

Oct. 22 WCTE Conference, Eau Claire

Finding a Balance: Traditional Content vs. Contemporary Technology



WCTE is thrilled to feature three national speakers on technology and literacy in the English classroom at its state convention and pre-convention workshop, Oct. 21-22.

Thursday, Oct. 21 will start with an exciting pre-convention workshop featuring past NCTE president Kylene Beers and her colleague, teacher and author Robert E. Probst. Kylene and Bob will facilitate two sessions on Thursday – Book by Book: Creating Observant Readers and Understanding the Literacy Demands of the 21st Century.

Friday's convention will feature Keynote Hilve Firek speaking on technology in the English classroom, along with a wealth of sectionals and educational vendors. See the registration form on page 3 for more information.

Luncheon Speaker: Michael Perry



Michael Perry is a humorist and author of the bestselling memoirs "Population 485: Meeting Your Neighbors One Siren at a Time," "Truck: A Love Story," and "Coop: A Year of Poultry, Pigs, and Parenting."

Despite his success as a writer and, more recently, as a musician and songwriter, Perry still serves as an emergency medical first responder for the local fire department in the Wisconsin county where his farm is located. Perry will also be speaking at the Chippewa Valley Book Festival on Friday evening, 7:30 p.m. in Schofield Hall, UWEC Campus. For a complete schedule of Book Festival events, Oct. 18-24, check the website: www.cvbookfest.org.

NPR's All Things Considered featured Perry on July 29, 2006. Click [here](#) to listen to the archived piece, "Put the Pick up in Park, and Enjoy Idle Conversation."

Keynote Speaker: Hilve Firek



Hilve Firek is an assistant professor at Virginia Wesleyan College. She is the author of "Ten Easy Ways to Use Technology in the English Classroom." She is a former high school English and journalism teacher whose articles have appeared in such periodicals as Phi Delta Kappan.

Firek is also the author of supplemental curriculum materials for language arts teachers throughout the grades. She regularly presents workshops and inservice training sessions on the integration of technology into English instruction.

CONFERENCE

Register now

Here's Pre-conference information, Registration and Membership application / renewal. >>Page 2-3-4

WCTE PROFILE

Meet a Board Member

Connie Foye Jonett, Ph.D., teaches at Stratford High School in Central Wisconsin and has been a WCTE member for 20 years.

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JOIN THE DISCUSSION

End of Zero?

Are zeroes unfair? Is extra credit worthwhile? Are behaviors such as completion and timeliness important ingredients in student learning? >>Page 5

THEN AND NOW

Teaching Has Changed

NCTE's 100th anniversary is next year. share your story of how teaching has changed during your career. >>Page 5

CORE STANDARDS

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List of texts is intended to be a resource only. >>Page 6

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Help for Journalism Teachers

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Wisconsin English Journal

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FOR CLASS

LGB Lessons, CC Standards

Teachers needed to write LGB lessons in alignment with Common Core Standards. >>Page 8



21st Century Literacies Workshop

Thursday, October 21

Limited Space Available

Register Now

Join us for an exciting pre-convention workshop featuring past NCTE president Kylene Beers and her colleague, teacher and author Robert E. Probst. Workshop fees include all breaks, lunch, and handouts. Those making reservations at the Metropolis Hotel will also have continental breakfast and four waterpark passes included. See the registration form on page 3 for further information, registration fees and room rates. Discounted workshop + WCTE conference registration fees available.

Morning Session - Book by Book: Creating Observant Readers

In this morning session, we will share a new set of strategies we call Notice and Note Mini-lessons that we're using with struggling readers to help them read a literary text more critically. These mini-lessons help students understand what they might watch for in a text (what they should notice) and teach them how they might think about those observations (what they might note). In doing so, readers make connections and predictions in a text so that they notice the changes in characters and conflict and more quickly identify themes. It's a hands-on session—so come prepared to jump into a text we'll provide and do some noticing and noting!

Afternoon Session - Understanding the Literacy Demands of the 21st Century

Join us this afternoon as we consider what it means to be literate in the 21st century. We'll look at the shifts in literacy and demonstrate some of the tech tools that help connect students to learning. In particular, we'll pay attention to the tools that improve comprehension and engagement. Bring your laptop (battery charged!) and as we demonstrate technology, you can practice it immediately.

Kylene Beers, a former middle school teacher, is Senior Reading Advisor to Secondary Schools with the Teachers College Reading and Writing Project, Columbia University. She is the author of "When Kids Can't Read – What Teachers Can Do" (Heinemann, 2002) and coeditor – with Robert Probst and Linda Rief – of "Adolescent Literacy" (Heinemann, 2007).



A respected authority on struggling readers who works with elementary, middle school, and high school teachers across the nation, Beers is the Past President of the National Council of Teachers of English.



Robert E. Probst was first an English teacher in junior and senior high schools in Maryland and then English supervisor for the Norfolk, Va., schools before he moved on to Georgia State University as Professor of English Education. He spent much of his time during those years wondering why kids didn't enjoy reading literature quite as much as he did, and trying to figure out how to change that unhappy situation. He then developed strategies to bring kids and books together more happily.

That work led him ultimately to write "Response and Analysis: Teaching Literature in the Secondary Schools" and to serve as senior author of "Elements of Literature" (Holt, Rinehart and Winston), a literature, composition, and language program for grades 6-12.

In this age of technology, how do we make sure we stay true to our content while integrating blogs, wikis, electronic portfolios, webpages, etc. into our classrooms?

Join the conversation about 21st Century Literacies at the State Conference.



Lynn April


video
 Click [here](#) to watch Lynn talk about the Oct. 2010 Conference in Eau Claire.

REGISTRATION FORM

2010 Wisconsin Council of Teachers of English Workshop and Conference Thursday, October 21 and Friday, October 22 Eau Claire, Wisconsin

Please send a copy of this registration form and payment in the form of a check payable to the Wisconsin Council of Teachers of English (WCTE).

Purchase orders are acceptable to hold your place; however, actual payment by individuals or school districts must be sent prior to or received at the event. **Mailing deadline: September 10, 2010.**

Name: _____
Home mailing address: _____
City: _____ State: _____ Zip code: _____
Email address: _____
School name _____

Please CIRCLE one:	Thursday Workshop	Friday Conference	Both
WCTE Members	\$ 85	\$ 85	\$150
Non-members	\$125	\$125	\$225
Students/Retirees	\$ 50	\$ 50	\$ 95

See membership form on bottom of the next page.

Thursday workshop fees include all breaks and buffet lunch

Friday conference fees include breakfast and lunch choice (please check preferred lunch choice):

- _____ Hawaiian Chicken (salad, grilled chicken breast w/pineapple teriyaki sauce, rice)
- _____ Philly Cheese Steak (Philly cheese steak sandwich w/cheese, onions, peppers on hoagie)
- _____ Vegetarian (wild mushroom consommé, balsamic marinated Portobello mushrooms, roasted red peppers, zucchini, squash, Chèvre cheese, roasted beet and sweet potato Napoleon)

\$ _____ Convention/Workshop Fees (see circled above)
\$ _____ WCTE Membership Fees (see next page)
\$ _____ TOTAL enclosed / to be paid AT OR BEFORE convention date

Mailing address:

Wisconsin Council of Teachers of English
UW-Milwaukee
Department of Curriculum and Instruction - Enderis 310
P. O. Box 413
Milwaukee, WI 53201

WCTE has reserved a block of rooms in each of the two hotels used for the workshop and conference at conference rates from Wednesday, Oct. 20 through Friday, Oct. 22. In order to get the conference rate for the hotel rooms, you need to make a reservation by Sept. 30, 2010:

Thursday Literacies Workshop - Metropolis Hotel: www.metropolishotel.com (888-861-6001)

\$99 plus tax - Reservations at the Metropolis Hotel include complimentary continental breakfast and four passes to the Action City play area and Chaos Water Park

Friday WCTE Convention - Ramada Convention Center: www.ramada.com (715-855-0871)

\$70 plus tax

Registration questions? Contact WCTE Executive Treasurer, Tom Scott at tscott2@uwm.edu. or convention chair Lynn Aprill at aprillyn@bonduel.k12.wi.us. Remember to check www.WCTEonline.org for more info.

Please share this registration form with your department colleagues for further information, registration fees, and room rates. Discounted WCTE conference + pre-convention workshop registration fees available.

WCTE BOARD MEMBER PROFILE

Meet Connie Foye Jonett, Ph.D.

“Staying connected with other teachers is important to me, particularly since I teach in a small, rural high school. Isolation can be professionally devastating.”

– Connie Foye Jonett

Connie L. Foye Jonett, Ph.D., teaches at Stratford High School in Central Wisconsin and has been a WCTE member for more than 20 years.

“Reading about teaching ideas is one thing, but collaborations established through the WCTE conventions, publications, and opportunities has kept my classroom alive and full of savvy,” she said.

Jonett, who recently earned her terminal degree in Education and Leadership at Cardinal Stritch University, teaches 11th and 12th grade English while also teaching Written and Oral Communications courses to high school seniors for technical college credits.

She just finished mentoring her ninth student teacher. The output of the current university English Education programs continues to awe and inspire Jonett.

“I suppose I am a cooperating teacher for selfish reasons,” Jonett said, “as I will do anything to keep my rural students current and competitive in post-secondary environments.”

Her dream is to return to Ireland, where she completed a portion of her own student teaching experience.

Writing short stories and “inhaling the culture for rejuvenation” best expresses Jonett’s desire for creativity and personal enhancement. Jonett lives with her husband, two beagles, and a cockatiel named Spike.

“Spike screeches and replaces the sounds of our two sons, now both adults and married,” she said.



NOMINATIONS DUE >> from Carol Conway-Gerhardt, WCTE Awards Chair

For details related to these awards, please go to www.wcteonline.org and click on Awards and Honors.

Questions, e-mail Carol Conway-Gerhardt at trgceg@gmail.com.

Application or nomination deadlines: Sept.27, 2010

- **Robert C. Pooley Award for Research (up to \$2,000)**
- **Jarvis E. Bush Award for Successful Techniques in Teaching Composition (\$200)**
- **Lucile S. Pooley Award for Creative Teaching of English Language Arts (1st Place \$200; 2nd Place \$100)**
- **Lee Burrell Intellectual Freedom Award for Expression Free from Censorship and for Humane Communications**

MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION / RENEWAL

Please complete the information as indicated; then send to Membership Secretary:

Tom Scott
UW-Milwaukee
Department of Curriculum and Instruction
Enderis Hall 391
P. O. Box 413
Milwaukee, WI 53211

This form represents a:

- New membership
 Renewal

CESA District: _____



Membership Information:

Name: _____

Home Phone: _____

Address: _____

Work Phone: _____

School: _____

Email: _____

What grades do you teach?

- Elementary
 Middle
 Secondary
 Post-secondary

Are you an administrator or specialist?

- Department Chair
 Elementary Administrator
 Middle/Secondary School
 Administrator
 Reading/Language Arts Specialist

What sort of member would you like to become?

- \$30 Standard
 \$40 Contributing
 \$50 Sustaining
 \$20 New Teacher (1st or 2nd year in the profession)
 \$15 Retiree
 \$5 Student

Please include a check made out to WCTE for the correct amount.

JOIN THE DISCUSSION >> Erin Schwane, New Berlin West High School

The End of Zero?

When secondary teachers distribute their syllabi the first week of school, students are likely to find separate sections describing course grading and expectations for behavior. But do teachers actually treat the two separately?

My district, the School District of New Berlin, has decided they often do not and is now requiring staff to post academic grades and behavior/responsibility issues separately on student report cards and transcripts. For definitions, see the board policy at: http://www.nbexcellence.org/cms_files/resources/6151-Policy.pdf.

Educators such as Douglas Reeves and Eric Twadell stand behind such school-wide movements, arguing that giving zeroes for missing work or awarding extra credit assess behavior instead of student learning.

In the past, such practices varied widely among teachers and buildings; however New Berlin students have had common grading scales in each department. With the new policy, the district aims to make grading even more uniform and more accurate. For more details see <http://www.newberlinnow.com/news/97305089.html>.

Still, there remains much debate among staff, students and parents about the necessity and effectiveness of such a policy. As a teacher, I see the logic in the research but am unsure how this new policy will impact my classroom.

Do you have experience with such a policy or thoughts on the theory behind it? Are zeroes unfair? Is extra credit worthwhile? Are behaviors such as completion and timeliness important ingredients in student learning?

Let us know your thoughts on separate grading for behavior and academic achievement. Write to our editor at lbarring@wi.rr.com. We'll publish your comments in our next issue.



THEN AND NOW >> from NCTE



One look at these photos* and it's easy to see that styles have changed and kids have changed.

So has our world.



1927 cheerleader



1938 class officers



1950's prom

How has YOUR teaching changed?

NCTE is interested in your history, how your teaching has changed – how you have altered, adjusted, or shifted your habits and expectations – since the time you began teaching. Whether you are a 30-year classroom veteran or a new teacher, you have a story, and we'd like to hear it.

And we at WCTE want to hear your story also! Send us 150 words about the change in your teaching **Then and Now**. Please include:

- your name
- your school name
- your school location
- the number of years you have been teaching.

Send your submission to WCTE via lbarring@wi.rr.com. We will print your story in the WCTE Update AND we'll send it on to NCTE to be included in their list of stories.

*photos taken from Wauwatosa High School yearbooks

Common Core reading list has holes

With the state's adoption of the Common Core Standards in English Language Arts (ELA) and mathematics on June 2, the buzz among English teachers has been the list(s) of "Texts Illustrating the Complexity, Quality, and Range of Student Reading," in the ELA document (available at www.corestandards.org). A multitude of questions has come about, including: Is this what our state is requiring us to teach? How was the listed literature chosen? Why do we need a list?



Lisa Arneson works in the Center for School Improvement, located at CESA 5 in Portage where she is a literacy consultant and curriculum specialist. Arneson serves on the WCTE Board of Directors as the Region 5 Director. She is a former middle school/high school English teacher. She can be reached at arnesonl@cesa5.k12.iwi.us.

Focus on text complexity

First, take a deep breath. The state has been very clear that the list of texts is intended as a resource only. Additionally, the notes in the document clearly say, "Texts listed above are meant only to show individual titles that are representative of a range of topics and genres," as well as the types of texts one could use based on text complexity, one of the key requirements of the Common Core State Standards for Reading. "...All students must be able to comprehend texts of steadily increasing complexity as they progress through school." Research tells us that what students read, in terms of its complexity, is at least as important as what they can do with what they read. What is clear and glaring about these findings is that educators in all disciplines must do much more than simply ask students to read and answer questions about the text.

The standards document breaks text complexity into **three elements**: qualitative dimension, quantitative dimension, and reader and task. In making a qualitative evaluation of the text, one would look at the levels of meaning, structure, language and language demands. Readability measures are examined in a quantitative evaluation, and there are multiple variables when matching reader to text, including motivation, interest, background knowledge and others. One must look at all three variables when selected text for use in our classrooms, and this is where our professional judgment comes in.

The notes also say that "texts need to be selected around topics or themes that generate knowledge and allow students to study those topics or themes in depth." What are the topics and themes in your classroom and how do you move students to deeper understanding? Most of us already know how to select appropriate material for our students because we teach the student, not the text. This list serves as a reminder more than a resource, but certainly not a curriculum because there are a few holes.

Incomplete reading list

Those holes seem to be gaping. Given that nearly half of the students in U.S. public schools are students of color, approximately 20 percent of students speak a language other than English at home, and approximately 14 percent of students have an identified disability (U.S. Dept of Ed, 2007), there is no doubt that the literature on the list is not representative of all that should be taught in our classrooms. It is very light in multicultural selections, as well as current pieces of young adult literature that students would find meaningful and relevant.

Professional judgment and outside resources will serve us well as we move forward in examining and understanding the Common Core State Standards, and begin to adopt them in our buildings. A significant resource is Wisconsin's Children's Cooperative Book Center (CCBC) on the UW Madison campus, a wealth of the most current children's and young adult reading materials available, complete with reviews and support. Teachers who use this resource know that it provides a vital gathering place for books, ideas and expertise. The CCBC is committed to identifying excellent literature for children and adolescents and bringing this literature to the attention of those adults who have an academic, professional or career interest in connecting young readers with books. Contact the CCBC at <http://www.education.wisc.edu/ccbc/>.

Yes, the reading list in the Common Core Standards document has holes, but it is meant to provide examples and suggestions for teachers. In reading through the list and the description of text complexity, the creators of the Common Core do allow for and seem to respect our professional judgment. Though we will adopt the standards, we don't have to adopt the book list. Be sure to choose texts that will speak to the students in your classroom.

WCTE FALL ELECTIONS

Watch your inboxes for electronic voting

As the new school year is upon us, so too is the annual WCTE fall election. In addition to selecting a 2nd Vice President and a Secretary, WCTE members from many areas of the state will also vote for District Director(s). Current Directors are at <http://orgs.uww.edu/wcte/officers.htm>.

In mid-September, be sure to watch your e-mail inboxes for more information and for access to an online ballot. Please contact Emily Tymus Ihrke (Nominating Committee Chair/Director-at-Large), eihrke@usmk12.org, with questions or concerns.

MENTORING >> from Linda Barrington, JEA Mentor Program co-chair

Model of subject-specific mentoring assists new journalism teachers

Many English teachers find their way to publication advising later in their career, often with the benefit of their English training, but without a journalism-specific background.

The Journalism Education Association (<http://www.jea.org>), has started a mentoring program to address this need by pairing retired experienced journalism teachers with new publication advisers.

“We realized that the retired advisers had the expertise, the more flexible time schedule and the love of journalism to help make the mentoring program work,” said Julie Dodd, co-chair of the committee and a professor in the University of Florida’s College of Journalism and Communications.

Wisconsin’s mentors are Nancy Becker of Janesville, retired from Milton High School, Sandy Jacoby of Salem, retired from Tremper High School in Kenosha, and Dave Wallner of Madison, retired from Stoughton High School.

Although they reside in the far southern part of the state, they do long-distance mentoring in any part of Wisconsin. All three have advised award-winning publications and are highly respected in the field of scholastic journalism.

This program can provide an ongoing support system to improve the retention rate of new journalism teachers and advisers, while strengthening journalism programs across the state.

JEA’s goal is to train journalism teachers and media advisers who will stay with their publications and build them into strong, effective programs that promote JEA’s goals of freedom of expression, responsible journalism, and support for diversity.

“The mentoring program addresses the very crux of what we’re all about – training and maintaining quality journalism teachers in quality programs across the nation,” said Ann Visser, JEA past president.

The mentors are trained with materials from the New Teacher Center in Santa Cruz, Ca., guiding them through mentoring techniques, data-gathering activities, formative assessment and use of journalism standards in classrooms and after-school publication coaching.

If you are new to publication advising or know someone who is and would like a journalism mentor, contact any one of these three mentors. The support of your school administrator is essential, and the program is offered at no cost to you or the school.



Nancy Becker
Janesville
beckerng@charter.net



Sandy Jacoby
Salem
jacoby@tds.net



Dave Wallner
Madison
annedave@chorus.net

PUBLICATIONS

Wisconsin English Journal welcomes submissions of articles

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The fall 2010 issue of the Wisconsin English Journal will be published online in October. Look for a variety of texts each issue, including

- Reports of language and literacy research
- Critical reflections on teaching
- Descriptions of effective teaching methods and instructional tools
- Profiles of outstanding English teachers
- Book reviews
- Policy statements
- Conference proceedings
- Columns related to literacy, diversity, technology, and scholarship

Call for Idea Submissions: The New Adventures of Old Literature

Future issues of this column will contain your own teaching ideas. To submit an idea, e-mail Dawnene Hassett at ddhassett@wisc.edu. Submit a paragraph or an outline about how you teach a classic piece of literature in ways that resonate with today’s students. Include your phone number and email at the bottom of your submission, and Dawnene will be in touch with you as you work together to publish your units or lessons.

Reviews of recently published books are regularly included in the Wisconsin English Journal. If you are interested in reviewing a book, please contact Jen Scott Curwood at jscott3@wisc.edu or Jess Gallo at jrgallo@wisc.edu.

Peer Review Process

Each article submitted to the Wisconsin English Journal will receive a minimum of two peer reviewers, and ultimate decisions about publication reside with the journal editors. All articles must be original work, not previously published, and submitted via the website.

To submit articles to the WEJ, log on to the [website](#) and follow the prompts. The deadline for submissions for the spring issue is February 15, 2011.

We are interested in submissions for a column called Tech Tools for Teachers.

If you would like to submit a book review, the theme this year is New Literacies.

PROFESSIONAL ISSUES >> from Tom Pamperin, committee chair Committee needs teachers to write sample lessons, units on GLB issues

This past June, Wisconsin signed on to the Common Core Standards. The Common Core will replace Wisconsin's existing teaching standards over the next four years; check out www.commoncore.org to see the new standards for yourself.

For better or worse, these are the teaching standards we will have to work with for the foreseeable future. What's exciting is that WCTE, representing English teachers from around the state, is in a unique position to direct the way that the new standards are implemented.

WCTE's Professional Issues Committee is committed to keeping classroom teachers involved in this process so that teachers, rather than corporate executives and government officials, are making the decision about how the new standards can best be put into action.

Simply put, teachers have a job to do, and will need to act quickly. DPI has specifically promised to provide sample lesson plans and curricula to "illustrate" the Common Core Standards.

WCTE fears that without strong involvement from classroom teachers around the state, these "illustrative" curricula will be interpreted as mandatory, changing a potentially

workable set of standards into a de facto national curriculum.

An important part of the Professional Issues Committee's work in the next few years will be to recruit and coordinate classroom teachers to write the sample lesson plans and units that DPI is looking for, while making it clear that these samples are exactly that—samples—rather than a required curriculum.

As a first step, the Professional Issues Committee is assembling teams of classroom teachers to write sample lessons and units in a variety of areas.

One early focus will be in developing materials for teaching LGBT themes in the English classroom, complete with lesson plans, materials and professional resources to help teachers deal with parents, administrators and students who are reluctant to face such an uncomfortable issue in the classroom.

Uncomfortable or not, LGBT education fits perfectly with WCTE's belief that classroom content "should facilitate the students' personal growth in a developmentally appropriate way, increasing their awareness of the world around them."

As the year goes on, other themes will be addressed. The goal is to



provide a wide variety of approaches to the new standards. Not only will WCTE's involvement make sure that the standards are implemented in ways that allow creative application of best practices, but by providing many samples, we will make it clear that no one lesson or unit is the "required" lesson or unit.

WCTE needs your help to get this important work done. If you are interested in serving on a team to develop sample lessons and curricula for the Common Core Standards, please contact Tom Pamperin, chair of the Professional Issues Committee, at pampert@chipfalls.k12.wi.us.

GETTING INVOLVED >> from Catherine Compton-Lilly, Assembly co-chair NCTE Assembly for Research Conference to be in Madison next February

NCTEAR is the research assembly for NCTE. In 2011, we will be hosting the national research assembly in Madison.

The 2011 conference theme will focus on crossing borders with an emphasis on emerging conceptualizations of how time and space affect and inform literacy education and research. Attention to time and space has emerged out of recent investigations that have recognized the ways time and space operate as contextual factors that affect the lives of students, educators, family members and researchers.

These insights have contributed to questions related to history, identity, longitudinal methodologies, in-school and out-of-school literacies, and local/global literacies, as well as a range of

other issues. The conference theme aims to address current practical, theoretical, methodological issues related to time and space in literacy research. This national conference will feature the work of keynote speakers who will speak to the affordances and challenges of various conceptions of time and space.

Special rates for teachers and teams of teachers will be made available as well as sessions that address the implications of this work for classrooms and schools.

During summer 2010, we will welcome proposals that describe literacy researchers' conceptualizations of time and space as well as insights and challenges gained through specific studies, explorations of emerging theories, and consid-

What: NCTE Assembly for Research Conference
When: Feb. 18-20, 2011
Where: UW-Madison, co-sponsor
Co-Chairs: Catherine Compton-Lilly, Mariana Pacheco, Erica Halverson
Theme: Time and Space in Literacy Research: Revisiting Context

erations of practical and ethical research dilemmas. The deadline for submission of proposals will be Sept. 30, 2010. Mark your calendars and watch for more information.

Questions right now? contact [Catherine Compton-Lilly](mailto:Catherine.Compton-Lilly@wisc.edu), 456B Teacher Education Building, 225 N. Mills Street, Madison, WI 53706.

WCTE Update
September 2010
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