

SCHOOL DIVISION CANDIDATES—BIOGRAPHIES *(in alphabetical order)*

Please review the candidate biographies and their responses to key questions about Colorado PERA so you can make an informed decision (candidates were limited to 100-150 words for their responses). The candidates' responses have not been edited by PERA. The deadline to vote is May 31, 2023.

DREW ADAMS | ADAMS 14 SCHOOL DISTRICT

Drew Adams is the HR Director for Adams 14 School District.

Education/Special Courses/Certifications

B.A., Anthropology and Latin American Studies,
University of Colorado Boulder

M.A., Curriculum and Instruction, University of Colorado
Denver

Principal K-12 Licensed

Ed.D—Leadership in Educational Equity, in progress

Employment History

In my career, I served in schools in the Metro and mountain communities as a classroom teacher, a school administrator, a bus driver and currently as a human resources director.

Organizational Affiliations/Achievements

In my professional role, I serve as member of CASPA (Colorado Association of School Personnel Administrators), and CASE (Colorado Association of School Executives). In my personal life, I serve on POSAC (Parks and Open Space Advisory Committee) for Boulder County.

EUNICE BOTCHWAY | ADAMS-ARAPAHOE SCHOOL DISTRICT 28J (AURORA PUBLIC SCHOOLS)

Eunice Botchway is a Special Education Teacher (Mild/Moderate) in Adams-Arapahoe School District 28J (Aurora Public Schools).

Education/Special Courses/Certifications

Bachelor of Arts Degree, Special Education Generalist,
Regis University

Master of Arts Degree (CLDE), Regis University

Special Education Leadership—Director (Current in post-graduate course work), Arkansas State University

Special Education (K-12) licensure

CLDE and Elementary Education (K-6) endorsement

CDE licenses: Elementary Education and Special Education Generalist

Employment History

Aurora Public Schools, 2020–Present

Special Education Teacher

Cherry Creek School District 5

English Language Support Specialist, 2019–2020

Special Education Teacher, 2019

READ Act Teacher, 2018–2019

Onsite-Director/ECE Instructor, 2014–2016

ECE Instructor, 2012–2014

ECE Teacher Assistant, 2011–2012

Organizational Affiliations/Achievements

Member, National Education Association

Member, Ambassador Fellow, Colorado Education Association (CEA)

Member, National Association of Special Education Teachers

SCHOOL DIVISION CANDIDATES—BIOGRAPHIES *(continued)*

PATRICIA FICHTER | FALCON SCHOOL DISTRICT 49

Patricia Fichter is a Para Educator at Horizon Middle School in Falcon School District 49.

Education/Special Courses/Certifications

I started going to college for business but I had to stop due to funds. I would love to finish my education in Political Science but I would rather not get into more debt. I love to read.

Employment History

I am currently at Horizon Middle School as a Para Educator. Before this job I worked at an immigration office as a secretary. I also worked at Men's Warehouse selling suits.

Organizational Affiliations/Achievements

I am currently in the Rank Choice Voting organization. We introduce rank choice voting to people, teach them, and have meetings at least once a month to discuss future plans and our successes. I also have my bartender license. I love to do anything involving the community.

JB PHILLIPS | MESA COUNTY VALLEY SCHOOL DISTRICT 51

JB Phillips is a Teacher in Mesa County Valley School District 51.

Education/Special Courses/Certifications

B.A., English Education and Mass Communications,
Montana State University

M.Ed., Lesley University

Ed.D., University of Northern Colorado

Employment History

Serving in 28th year in Colorado schools. Fourteen years in secondary English, social studies, and variety of other elective and core courses; nine years in school administration; five years in secondary computer science.

Organizational Affiliations/Achievements

Grand Junction City Council Planning Commission

Mesa County Block Grant Committee

Middlebury College BLSE Fellow

UNC Outstanding ELPS Doctoral Student (2000)

SCHOOL DIVISION CANDIDATES—RESPONSES TO KEY QUESTIONS

Colorado PERA's primary purpose is to provide benefits and programs as specified by state law, and the Board of Trustees oversees the administration of these benefits and programs. State law also gives the Board the responsibility for the investment of PERA's funds and to establish policy guidelines for the operations of PERA. Under this framework, the PERA Board of Trustees oversees the administration of the more than \$50 billion retirement fund for Colorado's public employees. Although the Board can and does make recommendations related to the employee and employer contribution levels and retirement benefit formulas, both are ultimately determined by the Colorado General Assembly and established by state law.

DREW ADAMS

INTEREST IN SERVING AS A PERA TRUSTEE

Please briefly describe why you are interested in being elected to the PERA Board of Trustees.

Working in schools allows me to support student, staff and community success. As a school district leader, my level of commitment of service to provide for our staff is unparalleled. I believe in advocating for the necessary changes to support our members success. As a trustee, I will support the growth and development of the PERA fund to support the financial security of our members.

CHALLENGES/OPPORTUNITIES FACING PERA

Please describe what you consider as areas of challenge/opportunity facing PERA and the Board's role in addressing these issues.

The PERA website refresh has significantly improved the ability for members to access their accounts. And the webinar sessions are quite informative. However, I wonder how informed the average member is about their retirement needs. We need to identify additional methods to connect with our members. HR managers in school systems are not equally informed which could be a great venue for helping our members be more informed as well. Additionally, we need to survey our members to better understand their needs and help them become more informed.

THE ROLE OF A TRUSTEE

What do you see as the role of a Trustee on the PERA Board?

The role of the Trustee is to act in the interest of PERA members to guarantee solvency and stability of the retirement accounts. In addition, the Trustee should be well informed of current and future policy matters. The Trustee should serve the members and advocate for them. As a member of the PERA board, I would act on the behalf of the school based members to advocate for their future earnings. My role as a Trustee is to be balanced, inquisitive and active in monitoring the changes that can impact our members.

EUNICE BOTCHWAY

INTEREST IN SERVING AS A PERA TRUSTEE

Please briefly describe why you are interested in being elected to the PERA Board of Trustees.

Teachers and school district staff work hard to ensure that their future is set when it's time for them to retire. As one of those many public servants, I want all who have contributed to the PERA Fund to know that their retirement fund is safe. My interest in being elected to the PERA Board of Trustees position is to represent all educators by serving them and providing support and accountability as they prepare for retirement. The job of the Board of Trustees is to ensure members are financially set for retirement.

CHALLENGES/OPPORTUNITIES FACING PERA

Please describe what you consider as areas of challenge/opportunity facing PERA and the Board's role in addressing these issues.

One area of opportunity is the PERA and its Board collaborating with members to ensure transparency to elevate trust. I am a PERA member and want to know that my investment is safe, and the Board needs to assure contributors. With the issue with social security, the Board should take the opportunity to address members about the security of their investment. A challenge facing PERA and the Board is addressing and solving the teacher shortage problem and how it can affect the PERA fund.

THE ROLE OF A TRUSTEE

What do you see as the role of a Trustee on the PERA Board?

A PERA Board of Trustees must be a trustworthy person representing their division and overseeing and managing members' retirement investments.

Responses to Key Questions continued on reverse

PATRICIA FICHTER

INTEREST IN SERVING AS A PERA TRUSTEE

Please briefly describe why you are interested in being elected to the PERA Board of Trustees.

I am interested in PERA Board of Trustee seat because I am great at organizing and executing plans. I also am very good at following rules. I like to have the input of the community on issues so that the public has input on decisions being made. I believe in transparency. I am a team player with everybody's interests in mind not just my own.

CHALLENGES/OPPORTUNITIES FACING PERA

Please describe what you consider as areas of challenge/opportunity facing PERA and the Board's role in addressing these issues.

The areas facing PERA and the board role I feel are challenging are gaining the public's trust in decisions being made. Another challenge I see that I will have is to come up with a plan to help keep funds coming from members over tax payer money. I feel like this would be a great opportunity to be part of something big that involves the community. I love being part of community base programs. This opportunity I am given will help me learn to start more programs for my community like community gardens and community coops. I am a native and my ultimate goal is to help my fellow neighbors live a healthy and happy life. I hope to be the change my community needs.

THE ROLE OF A TRUSTEE

What do you see as the role of a Trustee on the PERA Board?

What I see that my role will be as a Trustee PERA Board member is being able to make decisions on how to organize retirement funds. Working with the community on hard decisions about the funds. Making sure that I understand all about the program and to be able to make every meeting. Accountability. And for my members to have trust in my work for making the best decisions for them.

JB PHILLIPS

INTEREST IN SERVING AS A PERA TRUSTEE

Please briefly describe why you are interested in being elected to the PERA Board of Trustees.

I am currently serving a single year term and would very much like to be elected back into the committee. The oversight provided by this committee is of great importance to PERA beneficiaries. Not only is it a great learning experience for me personally, the membership on this committee allows me to give back some time to the education field that I've benefited from for many years.

CHALLENGES/OPPORTUNITIES FACING PERA

Please describe what you consider as areas of challenge/opportunity facing PERA and the Board's role in addressing these issues.

The continuing problems will center around demographic trends that are impacting the amount of active PERA members and the money going in and out of the fund. Housing costs, purchase, and rent prices are all up. Federal interest rates complicate matters. People and jobs are leaving the state at a rate that is not helpful to managing a secure fund. The greatest goal will be to maintain PERA back to being fully funded decades down the road. The short term need is to make sure active members and retired beneficiaries don't bear the brunt of the current financial issues.

THE ROLE OF A TRUSTEE

What do you see as the role of a Trustee on the PERA Board?

The role of the trustee is that of fiduciary that holds a legal and ethical relationship of trust with his or her constituents. The trustee attempts to ensure that prudent care of assets remains at the forefront of discussion. It is a trustee's job to question the workings and people involved in maintaining the fund with an open mind and willingness to understand and learn.