

PAULA BURGIN

Dear Colleagues,

I am writing to ask you to consider nominating me for Vice President.

Education is in crisis. Chronic underfunding has pushed us to breaking point. We are no longer only educators, we are counsellors, SEN specialists, social workers and more - stretched thinner every year, with fewer resources and larger class sizes.

The toxic assessment system does nothing to raise standards, while Ofsted and academisation continue to strip away our professional autonomy and dignity. Despite all this, we know our power. We are half a million strong: when we stand together, we are unstoppable.



I've spent over twenty years in education, beginning as a member of support staff in a special school before becoming a primary teacher, then working in PRUs. Wherever I've worked, I've always stood up as a rep to fight injustices and defend colleagues – always refusing to accept the erosion of our rights.

For the past two and a half years, I've been proud to serve as Joint Branch and District Secretary for Hull. In that time, I've worked relentlessly to rebuild and re-energise our local union: growing our network of active reps, creating spaces for members to connect and lead, and ensuring that our collective voice is heard loud and clear. Our WhatsApp groups and meetings have become the beating heart of our movement in Hull – spaces full of solidarity, laughter, sometimes frustration, but always, spaces to build for action.

Together, we've led and won disputes on workload, on violence against staff, on redundancies. When members took strike action for the first time at a Hull school, they forced a toxic headteacher to resign. That victory wasn't just about one school it showed what happens when we stand up and fight back. We've negotiated major local wins too - from scrapping performance-related pay, to pushing for fairer pay structures across our academies, and securing increased facilities time so we can better support our growing membership.

As Vice President, I would bring that same passion, energy, and commitment to our national union. I believe in our lay-led strength: activism is home grown through our Districts, Branches, Reps, Organising forums, and through empowering members. Our leaders must come from the rank-and-file - from those that work alongside us every day to ensure that decisions are grounded in real experiences and shared challenges: not from behind the desks of those that do not share our terms and conditions, not from those that do not have the lived experience of the struggle facing those in education.

Our support staff membership has exploded, despite us being blocked from active recruitment by the TUC. I believe that we must build on that energy and momentum. We must fight for recognition, resist job creep and demand equal standing with other support staff unions to secure the pay and conditions our members deserve. To become one union for all education workers, we must stand together and take this fight nationally.

Schools struggle to afford basic resources, support staff are paid poverty wages, teachers are leaving in droves. Meanwhile it's business as usual for academy CEOs and other trust leaders who continue to cash in. Public money meant for children's education is being siphoned off into bulging private pockets. It is greed at the heart of the marketisation of education. I believe that we must be a union that fights unapologetically for justice and demand salary caps for Trust CEOs and full financial transparency from every academy trust. Education must once again serve the public — not the profit margins of bloated trust boards and executive teams. Renationalise education, rebuild public accountability, and put learning before profit.

In solidarity,

Paula Burgin

SUE KENT

NOMINATE VP SUE KENT



Dear Colleague

November 2025

I'm standing for VP today because I believe our union is facing one of the most critical moments in its history, and we must be ready to meet it with courage and unity. I'm an experienced Executive and Branch Secretary of branch and three districts; I have had successful industrial action in our schools and colleges. This has led to a stream of work collectivising local issues. I am also a lead rep in a MAT where we have had successful industrial action and where the employer contributes to the facilities pot in each Local Authority, I sit on the JCNC. I have a track record of successful grass roots engagement. I am an experienced caseworker. I'm standing for Vice President because I believe our union stands at a crossroads – and what we do in the next few years will define the future of education, our profession, and the power of our collective voice.

By the time of our 2029 conference, we'll be standing on the edge of a general election. Whoever forms the next government, it won't be easy. Education will not be magically repaired. Funding won't suddenly appear. The profession won't be rebuilt overnight. We will need a union that is ready to lead a political rescue mission – a union that is strong, strategic, and united.

That's the leadership I want to bring.

Yours sincerely

Susan Kent



Email

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Dear Colleague,

Sam Makinde - Nomination letter for the NEU Vice President

I am seeking your District's nomination for Vice President of the NEU. Our profession faces a multifaceted crisis: the tangible attacks of inadequate pay, unsustainable workloads, and crumbling buildings, compounded by the ideological threat of a punitive OFSTED regime. This system of high-stakes fear must be abolished now because it undermines professional autonomy and student well-being. We will replace it with a framework of supportive, professional dialogue that truly fosters school improvement.

Concurrently, in the face of rising far-right narratives that seek to divide our communities and sanitise our curricula, our union must be the cornerstone of a powerful, progressive alternative. This means actively championing an inclusive education, such as that promoted by Black in the British Curriculum. We must embed this work into our national strategy to ensure our classrooms celebrate diversity and equip all students with a truthful, representative understanding of our history and society.

My record as a secondary teacher and District Secretary provides the proven experience necessary for this fight. I have not only defended members through casework but have strategically organised collective action, from local disputes to the National Day of Action that brought 40,000 to London, to win on issues of pay and workload. My advocacy has consistently included support staff, fighting for their professional recognition and better conditions at local and national levels, because our strength lies in our unity.

My commitment is rooted in the belief that a member-led, grassroots union is our most powerful tool. As your VP, I will immediately work from an intersectional framework to unify our members, listen to your concerns, and fight tirelessly to translate our collective strength into tangible victories on pay, funding, and a truly inclusive education system for every child.

I would be honoured to earn your nomination and work tirelessly to justify your trust.

In solidarity,
Sam Makinde

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I am asking for your support to become the first Support Staff president of our union.

As a mam of 5 children all who have a variety of special needs and as an educator, I have seen the good, the bad and the ugly of the education system. I have worked for Durham Local Authority for the last 5 years in the SEND Team, working with Schools and families across Durham. Before this I was a mainstream and SEND teacher, I also have experience of working in a variety of school support roles.

I have been active in our union since it began and was previously involved with ATL. I have held a variety of roles and positions including Rep, Branch Secretary, District Secretary, Chair of Regional Council, Regional Executive member and Support Staff Executive member.

I love our union and its members. The passion and dedication that they show every single day is inspiring. But our members, families and communities are on their knees, the education system is broken and we need to take action.

If elected I will...

1. Fight against the Far Right . All our members, students and communities should feel safe to walk the streets and be their authentic selves.
2. Campaign for fair pay for all members. The current offer for teachers is woeful and support staff are the lowest paid but with the most diverse skill set. All members should be paid for the role they were hired to do. Job creep (additional roles, expectations and demands) should be discussed and paid properly.
3. Support activists, members, districts and branches to take action against employers who are implementing unfair and unjust practices.
4. Listen to members about what issues matter to them the most and act upon them.
5. Work with our Executive and staff to ensure conference motions are carried out.

We as members can make a change.

We will make education central to our workplaces.

We will use our voices as a membership of 500,000 to stand up for those who can't. To speak up on local, regional, national and international issues and say no. Not on our watch. No to genocide, no to child poverty no to children being unable to access education.

We will not tolerate our members being bullied or victimised for speaking out.

We are the union. We have the power to make a difference.

Please nominate Emma Farthing for NEU Vice President



Our workplaces are under attack from an onslaught of punitive accountability measures, real-terms cuts to pay and funding, and crushing of creativity and autonomy. Another education system is possible and must start with the building of an NEU which can make a material, visible difference to the working lives of our members, by organising in our workplaces and our communities. We can and must rise to the reactionary challenges we face from government and the far right.

I am a Teacher of English and have been a school rep across Catholic and state schools since my first year in teaching 18 years ago. In my first school I built a union group from three members to thirty and saw how this can transform a school for both those who work there, and our students. I also have experience of the leadership side of school life and advocating for NEU policies in leadership.

I have been the district and branch secretary of Croydon NEU since 2019. In that time our core team has been built from three to eight, as we have won increased facilities time despite a bankrupt LA and a very small number of LA schools. Our district committee has grown from ten to twenty-five, allowing us to build outward facing and well attended general meetings. Our central focus is on reps- we recruit them, we train them, we engage them in the district, and we urge them to launch disputes- most of which are resolved in members' favour before strike action is necessary. In keeping with my belief in a lay-led union, I create and share our own model materials for reps.

As educators, we are part of working class communities and listen to them- including the dissatisfied. We are well placed to help our communities fight back, linking struggles together and taking on vested interests- building the schools we deserve where all are welcome, including refugees and asylum seekers. The NEU's work taking on the far right has been impressive- I will work to broaden and deepen it.

In our classrooms, we seek to create an environment of equity. The NEU has a key role in seeking to project that environment into the whole education system and ultimately, the whole of society. We work to collectivise the struggles for equality, to make these central workplace issues. I will help to lead a grassroots push to embed the toolkits we have and make them a living reality for members.

The NEU has a proud record of support for international solidarity, and I stand in that tradition. The Palestine movement is a ray of hope in a dark political world, and the NEU needs to remain central to that campaign, and to our other priority international campaigns.

Those who know me say I am principled, diligent and experienced. Please consider nominating me for Vice President.