

April 25, 2019

TALE Board of Directors

Dear Directors:

Hello! My name is Jodie Smith and I am writing in interest of serving in one of the current open spots on the TALE board. My greatest fulfillment in my 20+ years in education has been supporting teachers in their professional growth. I have done this through consulting, in support positions at the district and campus level, and through staff development and conference presentations. But I am ready for a new way to impact Texas educators, and serving through TALE would be a blessed way to do so.

My professional career began in 1993 as a middle and high school English teacher in Gunter, Texas. As a young inexperienced educator in a small school, I was not even aware of professional organizations. Fortunately, I had a great mentor in a fellow colleague, who supported me through those first three learning years! The seed for a desire to help other teachers was planted then and there. I moved on to another small school, Maypearl MS, where I had the opportunity to become a teacher leader, serving as the lead ELAR teacher, a member of the campus Site-based Improvement Committee, and as the teacher representative with the (then) new appraisal system. It was here that I learned how to map curriculum and had the opportunity to mentor new teachers. After three years, I moved into a support role in a large middle school in McKinney. At first intimidated, I soon was elated to realize I was working with many teachers who appreciated having someone right there on the campus each day that could help them grow in their skills. It was here that I first became aware of the power of professional organizations. I joined TCEA and soon was presenting at the state conference in Austin! It was so gratifying to know that I could even help educators beyond my school! Moving back into ELAR support, I became a writing trainer through NJWPT/Abydos Learning. Their model of ongoing professional development and support at the local level was so effective! I began reading professional literature in earnest and joined NCTE and TCTE. In 2003 when my husband was hired as the Superintendent of Melissa ISD tasked with moving a K-8 district to a K-12 district, he invited me back into the classroom to help establish the high school ELAR foundation. I was able to return to teacher support a year later, and in 2006 became the District Humanities Coordinator. Working with elementary teachers, I soon learned I needed more knowledge in order to help them. Joining (then) IRA and TARE provided the support I needed to facilitate k-5 teacher growth through collegial coaching! And I was blessed to drive a group of teachers to Little Rock for the regional IRA conference where our highlight was learning directly from our literacy heroes the Two Sisters, Gail Boushey and Joan Moser! This was just the boost we needed to fully implement a guided reading/strategy reading model in our district.

Along this professional journey, my husband and I were on a personal journey to start a family. Full of challenges, this journey had to take precedence, so in 2011 I resigned my position. After one more failed medical treatment, God led us to learn about adoption. During our wait period, I had the privilege to work on a consulting basis for both Melissa ISD and Allen ISD. During a time of transitioning state assessments, I created assessments for both districts, provided scoring training for Melissa, and helped AISD middle school teachers transition to an ELAR block schedule after having reading and writing taught separately by different teachers. I also continued working with my husband on TeacherTube, our free online teacher resource we had created in 2007.

In 2013 we were blessed to become parents to a sweet, blue-eyed boy! I became a full-time mom! In 2015 we had the opportunity to begin work with another adoption agency. We moved to Texarkana in the fall of 2016 when my husband accepted the position of Superintendent of the Pleasant Grove ISD, and in February 2017 were blessed to welcome another precious boy – hazel eyes this time! Another blessing was finding an amazing pre-school! Thanks to mothers-day-out, I have been able to return to teacher support. I am now working with the PGISD curriculum director as an ELAR consultant on a pro-bono basis! There I am working with a cadre of teachers to prepare to implement the new ELAR TEKS within a workshop and guided/strategy reading model. My inner teacher-helper is alive again, but I was basically out of the education loop a few years, so I have turned to ILA and TALE to help catch up! I hope to return to a full-time position in teacher support-- either in the K-12 setting or higher ed setting--in the near future. And I would truly be honored to offer what I can to teachers now through a position on the TALE board.

If elected to the TALE board, I would support keeping the advocacy alerts going. I still get emotional thinking about the previous ELAR TEKS revision and so appreciate TALE advocated then and now for what is in the best interest of Texas students and teachers. Sadly, I have not attended a TALE conference and looking at the 2019 conference schedule has me even more down. Why? Because the presenters are awesome! (Seeing Richard Gentry and Mark Weakland would have been a boost with spelling on my list to tackle next in my consulting role.) Retaining such relevant, impactful speakers and presenters is another thing I would continue to support as a board member. And of interest for me is increasing awareness of the organization and increasing membership. Like I was, some new teachers do not even know about the state organization and what it can offer them in support. Working to create membership fee scholarships is an idea I am interested in investigating. Having experience working in and with smaller school districts, I know that they often cannot afford literacy specialists or reading coaches. Their curriculum director (if they even have one) has to do it all. And unless he or she is from a literacy background, they may not be best equipped to support literacy instruction. We may ask who is coaching the coach? I would like to investigate how TALE can further support these folks especially – perhaps in some collegial/professional coaching capacity for the lone C&I directors and/or principals who serve in that capacity.

Along with this background letter, I have submitted my CV and a letter of support. I appreciate the opportunity to apply for a position on the TALE board, and if elected I will work dilligently to support the mission of TALE and the needs of its members.

Sincerely,

Joanna “Jodie” Smith

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Independent Consultant

Education consultant offering training and support in the areas of curriculum design, English Language Arts and Reading (ELAR) curriculum and instruction, reading/writing workshop, guided reading, assessment, technology integration, reading and writing in the content areas, learning communities, coaching, instructional best practices, and developing online teaching/learning resources for instruction and staff development.

Academic History

Master of Arts in Education 2010
Fontbonne University, St. Louis, Missouri
Emphasis: Teaching of Writing across the Curriculum

Bachelor of Arts in English 1993
Texas A & M University - Commerce, Commerce, Texas
Major: Secondary Education

Professional Certifications and Training

- Secondary English Texas Educator Certificate (6-12)
- English Language Arts Texas Educator Certificate (6-12)
- Information Processing Technologies I Texas Educator Certificate (6-12)
- Collegial/Professional Coaching
- Professional Learning Communities
- Abydos Writing Trainer (2003-2015)
- Virtual Instructor Certification
- Gifted and Talented Teacher Certification
- Advanced Placement Teacher Certification

Professional Positions

ELAR Consultant 2018-Present
Pleasant Grove Independent School District, Texarkana, Texas

ELAR Consultant 2011-2013
Allen Independent School District, Allen, Texas
Melissa Independent School District, Melissa, Texas

Co-Owner, Content Creator, and Workshop Presenter 2007-2013
TeacherTube LLC, Online Teacher Resource

District Coordinator of Humanities Curriculum and Instruction Melissa Independent School District, Melissa, Texas	2006-2011
District Technology Integrator and Language Arts Specialist Melissa Independent School District, Melissa, Texas	2005-2006
Technology Instructor and Staff Development Instructor Melissa Independent School District, Melissa, Texas	2004-2005
English Language Arts Instructor Melissa Middle School, Melissa, Texas	2003-2004
Technology Integrator and Academic Specialist Dowell Middle School, McKinney ISD, McKinney, Texas	1999-2003
English Language Arts and Technology Instructor Maypearl Middle School, Maypearl, Texas	1996-1999
English Language Arts and Technology Instructor Gunter Middle and High Schools, Gunter, Texas	1993-1996

Service

District and Campus Service

Member and Facilitator, Reading/Writing Learning Community, Harry McKillop Elementary,
2005-2011

Member and Facilitator, Humanities Learning Community, Melissa Intermediate and Middle
School, 2006-2011

Member and Facilitator, Humanities Learning Community, Melissa High School, 2008-2012

Member and Facilitator, District Humanities Learning Community, Melissa Independent School
District, 2008-2011

Member and Facilitator, English Language Arts Philosophy Writing Team, Melissa Independent
School District, 2006

Member and Chair, Campus Technology Team, Dowell Middle School, 1999-2003

Campus Site-based Committee, Maypearl Middle School, 1996-1999

Professional Community Service

- Tutor for elementary students in math and reading and middle and high school students in writing
- Volunteer classroom reader
- Board of Directors, Abydos Learning International
- Local Host, Abydos Learning International's 22nd Annual Teachers' and Trainers' Conference

Scholarly and Creative Work

Workshops, Seminars, Presentations

- Smith, J. L. (2012, March). *i-Literacy: Using iPads for multisensory literacy intervention*. Session presented at the Abydos Learning International's 26th Annual Teachers' and Trainers' Conference, Dallas, Texas.
- Smith, J. L. (2011, July). *Seventh grade best practices institute: Teaching language arts in the block*. Training presented at Allen Independent School District, Allen, TX.
- Smith, J. L. (2011, August). *iPad apps for elementary language arts*. Training presented at Allen Independent School District, Allen, Texas.
- Smith, J. L. (2011, August). *iPad apps for secondary language arts*. Training presented at Allen Independent School District, Allen, Texas.
- Smith, J. L. (2011, August). *iPad apps for teacher productivity*. Training presented at Allen Independent School District, Allen, Texas.
- Smith, J.L. (2010-2011 Academic Year). *Learning community facilitator training*. Training presented at Melissa Independent School District, Melissa, Texas.
- Smith, J. L. (2010-2011 Academic Year). *Professional Coaching*. Training provided to leadership teams of all campuses at Melissa Independent School District, Melissa, Texas.
- Smith, J. L. (2011, December). *Scoring the state of Texas assessment of academic readiness in writing for grades 4 and 7*. Training provided at Melissa Independent School District, Melissa, Texas.
- Smith, J. L. (2004, 2005, 2007, 2010). *Three-week writing institute*. Summer training presented at Melissa Independent School District, Melissa, Texas.
- Smith, J. L. (2009). *Engage digital natives with video: High school student created instructional videos for elementary students*. Session presented at the 15th Annual Technology Planning Conference, Region 10 Education Service Center, Richardson, Texas.
- Smith, J. L. (2009, March). *Bringing down the wonders: Teaching the classics in summer camp*. Session presented at the Abydos Learning International's 23rd Annual Teachers' and Trainers' Conference, Dallas, Texas.
- Smith, J. L. (2009, February). *Students teaching students: High school Spanish video Production*. Workshop presented at the Texas Computer Education Association Conference, Austin, Texas.

- Smith, J. L. (2008, March). *Around the track in record time: Speedy ways to integrate and create instructional videos*. Workshop presented at the North Carolina Association for Education Communications and Technology, Concord, North Carolina.
- Smith, J. L. (2008, October). *Engage Elementary School Digital Natives with Student Made Instructional Videos*. Workshop presented at the Texas Foreign Language Association Conference, Houston, Texas.
- Smith, J. L. (2007, February). *Get students published with publish-on-demand*. Session presented at the Texas Computer Education Association Conference, Austin, Texas.
- Smith, J. L. (2006, March). *Sharing the great invention of the world: Publishing a campus anthology and online literary magazine*. Session presented at the Abydos Learning International's 20th Annual Teachers' and Trainers' Conference, San Antonio, Texas.
- Smith, J. L. (2003). *Three-week writing institute*. Summer training presented at McKinney Independent School District, McKinney, Texas.
- Smith, J. L. (2003). *Technology integration: Equipping teachers and students with tools to increase student achievement*. Session presented at the Texas Pathfinder Collaborative Conference, Austin, Texas.

Publications

- Smith, J. (2013 Kindergarten June/July). *Me!* The Mailbox Idea Magazine for Teachers.
- Smith, J. L. (2002 November/December). *Wireless Laptop Integration at Dowell Middle School*. The Book Report.

Honors and Awards

- Dollar General Grant (2011, September)
\$2,000.00 awarded for an intervention initiative using iPads with dyslexic and language delayed students.
- ING Grant (2008, November)
\$2,000.00 awarded for the implementation of an annual fourth grade writing camp.
- Gilder Lehrman Institute for American History Teacher Seminar (2008, August)
Awarded participation, including all travel expenses, in the *Teaching Digital History* workshop in New York, New York.
- Sue German Teaching Excellence Award, 2008
Awarded by Abydos Learning International
- EDS Technology Grant (2006, September)
\$1,500.00 awarded for instructional video production in the Spanish classroom.

Professional Organizations

Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development (ASCD)

International Literacy Association (ILA)

Texas Association for Literacy Education (TALE)

To Whom It May Concern,

This letter is in reference to Jodie Smith as a nominee to become a Board Member for the Texas Association for Literacy Education (TALE). I have had the pleasure of knowing and working with Jodie for almost 20 years. I first met Jodie through the Abydos Literacy Learning writing institute (formerly New Jersey Writing Project in Texas) where we trained side by side together for three weeks. She and I immediately bonded over our love for literacy, the development of teachers, and our desire to promote authentic reading and writing strategies in the classroom across all grade levels and content areas. As a past president of TALE, I know the work it takes to be a productive board member. One must have passion, dedication, and a willingness to serve and advocate for literacy in multiple ways. Jodie has all of that and more. She brings a fresh perspective to TALE from her many roles - teacher, central office administrator, consultant, teachertube co-creator, and now mother. She is the consummate professional who, through her many contributions to education, has shown her belief in the value of ongoing literacy research, her passion for the professional development of teachers, and her leadership and advocacy for the teaching profession. TALE membership would greatly benefit from having Jodie Smith as a Board Member.



Sincerely,

Robin D. Johnson

2016-17 President of TALE
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