



# Unity

Jan. 30, 2024

## Candidate Information and Legal updates

### Use Your Voice - VOTE

FEA-Europe is in the midst of a biannual election. **Voting** is the cornerstone of any thriving democracy, serving as the bedrock upon which the foundations of a just and representative government are built. Its importance cannot be overstated, as it empowers members to actively participate in shaping the course of **their** Association. Elections provide members with the opportunity to voice their opinions, choose their leaders, and influence the direction of policies that impact their lives.

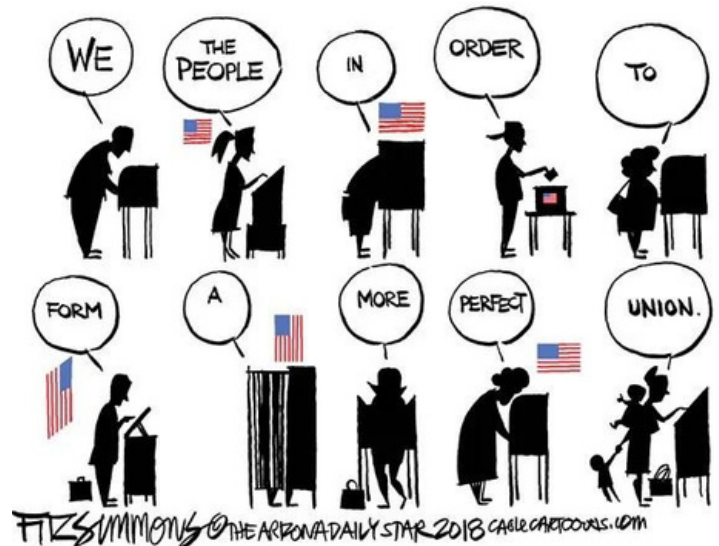
One of the primary reasons voting is crucial lies in its ability to foster a sense of civic responsibility and engagement. When members exercise their right to vote, they contribute to the collective decision-making process, reinforcing the democratic values that underpin the Association. In doing so, they become active stakeholders in the governance of their Association, ensuring that the leadership is reflective of the diverse perspectives within the population.

Beyond individual impact, the collective power of votes can drive change. Elections provide an avenue for marginalized voices to be heard, promoting inclusivity and representation. By voting, members contribute to the creation of an Association that is responsive to the needs of the entire population, rather than just a select few.

In last year's election for Area Director, FEA Europe members had a return rate of only **EIGHTEEN PERCENT** of Europe's membership. We can, and must do better.

**USE YOUR VOICE - VOTE!**

### Graphic of the Week



Follow the directions on the ballot and return it in the envelopes provided to the individual running the election, usually the FRS. While we will never be a perfect union, we will be a stronger union with your input.



### General Disclaimer

The following candidate information is provided by the individual candidates running for the positions listed below. This material does not constitute endorsement or recommendation by FEA, any FEA local or area, or by the NEA.”

- **Europe-Wide** Human & Civil Rights Coordinator
- **Division Representative**
- **Division** Human & Civil Rights Coordinator
- **Division** Delegates to the NEA Representative Assembly

# Europe-wide Candidate Information

## FEA-Europe Human & Civil Rights Coordinator

(elect one for a two-year term)

### **DiAnna Martinez, Teacher, K-5 AAPS, Vogelweh Elementary School**

I have held school level representative positions to include FR, FR-HCR, and I am presently the FRS at my school. I have been the HCRC for Europe East Division 1 for four years and have worked closely with the Europe HCRC during that time in order to ensure members throughout Europe have had HCR representation.

### **Nancy Harb Almendras, Teacher, AP Literature/English 12, Wiesbaden High School**



My background as District Rep in the Okinawa and Heidelberg Districts, my frontline position as FRS, my participation as delegate at the FEA-NEA Representative Assemblies and NEA Diversity Cadre gives me the experience to successfully represent members. I am transparent and have assisted members writing grievances and EEOs, including addressing difficult issues with management. I am involved with the NEA Arab-American Caucus and Educators for Palestine. We work to ensure that the concerns of students and teachers of all ethnicities are advocated by NEA and were successful recently at NEA-RA. I'm a member of an oppressed group and uniquely suited for HCRC-Europe. Educators for Palestine currently advocates that NEA, the largest labor union in the US, demands that our government call for an immediate ceasefire so that Palestinian children may receive an education, which they've been denied for months.

### **Olga Sims, Teacher, World History 9-10, Stuttgart High School**

Olga Sims was born in the Soviet Union. Upon graduation from high school, she pursued a bachelor's degree in Asian studies from Moscow State Institute of International Relations, Russian Federation. Ms. Sims moved to the United States and continued her education at George Mason University in Virginia. She graduated from George Mason University with a master's degree in education. Ms. Sims continued her professional studies and obtained an educational specialist degree in school leadership and administration with a concentration on special education leadership from Regent University. Currently, Ms. Sims is working on her doctoral degree in exceptional education executive leadership. Ms. Sims started her educational career as a paraprofessional serving students with disabilities in 2006. She became a special education teacher in 2007 and taught students with learning and intellectual disabilities in Virginia for seven years. In 2014, Ms. Sims moved to Las Vegas, Nevada, and worked as a teacher of students with mild disabilities.



# Europe-West Candidate Information

## Division Representative

(elect one for a two-year term)

### Jessica Yucel, Spangdahlem High School



Jessica Yucel is a DoDEA graduate, having attended Geilenkirchen Elementary School, AFNORTH MHS, and Ankara Elementary / High School. After obtaining degrees in Secondary Education and Educational Leadership, she began teaching in Arizona before beginning her career with DoDEA. During her tenure at Bitburg and then Spangdahlem High School, she assumed leadership roles as an active member of the Continuous School Improvement / Instructional Leadership Team and as the AVID Site Coordinator. She added on leadership roles within FEA by becoming an FR and then an FRS, as well as president of her local Association. After four years as an FRS, she was appointed to the position of Division Representative for Europe West by the Europe Area Council. She hopes to continue her role as the Division Rep to provide strong and impactful advocacy for educators across Europe West.

## Division Human & Civil Rights Coordinator

(elect one for a two-year term)

### Doug Lechner, SHAPE Elementary School



I am serving in my 4th year as the SHAPE Elementary Human & Civil Rights Coordinator. I have also served in multiple leadership roles at SHAPE Elementary including 7 years as grade level chair, 1 year as CSI co-chair, and 2 years on the Instructional Leadership Team.

## Delegate to the NEA Representative Assembly

(elect two for a one-year term)

### Anita Lang, Lakenheath High School



As a member of the European Area Council, and both the NEA and FEA Board of Directors, I have worked to ensure that educators rights are protected. I believe that educator voice is the most important piece to making a successful union. By attending the NEA Representative Assembly, I can use my voice to determine how members' dues will be spent, moving the profession in a positive direction. I have also worked hard to be a good steward of members' money and as a delegate, I will vote to spend dues money in ways that maximize the benefits of our public school students. I take this responsibility very seriously. I am willing to share my experiences with anyone interested in participating at the RA in the future. Locals can send delegates too!