

## **Elementary Section Steering Committee**

*The Elementary Section Steering Committee (<http://www.ncte.org/elem>) is responsible for the governance of NCTE's Elementary Section.*

Our committee has pursued the following initiatives since NCTE 2015:

### **OUTSTANDING EDUCATOR OF THE YEAR:**

In keeping with the theme of advocacy for NCTE 2016, our committee selected Bess Altwerger as Outstanding Educator of the Year. Bess has a long history of activism in public education, including the Opt Out Movement in response to the dominance of high stakes testing. For the Elementary Get-Together, we are organizing a panel discussion, focusing on advocacy, inviting table discussions and interaction. Our goal is for all participants to leave with a "call to action" plan.

As part of this process, we organized an interview with Bess for *Language Arts* magazine and Bess's featured session at NCTE 2016.

The nomination process continues to be open to all elementary section members to enable a more participatory, democratic process. Nominations now close at the end of the Get-Together. The committee, of course, will then vote on the nominations we receive.

### **MEET THE ELEMENTARY SECTION SESSION AT NCTE 2016:**

Our session also focuses on advocacy. Specifically, we are addressing the need for diverse books in schools. We have invited two outstanding Mexican American children's book authors, Duncan Tonatiuh and Carmen Tafolla, who will discuss their purposes for creating dual language books celebrating Hispanic culture. We will then showcase work in several New York City public elementary schools that participated in author studies and show how books by these authors impacted students' literacy lives.

### **DONALD GRAVES AWARD WINNER:**

We selected our 2016 Donald Graves Award Winner, who will receive the award at our Get-Together. In addition, we organized a special session featuring our present and past Donald Graves Award Winners with Ralph Fletcher serving as discussant.

### **COMMITTEE WORK and ADVOCACY WORK:**

We have two initiatives prior to NCTE 2016. The first is our work with *Language Arts*. Specifically, in addition to the Outstanding Educator of the Year interview, we now coordinate an additional column from the Donald Graves Award Winner focusing on his/her writing pedagogy. Second, we are working with the editorial team to create a *Language Arts* award for outstanding feature article. Third, we are in conversation with the new editorial team to coordinate our presence and participation in online and social media networks.

Our second initiative is to consolidate the NOW Message with the monthly e-newsletter to elementary school memberships. Our intention is to issue an e-newsletter once/month that goes to all Elementary Section members. Each monthly e-newsletter will focus on a theme, and connect to other NCTE channels of communication and resources. Each member of the ESSC will be editor of the month for one to two turns/annually. We are now waiting on new initiatives from the Presidential Team, and hope to launch this e-newsletter this upcoming fiscal year with the launching of the new NCTE website.

Finally, we have chosen our next ESSC chairperson and are transitioning to four new members of our ESSC team.

We are holding our next virtual meeting on October 4<sup>th</sup> via Zoom. Goals will be to plan our work at NCTE 2016 and to begin implementing our other projects and initiatives listed above.

**Ted Kesler, Chair**

## **Middle Level Section Steering Committee**

*The Middle Level Section Steering Committee (<http://www.ncte.org/middle>) is responsible for the governance of NCTE's Middle Level Section.*

Throughout the past year the Middle Level Section Steering Committee (MLSSC) members have contributed their service to NCTE and the Middle Level Section in three ways:

1. planning the Middle Level sponsored sessions for the annual convention,
2. soliciting nominees and selecting the winners of the Richard W. Halle award and the Outstanding Middle Level Educator Award; and
3. considering a variety of ways our section can promote and support the shared vision of NCTE.

### **Election of New Committee Members**

Our MLSSC meetings held in Minneapolis, MN. New members Dr. James Blasingame (Arizona State University; Tempe, AZ) and Shanetia Clark (Salisbury University; Salisbury, MD) joined our meetings.

At the 2016 Annual Convention in Atlanta, we are delighted to welcome Justin Stygles (Guy E Rowe Elementary; Norway, ME) and to welcome back Frances Chamberlin (Tracy, CA) to our committee.

### **2016 Conference Planning**

The Middle Level Get Together will bring together a number of dynamic personalities to help us kick off the Middle Level Section Annual Convention Program on advocacy we are calling #WhyMiddleMatters. The Meet-up will include appearances by Rich and Sandra Wallace, Antero Garcia and Laurie Halse Anderson. As you look through the conference program you might also see the Middle Level Section has identified a few sessions that will serve as anchor points for our program in Atlanta. These special sessions are:

- Why Middle Matters: A Conversation on Powerful Teaching for our Quirky, Amazing Middle Schoolers* brings together a number of well-known middle-level pedagogy specialists who will share their insights on the wonderful work of teaching middle level learners.
- Why Middle Matters: Teachers Voices* is a roundtable session highlighting the work of middle school teachers who have been identified as outstanding educators by their local NCTE affiliates.
- Why Middle Matters: Teachers as Writers* is a workshop session hosted by the new *Voices from the Middle* editorial team to share with attendees how they can contribute to the journal.
- Why Middle Matters: STUDENTS Advocate for Next Steps in Middle Level Teaching and Learning* is a roundtable session that will be led by middle school students from the Atlanta area.
- The Middle Mosaic* will be the culminating event of the 2016 Middle Level Section conference program. This dynamic session will bring together the many conversations and the range of themes shared in the entire Middle Level convention program.

And we are also excited to announce our Middle Level Luncheon keynote address will be delivered by Neal Schusterman.

### **Awards and Recognition**

The 2016 Richard A. Halle Award Winner is Laura Robb, author of many books including *Teaching Reading in the Middle School* (Second Edition, 2010, Heinemann).

The 2015 NCTE Middle Level Educator Award recipient is Kristine Shurina from Bridgewater-Raritan Middle School; Bridgewater, NJ.

***Voices from the Middle* Journal.**

Earlier this year *Voices from the Middle* was given a remarkable redesign under the direction of our new editors Dr. Shelbie Witte and Dr. Sara Kajder. The new editors have also launched a new middle level podcast that speaks directly to middle level teachers. I invite you to take a look at the upcoming themes they have selected for the journal posted here: <http://www.ncte.org/journals/vm/call>. And take a listen to the NCTE Voices from the Middle podcast in your Apple iTunes Store.

The committee would like to extend a special thanks to outgoing editors Doug Fisher, Nancy Frey, and Diane Lapp for their remarkable service to NCTE and the Middle Level Section.

**Future Plans**

I will be cycling off the MLSSC this year and passing on the section leadership to Mr. Chris Lehman (New York, NY). Chris is a remarkable person who brings dynamic creativity and leadership to the Middle Section and the larger organization.

It has been a true pleasure to serve NCTE as a section chair and a member of the Executive Committee. All that we have seen and all that we have accomplished together these past two years... In retrospect this experience has been truly remarkable. The tears, blood and sweat we have spilled together have softened the ground where hope, joy, and prosperity will grow.

**Matt Skillen, Chair**

### **Secondary Section Steering Committee**

*The Secondary Section Steering Committee (<http://www.ncte.org/second>) is responsible for the governance of NCTE's Secondary Section.*

- We have continued to brainstorm ideas to further as an ongoing effort to provide reliable and monthly take-away lessons for secondary teachers. Various initiatives have experienced a great reception from teachers, and as a result, Section members are monitoring and contributing more to the Secondary Level and Teaching and Learning Connected Communities.
- We are inviting Section members to contribute to *HSM columns*.
- We will ask a number of interested Section members to review proposals for the 2017 Convention
- Our initiative to inform Secondary Level of meetings and conferences of CEL and Whole Language via CC and blog is ongoing, and we hope has helped in attendance.
- We will continue to encourage teachers to take part in Advocacy Day.
- We will reach out to the Affiliates with invitations to contribute *Engage Now!* lessons and featured updates.
- We continue to promote ongoing conversations about what we mean in terms of literacy education.
- We are seeking to publish more information in our section of the CC.
- We are seeking ways to enrich current assessments and promote collaboration.
- We continue to focus on the relationship among NCTE, teachers, and students.
- The committee is working to feature teacher stories on the Connected Community.
- We are working to connect with pre-service teachers and new members to NCTE.

**Katie Greene, Chair**

## **College Section Steering Committee**

*The College Section Steering Committee (<http://www.ncte.org/college>) is responsible for the governance of NCTE's College Section.*

### **NCTE CSSC/CCCC Task Force on Hiring Practices**

This Task Force has completed its charge; the statement is now online. Feedback has been mostly positive, particularly on the section about hiring WPA positions.

### **Position Statement on Competency-Based Education/Prior Learning Assessment**

We continue to work toward a position statement on Competency-Based Education (CBE) – also known as Prior Learning Assessment (PLA), Credit for Prior Learning (CPL), and Prior Learning Assessment and Recognition (PLAR). We are still grappling with the question about whether this should be a “here’s our opinion of CBE” statement or more of a “here’s how it should be carried out” statement, along the lines of the “Statement Dual Credit/Concurrent Enrollment Composition: Policy and Best Practices,” which is an excellent model.

I have sought additional expertise for help with this statement:

| Name                    | Institution                   | Relevant Expertise               |
|-------------------------|-------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| Lauren Rosenberg        | New Mexico State University   | adult literacy                   |
| Alexis Hart             | Allegheny College             | student veterans and composition |
| Michelle Navarre Cleary | DePaul University             | CBE                              |
| Cathy Leaker            | Empire State College          | CBE                              |
| Heather Ostman          | Westchester Community College | CBE                              |

Holly Hassel, who's on the CSSC, has an article coming out in *WPA* in December about competency-based education, so she will also be an excellent asset to this process. When we had the summer Executive Committee meeting, I shared this project with the other section chairs in a breakout session, and we realized that it would be a good idea to have someone from the Secondary Section (because we're writing about credit for First-Year Writing), and possibly someone from the Middle Section as well, involved in creating this statement, even just to read a later draft and give comments.

One problem we've discovered is that *within our field*, opinions of CBE/PLA are somewhat polarized. Some scholars who have written about it have maintained that we must embrace CBE/PLA, and that if we don't, we are missing an opportunity as a field. They recommend that we structure the statement in two parts:

- one part would give a position about CBE/PLA for credit for first-year writing courses in particular
- the other part would give a position about the role that writing faculty can play in CBE/PLA credit for courses in other disciplines (for instance, when a portfolio of writing is required to demonstrate knowledge in a subject)

Proponents of CBE/PLA say that we could design a course for the composition of such portfolios. The critics seem to outnumber the proponents, so the CSSC is in a rather difficult position: not wanting to dismiss work that our colleagues have done, work that has been published in top-tier journals, but not wanting to embrace CBE/PLA either.

In any case, the process continues. Carolyn Calhoon-Dillahunt has approved a session, from her Program Chair-sponsored sessions, which she's calling Cultivate and Think Tank, about CBE/PLA. I have brought together several scholars who have published about CBE/PLA, and I imagine we'll have a lively discussion. This session should also be a good opportunity to hear from the membership, as those who will want to attend will be people who a.) don't know much about CBE/PLA and are looking to learn more -- we will be able to find out what their particular questions and concerns are; and b.) know a bit about CBE/PLA and are assisting with, or advocating against, CBE/PLA initiatives

at their own institutions -- we will be able to ascertain what their needs are. This feedback will surely help us with our position statement.

#### **Increased Collaboration with MLA**

Our MLA liaison, Mya Poe, is using Anne Ruggles Gere's election as Second Vice President of the Modern Language Association as an occasion to have a larger discussion about English Studies that involves collaboration among NCTE, CCCC, and MLA.

Two panels are scheduled for MLA:

346. Writing Studies at the MLA: The Past and Future of English Studies, is scheduled to take place at 3:30+4:45 p.m. on 06-JAN-17 in 203B, Pennsylvania Convention Center.

speakers: Melissa Ianetta and Carolyne King (Univ. of Delaware), Deborah Holdstein (Columbia College Chicago), Anne Geller (St. Johns)  
respondent, Anne Ruggles Gere (Univ. of Michigan)

62. Locating the Rhetorics of Writing Studies Today: A Discipline No Longer on the Periphery of English, is scheduled to take place at 1:45+3:00 p.m. on 05-JAN-17 in 203B, Pennsylvania Convention Center.

Sandra Jamieson and Elizabeth Kimball (Drew University), Christie Toth (University of Utah), Darin Jensen (Metropolitan Community College), William FitzGerald (Rutgers Camden)

#### **Richard Ohmann Award**

The Richard Ohmann Award Committee has selected a winner for this year's award. The 2016 winner of the Richard Ohmann Award is Steve Lamos, Associate Professor and Associate Director of the Program for Writing and Rhetoric at the University of Colorado-Boulder, for his article (78.4) "Toward Job Security for Teaching-Track Composition Faculty: Recognizing and Rewarding Affective-Labor-in-Space." The selection committee found Lamos' article to be timely and illuminating for many audiences. Lamos offers a thoughtful analysis of a prevalent problem in the conversation about labor in composition pedagogy: the terrible working conditions of most composition teachers. Through his discussion on "affective labor," Lamos helps readers both inside and outside of the academy appreciate what writing teachers do in the writing classroom, which he identifies as "nurturance, supportiveness, interdependence, and nondominance" [76]). Lamos not only addresses the problem, but he also theorizes a way forward that will build dignity and a professional work environment for composition teachers. Through his concrete suggestions for creating change, Lamos conveys a persistent hopefulness for composition teachers and the field. Special thanks go to Isabel Baca, who served as Chair of the Ohmann Award Committee this year and did an outstanding job.

#### **CSSC Meetings**

The CSSC will be meeting October 19 via Zoom to do some planning. We have tended to spend a considerable amount of time in our face-to-face meetings on matters like assembling subcommittees and thinking of people to ask to be reviewers and coaches of proposals. We want to get a good bit of that done in this Zoom meeting, so that we can devote more face-to-face time to complex projects. Our agenda for the Zoom meeting is:

1. forming a committee for the Richard Ohmann Award for next year
2. convention planning for St. Louis in 2017: we need to choose a College Celebration speaker and think of some good ideas for College Section-sponsored panels
3. move forward on the position statement on competency-based education/prior learning assessment
4. gather volunteers to review proposals for the 2017 conference
5. gather volunteers to serve as coaches for the 2017 conference
6. ideas for ways to collaborate more with our colleagues in K-12
7. new ideas, new initiatives, etc.

#### **Changes in Membership**

Two members of our committee have had to step down. Asao Inoue, Assistant Chair of the CSSC, was elected Assistant Chair of CCCC, and under NCTE rules, he may not hold both positions. We appreciate his work on the CSSC and look forward to supporting him in his leadership role in CCCC. Jacqueline Rhodes recently changed institutions and is busy getting familiar with her new university. We appreciate her work on the CSSC and warmly congratulate her on her new position. Replacing Asao and Jackie will be Sara Webb-Sunderhaus of Indiana University-Purdue University Fort Wayne and Toby Emert of Agnes Scott College. Welcome Sara and Toby!

**Clancy Ratliff, Chair**