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# Dispatch

P E N N S Y L V A N I A   S T A T E   E D U C A T I O N   A S S O C I A T I O N - E S P

Winter 2021

A publication for education support professionals of PSEA

## Message from your president

### Taking Care of Each Other

**W**e celebrated National ESP Day on Nov. 17 to say thank you for all the work and volunteering that you do for our public schools. This is another challenging school year for everyone in schools. But I know our schools and local unions have outstanding support professionals who are blessed with strong leaders and members. Because of the work we all do, support professionals help make the student's journey through the school day from start to finish more fulfilling. You give parents the confidence that their children are being taken care of during these difficult times because we all make good - no matter how big the challenge.

And there are more challenges

every day, but support professionals continue to drive students to and from school; help kids safely across the street; answer those urgent phone calls and emails; fix internet problems; deliver and feed students nutritious meals; and keep our school buildings clean, safe, and secure. We are always there to lend an ear to a child and give them a pep talk when needed. I know firsthand that you are always proud to make a difference in the lives of so many young people and improve the communities that we serve each day. By working together, we all can win in the game of life.

As we approach the holiday season, let us keep in mind the less fortunate people in our communities by making a little



**Rudy Burruss**  
*ESP Region President*

difference in their lives. Local unions may consider donating time or resources to those charities in need. Our unions have and will always be a big part of communities, especially when people are down on their luck.

Congratulations to Woodland Hills School District Education Support Professional Association member, Delores "Dee" Scales on being named PSEA's 2021 Dolores McCracken Education Support Professional of the Year!

Finally, do not forget to check on your union family during these tough times. I want to wish you and your families a wonderful holiday season and the healthiest of the new year. In 2022, I look forward to seeing some of you in person and hearing from others by any other means of communication. Enjoy the holidays!

### Dates to Remember

ESP Local Audit Certificate due at PSEA Headquarters  
**January 30**

Read Across America Day  
**March 2**

2022 PSEA Spring Leadership Conference  
**March 11-12**

2022 NEA ESP Conference, New Orleans  
**March 25-27**

2022 ESP Region Leadership Conference and House of Delegates, Lancaster Marriott at Penn Square  
**April 22-23**

# Education Support Professional of the Year

**D**olores “Dee” Scales, a paraprofessional and union leader in the Woodland Hills School District in Allegheny County, is the 2021 Dolores McCracken PSEA Education Support Professional of the Year. The announcement came during American Education Week and as schools across the commonwealth prepared to celebrate Education Support Professionals Day, a day to recognize the professionals who work hard to support students and help schools run smoothly.

Scales said she was honored to receive this award and that there was no better time than American Education Week to celebrate Pennsylvania’s hardworking education support professionals.

“I am honored to receive this recognition,” Scales said. “It means a lot because support professionals do a lot of work, not only within our schools but in our communities, as well. Many support professionals live in the communities where they work so they have a great rapport not just with students but with students’ families, too.”

Scales has worked as a paraprofessional in the Woodland Hills School District for the past 26 years, including working with students who have special needs in life skills, learning support, and emotional support classrooms.

She currently works with students in an emotional support classroom in the Dickson Preparatory STEAM Academy.

Colleagues praised Scales’ dedication and ability to draw out the very best in her students.



“She has a special rapport with her 6th through 8th grade students and works closely with them by helping them with their academics and electives,” Diane Crocco, a food service professional with the Colonial School District and fellow PSEA member, wrote in nominating Scales for the award. “She has a strong work ethic and is always willing to go above her duties without hesitation.”

Scales also encourages her students to give back to their community. She and her students have taken part in a program that distributes free turkeys and food to families in need around the holidays.

“The students always find this opportunity to be very rewarding,” Scales said. “My hope is they will continue to give back like this all their lives.”

Scales is very active in her local union, the Woodland Hills Education Support Professionals Association, and PSEA. She serves as vice president and grievance chair in her local and is a go-to source for her colleagues when they have questions about their contract, member benefits, or training opportunities.

Scales serves as president of PSEA’s Education Support Professionals Western Division and sits on PSEA’s Racial Justice and Equity Taskforce, PSEA’s Resolutions Committee, and PSEA’s Credentials and Elections Committee. She is a delegate to both PSEA’s House of Delegates and the National Education Association’s Representative Assembly.

Outside of her school and union roles, Scales is very active in her home community of Braddock. She has volunteered with the “15104 Clean Up Day” to help clean up neighborhoods in her community and the “412 Food Rescue,” which feeds thousands in the Pittsburgh area. She also has taken part in projects to provide backpacks and school supplies to students in need. This year, Scales was elected as an at-large member of the Braddock Borough Council.



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 education support professionals of the  
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## PSEA-ESP Elections

**E**lections for the following officers and committee positions will take place at the ESP Region House of Delegates at the Lancaster Marriott at Penn Square on April 22-23, 2022. Members wishing to run for any of these positions should complete the Statement of Candidacy form. Candidate forms submitted to the Credentials and Elections committee will be published in the March issue of *Dispatch*. The candidates will have their names printed on the election ballots. **Statement of Candidacy is due Feb. 7, 2022.**

- **REGION OFFICERS**  
*Term 2022-24*  
 Vice President  
 Officer-at-Large

- **RESOLUTIONS COMMITTEE**  
*Term 2022-24*  
 Two (2) Committee Members  
 Two (2) Alternate Members
- **LEGISLATIVE COMMITTEE**  
*Term 2022-24*  
 Three (3) Committee Members  
 Three (3) Alternate Members
- **INSTRUCTION AND PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT (IPD)**  
*Term 2022-24*  
 One (1) Committee Member