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The Language Arts Journal of Michigan

Leading Literate Lives

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Call for Manuscripts

Spring 2011

Literacy Policy: Who Says What and Why?

The political landscape of education is continually changing in ways that affect both teachers and students. Yet, good teachers find ways to negotiate the sometimes tricky waters of policy, bandwagons, parent and administrative expectations, standardized assessment preparation, and what they know in their hearts is good for their students. Thomas Newkirk reminds us “that the one great untapped resource in most school systems is the excellent teaching going on in them—and the potential for that teaching to be instructive to others.” But in an era when standardized test scores will be used to measure teacher effectiveness and teacher decision-making is frequently questioned, teachers are feeling more and more overwhelmed.

In this issue we hope to explore the policy landscape, whether it is building, district, state, or national, and highlight how it ultimately affects teachers, students, administrators, parents, and society as a whole.

Articles for this issue may focus on one or several of the following questions:

- What does the legislation really say and how can teachers balance the intent of legislative mandates and the realities of teaching?
- What stories do you have about the impact of standardized assessment preparation on students, instruction, curriculum and/or learning?
- How do good teachers make good decisions about instruction and curriculum in a time when their choices seem to be limited?
- What does history tell us about the role that policy plays in literacy education?

Deadline: February 15, 2011

Fall 2011

Past, Present, Future: Where Have We Been and Where are We Going?

A hundred years ago a group of educators concerned about the narrowing of the literary canon organized the National Council of Teachers of English and launched a tradition of support and advocacy that continues into a new century. Today NCTE and affiliates like the Michigan Council of Teachers of English continue in this tradition. As NCTE celebrates its 100th anniversary, we invite you to join us in thinking about where we have been, where we are currently, and where we’d like to be in the future. We encourage you to think about literacy practices from the past, new directions in literary criticism, instruction, and changing definitions of what it means to be literate.

Authors might consider one or more of the following questions:

- How can we serve under-represented populations? What does a growing definition of diversity mean for English language arts instruction?
- In what ways are new technologies driving new literacies and what impact will those new literacies have on English language arts instruction?
- What can we learn from the past when technologies like the printing press changed the landscape of text and literacy?
- How have past educational movements shaped the classroom and what have we learned as a result?
- How do the teaching methods of yesterday compare to the methods of today? How do you see our teaching methods shifting in the future?

Deadline: July 1, 2011

Authors may submit manuscripts by going to <http://scholarworks.gvsu.edu/lajm> and clicking on “Submit an article.” All manuscripts must be submitted as Word documents in APA style. Author queries should be sent to lajm@gvsu.edu.