

# CANDIDATE QUESTIONNAIRE

## OSBA Legislative Policy Committee

Name: Kathy Wai \_\_\_\_\_ Region: Clackamas

District/ESD/CC: \_North Clackamas\_\_\_\_\_ Position #: 5

I certify that if elected I will faithfully serve as a member of the OSBA Legislative Policy Committee. My nomination form has been submitted to OSBA (or is attached to this document) as evidence.

Kathy Wai

Name

10/1/2021

Date

***Be brief; please limit your responses to 50 words per question.***

1. What do you want to accomplish by serving on the Legislative Policy Committee (LPC)?

By serving on the LPC, I hope to continue advancing equity in our education system so that all students can reach their full potential. We need to keep “recognizing institutional barriers and create access and opportunities that benefit all” (from OSBA’s education policy). As someone who was the first in her family to graduate from college in the United States, I’ve experienced the power of education in transforming my life and that of my family. However, growing up, I never saw teachers, Principals, or school board members who looked like me. It is important to have leaders in positions of power who reflect our growing and diverse communities. I also look forward to representing the voices and interests of school boards in the Clackamas region and being a helpful resource for OSBA and our members.

In addition to equity, I would also like to keep strengthening OSBA’s Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion goals to ensure that we are on track to meet them.

2. What leadership skills do you bring to the LPC? Give an example of a situation in which you demonstrated these skills.

My skills of being a community organizer, an effective communicator, and advocate for underrepresented communities will benefit the work of the LPC. In my experience as the Census Justice Director for We Count Oregon in 2020, I worked with 12 community based organizations serving our Black, Indigenous, immigrant, people of color and refugee communities around the state to ensure that they are being accurately counted in the Census. Through organizing skills, I built trusting relationships with communities of color who have been historically disenfranchised by our government. By working with locally elected leaders and state representatives, we were able to communicate a strong and impactful message to these communities and get them counted. With COVID-19 impacting our in-person outreach efforts, we adapted our strategy in engaging with communities through other means, such as social media and online. Lastly, having complete and accurate Census data is critical to determine funding for our schools, health, transportation, and social service programs so it was important to advocate for an extension of the Census deadline to maximize our efforts in Oregon. In addition to working on the 2020 Census, I was also the Legislative Director to State Representative Alissa Keny-Guyer and helped advance policies around health, education, housing, and human services in the 2019 Legislative Session. In fact, I met with many of the North Clackamas parents and students as they lobbied for HB 3427 and met with other legislators. My depth of knowledge for the Oregon legislative process, relationships to stakeholders, and legislators will be an asset to the LPC. In my current position working for the Secretary of State around redistricting, we also have to remain completely non-partisan and ensure that all voices of Oregonians are heard in the process of creating fair maps.

3. What do you see as the two most challenging legislative issues faced by OSBA?

The continuing of the COVID-19 pandemic and trying to return our students and staff back to school will be a continued challenge as the state deals with guidance on vaccinations and the ever changing nature of guidelines from public health and ODE. OSBA needs to hear from all districts and try to establish common ground so that we can all work together for the best interest and health/safety of our students and broader school community.

A second challenge is implementing and reinforcing the Every Student Belong state law that was passed in the 2021 legislative session to protect and honor students who have been marginalized, especially those identifying as LGBTQ and Black, Indigenous, and other communities of color. With the decision that happened at the Newberg School Board and the backlash that followed, this opens up more conversations about protecting student and staffs free speech and ensuring that we honor many diverse identities and communities that call Oregon home.

4. What do you see as the two most challenging legislative issues faced by your region?

In Clackamas, the lower number of vaccination rates compared to Washington and Multnomah county affects and disrupts learning for our students. School districts in Clackamas are different from each other and we know that some districts have higher cases of COVID among their student body and the community. Even though we're in different districts, we all travel, play, and live together in the same region. There should be continued conversations around vaccines, masking, and how ultimately this will affect our students.

The second most challenging issue is recruitment and retention in diversifying our educator workforce. Since one of the biggest factors to student learning is the connection with their teacher, and students of color need teachers who they can relate to, we need to work on legislation that will allow more opportunities for those with diverse experiences and backgrounds to enter the profession and make a living wage. This also touches on equity because teachers of color need to be supported in their professional development and legislation needs to address barriers.

5. What is your plan for communicating with boards in your region about legislative issues?

While we are still in the pandemic, I will use email primarily in collaboration with the OSBA Clackamas Region Board members on communicating through OSBA's list-serv. After the pandemic when in-person meetings are allowed, I will commit to attend as many Clackamas Region Board meetings scheduled and use other means of personal communication.

**Deadline: October 1, 2021, 5 p.m.**

*Materials submitted by the candidate on this form may be subject to a public information request under ORS Chapter 192.*

# CANDIDATE PERSONAL/PROFESSIONAL RESUME

## OSBA Legislative Policy Committee

Name: \_\_\_Kathy Wai\_\_\_\_\_ Date: October 1, 2021

Address: 11302 SE Ludlow Ct.

City / ZIP: Happy Valley, OR 97086

Business phone: n/a \_\_\_\_\_

Residence phone: n/a \_\_\_\_\_

Cell phone: 971-269-7595

E-mail: Kathy.wai@nclack.k12.or.us \_\_\_\_\_

District/ESD/CC: North Clackamas School District \_\_\_\_\_

Term expires: 6/30/2025 \_\_\_\_\_ Years on board: \_4\_

**Deadline: October 1, 2021, 5 pm**

Please send your picture (head shot).  
A high-resolution digital photo is preferred but a print is acceptable.  
E-mail to [OSBAelections@osba.org](mailto:OSBAelections@osba.org),  
or mail to: Oregon School Boards  
Association, 1201 Court St NE, #400,  
Salem, OR 97301

**Work or service performed for OSBA or local district** (include committee name and if you were chair):

North Clackamas Board, Vice Chair- July 2019-July 2020

Relevant Board Committees:

- Youth Voice- 2021-2022
- Superintendent's Evaluation- 2021-2022
- Bond Oversight- 2021-2022
- NCEA/Collaborative Communications- 2021-2022
- Legislative Advocacy - 2018-2019
- Community Equity- 2017- 2019
- Legal Services - 2020- 2020 (ad-hoc)
- Policy Review- 2017-2019
- Superintendent Evaluation- 2018-2019
- School Security Taskforce- 2018-2019

**Other education board positions held/dates:**

Workshop Presenter at the OSBA Fall Conference 2019 with other school board members: Best practices for trauma informed, culturally proficient, comprehensive sex education.

Oregon School Board Members of Color Caucus

- Leadership Council, District 5 Director, North Clackamas- December 2018- current

**Occupation** (Include at least the past five years):

Employers:

Dates:

- Oregon Secretary of State, Redistricting Administrator, January 2020- current
  - Oregon Futures Lab, Census Justice Director, October 2019- January 2020

- Legislative Director, Representative Alissa Keny-Guyer (HD 46), August 2018- August 2019
- Civic Engagement Director, Asian Pacific American Network of Oregon, July 2014- July 2018

**Schools attended** (Include official name of school, where and when):

High school: St. Mary's Academy, Portland, OR, 2000-2004

College: University of Portland (2004-2005) transferred to Portland State University, Portland, Oregon (2005-2008)

Degrees earned: B.S. Community Health Education, Summa Cum Laude (2008) Portland State University

Education honors and/or awards:

- Alice Award Recipient, Street Trust of Oregon, 2020
- Alumna in Leadership Award, St.Mary's Academy, 2019
- Spirit of Portland: Equity in Practice Partnership, City of Portland, 2016
- Exemplary Community Volunteer, The Asian Reporter Newspaper, 2010
- Proud Partner, United States Census, 2010
- Summa Cum Laude, Portland State University, 2008

Other applicable training or education:

Bilingual in Burmese language

**Activities, other state and local community services:**

- Co-Chair, Supportive Housing Services Committee, Clackamas Representative, Metro- 2020- current
- Metro Policy Advisory Committee (MPAC) 2018-2021
- Clackamas Representative on TriMet Board of Directors- 2018-current
- NARAL Oregon PAC Board of Directors, 2017- 2020
- Oregon Public Health Institute, Board of Directors, 2018-2019
- Southeast Asian New Year in the Park Celebration, Steering Committee Member, 2016-2018
- Asian Pacific American Network of Oregon, Board of Directors, 2009-2011
- Asian American Youth Leadership Conference, Steering Committee Member, 2011-2015
- Burmese Christian Association of North America, Oregon Youth Chapter 2009-2012
- Student Advocates for Success Club, Portland State University, 2005-2007

**Hobbies/special interests:**

- hiking and enjoying the outdoors
- learning how to cook traditional Burmese cuisine
- volunteering

**Business/professional/civic group memberships; offices held and dates:**

See above

**Additional comments:**

N/a

**Deadline: October 1, 2021, 5 pm**

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