

Elementary Section Steering Committee

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

Ongoing Communication:

During the year, our steering committee communicated via Connected Communities. We also had five virtual meetings using Google Hangout.

Convention Planning:

The ESSC received a wide range of high quality proposals for the 2015 convention in Minneapolis. ESSC Chair Ted Kesler and Elementary Representative-at-large, Lisa Martin, worked closely with representatives of the ECEA, Rainbow Strand, the WLU, and LGBT Strand, to select a wide variety of excellent proposals.

Sponsored Session:

We are continuing a session at the November conference from previous years where attendees get to meet ESSC members, ask questions, and find out ways to participate in the section. However, in the past two years, this session was sparsely attended. Partly to draw people in, this year we decided to bring in a prominent keynote speaker, namely, Kate DiCamillo. We are planning to use Twitter and Today'sMeet to encourage digital participation in the session.

Children's Book Awards Luncheon:

Previously the ESSC sponsored the Books for Children Luncheon. This venue has morphed into the Children's Book Awards Luncheon. At this year's luncheon, we will be honoring the 2015 winners of the Orbis Pictus Award (Candice Fleming), the NCTE Poetry Award (Marilyn Singer), and the first winner of the newly-minted Charlotte Huck Award (Ann Martin). Each recipient will give a keynote address. In addition, we will be announcing the winners of the 2016 awards! This substantial change in format generates much more attention to these substantial children's book awards and the recipients, and therefore, to the event itself.

Elementary Section Get-Together

The Distinguished Educator recipients are Anne Haas Dyson and Celia Genishi. In 2013, the ESSC changed the format and invited a children's author to be the keynote speaker at the session in an attempt to draw more attendees. This change generated more attendance, especially from newer participants of the elementary section of NCTE. Each year the distinguished educator(s) also select(s) the children's author/illustrator to provide the keynote speech. This year Anne and Celia invited Peter Sis, an award-winning author/illustrator, who focuses on social justice issues. Anne and Celia will also present a notable session on Friday, focusing on literacy in early childhood classrooms.

In addition, the ESSC has opened up the nominations for this prestigious award to all elementary section members of NCTE. Our intention was to democratize the process.

Donald H. Graves Award

This year's winner is Emily Elizabeth Smith from Cunningham Elementary School in Austin, TX.

For the first time, we are holding a special session of past and current Donald Graves winners. These teachers will now have the opportunities they deserve to present the awesome writing instruction work that they are doing in their classrooms. We intend to host this special session at each annual convention going forward and connect these teachers with opportunities to publish in *Language Arts*.

New Initiatives:

This year, Ted Kesler (ESSC Chairperson) and Lisa Martin (ESSC Rep-at-Large) participated in the selection of the new *Language Arts* editorial team. For the first time, the team comes from a range of universities. We are proud of our selection of Wanda M. Brooks, College of Education, Temple University; Denise Dávila, College of Education, University of Georgia; Jonda C. McNair, Eugene T. Moore School of Education, Clemson University; and, Kelly K. Wissman, School of Education, University at Albany, State University of New York.

The ESSC held two Twitter “Tweet Ups” during the year, using #nctelem @ncte. We intend to use these “handles” to encourage virtual communication during the NCTE 2015 conference. We also intend to continue these “Tweet Ups” during the upcoming year.

The ESSC is working on being the editors of the monthly newsletters to all elementary schools that enroll in the school memberships to NCTE. In addition to determining the topics for each monthly newsletter, our communications will include: the monthly newsletter with links to the NOW e-mails, the NCTE blog, Twitter feeds, and other NCTE resources. We intend to recruit teachers to participate in the articles for each newsletter.

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 to further improve the conditions literacy education.

Election of New Committee Members

Our MLSSC meetings held in Washington, DC were well attended and we welcomed new members Chris Lehman (Bronx, NY), Laurie Sullivan (Needham, MA) and Francis Chamberlin (Tracy, CA).

We are delighted to welcome James Blasingame (Arizona State University; Tempe, AZ) and Shanetia Clark (Salisbury University; Salisbury, MD) as new members to the committee. They will join us for committee meetings in Minneapolis.

2015 Conference Planning

A number of committee members have been hard at work this year revamping what has been called the "Get-Together" session, which is held at the opening of the annual convention on Thursday prior to the first general session. As a result of the committee's work, we are proud to announce that this year we will host the first **Middle Level Meet-Up** that will feature a group of **Rock Star** classroom teachers from our affiliate groups who will exhibit and share some of their best practices with those in attendance. We will also present an author's panel with YA novelists Jennifer Niven, Martha Brockenbrough, and Sara Larson.

Another group of committee members has dedicated their year to building on the amazing experience we all shared at the 2014 Middle Level Mosaic. Through their efforts we have secured a great lineup for the 2015 Mosaic which will include presentations by Smokey Daniels, Sara Ahmed, Antero Garcia, Teri Lesesne, Gene Luen Yang, Jennifer Nielsen and Jennifer Holm.

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

Awards and Recognition

The 2015 Richard A. Halle Award Winner is Dr. Beverly Chin, Professor and Chairperson of the English Department at the University of Montana.

The 2015 NCTE Middle Level Educator Award recipient is Sandra Kowalczyk.

Voices from the Middle Journal.

The MLSSC is proud to announce that Shelbie Witte (Oklahoma State University) and Sara Kajder (University of Georgia) have been named the next editors of *Voices from the Middle*. 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>. Our new editors bring many exciting ideas that will engage Middle Level section members and elevate their voices in print and digital platforms alike.

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

The MLSSC will continue to discuss ways in which members can more actively engage with NCTE throughout the year. Our committee plans to actively participate with other sections in the development and distribution of materials that will be specially prepared for those who belong to NCTE through a new school-wide membership. We believe this is a fantastic venue to help shape the voice and identity of our section in the larger NCTE organization.

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 asked a number of interested Section members to review proposals for the 2015 Convention. We will continue to build our reviewer base.
- 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 to increase attendance at NCTE events.
- During the upcoming years, we will post "Did You Know? Segment for Secondary Level" blurbs aimed at providing teachers with bite-sized information on policy, court rulings, and resources.
- 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 than one *Engage Now!* a month.
- We have continued *Engage Now!* as an ongoing effort to provide reliable and monthly take-away lessons for secondary teachers. This initiative has 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 *Engage Now!* Lessons
- We will begin meeting via conference call to discuss convention sessions and meetings.
- We are seeking ways to enrich current assessments and promote collaboration.
- Our *Engage Now!* focuses 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.
- We continue to recognize award winners during the Section luncheon at the Annual Convention.

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.

College Section Update

The CSSC is proposing convention sessions, planning additional activities, and supporting strategic governance for 2016 to further strengthen our membership and programming in the collegiate setting as well in collaboration across our sections. Kelly Sears Smith, our administrative liaison, has been supportive. The following report includes various areas of engagement and planning to support our College Section mission and goals.

2015 Annual Planning and Programming

In preparation for the College Section annual convention program in Minneapolis, various platforms were used to gain more membership enrollment and convention interest. We are committed to increasing membership as well as opportunities for more collaboration across the sections. For instance, in May 2015, a college-level membership recruitment letter was mailed to about 10,000 English faculty at two- and four-year colleges (mostly early-career and all non-members, current or past) across the U.S. In June 2015, recipients received a follow-up reminder about the invitation to join.

In addition, several other activities were planned to promote the College Section and our shared work across the sections and our membership. For instance, in September 2015, a survey was prepared for the College Section Steering Committee members to seek their program speakers and topics for the 2016 annual convention.

Also, the Chair prepared a blog essay for posting on Literacy & NCTE: The Official Blog of the National Council of Teachers of English. The posting is titled "[Our US Poet Laureate and Hispanic Heritage](#)" and was posted on September 23, 2015.

In October 2015, the Chair participated in a short interview video was recorded for release, via YouTube, that highlighted our College Section programming and invited prospective members to the annual convention in Minneapolis.

A resolution on student data privacy and security was submitted for review and consideration by the 2015 Resolutions Committee at the annual convention in Minneapolis, Minnesota.

Lastly, the Chair was invited by Eric Pritchard (University of Illinois at Urbana–Champaign) to serve as the facilitator for the 2016 CCCC LGBT Lavender Award Selection Committee, Article Award Subcommittee. A final decision for the award will be presented by the three subcommittee members before January 26, 2016.

National Day on Writing

For National Day on Writing (October 20th), which is a day designed to celebrate the many ways we compose and the varied voices connected to a writing life, the Chair submitted a brief statement to advance writing and the teaching of writing for this year's theme "Why I Write."

College Celebration

Our featured presenter during our College Celebration, which is scheduled for Friday evening, November 20, 2015, will be Linda Adler-Kassner, professor of Writing Studies and director of the Writing Program at the University of California, Santa Barbara. Also, Adler-Kassner is the program chair for the CCCC annual convention to be held April 6–9, 2016, in Houston, Texas.

The 2015 Richard Ohmann Award will be presented to [Steph Ceraso](#) (University of Maryland, Baltimore County) for the research article titled "(Re)Educating the Senses: Multimodal Listening, Bodily Learning, and the Composition of Sonic Experiences." The article appeared in *College English* (November 2014) Volume 77, Number 2.

College Luncheon (CCCC and CSSC)

CCCC and the CSSC will co-host [Frank X. Walker](#) as our luncheon speaker on Saturday, November 21, 2015. Walker is the 2013–2014 poet laureate of Kentucky and an associate professor of English at the University of Kentucky.

Incoming Chair and Assistant Chair

In May 2015, Clancy Ratliff (University of Louisiana, Lafayette) was elected as our incoming chair. Asao Inoue (University of Washington, Tacoma) was elected as assistant chair. Their terms begin following the Magic Hour on Sunday, November 22nd.

Joint Task Force (CCCC and CSSC)

In 2014, a joint task force between the CCCC and CSSC was established to collect data on hiring practices. The final outcome will be a position statement with recommendations on “Best Practices in Searches and Hires for Rhetoric/Composition” for our discipline, which will be jointly reviewed and approved. The joint task force members from the CSSC are Clancy Ratliff (University of Louisiana, Lafayette), Asao Inoue (University of Washington, Tacoma), and Mya Poe (Northeastern University).

The Task Force’s statement between the CCCC and CSSC on hiring practices is in the final stages of editing. The complete version titled “Best Practices in Searches and Hires for Rhetoric/Composition” is due in November 2015. However, the Task Force hopes to have a complete version by the beginning of the 2015-2016 hiring cycle, in time for departments to reference it for their job postings and committee searches. It is likely to be presented to the CCCC Executive Committee at the CCCC annual convention, which will be held in April 6–9, 2016 in Houston, Texas.

The joint task force charges are as follows:

Charge 1: Locate, collect, and synthesize the best available data on employment and search processes in Composition/Rhetoric, drawing upon established research by relevant groups such as the Modern Languages Association, the Coalition of Adjunct Workers, and others.

Charge 2: Produce a statement of Best Hiring Practices in Composition/Rhetoric for use by colleagues in the discipline but also by administrators and others who play a role in hiring.

Informed by many other position statements from CCCC and from Modern Language Association (MLA), the statement discusses best practices for forming search committees, composing job ads, submitting application materials, establishing the search timetable, conducting first-round interviews, moving from first-round interviews to selecting finalists, and holding final-round interviews. There are also sections dedicated specifically to non-tenure-track positions and to Writing Program Administration (WPA) positions.

2016 Richard Ohmann Award Committee

In preparation for the [2016 Ohmann Award Committee](#), committee members will be appointed to review and score the eligible articles from *College English*, Volume 78 (September 2015 through July 2016) for award consideration. A committee chair will be selected with committee members including the 2016 Ohmann Award chair, CSSC chair, Steph Ceraso (2015 award recipient), and others as noted in our bylaws.

Convention Sessions

The CSSC is sponsoring four key sessions for the 2015 convention program and in support of research themes that appear in [College English](#) and the [Teaching English in the Two-Year College](#) (TETYC) journal. The proposed thematic sessions and CSSC members co-leading the sessions are as follows:

1. Dual Credit Enrollment Roundtable (R. Joseph Rodríguez)
2. Science Literacy and Writing Panel Session (Clancy Ratliff)
3. Tribal Colleges and Universities Panel Session (Jacqueline Rhodes, Mya Poe)
4. “What Does College Writing Look Like?” Panel Session with Listening Tour (Eva Payne, Isabel Baca, Andy Anderson)

Future sessions will be considered to highlight key themes and challenges appearing in our journals as well as past recipients of the Ohmann Awards as presenters.

On-Going Focus on Strategic Governance

The CSSC members are keeping in mind the four key strategic governance questions. The emphasis of the questions is based on “what,” while some of our work relies heavily on the “how” and “why” for the College Section. However, we are in support of a collective agenda that reflects research, issues, and communications as key areas of interest.

The recommendations and actions from our business meetings favor more actionable items at the CSSC level and remain priorities to highlight to NCTE for consideration in planning and programming:

Research

1. Produce original research projects and reports with both quantitative and qualitative data that include issues such as literacy education, graduation rates, placement rates, writing studies, and educators’ working conditions.
2. Prepare studies that are strategically and rhetorically compelling for the public to understand with a narrative that is relevant and direct with actionable recommendations about our professional work.
3. Establish and support a seed grants program ranging from small to large-scale research projects with opportunities for PK–post-graduate level teachers and faculty members to collaborate.
4. Establish a research fellowship within NCTE that includes PK–post-graduate level teachers and faculty members.
5. Adopt a mentorship program for beginning faculty in community college and university levels in the areas of teaching, research, and service. (This can be modeled by the mentorship program successes of CEE and CEL.)
6. Involve graduate students and faculty (at all ranks) and launch research projects that produce new data in all forms about the conditions of teaching English Studies, literacy, and language arts and disseminate results.

Issues

1. Take a stand on principles more directly and forcefully with data results that are relevant and actionable with original data that NCTE collects and reports with a firm voice and standing.
2. Invest in members’ concerns and the issues they have identified to communicate a single story and message for action and change.
3. Establish a think-tank group at headquarters that responds to concerns with a clear, relevant perspective and communicates directly with all members.
4. Design and maintain an interactive map of all states on what’s happening nationwide in English Studies, literacy, and language arts.
5. State the issues in our profession more directly via various media, including a new web site that is member orientated that is PK–post-graduate levels.
6. Engage other organizations in advocacy that works for teachers, students, and diverse communities with key, shared goals that are attainable with results.
7. Consider how community organizing adopts key language and issues with a persuasive element to voice problems and challenges to change minds.
8. Be more proactive and assertive about issues and utilize social media, multimedia, and convention platform for messaging and action.
9. Establish an award to recognize an NCTE member who advocates on issues relevant to our profession through public engagement for social action and change.

Communications

1. Invest in product development that is inviting and provides opportunities for intellectual development and intellectual property to support instruction and research in English Studies, literacy, and language arts.
2. Provide reports with evidence and talking points that can be helpful for teachers and faculty who interact with the public.
3. Consider data-based communications that reflect clarity for the general public to understand.
4. Develop one-page fact sheets about English Studies, literacy, and language arts that make use of the following communicative literacies:
 - a. Audio, visual, multimedia, and infographics
 - b. Research seed funding and fellowships with new, original data that are evidence-based

- c. Brevity and clarity with language and publications that reflect three points, problem solving, or results or solutions
 - d. Capacity-building stories with an advocacy narrative that values and communicates metaphors such as “building something together”
5. Welcome and maintain personal perspectives to NCTE through multimedia and teacher advocacy narratives.
 6. Reduce the burial of stories in the NCTE web site and move relevant and current content to the cornerstone pages of the web site.
 7. Migrate archival content to other web spaces that does not reflect NCTE members’ stories and professional issues.
 8. Create a YouTube channel and NCTE channel that is about members’ stories, teacher advocacy, convention news, and how we are becoming literate in the 21st century.
 9. Reach the vast, untapped, and ignored audience with whom we have not communicated about issues within our profession by creating footage from conventions and talking to our members where we can find them ready to speak for teachers and our profession.

Next Steps by the CSSC

1. Develop a plan between the College Section Steering Committee and the Conference on College Composition and Communication (CCCC) Executive Committee beginning in 2016, if not sooner, to engage in research, issues, and communications that are relevant to our membership and to advance our collective agenda year round.
2. Maintain the rigor and momentum established in July 2014 by the CSSC and CCCC Executive Committee Joint Task Force on Hiring Practices in College Composition to support our profession through equal and equitable employment and search processes.
3. Develop and submit convention proposals that include graduate students to increase research in English Studies, literacy, and language arts and in support of our College Section membership.
4. Review recent articles in *College English* and the *Teaching English in the Two-Year College* (TETYC) journals to consider theme for future programming.
5. Collaborate with journal editors of *College English* and the *Teaching English in the Two-Year College* (TETYC) to determine ways to make selected journal articles more interactive for readers with video footage, author commentary, reader responses, and research-in-practice perspectives.
6. Consider a mentorship model and program that can be manageable and beneficial to beginning faculty in community college and university levels.
7. Seek collaborations in convention cities on research, topics, issues, and research related to the College Section such as dual credit and enrollment, tribal colleges and universities, rhetoric and writing studies, feminist studies, college and career readiness and writing, and Listening Tour.

NCTE Connected Community and Improved Communications Platform

The College Section is actively using its own designated community to advance higher education topics. NCTE is encouraged to conduct a feasibility and usability study and find ways of engaging members through an improved platform that meets members’ interests and needs for communications.

Election Results: New CSSC Members and Nominating Committee Members

Steven Alvarez (University of Kentucky, Lexington), Beth Godbee (Marquette University) (one-year term), and Rochelle (Shelley) Rodrigo (Old Dominion University) were elected to the CSSC. Their term begins in November 2015.

The 2015-2016 College Section Nominating Committee members are Akua Duku Anokye (chair) (Arizona State University, Glendale), Beth Brunk-Chavez (The University of Texas at El Paso), and Aja Martinez (Binghamton University, New York).

Search for Editor of *College English*

The Chair, Clancy Ratliff, co-chair, and Kathleen Blake-Yancey are serving on the *College English* Editor Search Committee. The two finalists will be interviewed in Minneapolis with a selection and announcement to follow in December 2015.

Search for Executive Director and Selection

The Chair served as a member of the NCTE Executive Director Search Committee, which had the charge to review applications with the national search firm Association Strategies, Inc. (ASI). The application closed on July 13th, 2015. Members of the Search Committee included the Presidential Team and the Headquarters Subcommittee, which formed the core of the Search Committee. Additional members include four staff members from the Urbana office. The two finalists met with the Search Committee in Urbana in September 2015.

Emily Kirkpatrick was selected as the new Executive Director of NCTE. The [press release](#) was distributed on October 13, 2015.

Grazie

It has been a pleasure to serve as CSSC Chair for the past two years. Thank you for your contributions to the CSSC as we advance our College Section goals in support of our membership and profession.

R. Joseph Rodríguez, Chair