



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

November 20, 2006

Included: Educators in attendance

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Educators Look to Engage Students in Critical Discussion

Anyone who has ever tried to teach a group of people knows it is difficult to begin and maintain a group discussion. Kansas teachers looking for ways to engage high school students in class discussion recently attended a workshop at ESU encouraging the use of a method called Socratic Circles.

Socratic Circles uses the teacher as facilitator of a student-centered discussion which offers students the opportunity to construct content knowledge through conversation and improve their discussion skills through peer coaching. The method encourages critical reading, thinking, discussion and democratic principles.

The workshop, called “Socratic Circles: Empowering Student-Centered Discussion,” was organized by the Jones Institute for Educational Excellence and held Friday, November 17, 2006. The event was attended by 40 educators from across the state.

“This might very well be called the best workshop I’ve ever attended, and I’ve been teaching since 1969!” said Patty McDonald, an English teacher at Fredonia High school who attended the event.

Matt Copeland was the workshop’s presenter. Copeland is the dean of the English department at Washburn Rural High School, in Topeka. He is a 2005 Milken National Educator and 2003 Kansas Master Teacher. In addition to his teaching duties, he also serves as an officer and executive board member of the Kansas Association of Teachers of English.

For more information about this workshop, contact Toni Bowling at 620-341-5372 or 1-877-378-5433, mbowling@emporia.edu.

Educators in attendance at the workshop included:

Emporia State University –
Malonne Davies

USD 266, Maize –
Teri Larson, Pam Zipfel

USD 446, Independence –
Rene Hensley, Karen Trester

USD 232, De Soto –
Brian Dinkel, Nikki Leisten,
Brandi Roberts

USD 305, Salina –
Karen Bastin, Krista DeVoe,
Kaisha Edgerle, Tonya Keim,
Barbara A. Livengood,
Krystal Richard, Anna Wedel

USD 450, Shawnee Heights –
Michael Bass, Mary Dormer,
Maureen Munz, Dana Peterson

USD 253, Emporia –
Dennis Newell, Valerie Ringler

USD 344, Pleasanton –
Robin Bortzfield, Sheila Wimmer

USD 484, Fredonia –
Kay Kile, Patty McDonald

USD 259, Wichita –
Thomas Davis, Jennifer Fry,
Celeste Hutton, Lisa Kellerby

USD 400, Smoky Valley –
Casey Long

USD 501, Topeka –
Melissa Mikkelsen

USD 261, Haysville –
Nicole Eitzmann, Casey Meier, Martha
Moree

USD 420, Osage City –
Mary Casey, Matt Marple

USD 512, Shawnee Mission –
Vicki Arndt-Helgesen,
Jeannette Bonjour

###TEACH###

