

The Western Kentucky University Writing Project

Writing Advisory Board Minutes

September 9, 2000

Writing Advisory Board Meeting
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Members present: Karen Alford, Regina Brooks, Chris Carter, Lynn Claycomb, Deidre Day, Michelle East, John Hagaman, Jim Lilly, Alice Penrod, Ann Pollard, Nancy Schulten, Karen, Scott, Belinda Stark Members absent: Alice Cantrell, Angela Carter

Nancy Schulten was re-elected as chair of the Advisory Board.

OLD BUSINESS:

Based on a motion made by Nancy Schulten and seconded by Belinda Stark to fund the following, the Board unanimously agreed:

--NCTE Scholarships were awarded to Beverly Heady (Magnolia Elementary) and Leigh Ann Littlefield (Warren East Middle School)

--A Teacher-Research grant was awarded to TJ Maynard of Hiseville Elementary; more are available

--Book Discussion Group grants were awarded to teachers at Barren County Middle School (leader: Karen Marcum) and at Muhlenberg County (leader: Donna Vincent). There is still more money for additional book groups.

REPORTS:

YOUNG WRITERS' CAMP had 17 students participating. Nancy Schulten and Sonja Bruce conducted this camp, with the co-operation of the Center for Gifted Studies. Nancy reported that the camp was a success, especially the visit of Marcia Thornton Jones. An anthology will be out shortly after it is completed.

SUMMER INSTITUTE reaction was related by Lynn Claycomb. Renewal and learning and "life-changing experience" were the words used. Folks who could benefit from the experience may not always apply: recruitment was urged by all Project Fellows. John suggested saving a place or two in the Institute for experienced Project graduates who wished to return to renew themselves and their skills. The group discussed the advantages of this, including helping teachers who needed more information, making folks aware of how the Project is evolving, etc. Also described was the teacher-exchange program between Western and Murray State whereby Tom Stewart visited Murray for two weeks and Therolyn Parker visited the WKU Project for two weeks. Each participated by giving demonstrations, writing, and joining in discussion groups.

INSERVICE AND OUTREACH was discussed by Karen Scott and Karen Alford, co-directors for the Outreach program. Karen Scott reported on the success of the workshop led by Donna Vincent, Creating the WRITE Foundation, which has evolved into four sessions for K-4 teachers. A Wonderful Wednesday (September 20) will focus on poetry, transactive writing, writing and the gifted learner, and craft lessons. It is to be at Mancino's and is for K-4 teachers. Special needs learners workshop was a success this summer, but Ann Pollard said she would do things differently if she had time to do this again. Suggestions were to do some Marker training, some more grade-appropriate sessions, some more work in instruction rather than assessment, and more training in writing itself.

Middle/High School needs were discussed and a Wonderful Wednesday (6-12) tentatively planned for October 25. Markers, teams of content writing teachers, integrating writing and contents were some of the ideas discussed. Location for this inservice: try Barren River

RECRUITMENT: Deidre Day reported that she was having success in Hart County and suggested that other project graduates, especially content related, might be able to go to schools and talk with content teachers about the advantages of participating in the project. John suggested targeting content teachers who could be provided a stipend to go talk with some of these schools and show some of their work.

Karen Scott suggested that this information be especially accessible for teachers who go into the alternative training for rank changes. Contact people might include Eileen Whaley, Lynn Hines, Ann Pollard.

WEBSITE AND PUBLICATIONS

One suggestion was made to update the Writing Project brochure by putting in the website, cutting down on institute promo, updating board list, etc. The suggestion was made to contact Alice Cantrell to see if she will help.

Also suggested was bringing in retired teachers for a luncheon or meeting to keep them updated on what is going on in the project and in writing initiatives across the state. Jim Lillie agreed to help with this project.

CONTINUITY:

What can we do for existing project teachers? Suggestions included speakers, different types of initiatives like Polaroid cameras, technology connections. Problems were giving up a weekend day for this, finding a time when teachers could attend, finding a central location. Regina and Angela are to work on these programs.

Writing retreat at Donna Vincent's campground has been postponed until the spring and may serve as a major continuity activity.

EVALUATION AND DOCUMENTATION: Michelle East reported that it is difficult to track the impact that WP teachers have on their schools scores and students. There are too many variables. John suggested a project the Southern Arizona writing project completed that contained teacher anecdotes of impact. The group suggested that Writing Project 15 or 16 might pilot this, along with possibly Ann Pollard and Kim Janes.

THREE YEAR PLAN

John reviewed the plan, looking at what we have done and what we have yet to do.

Deidre suggested having a WP person talk with student teacher about recruitment for the Writing Project in the future or inviting them to attend outreach sessions we have.

Ann also suggested targeting outreach teachers for Writing Project applicants.

WHAT DO WE RETAIN?

Young Writers' Camp

The Board decided the WKU Writing Project would sponsor a wine and cheese reception for former and present WKU Project Fellows at KCTE, since all projects aren't meeting together at the state convention this time.

Other ideas, like academic expectations, a state-wide advanced institute, and other initiatives were tabled.

Our own advanced institute might be a plan here, focusing on effective demonstration techniques. A week of successful classroom strategies (and/or an analysis of something that didn't work), time to listen and read and write, sharing sessions – all here at WKU. Out of this group might come a cadre of teachers who form teams to work with schools as need exists. How many? Possibly 12 – 15. All levels are to be represented, with a \$500 stipend. Target: 2nd or 3rd week of July. Select people early, bring them together, and let them decide their focus in a needs assessment meeting.

For newsletter, add something about the book groups again, that it's ongoing.

Subcommittees: Institute (Nancy, Sylvia); Inservice (Chris, Karen, Karen); Teacher Research (Ann, Karen, Alice P); Young Writers' Camp (Karen, Nancy, Chris); Publications/website (Alice C, Lynn); Recruitment (Deidre, Jim); Continuity (Regina, Angela, Belinda); and Evaluation (Michelle, Lynn)

Next meeting date: January 20 at 10:00 EST in Glendale at the Depot.

Respectfully submitted,

Sylvia Abell
