

Board of Trustees Vacancy

2023 Candidate Application

Name	Griselda Guevara-Cruz
City	Edmonds
State	WA
Occupation	Migrant Education Program Supervisor, the Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI)
Education	BA, Spanish with Honors, Minors: Sociology & Education, Whitman College. MA, Mexican American Studies, Education Policy, The University of Texas at Austin
Give a brief description of the skills and experience you can bring to the Sno-Isle Libraries Board of Trustees.	<p>*I was the 2016-2017 Congressional Hispanic Caucus Institute Secondary Education Graduate Fellow. I had first-hand experience on policy-making and the legislative process in Capitol Hill.</p> <p>*I am passionate about contributing my time and effort towards diminishing inter-generational poverty, mentoring young people, and engaging my community to engage civically, and in general engage on issues that affect our immediate community/neighborhoods.</p> <p>*I grew up in south Snohomish County. I care about the people in my community.</p> <p>*I am trilingual: Mixteco bajo (primary language), Spanish and English (speak fluently and read/write with high proficiency).</p> <p>*I am an experienced educator.</p> <p>*I have extensive qualitative research experience.</p> <p>*I possess strong critical-thinking skills.</p> <p>I am an indigenous Latina with roots from La Mixteca region in Oaxaca, México. My family members and extended Mixtecan community have been long-time residents of south Snohomish County. I am a proud product of the public schools (Mariner HS). I am a first-generation high school and college graduate; and, the only one with an advanced degree in my family. I grew up in an economically challenged, migrant-farmworker household. I am the daughter of two monolingual indigenous immigrant parents, a first-generation U.S. citizen, and first-generation professional. English and Spanish are both foreign languages learned over my lifetime. I am fluent in Mixteco bajo. I state all these identity markers because they collectively influenced my passion to commit myself to the educational sector and to be in spaces where I can work within to ensure that my family and community's humanity is recognized.</p>

	<p>With this comes challenging myself to be in spaces where I can support building on what it means to have, and be part of, an inclusive and justice-oriented community. I find this position within the Sno-Isle Libraries Board of Trustees to be fitting.</p> <p>Though I am honored to be a very small part of my community's children's educational journeys through my work with the Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction, I want to give my time a little more beyond the educational sector to an organization whose mission I believe in. I was very intentional in coming back home after spending some time in the south and then in the nation's capital to reconnect with my roots and be of service to the community that saw me grow up and influenced tremendously my choices in finding my calling, working with and for young people and their families. One of the things I find immensely important is how we engage minoritized communities—in the ways we acknowledge their humanity and give them space to become leaders. It's equally important for me to acknowledge my blind spots as a U.S. formally-educated, physically-abled indigenous Mexican ciswoman of color and be aware of how I show up in the world. I bear these things in mind because although I come from a marginalized community within a minoritized community, I'm conscious that there are privileges in particular parts of my identity.</p>
<p>What interests you about serving on the Sno-Isle Libraries Board of Trustees?</p>	<p>One of the primary things that are of importance to me is access to information and resources—in the ways knowledge/awareness is distributed. My parents are not literate (in Spanish and English), as such that is a community I am always thinking of—in how they are able to access information (or not). I have an aunt who is physically differently-abled, which leads me to consider access to physical spaces often. Small details matter to me because they make a difference to folks who are frequently not considered in the process of decision-making, no matter how small or big. I do not want under-represented communities to feel like an after-thought. I've had those experiences before, in most of my K-12 educational experience, and it's not a good feeling. I consider it a responsibility to bring up things that are not spoken about—through observing, listening, and proactively taking action. It's important to ask the hard questions: "Who's physically not present in particular spaces?" "Why might that be so?" "How can we proactively, and intentionally, change that?" "Where do we see ourselves going?" "What (more) can we do?" ... These questions are relatively important for me to keep building an inclusive environment—one that centers on creating a sense of belonging—and it is always a collective effort and work that makes things happen.</p>

<p>What other information would you like to include?</p>	<p>I am life-long public library client. Every place I've moved within the United States as an adult, I've made it a priority to be an intentional community member who gets a library card. There is so much that is offered at public libraries and my hope is that more people become informed about the resources available to them, in different languages, in different neighborhoods, and with accessibility that meets their needs. I am a fan of public libraries because when I needed internet or a computer to get my homework done beyond the hours of my public school (early 2000s), my local public library at that time (the Mill Creek Sno-Isle library) is what saved me time and time again. My parents' home is a few blocks away from the Mariner Library. At that time, that library location was nonexistent, and the closest public library (The Everett Evergreen Branch Library) had a policy that did not permit my siblings and I to access a library card because of our zip code (98204), and the street where my parents house was located. I am aware of the changes in place now, but it hurt then not being able to belong in a place that was so essential for success in school. It is my hope that more community members of all ages become comfortable around public libraries and know that it's a place where they can learn, access resources, and a place where they can also take their families and feel a sense of belonging. There is something for everyone. I continue to be grateful for the Mariner Library because there is so much need in that area. Thank you to everyone who made it happen.</p>
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