

# About NWP

## Our Mission

The National Writing Project focuses the knowledge, expertise, and leadership of our nation's educators on sustained efforts to improve writing and learning for all learners.

## Our Vision

Writing in its many forms is the signature means of communication in the 21st century. The NWP envisions a future where every person is an accomplished writer, engaged learner, and active participant in a digital, interconnected world.

## Who We Are

Unique in breadth and scale, the NWP is a [network of sites](#) anchored at colleges and universities and serving teachers across disciplines and at all levels, early childhood through university. We provide professional development, develop resources, generate research, and act on knowledge to improve the teaching of writing and learning in schools and communities.

The National Writing Project believes that access to high-quality educational experiences is a basic right of all learners and a cornerstone of equity. We work in partnership with institutions, organizations, and communities to develop and sustain leadership for educational improvement. Throughout our work, we value and seek diversity—our own as well as that of our students and their communities—and recognize that practice is strengthened when we incorporate multiple ways of knowing that are informed by culture and experience.

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## A Network of University-Based Sites

Co-directed by faculty from the local university and from K-12 schools, nearly [200 local sites](#) serve all 50 states, the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico, and the U.S. Virgin Islands. Sites work in partnership with area school districts to offer high-quality professional development programs for educators. NWP continues to add new sites each year, with the goal of placing a writing project site within reach of every teacher in America. The network now includes four [associated international sites](#).

## A Successful Model Customized for Local Needs

NWP sites share a [national program model](#), adhering to a set of shared principles and practices for teachers' professional development, and offering programs that are common across the network. In addition to developing a leadership cadre of local teachers (called "teacher-consultants") through invitational [summer institutes](#), NWP sites design and deliver customized inservice programs for local schools, districts, and higher education institutions, and they provide a diverse array of continuing education and research opportunities for teachers at all levels.

[National research studies](#) have confirmed significant gains in writing performance among students of teachers who have participated in NWP programs.

The NWP is the only federally funded program that focuses on the teaching of writing. Support for the NWP is provided by the U.S. Department of Education, foundations, individuals, corporations, universities, and K-12 schools.

## NWP Core Principles

The core principles at the foundation of NWP's national program model are:

Teachers at every level—from kindergarten through college—are the agents of reform; universities and schools are ideal partners for investing in that reform through professional development.

Writing can and should be taught, not just assigned, at every grade level. Professional development programs should provide opportunities for teachers to work together to understand the full spectrum of writing development across grades and across subject areas.

Knowledge about the teaching of writing comes from many sources: theory and research, the analysis of practice, and the experience of writing. Effective professional development programs provide frequent and ongoing opportunities for teachers to write and to examine theory, research, and practice together systematically.

There is no single right approach to teaching writing; however, some practices prove to be more effective than others. A reflective and informed community of practice is in the best position to design and develop comprehensive writing programs. Teachers who are well informed and effective in their practice can be successful teachers of other teachers as well as partners in educational research, development, and implementation. Collectively, teacher-leaders are our greatest resource for educational reform.

