
K • A • T • E
Kansas Association of Teachers of English

KATE Executive Board Meeting Minutes

21 October 2004

6:00 p.m.

Marriott Hotel, Wichita, Kansas

Members present: Andy Anderson, Virginia Beesley, Terri Browning, Joy Bunch, Donna Burke, Clark Coker, Matt Copeland, Diana Costello, Chris Goering, Ruthann Harris, Annie Heidersbach, Gerri Hilger, Linda Jones, Clark Killion, Debra Kohn, Kaleen Knopp, Marti Mihalyi, Glenna Mock, Dave Smit, Patty Strothman, Jane Wagner, and Dana Waters.

Call to order

President Clark Killion called the meeting to order at 6:00.

Introduction of new and former board members

Clark congratulated Ruthann Harris on a successful conference, welcomed new board members Terri Browning, Chris Goering, Gerri Hilger, and Glenna Mock. New members Mindy Applegate, Marilyn Brewer, Todd Goodson, Maryemma Graham, Troy Parker, and Jeff Roper were unable to attend. Clark asked that board introduce themselves and tell an interesting tidbit about themselves. He welcomed visitors Kent Williamson from NCTE and past president Pat Fellers.

Approval of agenda

Andy Anderson moved that the agenda be approved. Motion was seconded and carried.

Approval of minutes

Ruthann Harris moved that minutes of the June meeting be approved. The motion was seconded and carried.

Announcements

Clark will bring thank you notes he has received from 4H to the February meeting. He had received several requests from parents for extra copies of the *Younger Kansas Writers* CD. Clark announced that Kay Flook is resigning as conference treasurer and he will take her place. Andy Anderson announced that Rosemary Dean's husband had passed away and he had sent a condolence card on behalf of the KATE board.

Treasurer's report

Clark Coker passed out a summary of the balances for the last eight years and pointed out that we have lost an average of \$691 per year. He commended the board for changing publication of *Young Kansas Writers* and *Younger Kansas Writers* to CD and changing to a cash bar for the conference reception. He cautioned that we must be careful of how we spend money, and we must consider how we can raise our income. The conference this year should be in balance because our speaker fees were low. Linda Jones pointed out that several people had not been solicited for dues when they came in. She asked how we can take care of that problem. Andy Anderson suggested that we remind members tomorrow to pay any outstanding dues. Joy Bunch asked who was monitoring membership. Clark Coker said that he had some ideas of how that might be handled more efficiently now that he had been through the conference once. Andy Anderson moved that we accept the treasurer's report. The motion was seconded and carried.

Reports

Dave Smit reported that the marketing committee had developed a brochure that was ready to go. He asked for a contact at WSU so the committee could distribute brochures to the college of education. He asked to be notified of other conferences KATE could contact with the brochures. Deb Koehn suggested we contact Garden City schools about a secondary and middle school conference scheduled there.

Karen Ford's report as membership chair was tabled since she was not present. Andy Anderson reminded us that the membership form is on the website and can be downloaded. Ruthann Harris asked that we consistently use one form. Andy explained that all forms on the website are the same, and until all the old forms in circulation are used, we will just have to put up with the problem. Kent Williamson of NCTE gave some suggestions as to how we could handle keeping track of membership.

Kent Williamson reported that the State Department had asked NCTE to help develop some contacts with English organizations in Europe. Kent had visited an organization in Bulgaria. He is talking to state affiliates to see who might be interested in becoming a sister organization. European English organizations are interested in exchanging information on pedagogy, assessment, and other professional concerns. He suggested a way to help them get started would be to help them with journals, perhaps through a grant. Such exchanges could develop into an exchange of teachers, too, and there are organizations funding such plans. Kaleen Knopp asked what KATE would need to do if we want to respond to the offer. Kent said he will suggest some affiliates at the NCTE Conference in November. Then organization leaders could begin correspondence. Andy Anderson moved that we explore through NCTE establishing a sister relationship with an English language teachers' organization in the Balkans. The motion was seconded and carried. Andy will attend the NCTE conference and will communicate our wish to participate in the program.

Barbara Livengood and Carlene Stueve were not present to report on *Young Kansas Writers*.

Clark Killion explained that in the conference program he had listed Mary Heller as the outgoing editor of *Younger Kansas Writers*; Linda Jones, however, will be installed Friday as the new editor of *Younger Kansas Writers*. Linda had contacted Mary after the June meeting and is remaining in contact with her. Teachers now have Linda's name as the new editor. Linda reported that she had decided take submissions in hard copy, which she will then transfer to electronic copy. Andy suggested that since we will be publishing on disk, Linda ask for electronic submission. Patty Strothman said that she would help Linda with the technology. Linda explained that she did not have access to e-mail. To facilitate the transformation, Linda will accept submissions in any form for this year; later she may change to electronic mode. Andy stressed that we need to stipulate in the *KATE Update* and on the website the format required for submissions. Kaleen Knopp suggested a forecasting statement on the website so teachers are ready to change formats for future submissions.

Clark passed out information from Barbara and Gerritt Bleeker, including submission forms, for NCTE's Promising Young Writers program and the NCTE Achievement in Writing awards.

Shannon Nickell, our representative for the William Allen White award was not present. Clark said that since he had not heard otherwise, he assumed that Shannon was still willing to serve.

Andy Anderson announced that Elaine Gruenbacher of Wichita has agreed to edit *KATE Update*. Roseann Labarge from Oakley will be associate editor. Elaine will be at the conference Friday. Andy had explained to her that Moxley Publishing has been doing a lot of the formatting for *KATE UpDate*, but traditionally the editor has selected the publishing company she wanted to work with. Andy will go over the publishing schedule with Elaine tomorrow. KATE is still seeking an editor for *Kansas English*.

Matt Copeland reported for SLATE (Support for the Learning and Teaching of English) that censorship issues were down nationally. Reports of censorship issues in Kansas are channeled though our SLATE representative, Matt Copeland, and are passed on by Matt to the NCTE representative. The CDs Matt had made available to Kansas English teachers on strategies for dealing with censorship are still available.

Andy Anderson reported as NCTE liaison. Andy had nominated Elaine Gruenbacher for the NCTE Leadership Development Award. KATE's Resolution against Concurrent Credit was presented at the NCTE Conference last year. The resolution was not adopted but it did focus attention on the issue, and it is still being studied by NCTE. It has also been circulated at the Kansas Board of Regents and the State Board of Education, where it has had some impact. Andy said that although KATE does not consider itself political, our actions and concerns result in discussions that need to take place. Kaleen Knopp reported that the K State Faculty Senate is considering the issue of concurrent credit and KATE's documents are being presented there as a statement of the regard of the teachers of English in Kansas.

Stacy Zigler of the Kansas State Board of Education was not present at the meeting, but she will be leading a break-out session Friday. Andy said the KATE had been fortunate always to be involved in the discussion of standards and assessment with the KSBE. KATE has a voice there that is taken seriously. He commended Stacy for including teachers in the development of such documents. He also said that contacts such as the one Ruthann had made with State Board of Education member Carol Rupe by inviting her to speak at the conference are invaluable.

Anne Heidersbach, conference chair for 2005, reported that her theme will be Teaching Outside the Box: Fostering Creativity in Students and in Ourselves. She distributed forms for proposals and encouraged members to share them with colleagues. Annie had spoken with Sandra Cisneros' agent about engaging her as speaker, but Cisneros was unavailable.

Joy Bunch, nominating chair, reported that of the ten new board members, five were present at the board meeting and three others had attended the conference Thursday. Board members suggested that the nominating committee notify new members of their responsibilities and expectations, along with sending a meeting schedule. Virginia Beesley said that a list of duties was included last year in the new members' notebooks. Joy pointed out that the first official meeting is the October conference meeting, although KATE has invited new members to the June meeting as well. New members are installed Friday morning at the conference. Andy Anderson stated that it is the responsibility of the immediate past president to send letters to board members going off and new members coming on. In addition, letters should be sent to the principal of each new member to make the principal aware of the teacher's accomplishment and commitment. The board thanked Joy for many years of hard work on the KATE board.

Old business

Clark Killion read suggestions he had received at the open mike on membership and conference scheduling. He pointed out that the problem of low membership became obvious when the conference mailing included 2000 Kansas English teachers and our membership is barely 10% of that. He suggested we think of ways to offer more benefits to members. The following were suggested:

- Explore asking three or four community colleges to put on small conferences sanctioned by KATE and NCTE
- Document professional development credits for attending teachers
- Explore costs of group membership for CoLearn
- Set up regional meetings for professional development credits
- Survey English teachers to see what teachers want at our conference

Andy Anderson cautioned that we not set up competition with ourselves that could damage the organization. Dave Smit raised the question of how much more any of the board members can do in terms of time. He pointed out that our conference is what KATE really produces and that what we really need to do is promote our conference. He said that our attendance has been steady at around 200 each year no matter what we did differently with our conference. Diana Costello pointed out that the biggest problem with conference attendance is administrators not allowing teachers to attend. Andy

Anderson pointed out that we didn't have *UpDate* to distribute information as efficiently for this conference. Suggestions for increasing conference attendance were as follows:

- Put together a CD or a link on the web site to illustrate to administrators what teachers get from the conference and the organization
- Get the conference mailing out early so administrators and teachers can plan for absences
- Compose a letter highlighting concerns we addressed at this conference and mail it or post it on the website for members to download and take to their administrators
- Send a representative to administrators' conferences to explain the benefits of conference attendance and KATE membership for their staff
- Focus on what we offer that students will benefit from, rather than on professional growth of teachers
- Emphasize that what makes our presentations at KATE good is that they are concerned with students' learning and not with theory

Linda Jones reported that she and her colleagues had made a presentation at their school board meeting demonstrating the classroom gains stemming from their conference attendance, and they hadn't had trouble getting conference attendance approved since. Patty Strothman offered a database of principals' addresses that could be used to send information about KATE's web site. Clark encouraged board members to join the KATE Yahoo discussion group so that we could continue this discussion there. He will e-mail directions for enrolling in the group.

Clark Killion introduced the issue of conference scheduling. He stated that at the open mike it was plain that some people will be unable to attend whenever we schedule our conference. Andy Anderson said that in talking to conference attendees he discovered that people were not willing to attend on Saturdays. Since schools in the Kansas City area cannot get substitute teachers on Fridays, Andy suggested we consider a Monday Tuesday conference. Marti Mihalyi said that many districts have scheduled parent/teacher conferences on Mondays and Tuesdays. Jane Wagner suggested we move the conference up to the seventh week of the semester to avoid conflicts with parent/teacher conferences. The 2005 conference is now scheduled for the 20 & 21 of October. Annie Heidersbach emphasized that we must mail conference materials sooner and supply our members with rationale for why administrators should let teachers attend. Andy Anderson moved we appoint a conference marketing committee to promote the 2005 conference. Motion was seconded and passed. Matt Goering, Andy Anderson, Debra Kohn, Annie Heidersbach, and Ginny Beesley will write rationale. Andy Anderson pointed out that changing the conference date depends on the hotel's bookings, which are made far in advance. He will check with the hotel about available dates.

Ruthann Harris announced that the next meeting will be February 12 at the Eisenhower Library in Abilene. The alternative date will be February 26.

Andy Anderson moved the meeting adjourn. Motion was seconded and passed. Meeting adjourned at 8:30.

Dana Waters, secretary