

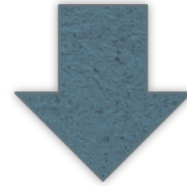
Creating Schoolwide Writing Assessments – A Cross-Curricular, Standards-Based Approach

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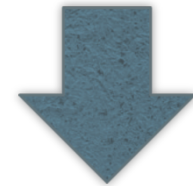
My Background

- St. Paul Public Schools

- MN Writing Project



- Institute for Student Achievement (ISA)
(Teacher's College, Columbia University)



- North High School/North Academy of Arts and Communications (NAAC)

ISA

- www.studentachievement.org
- The Institute for Student Achievement (ISA) partners with schools and districts to transform public high schools so that students who are traditionally underserved and underperforming graduate prepared for success in college.
- *provides all students with a rigorous, inquiry-based curriculum and instruction aligned with the Common Core State Standards.*

NAAC

- North Academy of Arts and Communications (formerly, Mpls. North High School)
- Beginning year 3 of a 4-year restructuring
- Standards-based instruction
- Emphasis on argumentative writing
 - 9th and 10th grades
 - Pre and Post assessments, fall and spring

Benefits of Assessing Writing

1. Provides a basis for instruction
2. Provides a means for studying student work
3. Provides direction for re-teaching
4. Provides a way for measuring student growth
5. Encourages writing across the curriculum

Year-long Writing Focus

- ◆ ISA Pre-Assessment (grades 9 and 10)
 - ◆ October
- ◆ Staff Scoring (All teachers)
- ◆ Staff review of results in five areas (Rubric)
- ◆ Staff selection of instructional focus
- ◆ Focused emphasis on writing in all content areas
- ◆ PLC discussions and viewing of student work and lessons
- ◆ Writing prompts administered across content areas
- ◆ ISA Post Assessment (Grades 9 and 10)
 - ◆ May

Writing to the Prompt
Preparing for the ISA Writing Test

	Feb 24	March 3	March 10	March 17	March 24	April 7
English						
Social Studies						
Science						
Math						
Art						
Radio						

Two-year Results

- 9th fall 2012 – spring 2014

Avg. Score increase in one domain:

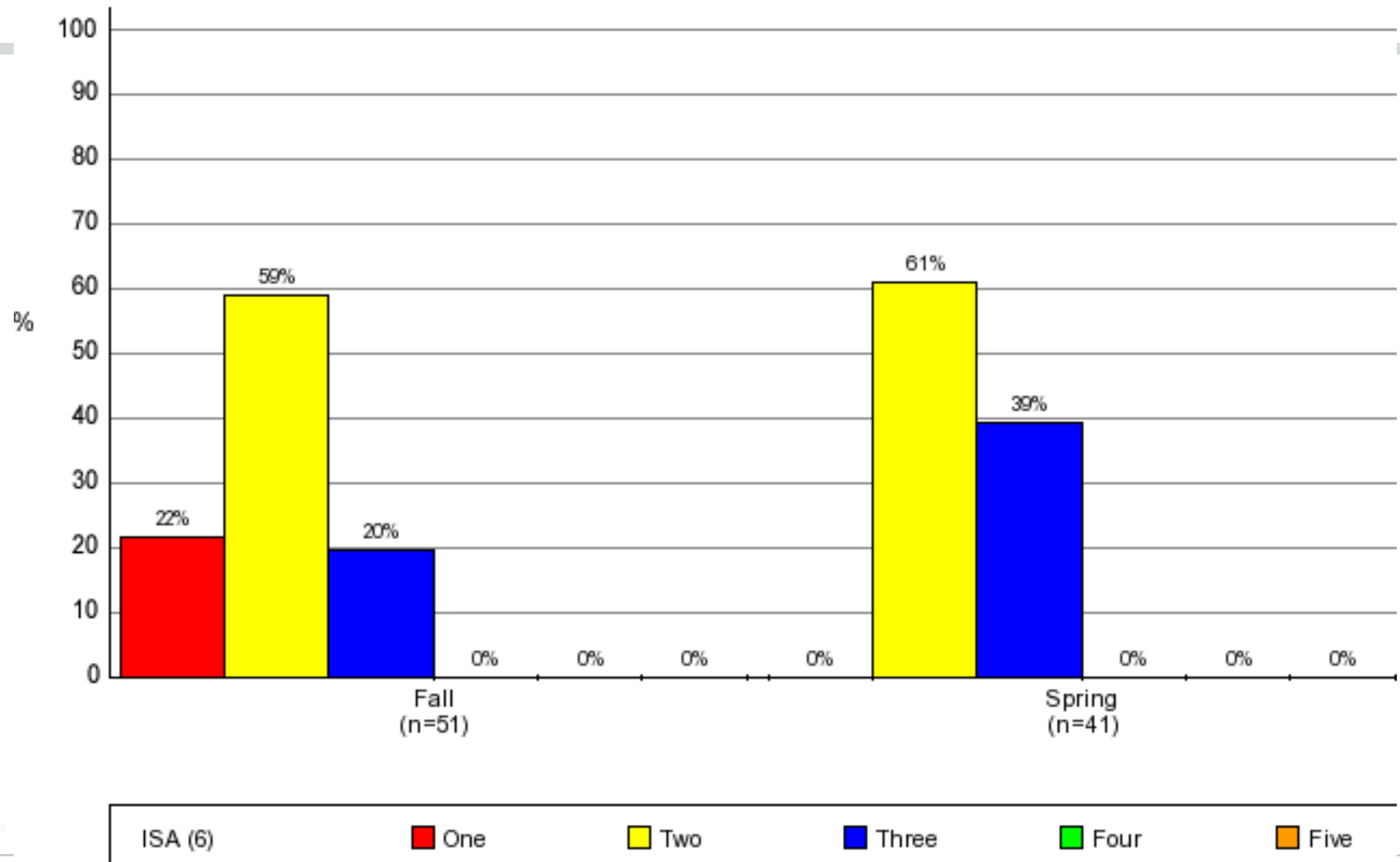
- **Organization** 1.6 -2.2 .6% difference

- 10th fall 2013-spring 2014

Avg. Score increase in one domain

- **Conclusions** 1.5 – 2.4 .9% difference

All Sections Benchmark Report for Grade 10 Unassigned
Percent of Students at Each Scoring Band
ELA - ISA ELA Grade 10 - Summary Results - All Assessments
School Year: 2013-2014
Holistic



GRAD Writing Trend Data

	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013
North Sr. High	61.2%	60.9%	64%	71.1%	71%*
Mpls	72%	77%	74.5%	80.9%	71%
MN	89.5%	90.6%	89.1%	91.9%	72%

Note* NAAC students. At the present time, 98% of the student body is African-American. The district average for African-American students taking the writing test in 2013 was 61%.

We've Learned

- Teaching and assessing argumentative writing in a systematic, cross-curricular fashion improves writing in general.

Teacher Reflections

- Be more intentional in teaching use of evidence, effective conclusions
- Be more intentional with modeling: What does a quality conclusion look like?
What does a college level paper look like?
- Encourage development of voice
- Consistency between classes
- Essays written in all content areas
- Expectations the same across the curriculum
- Writing folders followed students
- Common language across the curriculum

Support for Argumentation

New York Times website

Room for Debate

- “Should Literature be relatable?”
- “Should western child labor laws apply in developing countries?”

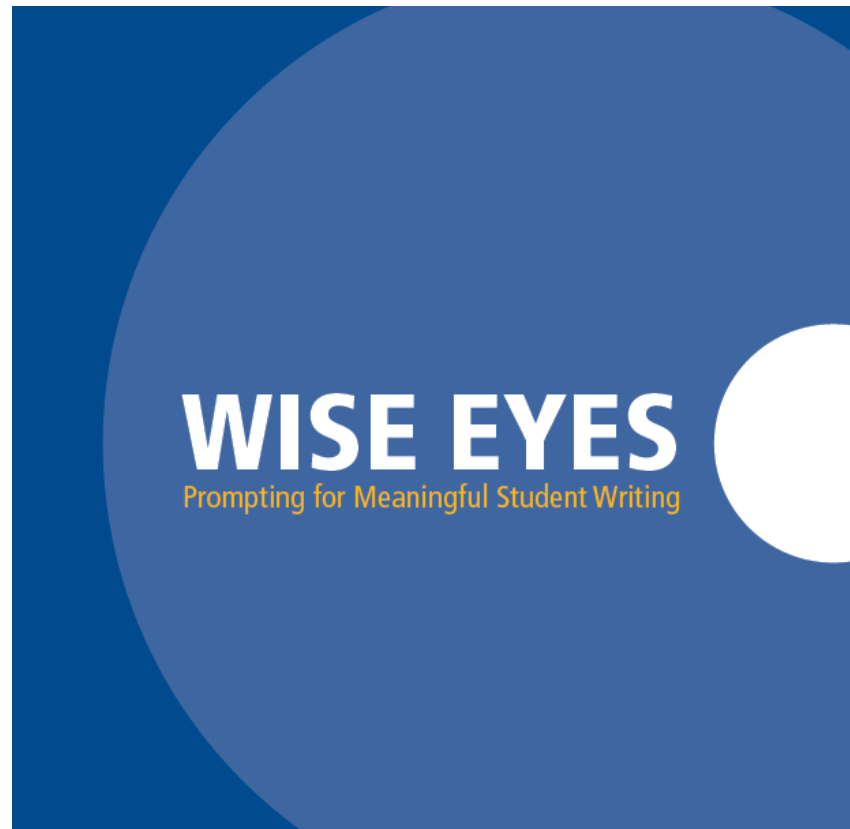
The Learning Network

- 200 prompts
- Writing contests

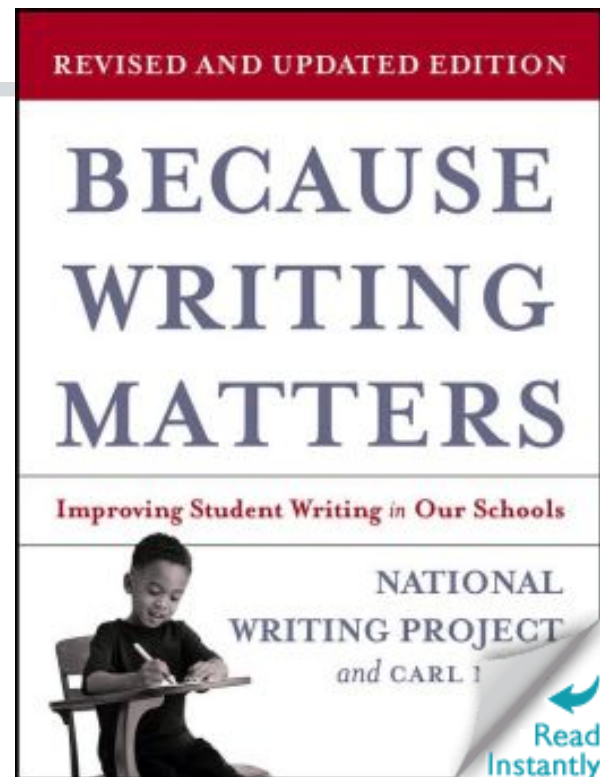
Writing Resources

- Anderson, Carl. *Assessing Writers*. Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann, 2005.
- _____ . *How's it Going: A Practical Guide to Conferring with Student Writers*. Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann, 2000.
- Anderson, Jeff. *10 Things Every Writer Needs to Know*. Portland, ME: Stenhouse, 2011.
- Hale, Elizabeth. *Crafting Writers K-6*. Portland, ME: Stenhouse, 2008.
- Gallagher, Kelly. *Teaching Adolescent Writers*. Portland, ME: Stenhouse, 2006.
- _____ . *Write Like This*. Portland, ME: Stenhouse, 2011.

[http://www.nwp.org/cs/public/print/books/
wise_eyes](http://www.nwp.org/cs/public/print/books/wise_eyes)



<http://ascd.org/publications/educational-leadership/apr14/vol71/num07/toc.aspx>



<http://www.nwp.org/cs/public/print/resource/writingmatters/2003/nagin.html>

Some thoughts on writing assessment:

The rationale is clear: school wide improvement of writing requires collective buy-in—the willingness of teachers, administrators, and the community to comprehend and support the rationale for change. It evolves over time from shared commitment and understanding.

Best assessment practice supports and harmonizes with what practice and research have demonstrated to be effective ways of teaching writing.

Teachers or administrators designing assessments should ground the assessment in the classroom, program or departmental context. The goals or outcomes assessed should lead to assessment data which is fed back to those involved with the regular activities assessed so that assessment results may be used to make changes in practice.

Writing assessment is useful primarily as a means of improving teaching and learning. The primary purpose of any assessment should govern its design, its implementation, and the generation and dissemination of its results.

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