



# WCTE NEWS

January 30, 2012

... from the desk of your president

## Greetings!

Hope the rest of you have come up for air refreshed after first semester. I am and eager to bring together our state's English teachers and WCTE membership for a GATHERING March 9-10 to learn just what Wisconsin English Teachers NEED to Know. As you may recall, we encouraged our membership to attend our Centennial Celebration last fall rather than compete with a state convention. We've pulled membership together for local district workshops, like the upcoming one in Madison. But there's so much happening in our field, we felt a need for a state-wide meeting this spring.

Thus, you are welcome to GATHER, not at an expensive hotel, rather reasonably at my high school on Friday after lunch—allowing for travel time, lunch on your own or over meetings, and so as not to disrupt too much of your school week. In case you missed her at nations, we have Carol Jago bringing us up to speed on the implementation of Common Core Standards. We've worked time into the session for hands-on follow-up discussions. After all that serious work, Milwaukee Comedy Sportz will adjust our attitudes before we recess for a wine and cheese social at a local art gallery. A block of rooms at two price points are available for you. If overnight accommodations just aren't in your budget, just give me a call for a special invitation to a slumber party at the Nelson's. I don't want finances to stop you from attending!

Saturday morning, we'll return to Arrowhead High School with Rebecca Sipe sharing her latest writing strategies linked to the Common Core. And should you have a reluctant learner or two, she may have just the help you've been looking for! Emilie Amundson has an important introduction and a DPI update. Two breakout sessions follow with choices for everyone—Rtl, more writing, reading, computerized grammar instruction, theater, AP and ACT. You'll be done and on your way to enjoy the rest of the weekend or extend your stay and enjoy what Milwaukee has to offer.

## Rooms for the Gathering:

DELUXE The Delafield Hotel: Check out the amenities and pamper yourself here at a special (lower than the state rate) for only \$129. Mention WCTE when making your reservations at 262 646-1600 or 866 430-2692 before February 21<sup>st</sup>, <http://www.thedelafieldhotel.com>

STANDARD: The Holiday Inn Express: Call before Feb. 18<sup>th</sup> 262 646-7077 to catch the state rate of \$70 for these newly updated rooms.

<http://www.hiexpress.com/hotels/us/en/delafield/dlfi/hoteldetail>

SLUMBER PARTY: Nelson's home just minutes from Arrowhead High School. Email me if you want to reserve a "free" space then bring your own towel and sleeping bag to "camp out" in the comforts of home!

Arrowhead has been working closely with CESA 1 trainers over the last two years. Kelly Schweigel, who presented at the Milwaukee fall workshop in conjunction with The Milwaukee Alliance of English Teachers, has created a one-page information sheet we're going to use to introduce high school parents to RtI. I'm attaching it for those of you who may still be a bit fuzzy on the topic. The chair of our committee will be sharing AHS's RtI story and lead discussion to fill in any missing details or answer questions you may still have.

### SB In-puT Needed ASAP Before Noon Thursday, Feb. 9

Last Friday after school, I opened an email from the DPI Office of Educational Accountability. Laura Pinsonneault invited us to review a portion of their work, which I have done and completed the survey on your behalf. You are welcome to respond individually as well. They are on a tight deadline and so this must be completed by noon Thursday.

From her email: On Thursday, January 26, our contractor Measured Progress and ETS held a webinar to describe the item specifications documents that require state review. This is an iterative process. SMARTER Balanced work group members and K-12 member state leads did an earlier round of review this month and we are now enlarging the circle to include teachers, LEA staff, the vendor community, and others. The revised documents are available currently at <http://www.k12.wa.us/SMARTER/Resources.aspx>. (Under the SBAC 04 Showcase 2 header)

We are seeking feedback through an online survey, also available at <https://www.surveymonkey.com/s/SBACItemTaskSpecsSurvey>

**Tech Tip : Scribblar**  
**Site: [www.scribblar.com](http://www.scribblar.com)**

### What is it?

- **Collaborative, multi-user whiteboard**
- **Upload files (ppt, doc, pdf, and jpg) which can be downloaded by other users**
- **Operates similar to SMART Notebook**
- **Chat using text or voice**

**What can I do with it in my English classroom?**

- **Concept mapping**
- **Comparisons → Venn Diagrams**
- **Group projects so students can collaborate outside of the classroom**
- **Class projects, each student or group could be responsible for their own page**
- **Review sessions the night before tests**
- **Peer or teacher reviews**
  - **Creates a fluid, evolving discussion about content and student work**
  - **Creates two-way conversation between student and teacher**
- **Vocabulary practice**

Thanks to Christina Bower, AHS media/tech specialist, for this suggestion! If you have a tech tip to share, please send it to me to share with other English teachers throughout our state.

**Final Reminder:** Just take a break from grading papers. Treat yourself—You deserve it!

Copy THE GATHERING information and share it with your department colleagues and friends from other schools. Reach out to one another and share rides to the first Gathering of Wisconsin English teachers. I promise you an enlightening time and a whole lot of fun! You won't want to miss this, so pass the word along so others won't either.