



\*Information in this document is current as of 6/7/22\*

## Seattle Teacher Residency Application Statements of Purpose for Cohort 11 (2023-2024)

### Submission guidelines for the STR Statements of Purpose:

- Please **create 3 separate documents** to upload to the [UW Graduate School application portal](#)
  - **USE TEMPLATES BELOW AND SAVE AS PDF FILE:**
  - [FirstNameLastName\\_Section1](#)
  - [FirstNameLastName\\_Section2](#)
  - [FirstNameLastName\\_Section3](#)
  - **SAVE AS EXAMPLE: CrystalVisperas\_Section1**
- Include your name in the text or header of each document.
- We recommend that documents are submitted in PDF format.
- Please respond in essay format (include paragraphs when needed).
- Double-space with 12 font size. Consider using fonts such as Times New Roman, Garamond or Calibri.
- Answers should be clear, concise and complete in order to demonstrate your writing proficiency.
- Your statement should demonstrate your commitment to teaching diverse students in Seattle Public Schools.
- Respond to each section and allot up to the maximum words indicated.
- Speak your truth!
- If you have any questions, please email Manager of Recruitment, Crystal Visperas at [crystal@alliance4ed.org](mailto:crystal@alliance4ed.org)

### Section 1 (400 words max)

**Tell us why you want to teach and explain why STR is the best pathway for you to become a teacher.**

You may address any of the following topics:

- Your prior experiences working with children (especially elementary age children and students with diverse identity markers) and how those experiences have prepared you for a teaching career in Seattle Public Schools
- Your capacity and preparation for graduate study at the University of Washington
- Your commitment to the families and communities in Seattle Public Schools
- *\*Your experiences working with people with neurodivergence, people with disabilities or children with disabilities (Special Education Pathway Applicants only)\**

### Section 2 (400 words max)

Seattle Public Schools is committed to ensuring racial equity. The district's [current strategic plan](#) is focused on "disrupting the legacies of racism in our educational system" for "students of color who are furthest from educational justice."

Describe and reflect on experiences you have working with people with backgrounds different from your own (i.e. race, ethnicity, religion, culture, gender identity, sexual orientation, neurodivergence, disability, etc). Please share on how these past experiences will contribute to your development as a culturally responsive and anti-racist educator in Seattle Public Schools.

**\*Section 3 is on the next page**

### Section 3 (400 words max)

Choose one of the quotes below to respond to and put it at the top of the first page of this section (not counted toward word limit).

Explain how the chosen quote relates to your vision of teaching and educational liberation. Make connections and provide specific examples referencing your values and personal story.

Quote 1: "To educate as the practice of freedom is a way of teaching that anyone can learn. That learning process comes easiest to those of us who teach who also believe that there is an aspect of our vocation that is sacred; who believe that our work is not merely to share information but to share in the intellectual and spiritual growth of our students. To teach in a manner that respects and cares for the souls of our students is essential if we are to provide the necessary conditions where learning can most deeply and intimately begin."

hooks, bell. *Teaching to Transgress: Education as the Practice of Freedom*. Routledge: New York, 1994.

Quote 2: "We can educate all children if we truly want to. To do so, we must first stop attempting to quantify their capacity. We must be convinced of their inherent capability, humanity, and spiritual character. We must fight the foolishness proliferated by those who believe that one number can measure the worth and drive the education of human beings or that predetermined scripts can make for good teaching. Finally, we must learn who our children are – their lived cultures; their interests; and their intellectual, political, and historical legacies."

Delpit, Lisa. *Multiplication Is for White People: Raising Expectations for Other People's Children*. The New Press: New York, 2012.

Quote 3: "Abolitionist teaching is the practice of working in solidarity with communities of color while drawing on the imagination, creativity, refusal, (re)membering, visionary thinking, healing, rebellious spirit, boldness, determination, and subversiveness of abolitionists to eradicate injustice in and outside of schools... To begin the work of abolitionist teaching and fighting for justice, the idea of mattering is essential in that you must matter to yourself, to your students, and to your students' community to fight. But for dark people, the very basic idea of mattering is hard to conceptualize when your country finds you disposable."

Love, Bettina. *We Want to Do More Than Survive: Abolitionist Teaching and the Pursuit of Educational Freedom*. Beacon Press: Boston, 2019.

Quote 4: "The vision that kids need to be saved equates to thinking something's wrong with them. There's no teacher who should go into a space thinking that the students are inherently bad. If you are walking into a classroom and see students as victims, you are seeing them as having an inherent flaw that only you can fix... The white savior complex is also problematic because it reinforces the notion that the teacher is the hero. To be a good teacher the effective skill you need is not ego. It's humility. You look at the natural, raw, unpolished beauty of the neighborhood, and if you are looking to save someone, you cannot see that. You are there not as a savior, but as a revolutionary. They must know that this work is also a civil rights issue. Teaching is not "just a job." There's "jobs" on Wall Street, jobs in policy, but in the classroom, education is a responsibility. You have lives in your hands, and it's a very powerful, serious and spiritual thing."

Emdin, Christopher. "Author's Advice to White Teachers in Urban Schools: Drop the "Savior Complex" and Learn from Students." *NEAToday*, <https://www.nea.org/advocating-for-change/new-from-nea/authors-advice-white-teachers-urban-schools-drop-savior-complex>. Accessed 16 May 2022.