



March 15, 2017

NYSEC

News from the New York State English Council

KWAME ALEXANDER TO SPEAK AT 2017 Annual Conference

"write a poem with tension ... let it walk a tightrope ... write a poem that finishes school ... a magna cum laude poem ... let it be momentous ... learn something meaningful ... share something significant ... write a poem that is contagious ... let it inspire ... make us ... want to write a poem ... about how brilliant ... and breathtaking ... and tragic ... and hopeful ... life is." - from *Dance Naked on the Floor* by Kwame Alexander

At the NCTE conference in November 2017 Award-winning author, Kwame Alexander reminded the audience that, "teachers are the army ... the purveyors of hope." He recalled Emily Dickinson's words about hope when he recited her famous lines, "Hope is the thing with feathers that perches in the soul." Alexander encouraged teachers to use poetry with their students because it is a quick, powerful way to help them find their voice. It can also allow them to become more human, more sympathetic, and more empathetic.

The award-winning author feels very strongly that poems can be a way to grow strong readers, and has used programs such as *Page to Stage* and *Book in a Day* to introduce students to the art of poetry. Alexander wrote his first poem at the age of 12 for his mom for Mother's Day, but he didn't begin to think of himself as a poet until he wrote poems for his wife, whom he met when they were in college. Today he tours the world sharing his love of poetry and the transformative power that it can have for our students. He feels that, "The power of poetry is that you can take these emotionally heavy

moments in our lives, and you can distill them into these palatable, these digestible words and lines and phrases that allow us to be able to deal and cope with the world." Kwame Alexander has written several YA novels, including the basketball themed novel written in verse, *The Crossover*, which won the Newbery Medal. Alexander has published over 25 books including a picture book entitled *Acoustic Rooster and His Barnyard Band*. NYSEC is proud to welcome back Kwame Alexander. We know that when you see him you will be inspired to read, write, and share poetry. We hope to see you at our annual conference, October 25 – 27, 2017 at the Albany Marriott. Please check out website, www.nysecteach.org, for more information.



By: Michelle-Peterson-Davis

President's Message



I recently surveyed a large group of educators, asking them if they were a LEARNER, LEADER, RISK-TAKER or merely INSPIRED. Clearly, one could fall into more than one category, but my intent was to determine a level of willingness and acquire an idea of what teachers wanted to learn, as I was the one planning the Professional Development. As I quickly noted what was most relevant or applicable to their world, I began to think of my own. Where did I fit in? I've been in the education field for 20 years, and my journey could really place me in any one of those categories. As teachers we want students to stretch themselves and to reach their full potential, discovering the many rewards that come with hard work. Yet, are we doing all we can to stretch ourselves?

Our annual NYSEC Conference brings all kinds of educators together. Attendees come to learn about new ways to enhance their curriculum and some take risks by exploring workshops of new trends. Leaders take the helm by sharing what they know. Our hope is that all leave feeling inspired and energized to return to their districts, having made invaluable connections with colleagues from across the state.

We're in a challenging time right now in our world. As educators we find ourselves faced with difficult questions from students and even more difficult decisions to make. However, what remains the same is the way we continue to lead students down the right path and commend them for making good choices. As role models, we extend respect, dignity and often times, empathy. Many of us honor students for academic and social achievements. We should do the same for our colleagues for the outstanding work they do every day.

The strongest school leaders that I have seen are those who use methods of communication to highlight district achievements, thank educators for the work they do and encourage communication within the community so that all have a voice. NYSEC aims to do the same, with your help. Have you noticed a teacher or administrator in your building worthy of recognition? Is there a program that has made your school proud? Please consider nominating a colleague for an award this year. Our NYSEC Awards deadline is **April 15th, 2017**.

The NYSEC Executive Board is always seeking ways to better serve our members. It is so gratifying to work with a group of people who have such extraordinary energy to grow the organization. We have several past presidents whose longevity on the board has contributed to NYSEC's success. We welcome your ideas and hope to see you as either a presenter or attendee in October!

Michelle Kaprinski, NYSEC President

"Intelligence plus character-that is true education."—Martin Luther King

2017 Conference Information

Developing the College/Career Ready Citizen Through Language, Literacy and the Arts

October 25th-27th 2017

Albany Marriott

Albany, NY

**REGISTER FOR THE 2017
CONFERENCE HERE**

This year's theme was chosen because "readiness" is about the journey our students take in order to be successful, productive citizens in today's world.

If you have best practices that you'd like to share at our conference, please click the link below to submit a workshop proposal.

Submit a workshop program proposal here

BOOK YOUR HOTEL ROOM TODAY!

Click here to book your room at a special discounted rate

Or visit www.nysecteach.org for links to all forms



NYSEC AWARDS

Nominate a deserving educator in your district!

Spring is just around the corner, so that means that it's time for awards. The New York State English Council is proud to offer the following awards each year for outstanding teachers, administrators, mentors, leaders and programs in districts across the state. Awards nominations should be submitted by April 15th.

PROGRAMS OF EXCELLENCE

Awards presented to exemplary ELA programs, which support creative instruction and learning, that have been in place for at least three years.

EDUCATORS OF EXCELLENCE

Educators nominated by colleagues who inspire excellence in students as well as teachers.

COLLABORATORS OF EXCELLENCE

Educators nominated by colleagues who team teach an extensive literacy component and inspire excellence in students and teachers.

MINI-GRANTS

\$500 is awarded to members who are willing to create, explore, enrich or research instruction in English Language Arts at each level: elementary, middle, high school, college and administrative/supervision

DR. RUTH E. EVERETT AWARD

Named after a former NYSEC President and Executive Board member, this award honors one or more cooperating teachers who have mentored future English Language Arts teachers in their student teaching or intern programs

In celebration of the programs and awards' recipients, NYSEC holds an Awards Ceremony every year at the NYSEC Annual Conference on Friday afternoon. All mailing, due dates, membership forms, and application information is available online here . If you have any questions about the awards process, e-mail the Awards Coordinators at awardsnysec@gmail.com .

NYSEC Awards Deadline

April 15, 2017

[Click here to submit nominations online](#)



www.nysecteach.org

VP ADMINISTRATION

Plato Was Smart

I failed retirement. For the last five years, I have had the opportunity to be a consultant in many school districts. And as we all remember, particularly from those early years in the classroom, the way we learn something well is to teach it. So what have I learned over the past five years as a consultant: The most vital portion of the work that both teachers and administrators do is in the planning. Plato tells us, "The beginning is the most important part of the work." The best teaching is in the planning. Here is the truth: When I was in the classroom my lesson plans were written for the administrator. The list of things to do was written for me. The list and the plan were not the same. The list was a road map, but it did not include my formative assessments or my goals. And I certainly had not developed a performance assessment that would be used at the end of the entire unit. The lesson plan was to impress someone. After five years as a consultant, I have been working in some districts as someone who delivers workshops on a variety of topics: vocabulary instruction, critical reading skills, promoting literacy through effective leadership, etc. What works best: sitting with a teacher or two for forty-five minutes to an hour, or working with a group of teachers in a workshop environment. Yes, a workshop environment in which they are doing what we expect of students: actually doing the work together. During that time together, teachers apply what they know and what they learn to a particular lesson. They include formative assessments that check student learning, without grading, from structured conversations in which students engage with each other. They set up the protocol they wish to use to promote that conversation. I find when preparing for the

announced or scheduled observation, they want to impress the administrator. I also find, often, that administrators want to see the teacher "teach." Both goals are fallacious. Teachers do best when students move from point A to point B during the lesson; more importantly, both the students and teachers are aware of this movement. And the teacher has already done the heavy work when planning.

If students have a distinct small goal and teachers reach that goal through collaboration among and with students: Success. So my latest shift is to look at the rubrics, particularly the Danielson rubric, and I have come to the conclusion that the most important domain is Domain One. That means the administrator or evaluator must spend time and energy reviewing the plan and then collaborating with the teacher on that plan. The collaboration is just as essential for teachers as it is for students. I have the pleasure to work with some amazing teachers and principals in my new post retirement life. The ones who spend time on the preparation are the ones whose test scores are going up. The principals who expect strong planning that includes literacy, protocols and individual thinking on the part of students are the principals who collaborate with teachers and achieve great test scores. And their teachers never teach to the test; they merely promote the skills that are necessary for students to succeed.



Victor Jaccarino
VP Administration

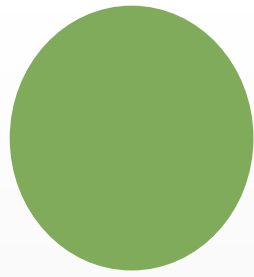


NEWS FROM VP COLLEGE

Beyond the Classroom: Making a Difference

"Doing nothing for others is the undoing of ourselves."

-Benjamin Franklin



No matter how you slice it, teachers serve. Whether it is students in their own classroom, parents and families in our communities, on school committees, for extracurriculars, as district liaisons, or on local, state, or national professional organizations, such as NYSEC or NCTE, teachers serve as part of the profession. Fundamentally, it is just part of our makeup. If you are also a parent, you have probably served in your children's schools, for their athletic teams, or extracurricular activities and enrichment programs. Perhaps you also serve religious organizations, on boards of directors or on advisory boards in your community. As an educator, you know how important it is to serve, as it is almost second nature.

It is also important for us to mentor new teachers into the profession and encourage them to serve. We can model this practice by inviting beginning teachers (interns, student teachers, pre-service teachers) to join us at committee meetings, encourage them to help with or take on leadership of clubs or teams within the school district, or volunteer in our communities. If we impress upon our novice teachers early in their careers that their service extends beyond the classroom, we are able to cast the net farther and extend our reach beyond which we are capable alone. Many teachers across the state even encourage their students to participate in service activities, apprise them of civic engagement, and make local to global impacts. As teachers, we have the ability, and I would even argue, the responsibility, to apprentice our students into a mindset and culture of service. This is not

anything new to most of us or to our students, who are already volunteering in their communities as part of religious and service organizations, as well as scouting groups, but to some, it really is. Some of our students have not had an opportunity to participate in service activities, and many may not recognize the important connection between classroom and community. How many times have you heard, "Why do we need to know this? When will I ever use this in my life?" Incorporating service learning projects and/or experiences in our classroom gives students an opportunity to discover the influence and impact they can make in an instance, on a life, a community, a region, a world. Service is empowering; endearing us to ways we can make a difference.

We invite you to share your stories or service-learning curriculum with your colleagues across the state, by either submitting a workshop proposal for our annual conference, "Developing the College/ Career-Ready Citizen through Language, Literacy, & the Arts," or writing an article for our NYSEC publication, *The English Record*, sharing your experiences with service learning in your school and community. If you have an ELA service-learning program that has been in place for at least three years, you may consider self-nominating for a Program of Excellence award. We welcome hearing about what you are doing, or planning to do, to affect change in our society.

Patricia Rand, Clarkson University

NYSEC Vice President, College

The English Record

New York State English Council



Aims

The English Record publishes original peer reviewed contributions that focus on the field of English education. The English Record features articles on pedagogy, essays, commentaries, program descriptions, reflective narratives, book reviews, poetry and occasional student work. Please check the website nysecteach.org for more information.

Submissions

Manuscripts should be submitted electronically to Dr. Kjersti VanSlyke-Briggs via e-mail at englishrecord@oneonta.edu

Manuscripts should be prepared using MS Word. All parts of the manuscript should be double spaced. Please number all pages consecutively. Each manuscript should include a cover sheet with the author's name, affiliation, position, a short two or three line author bio, preferred mailing address, telephone and e-mail address.

Identifying information should not appear elsewhere in the manuscript. Please include an abstract on the cover page of no more than 100 words. Manuscripts must conform to APA standards. Manuscripts that do not utilize APA will be returned.

All images, tables, figures and additional materials should be sent as separate files with a figure heading and notation within the manuscript for preferred placement.

There is an open deadline and manuscripts can be submitted at any time.

Permissions

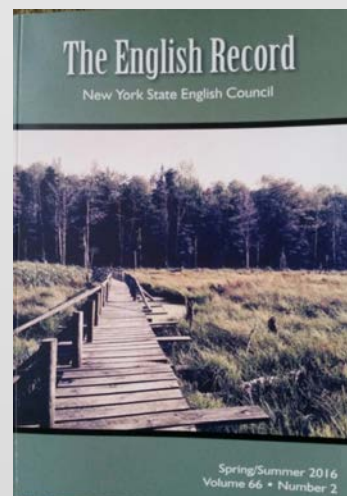
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Complimentary Copies

Each corresponding author will receive a copy of the issue after publication.

Message regarding the Fall Issue of the *English Record*...

A few of our members let us know that they did not receive their fall issue of the *English Record*. We are waiting for a second printing of that issue and will get them out as soon as possible. We are very sorry for the delay!



Friends of Excellence

The Friends of Excellence campaign helps pay for many of the wonderful programs which **NYSEC** supports. Some of the programs included in this fund are the Educator of Excellence Award, Programs of Excellence Award and the Mini Grants. In order for these programs to continue to function, Friends of Excellence asks for your assistance through a monetary donation. If you already were planning to give to Friends of Excellence, thank you. Your contribution will be added to the fund and is greatly appreciated.

If you have not already decided to give to the fund, please consider doing so. This will give you a chance to give back and assist others in your field. **NYSEC** offers many opportunities for English teachers. At some point in time you may have been recognized by **NYSEC**, assisted with a conference session, found an article you loved in The English Record, or simply discovered a connection with another teacher of English at the annual conference. All of these services are provided to help us grow in our profession. The Friends of Excellence campaign also stimulates growth and encourages new ideas.

Friends of Excellence are those members and businesses who contribute. Twenty-five dollars is the suggested amount, but it by no means is the limit or minimum donation. Please consider adding your support to this campaign. You can make your check payable to **NYSEC** and can send it with the Friends of Excellence form to me at the address below. We will acknowledge your gift through our Annual Conference Program. Your support is greatly appreciated.

Submit your donation, along with the following information:

- Name (as you would like it to appear in the program)
- Educational Institution you are affiliated with or retired from
- Amount donated
- Check Number
- Mailing Address

Please mail to:

Janet Matthews

Friends of Excellence Chair

jlmattthews@optonline.net

358 Church Street

White Plains, NY 10603



NYSEC is a 501 c3 organization and all donations are tax deductible.



STATE EDUCATION DEPARTMENT UPDATE

English Language Arts Learning Standards Update

The review of the P-12 English Language Arts Learning Standards is currently underway. Thank you to all who provided input during the public comment period. Currently, the standards are being revised, with an updated version of the ELA Standards scheduled to be presented to the Board of Regents in late spring. Additional information can be found on the NYSED AIMHighNY website (<http://www.nysed.gov/aimhighny>).

ERIK SWEET

ASSOCIATE IN ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS

NYSED OFFICE OF CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION

NYSEC RECEIVES NCTE HONORS



This past November, at the Annual NCTE Conference, NYSEC was honored with an Affiliate Award! Our journal publication, The English Record also received an Honorable Mention.



Larry Butti was delighted to present NYSEC's very own Michelle G. Bulla with the 2016 NCTE High School Teacher of Excellence Award!



NATIONAL COUNCIL OF TEACHERS OF ENGLISH

www.ncte.org

20Time in 7th grade ELA

This past fall, I attended an inspirational overview of 20Time. After this overview, I knew that this was something that my students and I would greatly enjoy. Up until this point I had been searching for a format that would allow my students to have more choice in relation to what and how they will learn. Seeing a High School English teacher successfully implement 20Time gave me the necessary push of confidence to know that I, too, could do this with my 7th grade ELA students. 20Time, which you may also have heard referred to as Genius Hour, is when you allow your students 20% of class time, (one class period per week for me), to pursue an interest of their choice. I've been teaching 7th Grade ELA for the past 18 years, yet each year, I try to find effective, innovative ways to encourage my students to pursue learning and passion. In my experience, choice for students enhances their learning because they almost always choose something that they like, which in turn, increases their investment in the process.

My students set a new 20Time goal at the very beginning of the quarter, then they have nine weeks to try to achieve that goal. At the end of the nine weeks, students must complete a presentation, in front of the class, showcasing the entire experience. To my delight, I have found that most students work on their 20Time goals outside of class since they are choosing to pursue a passion that they are excited about. So, what begins as 20% of class time quickly turns into a passion that takes up 20% of a student's overall time since they are so driven to achieve the final goal. During class time though, students develop the steps involved with achieving the goal, collaborate with peers and adults to receive advice, research their topic, and have time to practice and prepare for the culminating presentation at the end of the allotted time.

So, how can something like this fit into an ELA classroom? I create opportunities for students to complete tasks that directly align with standards from the CCLS. Students utilize backwards design to figure out what the end goal will be and how to achieve it. Throughout the process, they are tracking the progress of that goal. Students are given time to conduct research related to their 20Time goal, both from credible digital or print sources, as well as adults or peers, depending on the topic. They must cite this evidence in their final presentation. During 20Time, students collaborate by finding and working with other students who have similar 20Time goals. This has been a valuable experience for them because it strengthens their communication skills and exposes them to diverse perspectives. Students are writing routinely throughout the quarter. Specifically, they write short response paragraphs answering questions about their 20Time goals and about the steps involved with reaching those goals. They write entries in their Writer's Notebook about the 20Time experience. They write their presentations, and ultimately will write an argumentative essay on a topic related to their 20Time goal. 20Time has allowed me to work with students in a more customized way since their goals represent an interest that they were able to choose. If I am struggling to reach students, I talk with them about their 20Time goals so that I can encourage them, not just academically, but personally as well. See the inset above to be inspired by examples of 20Time goals from this year.

Visit the following site for more information <http://www.20time.org/>



CHRIS HORTON

Chris has been teaching 7th grade ELA at Van Wyck Junior High School for the past 18 years.

ZACH

I will create a Facebook page that encourages people to pay it forward with kindness.

CAMERON

I will bring the concept of Girl Up to my school to bring more attention to girls and women in our society.

NICK

I will photograph a sunflower every day for the next nine weeks so that I can make observations about the sunflower's journey of growth.

LOUIS AND MATT

We will raise money to purchase school supplies for students in need in our school.

BILLY

I will create and distribute survival kits for my family members.

If you're excited to share something you've been doing in your classroom with other ELA/English teachers across the state, send a one paragraph article proposal to Christine.furnia@wcsdny.org by 4/15/17.

SCHIZOPHRENIC

BY MIWIN HULL

Jongin didn't know right when he met him. He seemed like just any other boy making his way from the gas station, but, he seemed troubled. He would grab his head in frustration and mumble incoherent words as if to calm himself.

He had a bag hanging loose on his arms from his previous destination as he headed home. Jongin decided it would only be gentleman-like to help the boy out.

"Would you like some help?" Jongin asked the owl eyed boy after which said boy only gave a shy small nod and grabbed onto

"OH KYUNGSOO, YOU MADE A FRIEND? AND WHO MIGHT THIS BE?" SHE SMILED TOWARDS JONGIN.

his shoulder. The boy wasn't harmful, he guided Jongin towards his house so he didn't lose his way.

Jongin didn't expect anything less from the boy whose name he did not know. He led him to a



beige brick house accentuated with a dark chocolate brown. The grass was green and neatly cut.

Jongin knew he'd only spoken one sentence to the smaller boy but he couldn't help but get the feeling that he wanted to spend more time with him. He led the short boy to the door and the smaller boy opened the door only to find a middle aged woman standing there looking like she had been waiting.

"Oh there you are Kyungsoo! If you didn't return in the next two minutes I was gonna search for you!" she ran up to the boy who Jongin assumes is Kyungsoo, and took the bag out of his hand.

"Oh Kyungsoo, you made a friend? And who might this be?" she smiled towards Jongin.

"My name is Kim Jongin ma'am," he bowed respectfully towards her.

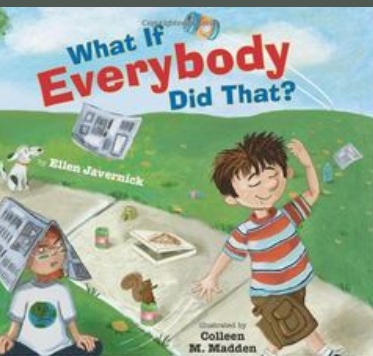
"Well why don't you join us for lunch? My husband is out at work so it's just Kyungsoo and me, but I'm sure he wouldn't mind if you joined," she smiled.

And with that, Jongin ended up staying over and frequently visiting Kyungsoo more often. He found out that Kyungsoo was schizophrenic a few

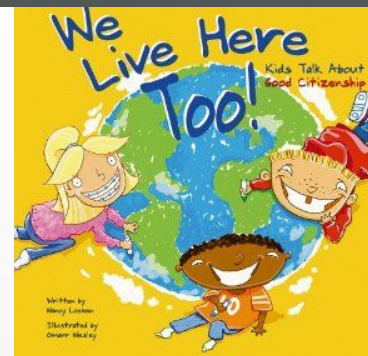
visits after his first and said boy thought Jongin would run away and call him a freak, but Jongin only smiled and said he would be his friend no matter what.

Miwin is a 7th grade student in the Wappingers Central School District.

If you have a student whose work you feel should be highlighted in our publication, send it to:
Christine.furnia@wcsdny.org
by 4/15/17.



Editor's Notes



Picture books to teach good citizenship at any level!

There are so many skills and attributes that our students need to succeed; cultural awareness, communication, literacy, writing, social and emotional development, problem-solving, teamwork, self-awareness, self-regulation, creativity and much more. See the following resources, and have fun with your students!

We live here too!: Kids talk about Good Citizenship -Nancy Loewen

What if Everybody Did That?- Ellen Javernick

Grace for President-Kelly S. DiPucchio

The Mitten Tree- Candace Christiansen

Being a Good Citizen- Mary Small

The Impossible Patriotism Project- Linda Skeers

The Empty Pot-Demi

Vote!- Eileen Christelow

House Mouse and Senate Mouse- Peter Barnes

Granddaddy's Turn- Michael S. Bandy and Eric Stein

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