

March 2, 2009

Dear (teacher name)

We appreciate the leadership you have provided to the Oregon Writing Project at Willamette (OWP@WU) site and hope we can engage you in some exciting new work. Please join us for a two-day Visioning Retreat at Thetford Lodge on April 18 and 19. The purpose of the Retreat is to collaboratively create a “big picture”(identity) of the site, identify new program opportunities, resources, and site leaders, and build a strategic plan.

What and Why

Some of the questions that will guide our work:

What is the work of Writing Project sites?

What does the work look like at our site; what is the purpose and goal of each program and how do our Summer Institute, Inservice and Continuity programs support each other?

Who leads the work and how do we support new leadership?

Many National Writing Project sites are finding Visioning Retreats to be an effective way to bring together directors and teacher leaders to take stock of where the site has been and how they hope to see it grow in the future. This seems a particularly good time for our site to ask these questions. We are looking at a couple of significant changes in leadership, we have a healthy and functioning infrastructure that will support growth, and we have a new group of positive, talented, energetic future site leaders. Writing Project sites are described as professional homes for teacher leaders. This seems a good way for us to come together and construct a professional home that serves our needs and will support us in meeting the needs of teachers in our area.

Logistics

Thetford Lodge has somewhat rustic bunkbeds (bring a sleeping bag), a fully stocked kitchen, and a beautiful view of the Little North Fork River. It is located about 30 miles from Salem toward Detroit Lake. We will provide you with a map. Car pools will be encouraged and organized. All food will be provided. Please let us know if you have special dietary needs.

Your responsibilities

We are asking that you prepare for our discussions at the Retreat by doing a bit of reading. We have included Pat Fox’s article, *Visioning Retreats as a Strategy for Leadership Development and Site Development* with this invitation. We also ask that you read Chapter 2 of the book, *Inside the National Writing Project: Connecting Network Learning and Classroom Teaching*, which describes the work of a Writing Project site. Advisory Board members have copies of this book. We will send a copy of Chapter 2 to everyone else who is able to join us. We will be discussing the three parts of a site: the Summer Institute, Inservice, and Continuity, so we are asking that you please select and read one monograph (these are fairly short) and one “other resource” from the attached list in any of these three areas—and we will send those to you. The NWP website has many resources that have been contributed by site leaders to inform our work,

but these represent some of the resources they recommend. When you come to the Retreat, please bring a quote from Chapter #2 that particularly speaks to you or raises issues/ideas. From the other readings you select, please bring 3 questions and two “big ideas” that came from your reading.

We hope you can join us and look forward to working with you. Please let us know if you can join us by either returning the enclosed RSVP or answering the same questions in an email response sent to Sue Crothers ([HYPERLINK "mailto:scrothers@willamette.edu"](mailto:scrothers@willamette.edu) scrothers@willamette.edu) by March 20th.

If you have questions, please contact Karen Hamlin at [HYPERLINK "mailto:khamlin@willamette.edu"](mailto:khamlin@willamette.edu) khamlin@willamette.edu or 503 580 3424.

Sincerely,

Karen Hamlin

***Oregon Writing Project at Willamette Visioning Retreat
RSVP***

_____ Yes, I would love to come.

_____ Sorry, I am not able to join you.

Name: _____

Address and Phone: _____

Email: _____

Please select one NWP monograph and one other reading or resource from the enclosed list and write it below. We will send these to you.

Monograph title: _____

Other article or resource: _____

Please mail this RSVP to

Sue Crothers
School of Education
Willamette University
900 State Street
Salem, OR 97301

Or email this information to Sue at

scrother@willamette.edu