

The Writer's  
Workshop, grades  
6-8



# Writing Review Committee



## 2019-2020

- Four full-day sessions
- Standards
- Curriculum
- Student work
- Data
- Interviews, surveys
- Professional reading
- Position papers
- And more ...



## Recommendations

WHITE PLAINS WRITING REVIEW COMMITTEE

Tuesday, March 10, 2020  
8:00 am - 3:00 pm  
Eastview MS Room 118

AGENDA

"Our of the mouths of babies... This first student, no more than nineteen years old, had adopted an ethos where every moment of her life, particularly her school life, was designed as preparation for some future moment, and presumably, at some point all of this furious work would pay off, that point being - in this particular student's mind - retirement, a date forty-five or fifty years in the future."

~ from

- Coffee will be served
- Welcome back & introductions
- Feedback & questions from session 3
- Jigsaw reading: Part 3 of *Why They Can't Write* "A"
  - Break (15 minutes)
- Review elementary writing survey results
- Individual recommendations
  - Lunch (1 hour)
- Writing Review Committee recommendations
- Wrap-up - next steps - reflection

Writing is...

- Creating composed knowledge
  - written language, graphics, mathematical equation
- Teaching/Learning happen inside/outside classroom
- Social and Rhetorical → "Effective writing is rhetorical"
- Serving a variety of purposes
  - Texts, Instagram posts, Blogs, Facebook posts, etc.
  - writers do not recognize these

growth

We are all writers

Who are writers

Everyone is a writer

they are all different

Connect

iPractical!  
iPractical!  
iPractical!

Collaboration / Cross-content Integration

Elective Program @ the High School a good place for this to happen

Connection between reading + writing

School Wide Celebration of NE Writing Day

Taylor...cupling et




# Writing Review Committee

## 2020-2021

- Curriculum projects/ revisions
- Professional learning
- Report and executive summary
- Presentation to board
- Reconvened Writing Review Committee
- Action steps/ work with recommendations



**Writing Review Committee  
Summary of Work 2019-  
Present**



- Presented to the White Plains CSD BOE Subcommittee on Curriculum
- December 8, 2020
- Jennifer Hammond-King, Coordinator K-6  
Douglas Cronk, Coordinator

### Where did the committee begin?

The committee's work started in exploring a set of questions and working toward a set of goals.

#### Questions

- What is the daily writing experience of a WP student from K through 12?
- How is writing used as a tool for exploration and learning?
- What are teacher expectations for writing?
- Is our writing instruction in line with state

#### Goals

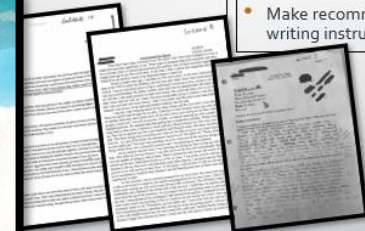
- Gather feedback about writing from students, teachers, and parents.
- Review vertical articulation of writing instruction.
- Develop a protocol for looking at student work.
- Make recommendations for summer curriculum work.
- Make recommendations for improving writing instruction.

## Breakout Groups

**Professional learning plan \* Grading and assessment**

**Writing across the disciplines \* Responding to student work**

- Review committee recommendations related to your breakout group.
- Can you envision a task/ tasks to address one or more of the recommendations?
- What might you explore related to this breakout group?



# Writing Review Committee recommendations

“The committee identifies a connection between the purpose and audience of a writing situation and how students see themselves as writers. Student writers at the elementary level, where there is a focus on choice, audience, process, and celebration, tend to see themselves as good writers who enjoy revising, refining, and sharing their work. *In many writing contexts, students at the secondary level seem to increasingly focus on correctness and producing a final product that will earn a grade. Some students see themselves as writing for an audience of one – the teacher – and want feedback narrowly focused on improving that grade. The committee wonders about the impact this may have on developing lifelong learners and effective communicators beyond an academic setting.*”

DECEMBER 8, 2020



## WHITE PLAINS PUBLIC SCHOOLS WRITING REVIEW COMMITTEE FINAL REPORT

### Writing Review Committee Executive Summary

During the 2019-2020 academic year, Jennifer Hammond-King, ELA Coordinator K-6, and Douglas Cronk, English Coordinator 7-12, established a Writing Review Committee with thirty members, including parents, teachers, instructional coaches, and administrators. The committee met four times; each meeting was an in-person full day session, in addition to conducting student interviews; completing shared readings; collecting examples of student work; and administering student, teacher, and parent surveys outside of the meetings.

Over the course of their work the committee reviewed district data relevant to student writing performance; explored the NYS ELA and Literacy standards for P-12; examined student writing

as well as supporting all staff in learning how to confer with and provide meaningful feedback to student writers. The Writing Review Committee made a total of nineteen recommendations in five general areas. These recommendations include:

- Collaboration and Cross-Content Integration
  - Identify and develop opportunities for interdisciplinary integration through writing.
  - Align writing expectations across all schools and grades.
  - Develop a district-wide culture of writing, including celebrations, such as The National Day on Writing, visits from writers, and more opportunities for student publication.
- District Structures
  - Develop a mission and vision statement for writing reflecting our shared values.
  - Consider scheduling structures and course offerings that best meet the needs of student writers.
- Professional Learning
  - Create a multi-year, multi-grade instructional plan for Professional learning.
  - Develop and implement structures for examining student work.
  - Plan for training in effective conferencing for teachers and TAs.
- Assessment & Grading
  - Explore assessing/ grading models that track mastery of skills.
  - Implement writing portfolios for students.
  - Teach students to set and monitor their own writing goals.
- Curriculum & Classroom Practices
  - Increase opportunities for student choice in writing, including genre, subject, and format.
  - Build publication and celebration into curricula.
  - Incorporate elements of the writing workshop.



# Writing Review Committee recommendations

- Align writing expectations across all schools and grades.
- Develop and implement structures for examining student work.
- Explore assessing/ grading models that track mastery of skills.
- Implement writing portfolios for students.
- Teach students to set and monitor their own writing goals.
- Increase opportunities for student choice in writing, including genre, subject, and format.
- Build publication and celebration into curricula.
- Incorporate elements of the writing workshop.

DECEMBER 8, 2020



## WHITE PLAINS PUBLIC SCHOOLS WRITING REVIEW COMMITTEE FINAL REPORT

### Writing Review Committee Executive Summary

During the 2019-2020 academic year, Jennifer Hammond-King, ELA Coordinator K-6, and Douglas Cronk, English Coordinator 7-12, established a Writing Review Committee with thirty members, including parents, teachers, instructional coaches, and administrators. The committee met four times; each meeting was an in-person full day session, in addition to conducting student interviews; completing shared readings; collecting examples of student work; and administering student, teacher, and parent surveys outside of the meetings.

Over the course of their work the committee reviewed district data relevant to student writing performance; explored the NYS ELA and Literacy standards for P-12; examined student writing

as well as supporting all staff in learning how to confer with and provide meaningful feedback to student writers. The Writing Review Committee made a total of nineteen recommendations in five general areas. These recommendations include:

- Collaboration and Cross-Content Integration
  - Identify and develop opportunities for interdisciplinary integration through writing.
  - Align writing expectations across all schools and grades.
  - Develop a district-wide culture of writing, including celebrations, such as The National Day on Writing, visits from writers, and more opportunities for student publication.
- District Structures
  - Develop a mission and vision statement for writing reflecting our shared values.
  - Consider scheduling structures and course offerings that best meet the needs of student writers.
- Professional Learning
  - Create a multi-year, multi-grade instructional plan for Professional learning.
  - Develop and implement structures for examining student work.
  - Plan for training in effective conferencing for teachers and TAs.
- Assessment & Grading
  - Explore assessing/ grading models that track mastery of skills.
  - Implement writing portfolios for students.
  - Teach students to set and monitor their own writing goals.
- Curriculum & Classroom Practices
  - Increase opportunities for student choice in writing, including genre, subject, and format.
  - Build publication and celebration into curricula.
  - Incorporate elements of the writing workshop.

# ELA current practice



## Grade 6

- **ELA ADV and Critical Literacy: 173 students (36%)**
- **ELA and Critical Literacy: 162 students (33%)**
- **R180: 149 students (31%)**

## Grade 7

- **ELA ADV: 147 students (33%)**
- **ELA: 294 students (67%)**
- **R180, CL1, CL2**

## Grade 8

- **ELA ADV: 209 students (42%)**
- **ELA: 288 students (58%)**
- **R180, CL1, CL2**



# Looking at the workshop model – Why?



- Addresses multiple recommendations
- Student familiarity, success
- Established record as a best practice
- Teaching *the writer*, not the writing

# Looking at the workshop model – How?



- ELA advisory committee
- Materials and resources
- Professional learning
- Time to collaborate and plan



## Why reimagine ELA: Our Mission



The mission of the White Plains City School District is to educate and inspire **all** students, while nurturing their dreams, so they learn continually, think critically, pursue their aspirations and contribute to a diverse and dynamic world.

# Why reimagine ELA?



The mission of the White Plains City School District is to educate and inspire **all** students, while nurturing their dreams, so they learn continually, think critically, pursue their aspirations and contribute to a diverse and dynamic world.

- The workshop model supports all students through standards aligned skills instruction and differentiation for student-specific learning needs.
- Built into the workshop model are opportunities for collaboration, one-on-one and small group conferencing, independent exploration, and student choice.
- Individual writing goals are identified – extension and acceleration are planned for in the writing progressions.
- The workshop model promotes and benefits from a diverse community of writers, who learn and grow through collaboration.



# Why reimagine ELA?



The mission of the White Plains City School District is to educate and inspire **all** students, while nurturing their dreams, so they learn continually, think critically, pursue their aspirations and contribute to a diverse and dynamic world.

- The purpose of ELA instruction in our schools is to develop the skills of all students, not to rank and select.
- The process of selection is problematic.
- We need to support the social and emotional development of all our students.
- It is not necessary to separate out students for them to be supported and challenged appropriately.

# Why reimagine ELA?



The mission of the White Plains City School District is to educate and inspire **all** students, while nurturing their dreams, so they learn continually, think critically, pursue their aspirations and contribute to a diverse and dynamic world.

- NO impact on H/ADV/AP/Dual Enrollment courses at HS
- Fewer scheduling obstacles at Eastview and Highlands – team consistency, dual language, etc.
- Reduces the impact of tracking – selection, gate keeping, parent/student anxiety, etc.



# Tentative timeline



YEAR	GRADE 6	GRADE 7	GRADE 8
2021-2022	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 3 Writing Units of Study</li> <li>• ELA – ELA ADV</li> <li>• Reading instruction in CL/R180</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Try one Writing Unit of Study</li> <li>• Planning/exploration</li> <li>• ELA-ELA ADV</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Volunteers try one Writing Unit of Study</li> </ul>
2022-2023	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• ELA Writing Units of Study</li> <li>• <b>The Writers Workshop grade 6</b></li> <li>• Reading Units of Study in CL</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 3 Writing Units of Study</li> <li>• ELA – ELA ADV</li> <li>• Align current CL units w/ELA units</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Try one Writing Unit of Study</li> <li>• Planning/exploration</li> <li>• ELA-ELA ADV</li> </ul>
2023-2024	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• ELA Writing Units of Study</li> <li>• <b>The Writers Workshop grade 6</b></li> <li>• Reading Units of Study in CL</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• ELA Writing Units of Study</li> <li>• <b>The Writers Workshop grade 7</b></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 3 Writing Units of Study</li> <li>• ELA – ELA ADV</li> <li>• Align current CL units w/ELA units</li> </ul>
2024-2025	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• ELA Writing Units of Study</li> <li>• <b>The Writers Workshop grade 6</b></li> <li>• Reading Units of Study in CL</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• ELA Writing Units of Study</li> <li>• <b>The Writers Workshop grade 7</b></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• ELA Writing Units of Study</li> <li>• <b>The Writers Workshop grade 8</b></li> </ul>

# Who tracks in Westchester?

District	ELA ADV/H 6	ELA ADV/H 7	ELA ADV/H 8	ELA ADV/H 9	ELA ADV/H 10
WHITE PLAINS	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Carmel	No	No	No	Yes	Yes
Mamaroneck	No	No	No	No	No
Mt. Pleasant	No	No	No	Yes	Yes
Valhalla	No	No	No	No	Yes
New Rochelle*	No	No	No	No	Yes
Edgemont	No	No	No	No	Yes
Ardsley	No	No	No	No	No
Briarcliff	No	No	No	No	No
Pelham	No	No	Yes	Yes	Yes
Byram Hills	No	No	No	No	No
Rye*	No	No	No	No	No
Tarrytown*	No	No	Yes	Yes	Yes
Ossining	No	No	No	No	No
Hendrick Hudson	No	No	No	Yes	Yes
Lakeland	No	No	No	Yes	Yes
Wappingers*	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes