

*External Evaluation for review by the South Carolina Education Oversight Committee
to comply with Legislative Proviso 1A.39*

South Carolina Writing Improvement Network
External Evaluation
2008–2010

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Introduction

The South Carolina Writing Improvement Network (WIN) serves as a professional development resource for South Carolina school administrators, teachers, and other education professionals. WIN provides customized professional development and technical assistance aligned to the South Carolina English/Language Arts standards. WIN established the following organizational goals to inform their work:

- inform the State's public schools and districts of WIN's purposes and activities;
- become involved with other education-related agencies and special projects that affect ELA instruction;
- study student writers within the context of an individual school's ELA instructional program to provide a realistic plan for teacher assistance;
- produce and identify instructional materials to enhance or improve ELA instruction for all students, with special emphasis on underperforming schools;
- provide professional development for teachers based on current research and theory;
- collaborate with teachers to develop instructional strategies.

Purpose of Evaluation

Based on recent legislation, WIN is required to have an annual external evaluation to examine the impact of services and activities on district and school personnel and students. The Office of Program Evaluation within the College of Education at the University of South Carolina conducted an external evaluation using information and data collected by WIN consultants. The overall purpose of the external evaluation is to determine 1) how WIN has contributed to improvements in student achievement in writing, reading, and research on PASS or HSAP for the schools served by WIN. Secondary areas for examination are to determine 2) the length and intensity of services to schools served by WIN, 3) the types of services provided to schools rated Below Average or At-Risk along with cost for those services, 4) the degree to which services have been integrated into classroom instruction, 5) the impact on achievement of students in classrooms served by WIN, 6) the return on investment for WIN services, and 7) the changes in WIN services to increase return on investment.

Services Provided and Data Collected

Professional Development Workshops

In 2008–09, WIN conducted more than 60 professional development workshops. A workshop consists of activities that occur during a one day period. The majority (56%) of WIN’s professional development consisted of multiple workshops/sessions. Of the 18 districts served, 12 (67%) had Absolute Ratings of Below Average or At-Risk based on the 2008 District Report Cards. Table 1 provides ratings of each district served and number of workshops provided.

Table 1
2008–09 Professional Development Workshops

District	Absolute Rating*	Growth Rating*	Number of Workshops
Allendale	At-Risk	Below Average	2
Beaufort	Below Average	Good	1
Charleston	Average	Excellent	2
Clarendon 1	Below Average	Excellent	12
Darlington	Below Average	Excellent	7
Dillon 1	Average	Excellent	1
Dillon 2	Below Average	Below Average	1
Dorchester 2	Average	Excellent	1
Dorchester 4	Below Average	Excellent	11
Fairfield	At-Risk	Average	1
Greenwood 50	Average	Good	5
Lexington 3	Average	Excellent	2
Orangeburg 3	At-Risk	Excellent	10
Orangeburg 4	Below Average	Good	2
Richland 1	Below Average	Excellent	1
Spartanburg 5	Average	Average	2
Spartanburg 7	Below Average	Excellent	1
Sumter 17	Below Average	Below Average	1

*2008 District Report Card Information

To evaluate WIN’s services in 2008–09, evaluations were collected at a sample (nine) of all workshops conducted. A closed-ended survey was used at three workshops, and at six workshops, participants were asked to indicate what they learned from the session.

Significant changes occurred in school and school district professional development budgets in the 2009–2010 fiscal year based on reductions in state funding. Many school districts dramatically reduced the amount of money dedicated to professional development. Districts and schools also used funding previously allotted to professional development to maintain general operating budgets in order to prevent teacher layoffs. In addition, WIN received the same amount of funding as in previous years during the 2009-2010 fiscal year, which did not allow WIN to substantially reduce the cost of professional development to schools and districts. These budget issues impacted the level and intensity of WIN services to districts and schools in 2009–2010; however, WIN intensified its efforts to collaborate more effectively with the South Carolina Department of Education to inform implementation and assessment of state standards across the state.

In 2009–2010, WIN conducted more than 30 workshops. Of the 10 school districts served, 8 (80%) had Absolute Ratings of Below Average or At-Risk based on the 2009 District Report Cards. A workshop consists of activities that occur during a one day period. The majority (63%) of WIN’s professional development consisted of multiple workshops/sessions. Table 2 provides the ratings of the school districts as well as the number of workshops provided.

Table 2
2009–2010 Professional Development Workshops

District/Organization	Absolute Rating*	Growth Rating*	Number of Workshops
Allendale	Below Average	Good	2
Anderson 5	Average	At-Risk	3
Batesburg-Leesville ES (Lex 3)	Below Average	At-Risk	1
Darlington	Below Average	At-Risk	1
Gilbert MS (Lexington 1)	Average	At-Risk	1
Scott’s Branch (Clarendon 1)	Below Average	At-Risk	3
St. George (Dorchester 4)	At-Risk	At-Risk	11
Writers’ Edge (3 Districts)	Below Average	Below Average	4
Columbia Area Reading Council	N/A	N/A	1
SC Department of Education	N/A	N/A	4
University of South Carolina	N/A	N/A	2

*2009 District Report Card Information

A standard 15-item survey was developed in 2009–10 (Appendix A) and used to collect data at five of the six workshops that were included in the evaluation sample. These surveys included nine closed-ended, Likert-based items and six open-ended items. Space for additional comments related to the closed-ended items also was provided. At one workshop (Allendale) a district-based evaluation form was used to collect information that included five closed-ended items and two open-ended items. The use of these surveys allowed WIN consultants to gather information to understand the impact of the session on teachers' beliefs and inform future professional development. Surveys were collected from a total of 177 participants.

Intensive Professional Development and Technical Assistance

In 2008–09, WIN was involved in two intensive professional development initiatives: 1) Writers' Edge Project and 2) Lexington School District 5 Graduate Course. The Writers' Edge Project continued in 2009-2010.

Writers' Edge Project

The Writers' Edge Project, an initiative of Benedict College, was funded by a grant from the South Carolina Commission on Higher Education. The project intended to improve the writing of students in high-needs schools. WIN consultants were part of a team that provided curriculum planning and instruction for a 10-day summer institute in 2008–09 and four follow-up sessions during the 2009–2010 academic year. WIN consultants also developed all tools used to evaluate the impact of the project on participants.

Two surveys were administered to assess teachers' knowledge and attitudes prior to participation and after participation in the 10-day summer institute. The knowledge-based survey (Appendix B) had 12 statements that teachers rated on a four-point scale from strongly disagree to strongly agree. The attitudinal survey (Appendix C) consisted of three items that focused on teachers' confidence and nine items that focused on perceptions regarding student writing and the 15-point rubric.

The summer institute teachers also were to participate in four follow-up workshops during the academic year to examine student work based on ideals presented at the summer institute and to continue to enhance professional development of the cohort. A multiple choice pre-post assessment, a portfolio assignment to explore changes in student writing over time, and an additional evaluation survey to be completed during the four follow-up sessions were developed

and administered by WIN to examine the impact of Writers' Edge on teachers and their students. In addition, 2009–2010 PASS Writing Scores were collected from the students of participating teachers (treatment group) as well as a comparison group of students of teachers who did not participate in Writers' Edge (comparison group). An external evaluation of this specific project was conducted by Joseph Saunders.

Lexington School District 5 Graduate Course

WIN worked with a cohort of Lexington 5 English/language arts teachers who enrolled in a graduate course related to student assessment. Nine middle and high school teachers who participated in the course completed an 11-item survey to gauge their perceived preparation in several areas. In addition to the 11 closed-ended survey items, teachers were asked three open-ended questions to gain feedback on the course.

Results

2008–2009 Professional Development Workshops

At six of the workshops in 2008–09, participants were asked to cite three things that they learned during the workshop. The results demonstrate that the majority of participants in WIN PASS Writing Workshops learned how to better use the 15-point Writing Rubric. Participants also frequently cited the ability to more effectively assess student writing among the key learning outcomes of WIN professional development. Tables 3-6 indicate the frequency with which each theme was cited. In a WIN Literacy Workshop, participants cited the importance of using a variety of texts, infusing literacy across the curriculum, and coding student writing as the main learning outcomes. Table 7 provides detailed results about learning outcomes at this workshop.

Table 3
Richland 1 PASS Writing Workshop

Theme (What I Learned)	Number Cited (Unduplicated)
Strategies for Teaching Voice	11
Strategies for Assessing Writing/Use of Rubric	10
How to Use NCS Mentor	8
Strategies to Improve Leads & Introductions	7
Strategies to Improve Student Writing	4

Table 4

Memminger Elementary School (Charleston) PASS Writing Workshop

Theme (What I Learned)	Number Cited (Unduplicated)
Clarification of Rubric and Scoring Guidelines	9
How to Write Questions	7
New Information about Mechanics/Vocabulary	4
Information about Four Domains	3

Table 5

Lexington 3 PASS Writing Workshops (Elementary & Middle Level)

Theme (What I Learned)	Number Cited (Unduplicated)
Information about New Rubric	14
How to Write Multiple Choice Items/Assess Students	6

Table 6

Spartanburg 5 PASS Writing Workshops

Theme (What I Learned)	Number Cited (Unduplicated)
Clarification of Rubric and Scoring Guidelines	39
How to Write Multiple Choice Items/Assess Students	32
Strategies to Improve Student Writing	21
Organization/Content Most Important	7

Table 7

Orangeburg 3 Literacy Workshop

Theme (What I Learned)	Number Cited (Unduplicated)
Importance of Using a Variety of Texts	12
Importance of Literacy Across Content Areas	9
Use of Coding (Connections, Questions, Confusions)	9
Importance of Making Connections to Real World	8
Strategies for Marking Text	8

At three of the 2008–09 workshops, a Likert-scale survey was administered to participants. Results from the survey demonstrate that the majority of participants agreed or strongly agreed

that the workshop provided useful and relevant information. For the Darlington PASS Workshop, 76.67% agreed or strongly agreed that the content was useful. For the Darlington Implementing Standards workshop, 84.30% rated the workshop and its content as very good or excellent. For the Holly Hill Professional Development Workshops, 92.34% generally agreed or strongly agreed that the content of the workshop was useful and relevant. Tables 8-10 provide detailed information about the survey results.

Table 8
Darlington PASS Writing Workshop

Item	n	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
1	10	0	0	2	2	6
2	10	0	1	1	2	6
3	10	0	0	2	2	6
4	10	0	0	3	2	5
5	10	0	0	2	3	5
6	10	0	1	2	1	6
Total	-	0	2	12	12	34
Percent	-	0	3.33	20	20	56.67

Table 9
Darlington Implementing ELA Standards and Indicators Workshops

Session	n	N/A	Poor	Weak	Acceptable	Very Good	Exceptional
1	21	0	0	0	15	60	165
2	19	0	0	5	23	46	117
3	25	1	12	8	57	110	62
4	34	4	0	0	4	89	243
5	30	12	3	5	39	77	163
6	19	0	0	0	4	46	140
7	26	5	0	5	44	94	164
8	25	10	0	1	53	121	65
9	46	0	1	21	87	184	177
10	30	1	0	4	22	74	199
Total	275	33	16	49	348	901	1495
Percent	100	1.16	0.56	1.72	12.24	31.70	52.60

Table 10
 Holly Hill (Orangeburg 3) Professional Development Workshops

Item	n	Strongly Disagree	Generally Disagree	Generally Agree	Strongly Agree
1	28	1	0	18	9
2	28	2	1	18	7
3	28	1	1	16	10
4	28	1	1	17	9
5	28	1	1	17	9
6	28	1	1	15	11
7	28	1	0	15	12
8	26	2	2	13	9
Total	-	10	7	129	76
Percent	-	4.51	3.15	58.11	34.23

2009–2010 Professional Development Workshops

A standard Likert-based survey format (Appendix A) was used in 2009–2010 to allow similar information to be collected from professional development workshops. Results demonstrate that the majority of participants across the six workshops in which data were collected agreed or strongly agreed that the workshops were well organized, met intended goals, and were relevant to participants' needs. However, there were significant numbers of participants in three of the workshops who disagreed or strongly disagreed on specific items mostly related to the relevancy of the workshop and focus of the workshop. This was most prevalent at the Anderson School District 5 workshops as some of the participants noted that the same material had been presented at previous professional development sessions conducted within the district.

Interestingly, the more positive evaluations came from two professional development initiatives that involved multiple workshops with the same participants. Scott's Branch participants were involved in three days of professional development workshops during a three-month period, and Allendale participants were involved in two consecutive days of professional development workshops. More than 70% of the participants at the Scott's Branch workshops strongly agreed across the eight survey items, and more than 80% of the participants at the Allendale workshop provided an excellent response across the four district-based survey items. Tables 11-16 provide detailed results from each workshop.

Table 11

Results from Anderson 5 PASS Writing Workshop, Grades 3-5

Item #	n	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
1	87	2	9	33	43
2	87	5	15	20	47
3	87	6	15	27	39
4	87	4	18	26	39
5	86	1	10	26	49
6	87	2	12	26	47
7	87	1	9	25	52
8	87	6	16	25	40
Percent		3.88	14.96	29.93	51.22

Table 12

Results from Anderson 5 PASS Writing Workshop, Grade 8

Item #	n	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
1	29	0	1	8	20
2	28	1	2	12	13
3	29	0	1	10	18
4	29	0	1	11	17
5	29	0	0	11	18
6	29	0	0	9	20
7	29	0	1	9	19
8	28	0	3	9	16
Percent		0.43	3.91	34.35	61.30

Table 13

Results from Anderson 5 Voice in Writing Workshop, Grades 9-12

Item #	n	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
1	24	1	0	7	16
2	25	1	2	12	10
3	25	1	0	8	16
4	25	1	1	4	19
5	25	1	0	4	20
6	25	1	0	4	20
7	25	1	0	4	20
8	25	1	1	6	17
Percent		4.02	2.01	25.13	68.84

Table 14

Results from Lexington 3 (Batesburg-Leesville) PASS Writing Workshop

Item #	n	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
1	13	0	0	1	12
2	13	0	0	2	11
3	13	0	0	1	12
4	13	0	0	2	11
5	13	0	0	2	11
6	13	0	0	1	12
7	13	0	0	1	12
8	13	0	0	2	11
Percent		0	0	11.54	88.46

Table 15

Results from Scott's Branch Traits of Writing Workshop

Item #	n	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
1	14	0	0	7	7
2	14	1	0	7	6
3	14	0	0	6	8
4	14	0	0	4	10
5	14	0	0	3	11
6	14	0	0	2	12
7	14	0	0	2	12
8	13	0	0	1	12
Percent		0.9	0	28.83	70.27

Table 16

Results from Allendale Writing Improvement Workshop, Grades 9-12

Item #	n	Weak To Good (1 to 5)	Very Good (6)	Excellent (7)
1	9	0	2	7
2	9	0	1	8
3	9	0	2	7
4	9	0	2	7
Percent		0	19.44	80.56

*Scale of 1(Weak) to 7 (Excellent)

Participants at the workshops were also asked to provide a one-word description of the workshop. This allowed WIN consultants to gain perspective on participants' overall beliefs about the workshop. The majority of the comments were positive in nature (e.g., fantastic, excellent, helpful, useful). At three of the workshops, at least one participant used a negative word to describe the workshop (e.g., boring, redundant, too time consuming). The negative

comments were all from participants from the Anderson School District 5 workshops. Two of the five workshops (Lexington 3 and Scott’s Branch) in which these data were collected received no negative comments. Tables 17-21 highlight the findings from this portion of the evaluation survey.

Table 17
One-Word Description of Anderson 5 PASS Writing Workshop, Grades 3-5

Type of Word	Number	Percent
Positive (e.g., helpful, informative)	23	79.31
Negative (e.g., boring, redundant)	6	20.69

Table 18
One-Word Description of Anderson 5 PASS Writing Workshop, Grade 8

Type of Word	Number	Percent
Positive (e.g., excellent, useful)	15	62.50
Negative (e.g., long, too time consuming)	8	33.33
Neutral (e.g., okay)	1	4.17

Table 19
One-Word Description of Anderson 5 Voice in Writing Workshop, Grades 9-12

Type of Word	Number	Percent
Positive (e.g., fantastic, interesting)	8	66.67
Negative (e.g., tedious, redundant)	4	33.33

Table 20
One-Word Description of Lexington 3 PASS Writing Workshop

Type of Word	Number	Percent
Positive (e.g., useful, relevant)	8	88.89
Neutral (e.g., okay)	1	11.11

Table 21
One-Word Description of Scott’s Branch Traits of Writing Workshop

Type of Word	Number	Percent
Positive (e.g., engaging, great)	7	100
Negative	0	0

WIN professional development participants were asked to provide an overall rating for the workshop or series of workshops. Three categories were provided for response: Not Worth My Time, Probably Worth My Time, or Definitely Worth My Time. On average, more than 93% of participants responded that the workshops were definitely or probably worth their time. A small percentage of respondents indicated that the workshop(s) were not worth their time. These responses were isolated to the Anderson 5 workshops. All respondents at the Lexington 3 PASS Workshop and the Scott's Branch Traits of Writing Workshop believed that the workshop was probably or definitely worth their time. Tables 22-26 provide detailed information about responses to this item.

Table 22
Overall Rating from Anderson 5 PASS Writing Workshop, Grades 3-5

Overall Rating	Number	Percent
Not Worth My Time	14	16.47
Probably Worth My Time	39	45.88
Definitely Worth My Time	14	37.65

Table 23
Overall Rating from Anderson 5 PASS Writing Workshop, Grade 8

Overall Rating	Number	Percent
Not Worth My Time	3	10.34
Probably Worth My Time	10	34.48
Definitely Worth My Time	16	55.17

Table 24
Overall Rating from Anderson 5 Voice in Writing Workshop, Grades 9-12

Overall Rating	Number	Percent
Not Worth My Time	1	4.00
Probably Worth My Time	12	48.00
Definitely Worth My Time	12	48.00

Table 25

Overall Rating from Lexington 3 Pass Writing Workshop

Overall Rating	Number	Percent
Not Worth My Time	0	0
Probably Worth My Time	2	15.38
Definitely Worth My Time	11	84.62

Table 26

Overall Rating from Scott's Branch Traits of Writing Workshop

Overall Rating	Number	Percent
Not Worth My Time	0	0
Probably Worth My Time	2	14.29
Definitely Worth My Time	12	85.71

Intensive Professional Development and Technical Assistance

Writers' Edge Project

In 2008–09, two surveys were administered to Writers' Edge participants. These surveys were administered at the onset of participation in the 10-day summer institute and at the conclusion of participation in the 10-day summer institute. Results demonstrate changes in knowledge and attitudes among the participants. As Tables 27 and 28 demonstrate, there was a shift in knowledge among participating teachers in all districts from "Strongly Agree" on the pre-survey to "Strongly Disagree" on the post-survey. These surveys posed statements that are often misperceptions of teachers in the English/language arts field; therefore, the shift to the opposite side of the scale indicated greater awareness of the appropriate interpretation of specific areas.

Table 27
Writers' Edge Knowledge Survey

District	Survey	Strongly Disagree	Generally Disagree	Generally Agree	Strongly Agree
Richland 1	PRE	19	27	40	22
	POST	28	31	23	15
	CHANGE	+9	+4	-17	-7
Sumter 2	PRE	9	11	11	5
	POST	13	10	2	8
	CHANGE	+4	-1	-9	+3
Sumter 17	PRE	15	40	40	37
	POST	44	27	22	27
	CHANGE	+29	-13	-18	-10
Total	PRE	43	78	91	64
	POST	85	68	47	50
	CHANGE	+42	-10	-44	-14

Table 28
Writers' Edge Knowledge Survey Effect Size

Pre Test Mean	32.83
Pre Test Variance	13.56
N	18
Post Test Mean	27.78
Post Test Variance	25.59
N	18
Effect Size (Cohen's d) =	1.592768
Effect Size	LARGE

Significant changes from the pre-administration to the post-administration of the Writers' Edge Attitudinal Survey also occurred. Prior to the summer institute, teachers felt less prepared and confident in their understanding of the 2008 writing standards and understanding of the 15-point rubric. After the summer institute, teachers felt significantly more prepared and confident in their understanding of state standards and ability to use information to improve student writing. Tables 29 and 30 demonstrate changes in teachers' attitudes and perceptions before and after the summer institute.

Table 29
Writers' Edge Attitudinal Survey

District	Survey	Strongly Disagree	Generally Disagree	Generally Agree	Strongly Agree
Richland 1	PRE	16	18	42	37
	POST	6	17	33	62
	CHANGE	-10	-1	-9	+25
Sumter 2	PRE	8	7	10	10
	POST	3	3	8	18
	CHANGE	-5	-4	-2	+8
Sumter 17	PRE	17	23	48	49
	POST	19	18	28	79
	CHANGE	+2	-5	-20	+30
Total	PRE	41	48	100	96
	POST	28	38	69	159
	CHANGE	-13	-10	-31	+63

Table 30
Writers' Edge Attitudinal Survey Effect Size

Pre Test Mean	34.64
Pre Test Variance	29.67
N	22
Post Test Mean	38.55
Post Test Variance	19.21
N	22
Effect Size (Cohen's d) =	1.086184
Effect Size	LARGE

A multiple-choice assessment was administered to 27 participating teachers at the onset of the 10-day summer institute; however, only five teachers completed the post assessment administered during the final follow-up session during 2009-10. Based on the low attendance at the follow-up sessions, the majority of participants did not submit portfolios or complete evaluation surveys at these sessions. The 12 participants who responded to the evaluation survey indicated the benefits of the project on their curriculum and instruction. The average response over the 14 items was 3.78 on a scale of 1 to 4, and four items received a 4.0 average. Low participation in the follow-up sessions did not allow for meaningful results to be calculated and impacted the quality of the project since it was meant to be a continuous professional development process. In addition, the PASS Writing analysis demonstrated no

statistically significant differences between the treatment group and comparison group (Saunders, 2010).

WIN was part of a collaborative team facilitated by Benedict College that implemented the Writers' Edge Project. Some of the content-specific instruction was provided by WIN consultants, with other content provided by college and university faculty members. It is difficult to attribute positive or negative results of this project to WIN based on their role as a collaborator rather than the facilitator of the process. The concept of this project was based on current research that professional development be content-specific, include substantial teacher interaction, and involve follow-up sessions to allow for implementation in the classroom (Blank, de las Alas, & Smith, 2007); however, the lack of follow through by teachers may have undermined expected student achievement impacts.

Lexington School District 5 Graduate Course

The mean score on the survey was 3.97 out of a highest possible score of 4.0 (strongly agree). Table 31 displays the results of the survey. In the additional comments section, five of the nine teachers indicated that all ELA teachers should take the course, three teachers indicated that the course was among the best courses they had ever taken, and three teachers requested a follow-up course to explore additional types and methods of assessment. One teacher wrote, "This course is the most helpful course that I have ever taken in my educational career! No kidding, it's that good!!" Another teacher wrote, "This class is such an eye-opening experience."

*Table 31
Results from Lexington 5 Graduate Course*

Item	n	Strongly Disagree	Generally Disagree	Generally Agree	Strongly Agree
1	9	0	0	0	9
2	9	0	0	1	8
3	9	0	0	0	9
4	9	0	0	0	9
5	8	0	0	0	8
6	9	0	0	1	8
7	9	0	0	0	9
8	9	0	0	0	9
9	9	0	0	0	9
10	9	0	0	0	9
11	9	0	0	1	8
Total	-	0	0	3	95
Percent	-	0	0	3.06	96.94

Conclusions & Recommendations

Professional development consistently found to have the most impact on student achievement is generally content specific, active learning oriented, intensive, and long term (Blank, de las Alas, & Smith, 2007; Wei, Darling-Hammond, Andree, Richardson, & Orphanos, 2009; Yoon, Duncan, Lee, Scarloss, & Shapley, 2007). In a review of more than 1,300 studies related to the impacts of professional development on student achievement in the areas of science, math, and/or English/language arts, nine studies used evidence that met rigorous research standards as required by the What Works Clearinghouse (Institute of Education Sciences initiative to promote the use of rigorous research to make informed decisions). These nine studies were included in a meta-analysis that explored the impact of professional development on student achievement. Professional development that was longer than 14 hours in duration demonstrated a positive and significant effect, and teachers who received substantial professional development lasting an average of 49 hours showed a 21-point improvement in student achievement. Among the professional development programs that had the least amount of teacher interface (5 to 14 hours), there were no statistically significant impacts on student achievement (Yoon et al., 2008).

Wei et al. (2009) recently conducted a review of professional development research that included a “range of research methodologies” (p. 3) to include case studies and other qualitative approaches as well as experimental research to allow more depth of understanding about the impacts of professional development. This meta-analysis concluded that consensus has begun to develop around key principles involved in effective professional development such as content-specific, standards-based professional development that includes examples of student mastery of material and a collaborative, intensive, and sustained approach to professional development

Professional development provided by WIN is content specific, focusing on improvement explicitly related to English/language arts standards with supplemental impacts on other content areas. WIN consultants work to assist teachers and administrators in effectively interpreting standards and provide examples of student mastery of English/language arts concepts. WIN consultants use active learning techniques in the professional development process that seek to engage and include teachers in the development of strategies and methods to understand and improve student learning. While these are strong aspects of WIN professional development and

technical assistance, the current intensity and length of engagement of WIN professional development activities are often not enough to significantly impact teacher functioning and student achievement. At this point, impact on student outcomes is hard to discern based on the limited intensity of WIN services and the prevalence of other professional development and technical assistance at many of the high needs schools and districts served.

WIN consultants are interested in and have attempted to provide professional development with more intensity particularly to Below Average and At-Risk districts and schools; however, budget cuts and funding constraints have limited schools' ability to afford this type of professional development. In addition, WIN's budget does not allow it to provide intensive services at a significantly reduced rate to be affordable for these districts and schools. On average, schools/districts provided approximately \$2,000 for a customized series of WIN workshops during 2009-2010 that consisted of between one and three workshops. Costs per district ranged from \$550 to \$3,000 based on the intensity of services. The actual costs to WIN to plan and implement a high-quality, one-day customized professional development workshop are between \$1,500 and \$2,500. WIN often provides more services and technical assistance than it is compensated for based on the amount it charges schools and districts for professional development. For example, WIN received only 15% of the costs required to plan and implement the services for the Writers' Edge Project.

Evaluations from the more intensive professional development workshops such as Clarendon 1 (Scott's Branch) and Lexington School District 5 are more positive than those from shorter term professional development and likely demonstrate the rapport developed with professional development facilitators and the commitment gained from more frequent interactions and integration of material over a period of time. In addition, evaluations from The Writers' Edge Summer Institute demonstrated that significant changes occurred in teachers' knowledge, beliefs, and attitudes during the intensive professional development process. The design and intent of the Writers' Edge Project was aligned with high-quality professional development; however, lack of follow through by participating teachers during the academic year following the institute appear to have compromised classroom and student impact (Saunders, 2010).

Based on information gleaned from workshop evaluations as well as teacher dispositions during technical assistance, WIN consultants have redesigned some of their professional development strategies for 2010–2011. In professional development designed for teachers in Grades 3-8 for

Dillon School District 2, which occurred in August 2010, WIN consultants analyzed district-level PASS Extended Response and Multiple Choice Writing Scores. The consultants developed a workshop to assist classroom teachers in understanding and using these data to inform their instruction. The evaluation form (Appendix D) used to determine pre-workshop perceptions and post-workshop perceptions allows WIN consultants and others to understand changes in beliefs, perceptions, and knowledge as a result of workshop participation. If WIN continues to use this type of data-driven approach in a more substantial and sustained professional development process, significant student achievement results may be realized.

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APPENDIX B



Writer’s Edge Summer Institute Survey

Directions: Using the scale below, write the appropriate number for statements 1-12.

(4) Strongly Agree **(3)** Generally Agree **(2)** Generally Disagree **(1)** Strongly Disagree

Before the Institute	Statement	After the Institute
	1. Good writers work through the writing process in sequential steps.	
	2. Good writers always begin with a rough draft.	
	3. Good writers copy or imitate the writing style of other writers.	
	4. Good writers include three main points or examples to fully develop the central idea.	
	5. Good writers use five paragraphs to arrange information in a way that logically develops the central idea.	
	6. Good writers use explicit transitional devices to help the reader move smoothly from paragraph-to-paragraph or from idea-to-idea.	
	7. Good writers spend more time editing than revising their writing.	
	8. A central idea is the same as a topic sentence.	
	9. The topic sentence is usually the first sentence of a paragraph.	
	10. Vivid vocabulary is the same as precise vocabulary.	
	11. An occasional sentence fragment is acceptable in the final draft.	
	12. The majority of student writing should be in response to a prompt.	

APPENDIX C



Writer’s Edge Scoring Academy Survey

Directions: Using the scale below, write the appropriate number for statements 1-12

(4) Strongly Agree **(3)** Generally Agree **(2)** Generally Disagree **(1)** Strongly Disagree

Before the Institute	Statement	After the Institute
	1. The 2008 writing standards and indicators are incorporated into the 15-point rubric.	
	2. I am confident in my understanding of the State’s expectations for student performance on statewide assessments.	
	3. I am confident in my understanding of how to use the Conventions Matrix.	
	4. I am confident in my understanding of how to use the 15-point rubric to score student writing.	
	5. Student writing should always be graded or assessed.	
	6. Student writing should always be graded or assessed using the 15-point rubric.	
	7. Student writing should always be graded or assessed in all four domains.	
	8. Student writing should always be graded or assessed for conventions.	
	9. Scored student writing should always include feedback that uses the language of the rubric.	
	10. Scored student writing should be used to inform instruction.	
	11. Students should understand the language of the 15-point rubric.	
	12. Computer-generated scoring of student writing provides accurate information that can be used to inform instruction.	

I have previously attended a training session for using South Carolina’s 15-point rubric.

(Circle one.) Yes No

If you circled yes, please indicate when you attended the session and who conducted the session.

When did you attend the session? _____

Who conducted the session? _____

APPENDIX D



PASS Writing Workshop Survey

Directions: Using the scale below, write the appropriate number for statements 1-7.

(4) Strongly Agree (3) Generally Agree (2) Generally Disagree (1) Strongly Disagree

Before the Workshop	Statement	After the Workshop
	1. The multiple-choice writing questions are aligned to the 15-point rubric.	
	2. I am confident in my understanding of how the State determines a student's Writing Performance Level (e.g., Level 3, Level 2, or Level 1).	
	3. I am confident in my understanding of how to interpret PASS Writing scores.	
	4. I am confident in my understanding of how to use test data to inform my instruction.	
	5. I am confident in my understanding of how to use the Conventions Matrix.	
	6. I am confident in my understanding of the 15-point rubric.	
	7. Students should understand the language of the 15-point rubric.	

Before the Workshop:

8. On which of the four domains do you think your students demonstrated the strongest performance?
(Circle one): Content/Development Organization Voice Conventions
9. On which of the four domains do you think your students demonstrated the weakest performance?
(Circle one): Content/Development Organization Voice Conventions
10. How do you use test scores/data (e.g., PASS, MAP) to inform your instruction?

After the Workshop:

11. Based on information presented in this workshop, on which of the four domains did your students demonstrate the strongest performance?
(Circle one): Content/Development Organization Voice Conventions
12. Based on information presented in this workshop, on which of the four domains did your students demonstrate the weakest performance?
(Circle one): Content/Development Organization Voice Conventions
13. As a result of this workshop, how do you plan to use test scores/data (e.g., PASS, MAP) to inform your instruction?
14. Please provide any additional comments on the back of this survey.