

Archived Information

NATIONAL WRITING PROJECT (NWP)

Goal: To improve the quality of student writing and learning, and the teaching of writing as a learning process, in the Nation's classrooms.

Relationship of Program to Volume 1, Department-wide Objectives: The National Writing Project (NWP) supports objective 1.1 (challenging standards and assessments) in its emphasis on helping students improve their writing and helping them meet performance standards set by states. It also supports Objective 1.4 (qualified teachers) by establishing teacher-training programs to improve teachers' writing skills. It supports Objective 1.5 (family involvement) through its emphasis on linking the NWP with the Family Involvement Partnership, the America Reads Challenge, and in compacts for reading initiatives. It also supports Objective 2.2 (early reading) by emphasizing linkages to reading and writing. It supports Objective 4.3 (education research to support education reform and equity) by linking research on effective teaching of writing to classroom practice.

FY 2000—\$9,000,000

FY 2001—\$10,000,000 (Requested budget)

OBJECTIVE 1: SUPPORT AND PROMOTE THE ESTABLISHMENT OF TEACHER TRAINING PROGRAMS DESIGNED TO IMPROVE THE WRITING SKILLS OF TEACHERS AND STUDENTS.

Indicator 1.1 Teacher satisfaction: Each year, National Writing Project (NWP) teacher participants and teacher leaders will rate the program as good or excellent and will affirm that the NWP has had a positive impact on their teaching practice.

| Targets and Performance Data | | | | Assessment of Progress | Sources and Data Quality |
|--|-----------------------|---------------------|------------|--|---|
| <i>Participant Rating</i> | | | | <p>Status: Target exceeded.</p> <p>Explanation: Participant rating: Data gathered at summer 1999 institutes showed 95 percent of new teacher participants rated the NWP program as good or excellent. The 1999 Inverness data collection found a higher percentage of good or excellent ratings than projected. The U.S. Department of Education "Voices in the Field" survey found that 91 percent of teacher leaders were "very satisfied" with NWP programs.</p> <p>Impact on Practice: A Voices in the Field survey showed 90 percent of teacher leaders participating in the NWP annual meeting reported that their teaching practice changed "a great deal" due to NWP professional development participation; 7 percent reported their practice changed "somewhat."</p> | <p>Sources: NWP Site Survey prepared by Inverness Research Associates. <i>Frequency:</i> Annually. <i>Next Update:</i> Fall 2000.</p> <p>U.S. Department of Education "Voices in the Field" survey. <i>Frequency:</i> One time. <i>Next Update:</i> None.</p> <p>Validation Procedure: Inverness data collected before ED Standards for Evaluating Program Performance Data developed; Inverness uses the NSF model for collection/verification. Voices in the Field data collected at annual meeting. No formal verification procedure applied.</p> <p>Limitations of Data and Planned Improvements: "Voices in the Field" supplements 1999 Inverness data, which will be realigned for 2000 to measure impact on practice.</p> |
| Year | Actual Performance | Performance Targets | | | |
| 1999: | 95%* | 91%# | 75% | | |
| 2000: | | | 75% | | |
| 2001: | | | 80% | | |
| 2002: | | | 80% | | |
| <i>Impact on Practice</i> | | | | | |
| 1999: | Not available* | 90% # | 75% | | |
| 2000: | | | 75% | | |
| 2001: | | | 75% | | |
| 2002: | | | 75% | | |
| <p>* Inverness data # Voices in the Field survey</p> | | | | | |

| Indicator 1.2 Improved student writing skills: Students taught by National Writing Project (NWP) teachers will show improved student writing skills. | | | | |
|--|---------------------------|--|--|----------------------------|
| Targets and Performance Data | | Assessment of Progress | Sources and Data Quality | |
| <i>Writing scores</i> | | <p>Status: No 1999 target has been set. Unable to judge.</p> <p>Explanation: Assessment in design phase during 1999, first available data in fall 2000. Data collected at 25 sites in four states. At sample sites, at least 40 percent of student population eligible for free or reduced lunch. Evaluation model for sampling of 25 third and fourth grade classrooms in Mississippi, Oklahoma, Pennsylvania, and California developed in 1999. First-year report to be issued in early October 2000. Study documents a cohort of students annually using a pre-and post-assessment design. Sample size will be adjusted to show national results.</p> | <p>Source: Academy for Educational Development. <i>Frequency:</i> Annually. <i>Next Update:</i> Fall 2000.</p> <p>Validation Procedure: Data to be supplied by the Academy for Educational Development. Validation procedure to be determined.</p> <p>Limitations of Data and Planned Improvements: Current data not available. Assessment to be aligned with other standardized assessments.</p> | |
| Year | Actual Performance | | | Performance Targets |
| 1999: | No data available | | | No target set |
| 2000: | | | | Target to be established |
| 2001: | | | | Target to be established |

KEY STRATEGIES

Strategies Continued from 1999

- ❖ To facilitate intra-agency collaboration, ED provides bridge services between the National Writing Project (NWP) and other student literacy programs, including the America Reads Challenge and the Family Involvement Partnership. The NWP has earmarked resources toward providing coordination and technical assistance to NWP sites and the other literacy programs. Several NWP sites have designed and conducted community events under the America Reads Challenge to promote reading and writing.
- ❖ To monitor and enhance the quality of teacher professional development, the NWP conducts annual peer review of each site and offers special services to sites, as needed, to ensure consistently high quality through ongoing review, evaluation, and technical assistance.
- ❖ To enhance customer service and strengthen research to practice, ED will provide a link between NWP and ED customers interested in teaching methods of writing, through linking their Web sites, developing a teacher discussion group online, and collaborating on a research and practice-based book for writing teachers.

New or Strengthened Strategies

- ❖ To enhance teacher professional development, the NWP will add new sites each year so that eventually there will be an NWP site within reach of every teacher in the country.
- ❖ To share best practices, the NWP will help more sites work directly with other sites in its network through cross-site networks and special initiatives.
- ❖ To enhance its teachers-teaching-teachers model, the NWP will strengthen its work on developing teacher leadership at local sites.
- ❖ To reach more teachers, the NWP will design and develop technology tools to support sites' outreach to teachers.
- ❖ To determine the best measurement of student assessment, the data collected for the NWP classroom study (Indicator 1.2) will be reviewed in relation to the data on instructional practices provided in the NAEP 1998 Writing Report Card—such as teachers talking with students about their writing; teachers saving student work in a folder or portfolio; students being asked to write more than one draft of a paper; and students being asked to plan their writing—as well as with the available state data.

HOW THIS PROGRAM COORDINATES WITH OTHER FEDERAL ACTIVITIES

- ❖ Collaborating with the National Endowment for the Humanities in the Family History/Schools for the New Millennium initiative.
- ❖ Linking the NWP Web site to the National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH) Web site and disseminating the Family History/Schools for the New Millennium materials to 165 local writing project sites.

CHALLENGES TO ACHIEVING PROGRAM GOAL

- ❖ Local sites are experiencing a large number of teacher retirements in their service areas. There are increasing professional development demands on writing project sites to work with new teachers, and it is a challenge in some parts of the country to meet these increased demands.

INDICATOR CHANGES

From FY 1999 Annual Plan (two years old)

Adjusted

- ❖ Indicator 1.1, Teacher participation, was changed to measure teacher satisfaction, and became an outcome, rather than an output measure.
- ❖ Indicator 2.2, Development of alternative methods of student evaluations by teachers, was incorporated into Indicator 1.2, Improved student writing.

Dropped

- ❖ Indicator 2.1, Teachers teaching their colleagues, was dropped. It was an output measure and has been kept as an internal measure.
- ❖ Indicator 2.3, Sites adapted for special needs of students, was dropped. It was an output measure and it continues to be a priority of the National Writing Project (NWP).

From FY 2000 Annual Plan (last year's)

Adjusted

- ❖ Indicator 1.1, Teacher satisfaction, now specifies change of teaching practice in addition to satisfaction, and targets new teacher participants and teacher leaders for measurement. The 75 percent target is now listed under Performance Target.
- ❖ Indicator 1.3, Improved student writing skills, is renumbered 1.2 and is changed to remove the sentence, "NWP teachers will develop methods to assess student writing."

Dropped

- ❖ Indicator 1.2, Project site performance, is dropped. It is not an outcome indicator and will continue to be kept as an internal measurement.

New—None.