Chairperson’s Report

Hawke’s Bay are lucky enough to have one of the most active regional associations in New Zealand. HBETA in 2016 was an excellent example what a regional association can do for teaching within the region. Last year we stepped outside the mould and made the most of what we can do as a group. Although we continued to meet each term, with a focus on PLD at each meeting, we also took advantage of some other opportunities to support teachers in the Region over the year.

We met in Term 1, 2 and 3 last year, thanks to our fabulous hosting schools. In Term 1, Hamish Crafter and his team looked after us and organised Charity Norman to present a workshop on using the Johari Window to create character. We were then lucky enough to be the first group in New Zealand to be invited to Westmount School. It was an honour to have the Principal of Westmount School speak to us about the school philosophy and the use of their state of the art learning centre. Heather Read then gave us some great tips and tricks for using technology in the classroom. I would also like to mention that the catering was amazing at this meeting and we all loved the prize bags at the end. Finally, at the end of Term 3, Morag Deeley and her team hosted us at Iona College. Here we had a practical workshop, presented by Karen Beaumont on Creative non-fiction. Which provided us with excellent opportunities and ideas to teach this in the classroom.

Term 3 was a busy term for us.  We held a moderator’s workshop with Kirsten Shaw.  The feedback from this meeting was extremely positive.  We had almost 60 teachers present and almost every school from Central Hawke’s Bay to Wairoa were represented at the workshop.

On Friday 11th of November 2016 we hosted our first Annual Big Day Out.  This was held at Karamu High School on Friday 11th of November.  There were eight workshops on offer in a variety of subject areas, including Creative Non Fiction, Engaging Maori and Pacifica students and sketchnoting.  We even had a representative from the NZSDC to present workshops on debating coaching and adjudicating.   We are also excited to have David Schaumann travelling from Dunedin to present a very practical keynote on unfamiliar text analysis.  He also presented a workshop later in the day on developing the sophistication of essay paragraphs.  We had over 60 people attend this event and the feedback was great. We hope to make this a regular occurrence on our annual calendar.

In Hawke’s Bay we suffered a huge loss in 2016.  The English Teaching Community were shocked and saddened to hear of Rod Dowling’s passing.  Rod was a huge part of our community for many years and has had a huge influence on us over the years as a teacher, mentor and colleague.  He taught at Te Aute College and Taradale High School.  He then went on to lead the English department at Lindisfarne College.  On top of this he also established and developed the BBA company where many of us purchase our benchmark exam resources.  He was a committed member of the HBETA and many of us will pay our respects and celebrate his life at a Memorial Service on the afternoon of Friday 11th of November at Lindisfarne College.

It has been disappointing to see numbers declining at these meetings. The professional networking and PLD provided by the association is invaluable and is a key factor in maintaining the professional practice over the region. Over 2017 we will look at moving the dates of these meetings to try and take advantage of the energy and enthusiasm teachers may have at the beginning of each term rather than the end.

In the changing political climate we are facing, we are still unsure about where we can get subject specific PLD. NZATE are currently exploring how the government plan to support teachers in upskilling in their roles, now that there is no subject specific, centrally funded PLD. This is one of the key concerns that NZATE have and they are working hard on your behalf to ensure the Government know what we need. However, through involvement with the HBETA we continue to develop of professional relationships and undertake professional learning