

April 24, 2019

Dear TALE Nomination Committee,

I would like to be considered for the At Large Board Member position that is open on the TALE board. I have been a primary level classroom teacher for six years, and I will graduate in May from Sam Houston State University with my Masters in Reading with a Reading Specialist Certification and a Dyslexia Practitioner Certificate. At my campus, I currently serve on the Leadership Development Team in which we practice and refine our leadership skills by mentoring other teachers, developing plans to progress the campus, and promote the vision and mission of the district through our campus.

I have been involved with TALE since 2017 and greatly appreciate the professional network of literacy leaders from across the state that I have met through this outstanding organization. I have presented at the TALE Annual Conference in 2017 and 2019, sharing my passion for literacy practices and meeting the needs of each student in my class. I also published an article in the TALE yearbook based on my 2017 presentation and am currently working on a manuscript for the 2019 Yearbook. I was highlighted as a Spotlight TALE Member in the Winter 2018 TALE Newsletter due to my desire to create students who use the skills and knowledge of reading and writing to make an impact in their communities. In addition to being an active member of TALE, I am also a member of the ILA. I attended the ILA Conference in Austin, Texas this past year and enjoyed learning about ways to incorporate more authentic learning techniques in the classroom. Learning and leading are top priorities in my future as an educator.

As an At-large board member, I will work closely with the Chair and other board members to promote the mission of TALE: to promote literacy that will enhance the lives of all Texas citizens personally, socially and economically. My vision for the position includes promoting TALE by showcasing the organization's commitment to best practices and love of literacy. I also wish to contribute my own values as a classroom teacher in order to further the work of the organization. I feel that my experience in the classroom and the organization, my ongoing learning attitude, and my involvement in leadership would benefit TALE's Board of Directors should I receive the position of At Large Board Member.

Sincerely,
Melissa Walker

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EC-6, ESL, and GT Certified

- Dedicated and goal-driven with a passion for learning
- Strong leadership skills
- Organized and self-motivated
- Excellent relationships with students, parents, staff, and administrators

Experience

2018-Present Robert & Felice Bryant Elementary School, Katy ISD Katy, TX

2nd Grade Teacher, English Language Arts and Social Studies, 2018-Present

- Teach reading, writing and social studies to a general education classroom which includes special education students
- Maintain a safe classroom and learning environment
- Develop engaging, differentiated lesson plans in a timely manner
- Member of the campus Leadership Development Team
- Lead staff developments at the campus level

2013-2018 Decker Prairie Elementary School, Tomball ISD Magnolia, TX

1st Grade Teacher, 2014-2018

- Taught all subject areas to a general education classroom which includes ESL and special education students
- Maintained a safe classroom and learning environment
- Developed engaging, differentiated lesson plans for all subject areas in a timely manner
- Served as a member of the campus Guiding Coalition
- Wrote district Social Studies curriculum for 1st Grade
- Led staff developments at the campus and district level
- Tutored 3rd and 4th grade students after school for Reading and Math STAAR

4th Grade Teacher, Self-Contained, Jan. 2014-June 2014

- Taught all subject areas to a general education classroom which included ESL and special education students
- Maintained a safe classroom and learning environment
- Developed engaging, differentiated lesson plans for all subject areas in a timely manner
- Tutored after school for Reading, Writing and Math STAAR

Student Teacher, August 2013-December 2013

- Developed lessons and instructed Kindergarten and 4th grade students, based on Texas State Standards and grade level expectations
- Planned and implemented differentiated instruction to diverse student populations including Gifted & Talented, ESL, and special education.
- Served as assistant coach to the Destination Imagination team

- Attended all staff professional development and meetings with mentor teachers, as well as campus extracurricular activities (Homecoming Parade, Fine Arts Festival)

Education

2016-Present Sam Houston State University Huntsville, TX
M.Ed. in Reading/Language Arts with a Reading Specialist Certification and Dyslexia Practitioner Certificate

- Expected Graduation Date: May 10, 2019

2009-2013 Sam Houston State University Huntsville, TX
B.S. in Elementary Education (EC-6)

- GPA: 3.75, graduated Magna Cum Laude
- Member of Kappa Delta Pi International Honor Society in Education

Publications

- Hudson, A. & Walker, M. (2017). Supporting effective guided reading instruction for all students. *Texas Association for Literacy Education Yearbook, 4*, 67-71.
- Walker, M. (in preparation). Student-organized classroom libraries: The heart of the literacy classroom. *Texas Association for Literacy Education Yearbook*.

Presentations

- Walker, M. & Hudson, A., (2019), “Student-Organized Classroom Libraries: The HEART of the Literacy Classroom” Presented at the Texas Association for Literacy Educators (TALE), Annual Conference, Waco, TX
- Walker, M., (2019), “Phonics 101: Understanding the New ELA TEKS” Presented at Robert & Felice Bryant Elementary School, Katy, TX
- Hudson, A. & Walker, M., (2017), “Effective Guided Reading for All Students” Presented at the Texas Association for Literacy Education (TALE) Annual Conference, Corpus Christi, TX
- Walker, M. & Hudson, A., (2017), “K-3, Guided Reading using the F&P Continuum of Literacy Learning” Presented at the Tomball ISD District Staff Development Day, Tomball, TX
- Walker, M., Smith, C., & Miller, S., (2017), “K-4 New Social Studies Curriculum” Presented at the Tomball ISD Staff Development Summer Sessions, Tomball, TX
- Walker, M. & Harcrow, D., (2016), “Guided Reading Using the Continuum of Literacy Learning in Grades K-2” Presented at the Tomball ISD District Staff Development Day, Tomball, TX
- Walker, M., (2016), “Book Study: Teaching Reading in Small Groups by Jennifer Serravallo” Presented at Decker Prairie Elementary School, Magnolia, TX

Professional Affiliations

- Member, Texas Association for Literacy Education (TALE) since 2017

- Member, International Literacy Association since 2017

Professional Learning

(Not required or funded by district)

- Texas Association for Literacy Educators (TALE) Annual Conference, March 2019
- International Literacy Association (ILA) Annual Conference, June 2018
- Transforming Our Teaching Through Reading-Writing Connections in K-1, Heinemann On-Demand Course by Regie Routman, May 2017, self-paced
- Guided Math 2.0, Nicki Newton, Summer 2016, self-paced
- Whole-Brain Teaching National Conference. Louisiana College, Summer 2015

Awards

- Finalist for campus Teacher of the Year, 2016 & 2017
- Texas Association for Literacy Education Spotlight Member, Spring 2018

References

Dr. William Rhodes, Principal at Robert & Felice Bryant Elementary, Katy ISD

Work Phone (281) 234-4307 Email WilliamHRhodes@katyisd.org

Whitney LaRocca, Instructional Coach at Robert & Felice Bryant Elementary, Katy ISD

Work Phone (281) 234-4314 Email WhitneyMLarocca@katyisd.org

Letters available upon request