

Wisconsin Council of Teachers of English

February Board Meeting

Thursday, July 28th, Pyle Center, Madison

Tentative attendees: Linda Barrington, Kathy Nelson, John Pruitt, Amy Harter, Erin Schwane, Jess Gallo, Karen Rigoni, Jacki Martindale, John Zbikowski, Marci Glaus, Abbie Fishman, Lynn Aprill, Pat Osowski

Meeting plans (italicized points are action plan items from last summer's meeting)

1 p.m. Welcome / book sharing

1:15 p.m. Review of finalized by-laws and new job descriptions
Revisit mission and strategic planning

- Question: If we don't have a fall annual membership meeting, are we breaking our by-laws? Kathy suggested that we might want to revise our by-laws to allow for a meeting of the board to be allowed to approve changes to by-laws.
- Lynn April drew our attention to the vacancies on our election slate. She brought up the fact that we have some CESA districts that we have consistently struggled to identify representatives while we have others with an abundance of volunteers. John Zbikowski: Do we need to identify our representation geographically? Ideas: Elect 1/CESA and 12 at-large representatives; elect certain number from urban, suburban, and rural; allow President appoint to vacant positions as exefio (however they wouldn't have voting rights). Erin Schwane suggested we contact Emilie Amundson.
- These ideas will be discussed again at tomorrow's board meeting for consideration before voting on the final version of the by-laws.
- Kathy Nelson shared an idea from the Affiliate Meeting to divide the responsibilities for conference planning. The by-laws currently state that the conference will be planned with the assistance of other officers, therefore it was felt that no further change was needed. The way operationalize that language might change.

2:00 p.m. Two sub-groups -

A. Organization of the Diversity Committee

Notes from summer 2011 meeting: Adding a diversity chair and elementary chair to our board. What do we want a diversity committee to look like/do? NCTE's current statement on diversity focuses on representatives of color. Should WCTE expand that statement to include grade level representation, LGBT, urban/rural/suburban, religion,... Why don't teachers of color engage with this organization? What makes it easy/difficult to engage with your English Language Arts colleagues? What would make our organization more inviting for people of color? Ideas for those in attendance for reasons why people of color are not

involved: teachers of color are often first generation teachers and are not aware of professional networking opportunities. Some are members of religious organizations and get their support there. To promote teachers: have teachers across the state assign students to write about a teacher who has been instrumental in their lives and have teachers write too. Publish them on our website. This could also be what we have WCTE reps share as they connect with other organizations. These could be organized by CESA, published by local papers, made public at SummerFest, ...something to improve the moral of teachers. NCTE National Day of Writing-have Wisconsin Day of Writing that may be on the topic of "A Important Teacher." Get the state Writing Projects to help. Tap into the local unions to fund it. Each CESA district director might host something. Challenge each CESA district to host something in the next year. Kathy didn't want to give a specific prompt, rather leave it to teacher discretion. The group thought that offering prizes. Ideas: Organize a panel at the next conference to address teaching in rural schools to better meet the needs of rural teachers. Survey membership to find out more about the students in all areas of WI, then develop sessions to meet those needs. DPI has a study of demographic information for all areas. Make connections with district level representatives. Host localized workshop to attract teachers of color. OR get some localized organizations to present panels or sessions at conference. Contact student groups on college campuses. Develop PDP sessions. Communicate with SWEA. PEOPLE summer program. Invite the current NCTE president Keith Gilyard to speak at one of our events. UW System Institute on Race and Ethnicity may have contacts to provide assistance. Center for Islamic Study at UWM. Conference topic: How do teachers of English address racism? Next conference, target specific presenters on specific topics to increase diversity. How are we going to connect with all of these organizations-can we do something at these organizations to get our name out?

This committee is headed by an appointed chair. The chair might develop an action plan organized by month to reach goals. President might contact chair (and others) monthly to follow-up on progress.

Action: Contact following: Islamic Center of Milwaukee, Latino Teacher Organization in Milwaukee, MMABSE in Milwaukee, WEAC, Anti-racist*Anti-bias Teaching Conference to offer the writing sessions. Connect with PDP development. Chair: Abbie Fishman appointed for a 3-year term Summer 2011 through summer 2013, with first priority in forming committee. Blurb to appear in the Update. Lynn will send an e-mail to WCTE membership introducing Abbie Fishman as the chair of the committee seeking members.

B. Membership/district director drive

Action items from 2010: Build membership and increase retention

Membership card to send with letters to expired members

Survey of membership at the end of last August/beginning of September

Monthly contact with directors.

Notes from summer 2011 meeting: Where are we at with issuing membership cards? Can we send out reminder notes when membership expires? This is

particularly relevant this year as we will not have a conference, which is the main time that people renew their membership. The group brainstormed ideas to get volunteers for the vacant CESAs positions.

Action: Lynn will send an e-mail to Jackie who will send it out to all District Directors outlining their responsibilities including hosting at least one event sponsored by WCTE each year. District Director send out “Beginning of the School Year” e-mail saying that everyone should do something this year. Then a follow-up e-mail reminder a couple of weeks later.

Jackie will contact everyone on the list compiled by Lynn et al (National Board Certified teachers, NCTE/WCTE presenters, ...) to identify volunteers for the vacant CESA positions.

We are still in need of a 2nd vice president (conference for 2013). The group felt that Lynn should contact: Lisa Arneson and Lynn Frick and Jackie Mabon. Lisa Arneson is currently planning a conference and may be interested in this position. Lynn Frick has experience with WCTE and would also be a good candidate. Jackie has been at several of the last WCTE Board Meetings and would make a good candidate.

Tom continues to handle financial aspects of membership. Consider appointing a membership chair to address recruitment.

4:00 p.m. Adjourn - Check in to hotel/supper on your own

Wisconsin Council of Teachers of English July Board Meeting

Friday, July 28th, Pyle Center, Madison

Humbly submitted by Emily Tymus Ihrke

Present: Emilie Amundson (p.m.), Amy Harter, Emily Ihrke, Linda Barrington, Kathy Nelson, John Pruitt, Jess Gallo, Jacki Martindale (a.m.), John Zbikowski (a.m.), Marci Glaus

Unofficial Notes:

Committee Meetings - 9 a.m. to 10:45 a.m.

(Linda Barrington, floating)

WEJ – Jess Gallo (w/ Marci Glaus)

Convention – Kathy Nelson (w/ Jacki M., John Z., Lynn A., Emily I.)

- See packet Kathy provided (“To Be of Use” followed by questions & resources)
- List of teachers/contacts in each CESA District
- State-wide, year-long essay competition (open to all ages): Making a Difference/Teachers Who’ve Made a Difference; a PR opportunity, FB page, in newspapers, on radio, etc; parents participate, too; awards; climax at our state English gathering in the spring (Arrowhead, free, beautiful, permission granted, in March)
- Each of the district gatherings & the Arrowhead gathering FREE for members; charge/membership dues for non-members
- Funding sources?
- Senator Kohl would come if available
- Envision growth of WCTE this year, “Think Big”
- start w/ district gathering in MKE
- NCTE Chicago: Lynn found a place that’s cheaper (The Inn of Chicago, 162 E. Ohio St.), would require some public transportation, Lynn is happy to coordinate this, would include a gathering of WI teachers (When & Where??? Cocktail party!); can we offer a financial incentive for WCTE members who live in WI/teach in WI, to the 1st 50 people? Pooley Foundation? First 50 we subsidize (reimburse?) \$200? \$100? Can we take \$10K out of the 60k? Kent Williamson says the time is NOW.
- NCTE’s 2020 Vision
- a committee to work on putting together the essay contest (winners could be by district, both student winners and adult winners): meet at Kathy’s house, poolside? Lynn, Linda, Jacki, John
- MEETING: August 10th, at 4:00, Happy Hour (at this meeting, Linda B. can’t be there but would like the group to decide on a name for the “thing”; she will then put together a press packet)

Intellectual Freedom – John Pruitt (w/ Amy Harter)

“Intellectual Freedom/SLATE/Standing Committee against Censorship”

- participate in NCTE’s Literacy Education Advocacy Day or Month
- speak out about NCTE’s positions and how these positions look in practice (media, legislators, public meetings, social events)
- contact classroom teachers with participation ideas
- involve more students in English Ed programs
- look actively for state challengers (maybe through collaboration with WLA’s Intellectual Freedom Round Table or with WSRA)
- nominate people for the award
- work with other state organizations against censorship (NCAC)
- campus-level National Day on Writing

Last summer’s initiatives (2010) to consider during these meetings:

Writing and soliciting others to write lesson plans linked to the new Common Core?

Linking our Update to NCTE?

Working on LGB and Core Standards?

Elections?

Action plan on adding to our website/using NCTE resources for affiliates?

Regularly Scheduled Board Meeting – “official” notes

Meeting called to order at 11:01 a.m. by President Lynn Aprill.

- I. Approval of the Agenda
Motion: Agenda approved. Motion: Jacki M. Second: John P. Motion passed.

- II. Approval of February’s Board Meeting Minutes
(CORRECTIONS PROPOSED: j.1—usage, wrong *its*; j.2—typo, should be *not* instead of *no*)
Motion: Minutes approved pending two changes. Motion: Kathy N. Second: Jess G. Motion passed.

- III. Treasurer’s Report – Tom Scott in absentia
Report attached to agenda. Checking balance of \$19,075.94. **Motion: Treasurer’s Report approved.** Motion: Jacki M. Second: Jess G. Motion passed.

- IV. Committee Reports
 1. Awards – *vacant*—Lynn is working on finding possible replacements for Carol.
 2. Election – Lynn Aprill—Donna, Lynn and Jacki are getting the slate ready; election to be held September 1st, 2011.

3. District Directors - Jacki Martindale—DDs will have lots to do, “if Kathy has her way.”
4. WCEL – Linda Barrington—CEL convention takes place from Sunday through Tuesday (connected to NCTE, immediately following); Linda wants to promote CEL membership in WI. She is reaching out to all sorts of people to encourage their attendance and membership.
5. Professional Issues – *vacant*—If you know someone who might be interested, contact Lynn.
6. Publications

- a. Website – John Zbikowski—1. Given the charge of consulting a professional web site designer, John got a proposal for a new website from Steve Tessner/Tall Guy Productions: \$2,200 for redesign in Dreamweaver (\$75/hour). The recommended strategy is a simpler re-design, using an amateur so that it would be cheaper. Discussion followed: Linda B. feels \$2k is a bargain (as opposed to 10s of thousands of dollars); Amy H. concurs, citing the “youth” perspective. Lynn and Jess G. agree. What about maintaining a site that’s created in Dreamweaver? The CMS idea came up a while ago, and we still don’t think that it’s for us. Jacki Martindale mentioned her son. John mentioned that he would help the “new website editor person” during a transition period. Could we advertise for this volunteer position in the Update? 2. What about hosting the site? For \$5.95/month we can move it off UWW (which has been free for over 12 years), to Network Solutions, which would free-up our content options (political statements, etc.). Our domain name is up for renewal in August; we will renew it. Lynn is going to write a letter thanking UWW for hosting our site for many years. 3. Content related to teaching WI authors is not available on the Internet. John, Ellen Last, Marti M. and the Lorine Neidecker (LN) Foundation are proposing to get materials online. What about a unit-plan-writing contest, for lesson plans related to teaching LN? What about an online literary map, related to NCTE centennial? Lynn is contacting three web designers in the Green Bay area about an online literary map. It would be good to have some “members-only content” (like the literary map, LN lesson plans, etc.). John will share formal proposal with officers.

Motion: We entrust John with up to \$3,000 to update WCTE’s online presence. Motion: Kathy N. Second: Jess G. Motion passed.

- b. Update – Linda Barrington—Linda would like to create a one-page master WCTE calendar. Planning for the next issue of the Update is well underway; it will come out in September 2011. It will remind people to watch for the election email with the link to electronic ballot.

- c. *WEJ* – Jess Gallo—Jess is urging us to become reviewers; the same people are getting tapped over and over.
- d. Facebook for Wisconsin Council of Teachers of English—Kathy Nelson—In the Update we’ll have a call for a new Facebook Editor.

Break for boxed lunch - 12:00 p.m. - 12:45 p.m.

Continue with board meeting - 12:45 p.m.

- 7. Convention – Kathy Nelson—Given the current political/economic context, Kathy doesn’t expect many WI teachers to attend NCTE in Chicago; it’s very expensive. WCTE is hosting a spring gathering for Wisconsin Teachers; it will be held Friday, March 9th at Arrowhead High School. (Might a Saturday be better?) We will charge a nominal fee (\$5?), or membership perhaps. The day will be a celebration of our writing initiative. Maybe it will be a Wisconsin Day of Writing. Awards will be given; political figures will be invited. This gathering will have a Board Meeting attached, perhaps the night before. (This meeting would be in place of the annual February meeting.) People are welcome to stay at Kathy’s house, which is 3 minutes from Arrowhead.
- 8. Archives – Emily Tymus Ihrke—Emily is looking for a new home for the WCTE archive. Linda noted that Mount Mary College Library is being renovated. Sister Mary Hester Valentine was a professor there, and she was a founding member of WCTE; Linda B. is also currently working at MMC. Emily will follow up.
- 9. Intellectual Freedom – John Pruitt—John shared NCTE’s recent work on intellectual freedom and mentioned other groups (ALA, WSRA, etc.) that have similar goals. Lynn provided an overview of WCTE’s swift and far-reaching response to Wisconsin’s Budget Repair Bill. John questioned the central purpose of WCTE’s Intellectual Freedom. Discussion followed. John is going to craft a draft of a WCTE position statement on intellectual freedom.
- 10. Report on Diversity and Membership meetings. John will also ask WSRA to add WCTE to their online list of “Resources that will help fight censorship.”
- 11. Other—*Diversity Committee*—Abbie Fishman has agreed to chair WCTE’s Standing Committee on Diversity. *Membership Committee*—Tom will need to get notice to members whose membership will lapse this fall. We will not have our traditional fall convention, so we will need to have a plan for not losing members.

V. Officer Reports

- 1. Second Vice President - Jess Gallo—Planning is underway for the October 2012 convention; Jess is working with several UW-Madison professors. The theme will be related to diversity, and the tentative location is Madison. The new Education building might be a possibility (free?). Save-the-date postcards should

go out in the spring, to all 300-level license holders. Jess will add at least one K12 teacher to her planning committee. Emily Ihrke volunteered.

2. First Vice President – Kathy Nelson—Kathy is planning a writing contest; NCTE has a portion of its website called “Gallery of Writing”; she will explore.

3. President – Lynn Aprill— 1. Lynn has worked on two recent DPI initiatives: one involving the possibility of earning English credit in some business courses; the other involving a birth-grade 12 literacy project. 2. Lynn considered submitting WCTE for affiliate of the year through NCTE, but determined that we didn’t meet all of the criteria. She is hoping, though, that we will be able to apply for the award next year. Lynn shared the criteria for the award. It will be due July 2012. Lynn has volunteered to collate our application for next year. 3. Lynn is pursuing the development of an online literary map. She is hoping to apply for the Pooley Award, hoping those funds could bring the online map to fruition. Lynn’s hope is that the online map would be a work in progress, where overtime it would evolve.

VI. DPI Liaison – Emilie Amundson (handout provided)

--Emilie is no longer serving as the ELA consultant as she’s been promoted. She will continue to work at the DPI, overseeing all curricular areas. The ELA consultant position will be posted. Emilie is looking for WCTE’s help in creating the most highly qualified applicant pool possible. Lynn would like WCTE to have a presence at the screening/interviewing/hiring table.

--The DPI has put together a good website on budget implications:

<http://www.dpi.wi.gov/pb/index.html>

-- Keep our eyes open regarding the 2013 State Superintendent election. (Emilie has been very proud of and impressed by Tony Evers’ work this year.) Do note that our constitutional right to elect the State Superintendent could be removed through one stroke of legislation. Governor Walker is taking a hands-on approach to education. Watch the news for more information about the joint DPI/Governor School Accountability Planning.

--Governor’s Blue Ribbon Read to Lead Task Force is meeting right now. A “reading war” has been bubbling up in WI over the last two years. Direct instruction is being hailed as the answer for all kids, according to the Wisconsin Reading Coalition (whose members make up 7 of the 14 positions on the Read to Lead Task Force). This group is questioning the work of the ELA Leadership Team (which includes Tom Scott and Erin Schwane). CESA 7 is working on a K12 scope and sequence (framework) for how to teach the Common Core state standards; CESA 7 is funding the entire program, and NCTE has been involved. It’s an integrated approach to the Common Core standards, involving essential questions and modules; it’s a structure or a scaffold that’s somewhat intuitive for teachers. DPI is hoping to make this tool free and available to all Wisconsin schools (somewhat similar to the program called *Align by Design*, which is NOT free, but is “sweeping the I-94 corridor”, or maybe it’s more like *Project Runway?*). Do NOTE: the Wisconsin Reading Coalition does not like this CESA 7 project. DPI has not signed a contract with CESA, but it’s hoping to. Either way, this tool will be available in January. Could the CESA 7 person (Claire Wick) speak at the October 8th WCTE Green Bay district meeting?

- Front matter for the Common Core Standards will include “Wisconsin’s Principles for Teaching and Learning” (which have “Tom Scott’s stamp all over them”—handout given) and a research brief.
- Disciplinary Area Literacy initiative—What do you do in your discipline to access deeper and richer content? (different from content-area reading—more exciting! new!) Jess Gallo has been serving on this team. More soon.

VI. Old Business

Revision of Bylaws—

--The question about geographic distribution of District Directors (24 in all, 2 from 12 separate districts)—much discussion... Decision made: ADDITION TO language of Article III, Section 2: *In the event that a District Director position cannot be filled, the position may be filled by a member from an alternate district. When a District Director at Large is needed, one shall be appointed by the Executive Committee.*

--Another question about whether we need to wait until an annual meeting to vote on bylaws—Could we vote on changing them during a board meeting? Might that be too quick and undemocratic? Or is efficiency a priority?

VII. New Business

1. A WCTE banner/poster for NCTE in November, related to the centennial (2 ft. x 3 ft.), Linda will work on this. NCTE is also interested in archival material; Emily will look into it and determine whether we will send something to be displayed. **Motion: We will give Linda B. \$100 to create a centennial poster for our affiliate that we can use for the rest of the year.** Motion: Kathy N. Second: John P. Motion passed.

2. **Motion: We will give \$725 for CEL Liason (currently Linda Barrington) to attend NCTE.** Motion: Jess G. Second: John P. Motion passed.

IX. For the Good of the Order

--Globe Theater productions of Henry IV Parts 1 and 2 in August, and Henry 8 in September—watch local theaters

--Kia Richmond’s new Facebook page and NCTE Ning on YA Lit

--NCTE movie about history of the Council

--Adjournment. **Motion to adjourn:** Kathy N. Second: Jess G. Motion passed.

The meeting adjourned at 3:01 p.m.