

The Western Kentucky University Writing Project

Leadership Team Minutes

January 27, 2007

Members Present:

John Hagaman	Gaye Foster	Liz Jensen
Shanan Mills	Cheryl Gilstrap	Michele McCloughan
Anne Padilla	Angie Skaggs	Yvonne Bartley
Byron Darnall	Ann Nance	Bonnie Honaker
Janet Martin	Linda Martin	Laura Houchens

Old Business:

- New brochure presented, thanks to Laura and Chris Houchens
- Scoring Guide: Linda—met with her faculty and went over the new KY scoring handbooks. It took a day with substitutes. Her faculty liked the inclusiveness of the new scoring guide. Content area teachers like the analytic aspect that was added to the new area. Incorporating the scoring guide with students. It appears that great new tool.
- Assessment reports:
 - Denise Henry: Cumberland Trace has a WP member at almost grade level. They have eliminated novice from special education students at this school. In this school it is a collaborative effort with the number of WP members in school (8) with the leadership of Denise.
 - Donna Vincent has taken the lead in the improvement of writing in Muhlenberg County drastically reducing the number of novice writers and increasing proficient writers at both elementary and middle school levels.
- These results are available on website

- Presented new offerings by Project Outreach 2007

New Business:

- Writing Advisory Committee Meeting—Byron
 - SCAT teams
 - Scoring system will improve as we integrate the guide. Cluster leaders will have more checks and balances in the “number crunching” aspect of the scoring.
 - Big movement: to reduce the time commitment of portfolio; with the reduction of the percentage in the overall accountability issues. Still are some movements to reduce portfolios all together.
 - What is considered scoring portfolios **before** scoring portfolios---there is no pre-scoring to be done. It goes back to “level of intent.” Is it being used to improve instruction or to see if the scores are going to be adequate? District policies need to be examined.
 - Feedback from other teachers can be crucial. Yet, how do we coach students while encouraging them to take responsibility for their own writing? How do we not spoon feed too much?
 - We’re intervening (a practice recommended by the Carnegie Corporation’s recent publication WRITING NEXT).
 - Could the work with portfolios before scoring be PD training for teachers to help them better understand how to use the new scoring rubric? Understand how to be ethical in writing on student portfolios—coaches not editors?

Outreach Programs

- List of events upcoming.
- We must get the information to our circle of influence.
- Please reply to e-mails.
- Let us know if you or someone you know can be a presenter
- Can we get the information to DACs directly?
- Our technology people are going to Louisville to see about getting a state project web site. This may help to get out the word about workshops.

KCTE is working on a joint project with the Writing Project. It’s a combined workshop on Sept 22 with Tres Seymour (young adult writer) and mini-demonstrations from the summer ’07 Invitational Institute

New Directors:

- Shanan Mills is stepping down and Misty Logsdon from Bristow Elementary is taking her place.
- Donna McPherson is taking over for Vernessa Drake as the Middle School co-director.

We're trying to get closer ties with the Ky Reading Project. Both Projects will meet together on June 15.

Summer Institute

- Only 15 or so applicants so far. Deadline is Feb 15, 2007. Please recommend strong candidates for the Project.
- We'll try to make sure people know others in their area who have been through the project

Break Out Sessions

Summer Advanced Institute: A Writing Retreat?

- What do you think about this concept?
- Other institute focuses?
- Reports from breakout: Cheryl talked about a "sleepover" at a state park, etc.
 - a. The participants would be expected to submit a proposal in advance: the writing might be inquiry based about a classroom practice, a literary piece, a personal piece—breadth of possibilities invited in this first retreat
 - b. Invite a local author to be a mentor: perhaps George Ella Lyons
 - c. Dinner for the kick-off
 - d. 3 days?
 - f. Celebration of results in the fall with a public reading

Linda Rief's April 21st workshop

- . Likely cost: \$50 per person
- . Morning: Teachers as Writers and its Effect on Students
- . Afternoon: Struggling writer/reader and how to find strategies that work
- . How do we get people to go?
 - 1) e-mail from each Leadership Team member to his/her Project year group
 - 2) personal invites
 - 3) Contact crucial people at central office to “invite” hand-picked people to come.
 - 4) Do we want people in the community to come? Home school? Reading/writing groups? WKU people? Barnes & Noble?
 - 5) Ken May BGISD Personnel Director Others from other districts?
 - 6) Possible newspaper ad/psa/etc?
- . Dates for pre-registration? Use last year as a guideline.
- . Focus Group for reading her material beforehand
 - make web addresses, list of her published materials available online & with printed materials
 - Any “teaser” materials we can show teachers (w/o infringing on copyright laws) to let them get a feel for her work
 - How do we get more people involved?

Future Outreach Possibilities

. Scheduled:

. **February 10:** Wayland Alexander Elementary: “Open Response and On Demand” and “Help for Disorganized, Lost, and Unreflective Writers”

. **April 21: Linda Rief Workshop and Reunion**

- . **July 14 or 21: “Writing to Learn and Personal Writing”**
- . **September 22: Tres Seymour and Mini-Demonstrations from Project 22**
- . Possibilities:
 - . Angie Skaggs--Understanding On-Demand
 - . Contact Student teacher workshops & see if we can help them reach student teachers
 - . Maybe use retired teachers to come in to the University to help Block students on . . . Fridays? Or demonstrate best practice mini-lessons in schools?
 - . Bonnie & Ann reading & reflection
 - . Sue Neal Roberts and Place Based Education
 - . Reading Strategies Day

Future Continuity Possibilities

- . What about retired people? Can they be mentors?
- . What can we do with all the research and videos we’ve made through the years?
- . Newsletter looked great. Continue to use it to publish WPF writings.
- . Retired Fellows—How do we contact them? Who would be interested? What would they want to do? Mentor new teachers? Teach a favorite lesson? Teaching mini-lessons to model for teachers & work with students. Should we market to principals & vice-principal fellows? Seek outside funding if necessary. Publish our success to media outlets. Maybe use Angie’s mom in Angie’s class with TV cameras?

Writing Next research-based information about what works in writing. Proof from outside KY that shows what we’ve been doing is right.

Double the Work—research-based information on how to reach English Language Learners

KY outscored all surrounding states on the SAT writing prompt. (SAT or ACT?)

Next meeting date: Sept. 15, 2007

Minutes taken by Janet Martin (Thanks, Janet!)