

The National Writing Project

**CLIENT SATISFACTION AND
PROGRAM IMPACT**

**Results from a Satisfaction Survey and Follow-
up Survey of Participants at 2002 Invitational
Institutes**

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Results from a Satisfaction Survey and Follow-up Survey of Participants at 2002 Invitational Institutes

SUMMARY

Teachers who participated in Invitational Institutes of the National Writing Project (NWP) during summer 2002 responded to two surveys: a Client Satisfaction Survey immediately following the institutes, and a Follow-up Survey of Program Impact one year later. The two surveys together assess the quality and usefulness of the institutes for participants, the knowledge and skills those participants gained, changes they made in their classroom practice as a result of the institutes, and the benefits they believe their students are gaining.

The results indicate that NWP institutes promote teacher learning and lead to increased use of effective classroom practices:

- ◆ More than 95% of participants in the NWP's summer 2002 Invitational Institutes gave positive assessments of the value and usefulness of the NWP programs. Teachers reported benefiting in multiple ways from the institutes.
- ◆ A substantial majority of NWP participants report that in the year following the institutes, they increased their use of multiple teaching practices that support students' writing development within a classroom community of writers. As a result of the summer institutes, teachers more often discuss students' writing with them, put greater emphasis on having students write to learn, focus more on developing their students' skill in choosing topics and in addressing different audiences and purposes, and give their students more practice in planning and revising their writing.
- ◆ The great majority of NWP institute participants think their students benefit from what they have gained from the Writing Project. Moreover, NWP participants believe that what they as teachers gain from the institutes ultimately benefits their students in all areas of the curriculum, not just in the writing classroom *per se*.
- ◆ At both elementary and middle grades, a majority of NWP participants employ classroom practices that are statistically correlated with higher achievement levels on the 1998 NAEP Writing Assessment in grades 4 and 8. Further, as a result of the NWP, most teachers are changing their classroom practices toward effective use of these practices.

*The Nation's Report Card: Writing 2002*¹ reports that across the nation there were significant improvements in writing in grades 4 and 8 in 2002, compared to 1998. While the 2002 report does not include analysis of school factors that contribute to higher scores, the same writing framework, developed under the aegis of the National Assessment Governing Board, served as the blueprint for both the 1998 and 2002 assessments. Thus, it is reasonable to infer that NWP teachers who are employing the classroom practices associated with higher achievement in 1998 are still, in 2002-03, contributing to student learning in ways that are consistent with higher writing achievement on this national measure.

¹ U.S. Department of Education. Institute of Education Sciences. National Center for Education Statistics. *The Nation's Report Card: Writing 2002*, NCEs 2003-539, by H.R. Persky, M.C. Daane, and Y. Jin. Washington, DC: 2003.

I. INTRODUCTION

This report presents results of a study completed in Fall 2003 by Inverness Research Associates on behalf of the National Writing Project (NWP). The study was designed to satisfy a U.S. Department of Education (USDOE) requirement that programs assess participants' satisfaction with their professional development experiences, and also assess the impact of professional development programs on participants' subsequent classroom practices.

Participants in the study were teachers attending summer 2002 Invitational Institutes held at 161² sites of the NWP. These institutes are the core programs by which each NWP site works with teachers (K-college) who will serve as the "teacher-consultants" providing leadership for the site. NWP teacher-consultants coordinate and deliver professional development activities in schools throughout the year.

Inverness Research Associates administered two surveys to these participants. The first was a Client Satisfaction Survey collected at the end of the institutes in summer 2002. This survey asks participants to rate the quality and potential value of the institute for their teaching. 2,736 participants responded to this survey. For the second survey, the Follow-up Survey, we asked these same participants one year later (Spring 2003) to assess the impact of the summer 2002 institute on their classroom teaching practices.

This was the fourth year that these instruments were administered to NWP Invitational Institute participants. Findings from previous years' surveys, also reported to DOE, are quite similar. The consistency of findings from year to year gives us considerable confidence in the validity and robustness of the results we are reporting.

Immediately below, we present the Satisfaction Survey results for the 2002 group — *as well as the Satisfaction Survey results from most recent participants in 2003 institutes.* (The 2003 participants will be given the Follow-Up survey in spring 2004). Following this brief section, the report focuses on the results of the Follow-up Survey for participants in 2002 Invitational Institutes.

² Of the 168 NWP sites in 2002, 161 submitted Client Satisfaction Survey data.
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II. RESULTS OF CLIENT SATISFACTION SURVEY

The “target indicator” of client satisfaction established by the USDOE is 75%. Ratings of participants in the NWP’s summer 2002 (and 2003) Invitational Institutes far exceed this target. Across all questions, more than 95% of teachers gave positive assessments of the value and usefulness of these programs. Results for both years are shown in the following table.

TABLE 1.
Results of Client Satisfaction Survey:
Comparison of 2003 and 2002 Summer Institutes

	2003 Summer Institutes 169 sites			2002 Summer Institutes 161 sites		
	# partic	Mean	% Excellent	# partic	Mean	% Excellent
1. How would you rate the overall quality of this NWP institute?	2789	4.87	99.3%	2731	4.80	98.4%
	# partic	Mean	% Better	# partic	Mean	% Better
2. On average, how would you compare the quality and value of this institute to other (non-NWP) professional development activities you have participated in recently?	2600	4.83	97.9%	2483	4.76	96.1%
	# partic	Mean	% A great deal	# partic	Mean	% A great deal
3. How much has the institute contributed to your understanding of how to teach writing effectively?	2790	4.81	98.1%	2734	4.74	95.8%
4. To what degree do you feel that you will be able to use and apply what you have learned in this institute to your own classroom and your own students?	2789	4.80	97.5%	2736	4.75	96.5%
5. To what degree do you believe that the experience you have had in this institute will translate into improved writing skills for your students?	2784	4.80	98.0%	2730	4.73	96.1%

Percentage totals represent participants who gave ratings of “4” or “5” on five-point scales where “1” represents a very negative rating, “3” is a neutral rating, and “5” indicates a very positive rating.

III. RESULTS OF FOLLOW-UP SURVEY OF IMPACT OF SUMMER INSTITUTES ON CLASSROOM PRACTICE

In spring 2003, Inverness Research Associates conducted a follow-up survey to determine the impact of the 2002 Invitational Institute one year later. This survey examined three areas:

- **The Overall Value of NWP Summer Institutes for Teachers**
- **Influences of NWP Institutes on Teachers' Use of Specific Classroom Practices**
- **Inferred Benefits to Participants' Students Because of NWP Institutes**

Response rate

Of the 3,176 participants at the 2002 Summer Institute, 2,769 completed Satisfaction Surveys. Of those respondents, 2,012 provided email addresses. We contacted this group by email in May 2003 and provided a direct link to our online follow-up survey. We received a total of 884 Follow-up Surveys, for an overall response rate of 44%³. Respondents represented 157 sites (98% of the sites that offered Invitational Institutes in 2002). Due to the distribution of respondents, we have no reason to believe the results reported are atypical or unrepresentative of the total population of NWP participants.

TABLE 2.
Response Rate on the Spring 2003 Follow-up Survey

Grade level taught	N of responses	N of emails sent	Response rate	% of all responses
K - 2	125	NA*	NA*	14.1%
3 - 5	173	NA*	NA*	19.6%
Elementary School Total	298	693	43%	33.7%
6 - 8	232	491	47%	26.2%
9 - 12	278	576	48%	31.5%
Middle and High School Total	510	1067	48%	57.7%
Post 12	76	99	77%	8.6%
<i>Unknown or Other GL**</i>		153		
Total -- All Grades	884	2012	44%	100%

* A total of 693 emails were sent to K-5 level teacher participants; further grade level breakdown is unknown.

** These participants did not report a grade level on the Summer Institute surveys, or their teaching did not fit within the K-5, 6-8, 9-12, or College categories.

Below we present results for each of the three sections of the survey. For each section, we first present results across all grades, K-college, and then we present results by grade level.

³ The response rate for the spring 2002 survey was 33%, so this year's rate of 44% reflects a substantial improvement.

A. The Overall Value of NWP Summer Institutes for Teachers

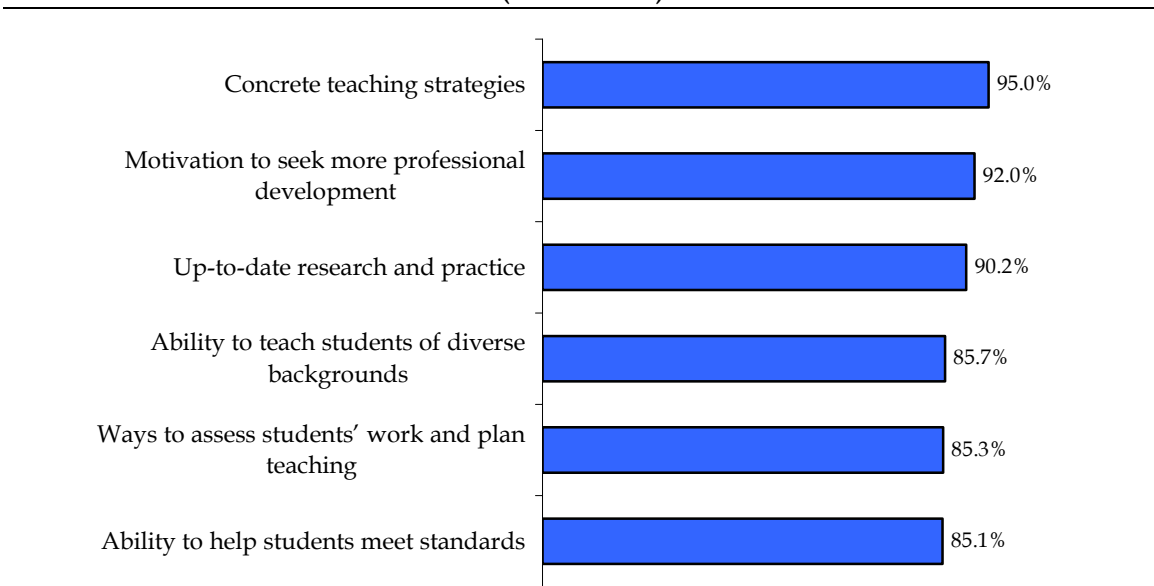
We asked teachers to assess the extent to which they gained a variety of benefits from the institutes.

Results for all grades

- ◆ **In very high proportions, teachers reported that they are benefiting in multiple ways from the summer institutes. Teachers’ ratings suggest that the NWP supports research-based practice and fosters ongoing teacher learning and improvement. Further, NWP institutes are helping teachers to be more responsive both to their students and to standards.**

Ninety-five percent of the teachers said they gained concrete teaching strategies from the institute; 92% said the experience caused them to seek further professional training; and 90% said the institute brought them more up-to-date on the latest research and practice. Further, 86% said the institute has enabled them to teach students with a wider range of backgrounds and skill levels; 85% of the teachers said they are better able to assess students effectively because of the institute; and 85% say they are better able to help students reach standards.

**FIGURE 1.
Benefits of Invitational Institutes for Teachers
(All Grades)**

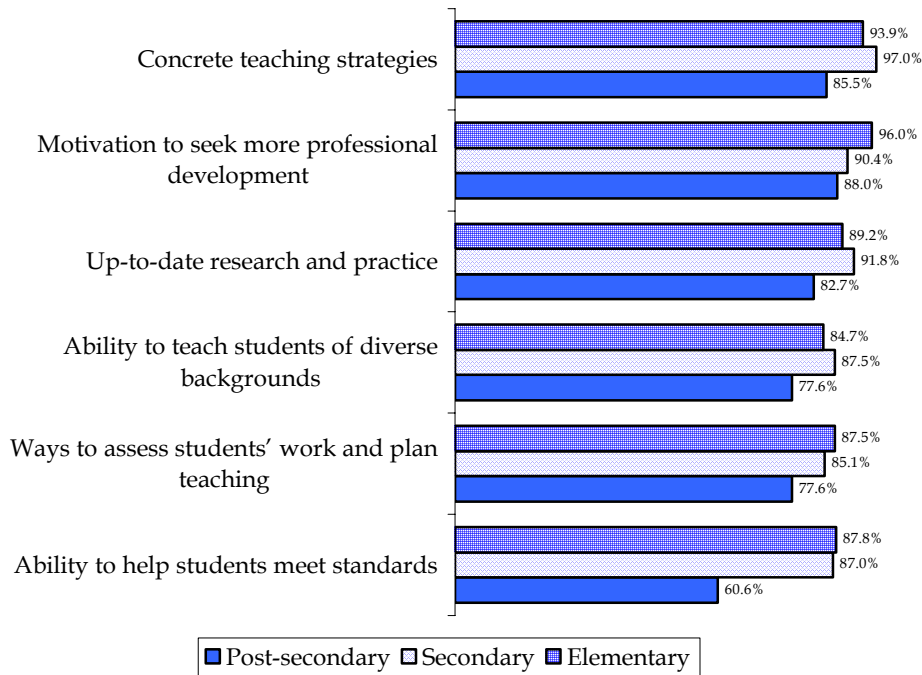


Percentages represent teachers who marked 4 or 5 on a 5-point scale where 1 = "disagree strongly" and 5 = "agree strongly."

Grade level comparisons

- ◆ In general, elementary and secondary teachers reported very similar benefits. Participants who teach at the post-secondary level offer slightly lower ratings, but still, the great majority say that they have benefited in the same ways as their colleagues in elementary and secondary schools.

FIGURE 2.
Benefits to Teachers
(Comparisons by Grade Levels Taught)



Percentages represent teachers who marked 4 or 5 on a 5-point scale where 1 = "disagree strongly" and 5 = "agree strongly."

B. Influences of NWP Institutes on Teachers' Use of Specific Classroom Practices

We asked teachers how much, if at all, they had increased their use of a range of teaching practices as a result of their Writing Project involvement.

Results for all grades

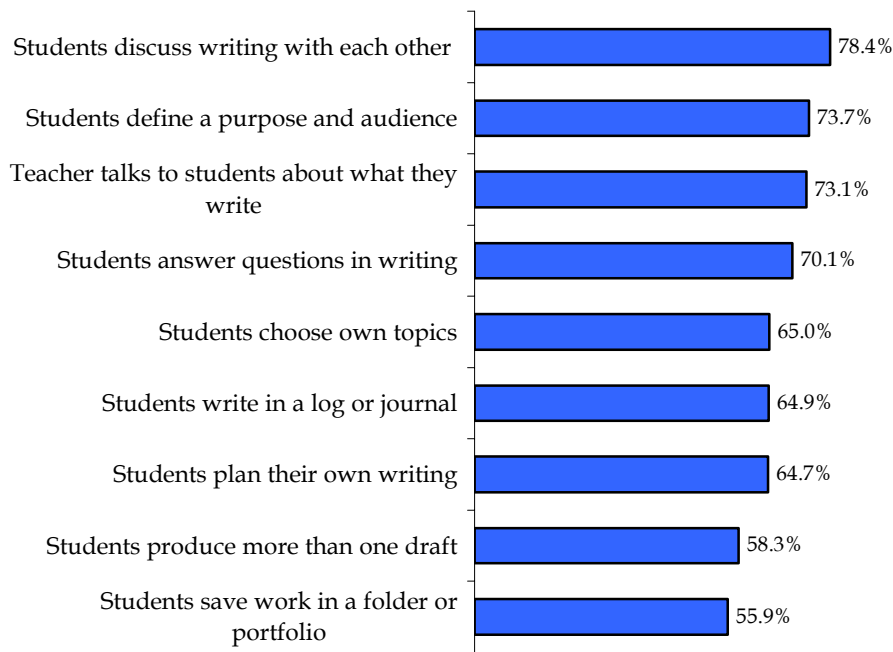
- ◆ The majority of participants report that they have increased their use of multiple teaching practices that support students' writing development within a classroom community of writers. As a result of Writing Project institutes, teachers more often discuss their students' writing with them, emphasize writing to learn, develop their students' skill in choosing topics and addressing different

audiences and purposes, and give students practice in planning and revising their writing.

Roughly three out of four participants (73%) report that, because of the Writing Project institute, they talk to their students about their writing more often, and 78% have their students talk to one another about their writing more often. About three in four (74%) also teach students how to define audiences and purposes for their writing more often. Nearly two-thirds of participants (65%) more often ask students to choose their own topics and to plan their writing before they write. More than half the teachers (58%) more often ask their students to write more than one draft, and 56% more often have their students keep their writing in a portfolio. All of these practices support students' development of writing skills and dispositions within an active community of writers.

Additionally, roughly two-thirds of teachers (70%) more often ask their students to answer questions in writing and to write in learning logs or journals (65%). These practices support the uses of writing to think and learn in all subjects. The following graph displays these results.

FIGURE 3.
Classroom Practices that Teachers Use More Often Because of the Institute (All Grades)



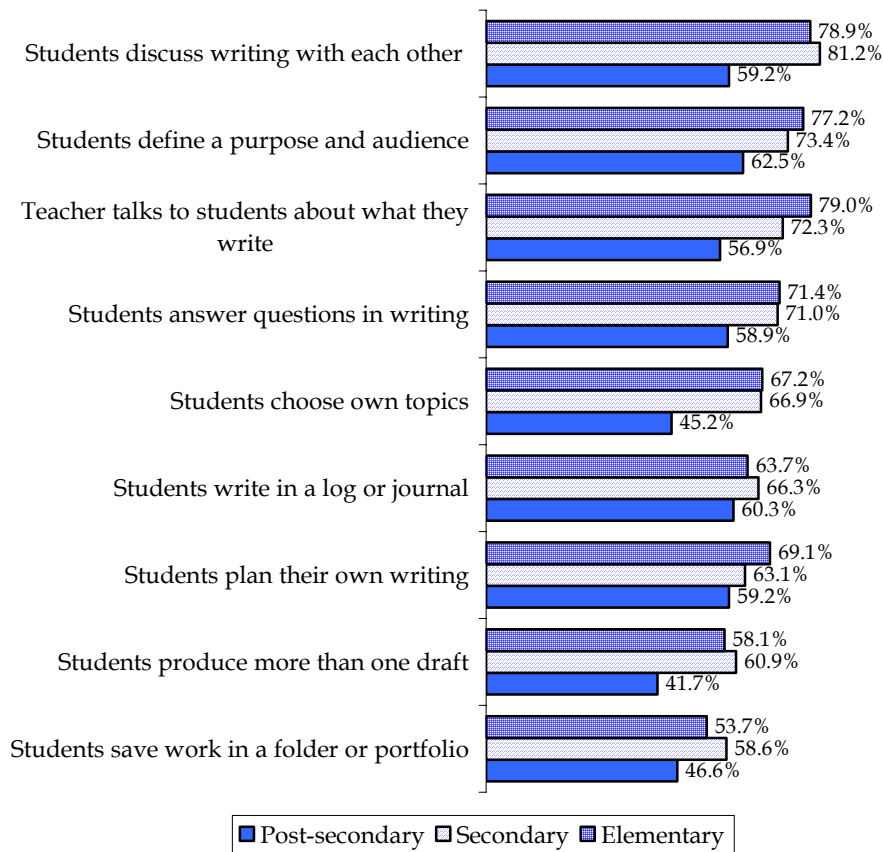
Percentages represent teachers who indicate that they engage in this practice "more often" this year because of the Writing Project.

Grade level comparisons

- ◆ Overall, there are small or no differences between the changes in practice made by elementary and secondary level teachers. K-12 teachers are somewhat more likely to have changed their teaching practices than post-secondary teachers; nonetheless, more than half of the post-secondary teachers report that they have increased their use of six of these nine practices.

The graph below displays these results.

FIGURE 4.
Classroom Practices that Teachers Use More Often because of the Institute
(Comparisons by Grade Levels Taught)



Percentages represent teachers who indicate that they engage in this practice "more often" this year because of the Writing Project.

C. Inferred Benefits to Participants’ Students Because of NWP Institutes

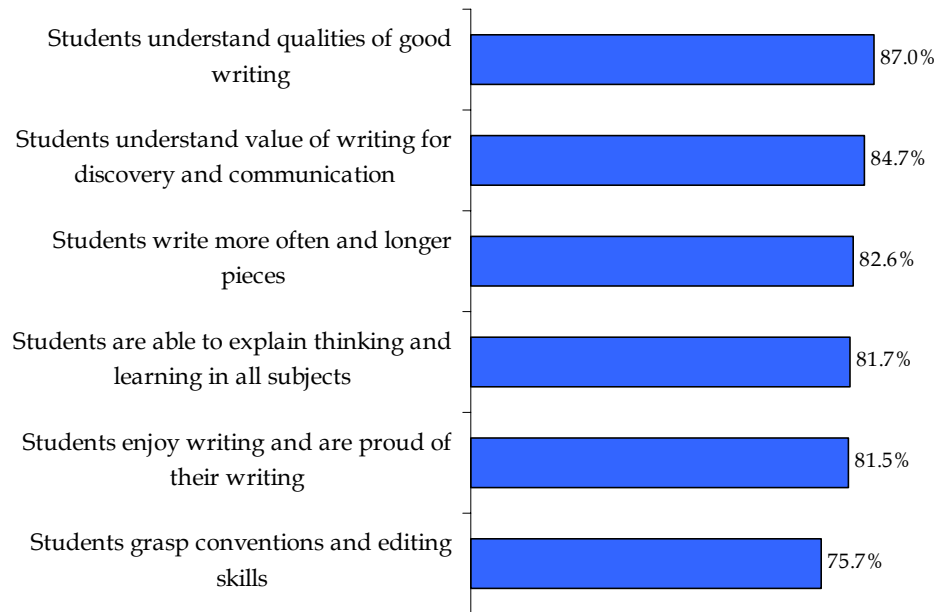
Results for all grades

- ◆ **The great majority of institute participants think their students are benefiting from what they, as teachers, have gained from the Writing Project. Moreover, teachers believe that the benefits to students extend beyond the writing classroom to all areas of the curriculum.**

Across all grade spans, teachers report that, because of their participation in the Writing Project, their students better understand the qualities of good writing (87%); better understand the value of writing for both discovery and communication (85%); write more often and write longer pieces (83%); and are better able to explain their thinking through writing in all subjects (82%).

Moreover, 82% of the teachers report that their students enjoy writing more and are more proud of what they write; and 76% report that their students have better editing skills and a better grasp of the conventions of correctness. The graph below displays these results.

FIGURE 5.
Benefits of Writing Project Involvement for Participants’ Students
(All Grades)



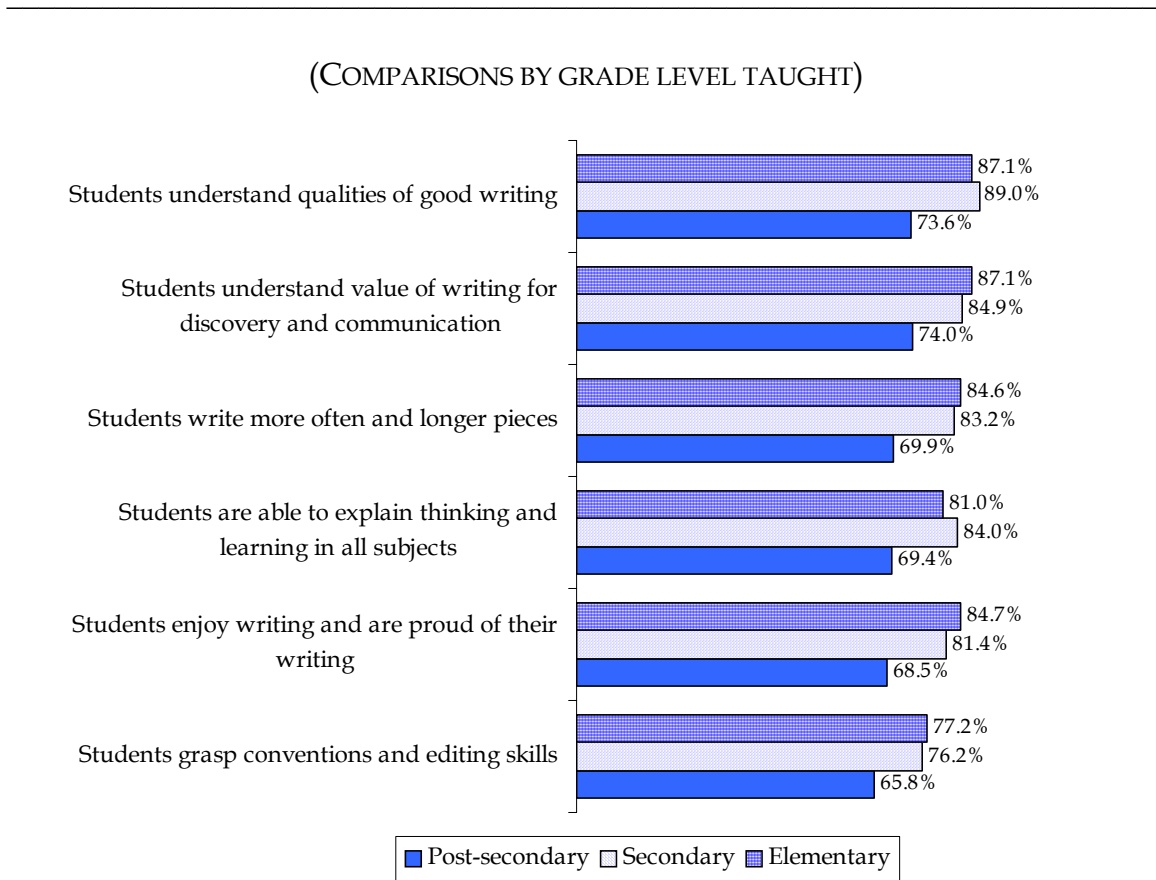
Percentages represent teachers who marked 4 or 5 on a 5-point scale where 1 = “disagree strongly” and 5 = “agree strongly.”

Grade level comparisons

- ◆ **There is very little difference between elementary and secondary teachers’ perspectives on benefits to their students. Across the board, roughly 12-15% more elementary and secondary teachers report benefits to student than their post-secondary colleagues; nonetheless, a substantial majority of post-secondary teachers believe their students benefit.**

The following graph shows these results.

**FIGURE 6.
Benefits of Writing Project Involvement for Participants’ Students
(Comparisons of Grade Levels)**



Percentages represent teachers who marked 4 or 5 on a 5-point scale where 1 = “disagree strongly” and 5 = “agree strongly.”

IV. NWP IMPACT ON CLASSROOM PRACTICES ASSOCIATED WITH HIGHER STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT IN WRITING

The NAEP 1998 Writing Assessment identified seven classroom practices that, when used at the right frequency, were statistically correlated with higher achievement levels on the grades 4 and 8 writing test.⁴ Our follow-up survey included these items. This section reports findings about how frequently NWP teachers in the elementary and middle grades use these seven practices, and about the impact of the NWP institutes on teachers' use of them.

*The Nation's Report Card: Writing 2002*⁵ reports that across the nation there were significant improvements in writing in grades 4 and 8 in 2002, compared to 1998. While the 2002 report does not include analysis of school factors that contribute to higher scores, the same writing framework, developed under the aegis of the National Assessment Governing Board, served as the blueprint for both the 1998 and 2002 assessments. Thus, it is reasonable to infer that NWP teachers who are employing the classroom practices associated with higher achievement in 1998 are still, in 2002-03, contributing to student learning in ways that are consistent with higher writing achievement on this national measure.

Results for both grade levels

- ◆ **At both elementary and middle grades, a majority of NWP participants employ five or more of the seven classroom practices at the optimal frequencies. Further, as a result of the NWP, most teachers are changing their classroom practices in the direction of optimal frequency of use. These results indicate that NWP institutes promote classroom practices that contribute to higher achievement and foster positive change in teachers' use of those practices.**

In the left-hand column of the table that appears on the following pages, we summarize the NAEP findings on optimal frequencies for each of the seven practices. In the two right-hand columns, we report how frequently NWP teachers use each practice, and the impact of the NWP institutes on these practices. Results identified as **elementary** compare NWP teachers in Grades 3-5 to the NAEP results for Grade 4. Results identified as **middle** compare NWP teachers in Grades 6-8 to the NAEP results for Grade 8.

⁴ These seven practices were reported or demonstrated by students. Frequency scales used by NAEP varied by item and grade level. For some practices, the scale was "never," "sometimes," or "always"; for other practices, it was "every day," "1-2 times a week," "1-2 times a month," or "never." Scales differed for the two grades on some items, preventing comparison of results for the two grades. Source: U.S. Department of Education. Office of Educational Research and Improvement. National Center for Educational Statistics. *The NAEP 1998 Writing Report Card for the Nation and the States*, NCES 1999-462, by E.A. Greenwald, H.R. Persky, J.R. Campbell, and J. Mazzeo. Washington, D.C.: 1999. Pp 85-103.

⁵ U.S. Department of Education. Institute of Education Sciences. National Center for Education Statistics. *The Nation's Report Card: Writing 2002*, NCES 2003-539, by H.R. Persky, M.C. Daane, and Y. Jin. Washington, DC: 2003.

TABLE 3.
Findings for Each Classroom Practice Associated with Higher Student Achievement

NAEP findings on contribution of classroom practices to student achievement	Practices of NWP teachers	
	Elementary	Middle school
1. Students' written work is saved in a portfolio		
At every grade level tested, students whose writing is kept (by students or teachers) in portfolios scored higher on the NAEP writing test than those whose writing was not saved in portfolios.	69% of NWP teachers keep their students' work in portfolios at least once a week or daily; an additional 30% do this at least once a month.	62% of NWP teachers keep their students' work in portfolios at least once a week or daily. An additional 33% do this once a month or more.
	57% of NWP participants do this more frequently as a result of their participation in the NWP institute.	63% of NWP participants do this more frequently as a result of their participation in the NWP institute.
2. Students produce more than one draft		
At the 8 th and 12 th grades, students who frequently produce more than one draft had higher achievement scores. At 4 th grade, there was no significant correlation.	66% of NWP teachers say their students produce more than one draft at least once a week or daily; an additional 38% say they do this at least once a month.	61% of NWP teachers say their students always produce more than one draft; an additional 37% say their students do this sometimes.
	56% of participants say they do this more frequently as a result of the Writing Project..	63% of participants say they do this more frequently as a result of the Writing Project.
3. Students plan their writing		
At both 4 th and 8 th grades, students who planned both their responses on the NAEP test had the highest average scores. Those who planned for one response had higher average scores than those who had planned for neither. This correlation was consistent with results of student survey results.	78% of NWP teachers say they have their students plan their writing at least once a week or as often as daily.	64% of NWP teachers say they have their students always plan their writing. An additional 34% say they have their students do this sometimes.
	72% of participants say they do this more frequently as a result of the Writing Project.	64% of participants say they do this more frequently than before because of the Writing Project.

TABLE 3.
Findings for Each Classroom Practice Associated with Higher Student Achievement

NAEP findings on contribution of classroom practices to student achievement	Practices of NWP teachers	
	Elementary	Middle school
4. Teachers talk to students about their writing		
<p>Students in elementary and middle grades whose teachers always or sometimes talked with students about their writing scored higher than those students whose teachers never talked with them about their writing. At the 8th grade, students whose teachers always talked to them scored higher than those whose teachers sometimes did.</p>	<p>88% of NWP teachers say they talk to their students about their writing at least once a week or as often as daily.</p>	<p>70% of NWP teachers say they always talk to their students about their writing.</p>
	<p>82% say they do this more frequently than before because of the Writing Project.</p>	<p>73% say they do this more frequently than before because of the Writing Project.</p>

5. Student or teacher defines an audience for the writing.

This question was not asked of 4th grade students taking the NAEP test. For 8th grade, those students who defined the audience once or twice a month had higher scores than those who never defined an audience or who defined an audience at least once a week or every day.

We cannot make a comparison. Nonetheless, among NWP elementary teachers, **22%** report that they or students define and audience or purpose once or twice a month; **42%** report doing so once or more a week; and **35%** report doing so daily.

28% of NWP teachers say their students define the audience and purpose for their writing once or twice a month, the optimal frequency. **68%** of NWP teachers have their students define the audience and purpose more frequently than is optimal with respect to NAEP scores.

74% of participants say they do this more frequently than before because of the Writing Project.

TABLE 3.
Findings for Each Classroom Practice Associated with Higher Student Achievement

NAEP findings on contribution of classroom practices to student achievement	Practices of NWP teachers	
	Elementary	Middle school
6. Students use a computer to write a draft.	<p>42% of NWP teachers have their students write on computers at the optimal frequency of once or twice a month, and an additional 38% have students use computers at the next optimal frequency, once or twice a week.</p> <p>32% of NWP teachers have their students use computers more frequently than before.</p>	<p>49% of NWP teachers have their students write on computers at the optimal frequency of once or twice a month; and an additional 8% have students use computers at the next optimal frequency, every day.</p> <p>33% of NWP teachers have their students use computers more frequently than before.</p>
7. Students discuss their writing with their family.	<p>61% of NWP teachers say that their students talk about their writing with their families once a month or more; an additional 31% say this occurs once a week or more.</p> <p>43% of participants say their students talk about their writing with their family more frequently as a result of the NWP institute.</p>	<p>82% of NWP teachers say their students sometimes talk about their writing with their families, and an additional 9% say they always do so.</p> <p>46% of participants say their students talk about their writing with their family more frequently as a result of the NWP.</p>

V. CONCLUSION

When teachers rated the quality and value of the summer 2002 NWP Invitational Institutes on the Satisfaction Survey, more than 95% said that the program was high in quality and that what they learned would be valuable. One year later on a follow-up survey, high proportions of those teachers reported that they indeed gained valuable knowledge and skills from the institute and, further, that they have changed their classroom practices as a result. These findings indicate that NWP institutes support teachers in emphasizing classroom practices that give students control over the processes and skills of writing, as well as practices that enable students to use writing to learn and communicate in all curriculum areas.

Moreover, high proportions of teachers reported that these changes in their practices are benefiting their students in both their skills and their attitudes about writing. Comparisons with findings for grades 4 and 8 from the 1998 NAEP Writing Assessment indicate that NWP institutes promote classroom practices that are correlated with higher achievement in writing. Because the framework for the 2002 NAEP Writing Assessment is the same, we can infer that these same practices are associated with higher achievement; further, we note that the 2002 results for both grades show significant writing improvement since 1998.

In sum, this study suggests that NWP institutes offer professional development programs to teachers that are high in quality and influential in positive ways in teachers' classrooms.