

NNSTOY

TEACHERS LEADING

Dear colleagues,

This is Teacher Appreciation Week. While many will share their gratitude for teachers this week, there is also another definition for appreciation: an increase in value. During this time of crisis, the value of the NNSTOY network has never been greater.

In February when the US stock market hit a record high and US unemployment was extremely low, NNSTOY teacher leaders were working tirelessly to meet student needs and to improve teaching and learning through the lens of equity in their classrooms and their school systems.

Then Covid-19 changed our world, widening the equity gaps we have been seeking to close. Teachers and students have lost the normal daily sense of community and the physical structure of their learning environment. Tens of millions of jobs have been lost. Our students and families are facing fear, uncertainty, illness, economic hardship, loss, and grief.

Through all of this, NNSTOY teacher leaders stayed the course, leading our best path forward in terms of practice, policy, and advocacy through the lens of equity.

NNSTOY has been hosting Professional Learning Communities to network members to address unique challenges, share effective strategies, and support each other in this meaningful and exhausting work. NNSTOY is deeply grateful to our members that have stepped in and invested their time, energy, and enthusiasm to this work:

- Elementary Grades K – 5: Susan Koch, Dana McDonough, KD Meucci, and Allyson Burns
- Secondary English Language Arts: Tom Rademacher
- English Language Learners: Leticia Ingram and Amy Hewett-Olatunde
- Special Education: Jean Lawson
- Music: Argine Safari
- Computer Science: Sean Wybrant

NNSTOY members have been policy leaders. At the request of the Kansas Commissioner of Education, NNSTOY members Cindy Couchman, Tabatha Rosproy, and Dyane Smokorowski led a Continuous Learning Task Force comprised of Kansas teacher leaders. Over just a few days (and with little sleep) they produced a 70 page report providing guidance to administrators, teachers, and parents on learning during this crisis. State policies that respect, value, and include teacher leaders lead to more effective and meaningful policies.

Teachers of the Year in Nebraska, Kansas, Maine and New Jersey joined their colleagues to partner with local and public broadcasting television stations to produce lessons for students across their respective state. They focused their equity lens on providing high quality instruction for students who may not have access to internet or computers.

During this Teacher Appreciation Week, we hope you take some time to appreciate and celebrate the value and importance of your public service to our students and their families. We also hope you share on social media your appreciation for your colleagues and mentors that supported and inspired your journey in teacher leadership.

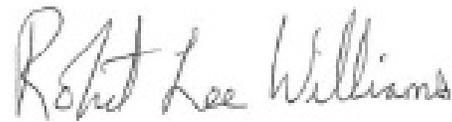
We are incredibly proud of our members and the increased value teacher leaders bring to policy, practice, and advocacy through the lens of equity. Thank you for all that you do.

We hope that you will be able to join us virtually at the 2020 National Teacher Leadership Conference Event this July 8, 9, and 10 as we continue to learn how to navigate this “new normal” together.

With deep respect and gratitude,



Maddie Fennell
NNSTOY Board Chair



Bob Williams
NNSTOY Management Consultant