2019–2020 EC Inquiry Groups (Subcommittees) & Charges

The three Executive Committee inquiry groups for 2019–2020 are loosely connected around themes related to writing:

1. Synergizing NCTE Support for Writing Teachers and Teacher-Writers
2. Writing for Impact—Shaping Policy for Literacy Education and NCTE Practices for Supporting Literacy Educators
3. Writing to Strengthen NCTE—Governance Documents Review and Recommendations

Given the EC’s expertise in writing and the teaching of writing, it hardly seems necessary to explain the importance of writing as an area of focus for our leadership agenda for the coming year. Yet it may be helpful to explain the framework I have used to develop this collective agenda. In 2018, I published an essay in which I highlighted and extended Golden and Bieler’s observation about “the strengths of our members: policy, practice, and dialogue” (2018, p. 85). In the essay, I suggested that NCTE could use “policy, practice, and dialogue” as an “energizing framework” to drive and connect its work. To explain this idea, I wrote:

We might envision this framework as a three-legged stool for NCTE efforts, noting that each leg supports and balances the others. We as English educators naturally love words, but as you [Noah Asher Golden and Deborah Bieler] remind us, position statements are at best a place to start (p. 85). The heart of our work is in our action: through policies, practices, and dialogic inquiry and reflection. For any existing or proposed NCTE initiative, we can ask ourselves: How does this lead to better literacy education policies at school, local, state, or federal levels? What is the significant impact that we can have on literacy education practices for curriculum, instruction, and assessment? As we focus on literacy education policies and practices, how will we foster dialogue that is characterized by inquiry, reflection, and constructive critique? (Zuidema, 2018)

To coordinate our inquiry group efforts for this coming year, I have drawn on this same animating framework. Over the coming year, our subcommittees will enable us as an EC to take action through concentrated attention on the following:

- Practices: Group 1 will conduct inquiry and develop recommendations to help NCTE amplify its strengths in supporting writing teachers and teacher-writers.
- Policy: Group 2 will complete a portfolio of projects that impact NCTE’s public policy priorities as well as its internal efforts to proactively address the shifting professional learning needs of literacy educators.
- Dialogue: Group 3 will lead a dialogic and reflective review of our NCTE governance documents, developing recommendations for alignment with our association’s vision and with best practices for governance of member associations.

Thank you in advance for your contributions to this important collective work. Together we are united for action: we will deepen and broaden NCTE’s support for literacy educators—making a difference for students in every classroom within our reach.
References

EC Inquiry Group/Subcommittee 1: Synergizing NCTE Support for Writing Teachers and Teacher-Writers

Group members: Janice Schwarze (chair), Frannie Lin, Cheryl Hogue Smith, Vershawn Ashanti Young, Deborah MacPhee, Kristen Suchor (staff)

Charge: This inquiry group/subcommittee, composed of EC members with collective expertise across preK–16+ educational contexts, is charged to help NCTE amplify its strengths in supporting writing teachers and teacher-writers. This subcommittee will produce a report for the EC that shall

- review how NCTE already supports writing teachers and teacher-writers through the work of sections, conferences, and assemblies, as well as through resources and services available for the overall membership;
- identify potential ways to connect, coordinate, and extend these supports (where doing so would be beneficial to members or member groups); and
- analyze possible gaps and recommend supports that could provide increased value for members.

Timeline

November–February
- Create and begin to implement a systematic plan to review how NCTE already supports writing teachers and teacher-writers through the work of sections, conferences, and assemblies, as well as through resources and services available for the overall membership.
  - Sections—Elementary, Middle Level, Secondary, College
  - Conferences (including LLA—Languages & Literacies for All; CEL—Conference on English Leadership; ELATE—English Language Arts Teacher Educators; TYCA—Two-Year College English Association; CCC—Conference on College Composition and Communication)
  - Assemblies: http://www2.ncte.org/groups/assemblies/find-an-assembly/
  - Overall membership—NCTE resources and events available to all members, as well as resources and events for the NCTE Standing Committee on Affiliates
- Update the EC on progress at the February EC meeting. Share the plan for systematic review, requesting feedback on suggested additions or adjustments to this plan.

February–April
- Discuss EC responses to plan for review of resources and revise as needed.
- Continue systematic review of how NCTE already supports writing teachers and teacher-writers through the work of sections, conferences, and assemblies, as well as through resources and services available for the overall membership.
- Begin drafting review section of the report for the EC.
- Update the EC on progress at the April EC meeting.
April–July
  ● Continue systematic review of how NCTE already supports writing teachers and teacher-writers through the work of sections, conferences, and assemblies, as well as through resources and services available for the overall membership.
  ● Finish drafting review section of the report for the EC.
  ● Give a presentation on the draft review section of the report to the EC at the July EC retreat, inviting EC brainstorming about potential ways to connect, coordinate, and extend these supports (where doing so would be beneficial to members or member groups).
  ● Use committee work time at the EC retreat to
    ○ discuss EC responses to the report and plan additions and revisions as needed;
    ○ identify potential ways to connect, coordinate, and extend these supports (where doing so would be beneficial to members or member groups); and
    ○ analyze possible gaps in these supports to recommend supports that could provide increased value for members.

July–October
  ● Complete a draft of the full report about how to amplify NCTE support for writing teachers through cross-pollination across sections and conferences. Discuss the draft as a committee and finalize the report.
  ● Submit the final report to be included on the November EC agenda.

Group members: Roberta Price Gardner (chair), Chris Goering, Tiffany Rehbein, Bradley Bleck, Julie Lindquist, Janelle Martin (staff)

Charge: This inquiry group/subcommittee is charged to complete a portfolio of projects that impact NCTE’s public policy priorities as well as its internal efforts to proactively address the shifting professional learning needs of literacy educators. These projects include

- Review the Mentoring Programs Task Force Report. Discuss the findings and recommend to the President any items that should elicit a broader or specific discussion and/or further research.
- Make recommendations about potential ways to use NCTE’s new and revised position statements to advocate for changes in literacy education policies related to literacy teacher preparation and certification.
- Review applications and recommend recipients for the 2020 Leadership & Advocacy Summit stipends.
- Collaborate with staff to update the NCTE policy priorities and as requested during the planning of the Leadership & Advocacy Summit, which is held in April 2020.
- Employ the collective expertise and research acumen of the inquiry group to identify recent changes and anticipated national trends in paths to certification for English language arts teachers. Prepare a presentation for the Executive Committee and lead an EC discussion to consider how NCTE can become the professional home for ELA teachers prepared through nontraditional paths, thereby impacting literacy for students, schools, and communities.

Timeline
November–February
- Review the Mentoring Programs Task Force Report. Discuss the findings and recommend to the President any items that should elicit a broader or specific discussion and/or further research.
- What are our 2019–2020 policy priorities related to literacy teacher preparation and certification? Collaborate with staff to update the NCTE policy priorities and as requested during the planning of the Leadership & Advocacy Summit (April 2020). (Respond to staff documentation and briefings.)
- Review applications and recommend recipients for the 2020 Leadership & Advocacy Summit stipends.

February–April
- Does NCTE have existing position statements that offer guidance and support for educators navigating pressing policies related to literacy teacher preparation and certification?
- Identify any additional position statements that could be high priorities for helping NCTE and its members to advocate for needed changes to policies on literacy teacher preparation and certification.
April–July
  ● Report to the EC on inquiry group members’ experiences and observations related to the 2020 Leadership & Advocacy Summit.
  ● Employ the collective expertise and research acumen of the inquiry group to identify recent changes and anticipated national trends in paths to certification for English language arts teachers.
  ● Prepare a presentation for the July EC retreat and lead an EC discussion to consider how NCTE can become the professional home for ELA teachers prepared through nontraditional paths, thereby impacting literacy for students, schools, and communities.
  ● Use committee work time at the EC retreat to
    ○ discuss EC responses to the presentation and plan for additional inquiry and research as needed.
    ○ brainstorm potential recommendations for how NCTE can shape its internal efforts to proactively address the shifting professional learning needs of literacy educators, given shifts in teacher preparation and certification.

July–October
  ● Complete a report that (1) summarizes the inquiry group’s findings regarding recent changes and anticipated national trends in paths to certification for English language arts teachers and (2) offers related recommendations for how NCTE can shape its internal efforts to proactively address the shifting professional learning needs of literacy educators.
  ● Submit the final report to be included on the November EC agenda.
EC Inquiry Group/Subcommittee 3 (Operations Teams): Writing to Strengthen NCTE—Governance Documents Review and Recommendations

**Group members:** Operations team—Leah Zuidema (chair), Julia Torres, Ann Marie Corgill, Yolanda Gonzales, Franki Sibberson, Alfredo Celedón Luján, Valerie Kinloch, Lisa Avetisian (staff)

**Charge:** An important task for any board is to ensure periodic review of its governance documents. NCTE’s constitution was most recently revised in 2012–2013, and in 2016–2017 NCTE’s constitution and bylaws were reviewed by a governance attorney to assess the alignment of these important documents with best practices for governance of member associations. The operations team will study these recommendations, further analyze the extent to which these governance documents and our Executive Committee handbook align with NCTE’s vision and make recommendations for action to the Executive Committee.

**Timeline**

**November–February**
- Learn about the purpose, history, and role of NCTE’s constitution and bylaws.
- Read and discuss NCTE’s constitution and bylaws, as well as the review of NCTE’s constitution and bylaws, plus the NCTE strategic plan items referencing NCTE’s governance documents.
- Agree on which sections of the NCTE constitution and bylaws may need revision and why, listing these sections and rationales and aims for possible revisions. (At this stage, the rationale is at the level of an overview listing: What may need to be changed? Why? To what end or purpose?)
- Update the EC on progress at the February EC meeting.
- Begin drafting proposed constitution and bylaw changes in tracked-changes documents, providing accompanying rationale statements for proposed changes in a cover memo.

**February–April**
- Finish drafting proposed constitution and bylaw changes in tracked-changes documents, providing accompanying rationale statements for proposed changes in a separate cover memo.
- Present proposed NCTE constitution and bylaw changes to EC for initial review and discussion at the April EC meeting.

**April–July**
- Discuss EC responses to first draft of proposed constitution and bylaw changes and rationale.
- Revise proposed changes to the constitution and bylaw and rationale.
- Present updated version of proposed NCTE constitution and bylaw changes and rationale to EC for review and discussion. Seek EC approval for recommended changes or note further items for follow-up in order to make revisions and seek approval at October EC meeting.
- Submit NCTE EC handbook and related policies and documents (such as conference handbooks) for governance consultant review and feedback in advance of July EC retreat. Read this report and the EC handbook before the July EC retreat.
July–October

- Consider which sections of NCTE EC handbook may need revision and why, listing these sections and rationales and aims for possible revisions. (At this stage, offer rationale at the level of an overview listing: What may need to be changed? Why? To what end or purpose?)

- To the extent possible, begin drafting proposed EC handbook changes in tracked-changes documents, providing accompanying rationale statements for proposed changes in a cover memo.

- Update the EC on progress at the November EC meeting, including sharing plans for how the 2020–2021 Operations Team will continue this project.