Systems of Care committee