

ESSC Member Activities and Responsibilities

Attend Meetings and Functions

- Begin serving term officially after “Magic Hour” (noon on Sunday during the Annual Convention) in the year of their election.
- Attend the Annual Convention during the years of their tenure and participate in section activities during convention week (see events below). \$50 per diem is paid for each day that section functions are scheduled and attended at the convention (maximum of \$150).

Thursday	ESSC Meeting	8:00 am–4:00 pm
Thursday	ESSC Get-Together	4:30–6:00 pm
Saturday	Books for Children Luncheon	12:30–2:30 pm
Monday	ESSC Meeting / Luncheon	9:00 am–5:00 pm

- Serve on the Board of Directors, and attend its meeting as a representative of the Elementary Section. The BOD traditionally meets on Friday evening during the Annual Convention.
- Encouraged, though not required, to attend NCTE regional meetings or professional development events in your area.

Participation in Steering Committee Activities

- Have an e-mail account and respond in a timely way to messages and duties communicated on-line. Much section business is handled through electronic communication.
- In January, participate in planning for the upcoming Annual Convention by screening/reviewing session proposals online.
- Contribute to and participate in ESSC projects.
- Contribute to and/or edit School Talk, a publication of the ESSC.
- Participate in the election of the ESSC Chair and the Assistant Chair, who become members of the NCTE Executive Committee. All elected ESSC members have the option not to run for the positions.
- Respond to inquiries and assume tasks as requested by the ESSC Chair in a timely manner. Costs of postage, photocopying, and an occasional phone call in connection with these duties will be reimbursed by the Council.
- Participate in or lead a subcommittee or task force created by the ESSC to further its work/mission.

Encourage Membership

- Support growth in the Elementary Section membership by inviting colleagues to join the Council.
- Read its publications (particularly Language Arts and School Talk).
- Attend its conventions and meetings, and participate in its programs.

Encourage Leadership

- Identify and support potential new leaders, especially teachers from underrepresented groups.
- Recommend candidates to both the NCTE Nominating Committee and the Elementary Section Nominating Committee to help assure quality in the continuing governance of the Council.

Exercise Leadership in Shaping NCTE Programs, Publications, and Professional Development Offerings

- Assist NCTE staff and leadership in identifying service/professional development opportunities at your institution or in your region. Serve in a planning or presenting role for some events.
- Notify the section of key education trends or issues in your region that could be addressed by Council publications, programs, or policy development.

- Bring to the section committee's attention any matters of general concern to members of the section or to the profession at large, gather pertinent documents and other information to enrich discussion of those concerns, and prepare to recommend courses of action for the section committee or, via the Chair, for the NCTE Executive Committee to consider.
- Serve as a liaison to other NCTE programs, subgroups, etc., when invited, but not when such invitations involve conflicts with section meetings and other responsibilities outlined above.
- Serve as members of an informal board of the section journal—Language Arts—and advise the editors on matters of content and concerns; new editor search committees include members of the respective steering committees.
- Under Council policy, elected section committee members must resign from posts that conflict with section meetings or duties (e.g., commission membership).

The Role of NCTE Section Committees in the Strategic Governance Process

Since 2004, the NCTE Executive Committee has devoted considerable time and resources to establishing positions and goals for the Council through a strategic governance process. It is a knowledge-driven process that relies upon sustained inquiry in understanding the dimensions of the most important questions confronting our organization, and yielding clear outcome goals that the Council will work to achieve over a 2–5 year time frame. Each inquiry is framed by four core questions:

1. What do we know or believe about how this issue influences/is perceived by our members and stakeholders?
2. What do we know or believe about demographic, economic, governmental, professional, and competitive trends that may influence our position on the issue?
3. What do we know or believe about our own capacity to act on the issue, and how authoritative we are perceived to be by those we seek to influence?
4. What are the ethical dimensions of our choices—who will benefit or be hindered by alternative courses we may select?

Section committees have a vital role to play at three distinct phases of the strategic governance process. First, they may choose to nominate topics for the EC to take up in a given year; this decision is typically made by the NCTE presidential team during a planning retreat in early September, so it is best to forward suggestions to the President-Elect or Executive Director in late summer. Second, they may have expertise to share with the Executive Committee issue manager or staff liaison during the investigatory stage when research is gleaned to shape answers to the four questions listed above. Finally, they have an essential role to play in helping the Council achieve the outcomes designated by the Executive Committee. This may come through offering advice to staff regarding program/initiative implementation, by discussing initiatives and positions established by the Council with influential colleagues, and by visiting education policymakers and elected officials to acquaint them with positions we have established.

Throughout the process, section steering committee members' most direct means of influence is through the Section Chair. The Chair is a voting participant on the Executive Committee and can actively shape the outcome goals established by that body. S/he can also be relied upon to explain the status of deliberations about an issue, or the rationale for positions arrived at.