Attitudes of Principals toward Written Composition Research and Instructional Leadership Practices Associated with Effective Writing Programs

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ATTITUDES OF PRINCIPALS TOWARD WRITTEN COMPOSITION

RESEARCH AND INSTRUCTIONAL LEADERSHIP PRACTICES

ASSOCIATED WITH EFFECTIVE WRITING PROGRAMS

by

Patricia R. Parlin

A dissertation submitted in partial fulfillment

of the requirements for the degree of

Doctor of Education

University of San Diego

1985

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One purpose of this study was to assess the attitudes of principals toward recent research findings concerning the teaching of writing. The second purpose of this study was to assess attitudes of principals toward the instructional leadership practices which would be essential to the management of an effective school-wide writing program. Subjects were (N = 180) elementary and secondary principals from San Diego County, California. The questionnaire used for this study, "Principals' Attitudes Regarding Written Composition," and the interview schedule were developed by the researcher based on a review of the literature. Fifty-eight percent of the questionnaires were returned with 57% being scorable. Seven principals were selected as a comparison group to respond to the interview schedule.

The independent sample t test and one-way analysis of variance were used to investigate the effect of: level of supervision, years of experience as a teacher and administrator, sex, professional expertise, and attendance at

presentations related to the teaching of written composition. Chi-square was used to investigate hypotheses regarding differences in responses to the individual items on the survey.

Results indicate that female principals demonstrated more positive attitudes in response to the questionnaire than did male principals. Principals with less than 5 years of administrative experience expressed significantly more positive attitudes than principals with more than 16 years of administrative experience. Analysis of responses to the questionnaire items indicates that general knowledge of the crisis in writing has promoted an awareness of the need to improve student writing performance. However, a summary of the responses indicates that only 1/3 of the principals responded with strongly held attitudes which would be needed to initiate a program reform. In 13 of the 40 questions a significant number of principals responded by indicating that they were "undecided." The assumption is that they lacked sufficient knowledge upon which to base a response.

Implications of this study suggest written composition inservice and training programs for principals are in order. Guidelines are suggested for the incorporation of the philosophy of the National Writing Project (NWP) in the model for principal training programs. Recommendations for observational research are made based on the results and limitations of this study.

DEDICATION

This Dissertation Is Dedicated to:

My husband, Dick

Not only is he an understanding and compassionate listener, but a trusted confidante. His support and encouragement have allowed me to broaden the vistas of my life experience. For this I give my deepest and most sincere love and gratitude.

My sons, Mark, Darryl and Brian

They give me whatever my spirit needs. They laugh or cry with me, praise or comfort me. They are the reason for being.

My parents, Mr. and Mrs. E. Hogan, and my sister, Mrs. B. Slater

In my family, I find a second self. They understand, support and believe in me. I am more because of their love.

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

My sincere appreciation is given to the many people who have provided assistance to me during the course of this research.

I am deeply appreciative of the support given me by my committee director, Dr. Robert L. Infantino. His expertise in written composition, his patience as an advisor and his enthusiasm for the project were essential to the successful completion of the study.

Dr. Patricia A. Lowry has been a faithful supporter throughout my doctoral program. As a committee member, her expertise in curriculum development and her advice during the writing stage of the study were most appreciated. I am deeply indebted to Dr. Lowry.

The counsel of Dr. William R. Foster as a member of my committee and as an expert in leadership theory and practice provided invaluable assistance to me. His efforts on my behalf are sincerely appreciated.

I would also like to express my appreciation to the Directors and Fellows of the San Diego Area Writing Project. The project personnel were extremely cooperative in providing me with information necessary to complete this study. My experience with the project has resulted in much

personal and professional growth. For this, I am deeply grateful.

Lastly, I appreciate the time and effort given by those principals that responded to the survey. I believe that this cooperation is indicative of their concern about student writing performance.

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INTRODUCTION

The educational community, media and government
universally agree that American young people lack suffi-
cient education in the basics which include the skill of
writing ("One in Five," 1983). Current statistics estimate
that approximately 26 million functionally illiterate
Americans cost the taxpayer $12.6 billion in payments to
welfare recipients and prison inmates. As staggering as
this figure is, the influx of computers, television and the
necessity of being able to process information has the
potential to increase this number by raising the level of
achievement needed to function effectively in our society.
The problem is pervasive enough that T. H. Bell, former
U.S. Secretary of Education, began an attack on the situa-
tion in the fall of 1983 through a "literacy initiative."
Such an initiative is deemed necessary although national
groups such as Literacy Volunteers of America and Laubach
Literary Action currently are serving as many as 67,000
adults each year.

Further public concern with lack of standards and
school performance is demonstrated by the filing of mal-
practice suits by parents and students. Edward Donohue and

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his parents brought just such a malpractice suit against
the Copiague (New York) Union Free School (Cooper, 1981).
Although the $5 million suit was unsuccessful, knowledge
that a student can graduate from high school and be unable
to read or write effectively continues to aggravate public
suspicions of the educational system. Public concern about
decline in basic skills achievement underlies a major move-
ment to develop universal standards by which to assess
competency for graduation from high school. Results from a
recent Gallup Poll emphasize the public belief that a high
school diploma no longer has meaning (Cooper, 1981, p. 7).
This poll indicated that 65% of the adults surveyed favored
a nationwide competency test as a criterion for graduation
from high school. Since 1974 competency testing is
required or being considered by every state in the nation.
These proficiency or competency tests assess achievement in
writing as well as reading and mathematics. Clearly there
is a crisis in education today. The public lacks con-
fidence in the educational system to produce a viable
product, i.e., a literate student capable of functioning
adequately in society.

<u>Statement of the Problem</u>

One of the major areas of the public's concern has
been the demonstrated lack of writing skills by students.
Evidence supporting the belief that there is a writing
crisis has come from two major sources. These sources are

indirect measures such as the verbal aptitude portion of the Scholastic Achievement Test and direct evaluations of students' writing.

The Scholastic Aptitude Test (SAT) is taken by numerous high school seniors prior to college entrance. Student scores in the verbal section registered a drop of 54 points between the years of 1963 and 1980. This test is not a writing test per se. However, as a predictor of success in college in which writing skills are necessary, the inference is that lack of verbal skills precludes lack of writing skills (Cooper, 1981, p. 6).

The National Assessment of Education Progress (NAEP) conducted three major surveys of student writing performance during the seventies. A NAEP newsletter article summarizing the results of these surveys concludes that American students have shown no improvement in their writing skills during the seventies ("No Major Changes," 1980-81). The surveys were conducted in 1969-70, 1973-74, and again 1978-79. Samples of writing were scored holistically for students aged 9, 13 and 17. Approximately 10% to 25% of the students at each age level evidenced serious writing problems. The assessment also included a survey of student attitudes about writing. Sixty-six percent of the 9-year-olds reported that they enjoyed writing while 53% of the 17-year-olds reported that they enjoyed writing. This decline can be viewed as an indirect measure of the lack of success in the school writing programs. It is equally

important to note that approximately a quarter of the

students at all ages felt that they were not good writers.

These NAEP findings are particularly alarming in view

of the fact that the decade of the seventies marked sig-

nificant new research into the process and teaching of

writing (Applebee, 1981). Intensive staff development

projects directed toward the retraining of classroom

teachers also began in the seventies. Evidence suggests

that the most successful of the teacher training programs

has been the National Writing Projects modeled after the

Bay Area Writing Project (BAWP). In 1979 a major evalua-

tion of the Bay Area Writing Project by the Carnegie

Corporation included this summary statement:

> It [BWAP] appears to be the best large scale effort
> to improve composition instruction now in operation
> in this country, and certainly is the best on which
> substantial data are available. (Scriven, 1979, p. 1)

This enthusiastic evaluation is somewhat tempered by the

fact that the evaluation did not show measurable evidence

of increased student achievement through direct testing

methods. The fault for this is believed to be multifaceted

and involved research design problems as well as actual

test results.

The philosophy behind the writing project represents

an important departure from traditional inservice programs.

It is based on six major assumptions (Penfield, 1980):

1. The writing problem is shared by the universities

as well as elementary and secondary schools; therefore, it

can best be addressed in a cooperatively planned and funded effort.

2. Traditionally, teachers have been poorly prepared to teach writing. College preparation has been geared more to methods of teaching literature and grammar than to written composition.

3. Successful teachers of writing can be identified and the best practices of these teachers can be effectively demonstrated to other teachers.

4. Teachers are more likely to accept suggestions and practices from another teacher regarded as successful in the teaching of writing.

5. Most teachers lack an awareness of the research findings regarding the teaching of writing.

6. Teachers of writing must themselves write.

Currently there are approximately 140 sites of the National Writing Project. Each is based on a replication of the principles developed at the Berkeley site. One of these, the San Diego Area Writing Project (SDAWP), has been in existence approximately 10 years and is associated with the University of California at San Diego (UCSD). As practiced by other project sites, SDAWP conducts a summer institute in which 25 teachers experience intense participation in the writing process both as teachers and students. As project fellows, these teachers then become presenters for the various staff development projects.

SDAWP contracts to provide these inservice programs to area school districts.

Arthur N. Applebee applies another measure of the effectiveness of present changes in the teaching of writing. In the recently published study, <u>Writing in the Secondary School</u>, he examines "the instruction situations in which students are presently learning to write" (Applebee, 1981, p. 2). The conclusions of his study draw a fairly dismal picture of the writing curriculum in secondary schools. In the foreword to the published study, Charles R. Cooper summarizes the major findings as descriptions of a "school writing program certain to fail." In such a program writing is limited to note taking, filling in the blank, short answer essays and copying material. Students have limited time to compose, receive inadequate and corrective feedback and are not asked for revisions. The students seemed confused about the purpose of writing and the methods used by skilled writers to compose. Students are even confused about how and why writing can be useful in their daily lives.

Given the facts that the seventies were a decade in which great strides were made in the areas of research into the process of composing, evaluation of compositions, teacher training and inservice in written composition, findings such as those described by Applebee (1981) are particularly disturbing. These facts suggest that

alternate areas of research may be in order if we are to be successful in our efforts to improve student writing.

A number of research projects which have been grouped under the general heading of effective schools studies conclude that when schools are matched on student background characteristics, levels of student achievement may vary considerably. These variances in achievement can be attributed to differences in school instruction, management, processes, and climate. As previously stated, most efforts to improve writing have focused on teacher training and inservice, research into the composing process and composition evaluation. Effective school studies conclude that the principal as site instructional leader has a tremendous potential to influence student achievement in major curriculum areas. To date little information is available regarding principals' awareness of the crisis in student writing or the principals' efforts to help remediate the problem.

Research supports the position that the principal is a pivotal point in the organization if curricular change is to be successful. A study by Berman and McLaughlin (1975) noted that when principals actively supported projects of curricular innovation in their schools, teachers were more likely to demonstrate the desired behavior changes and to perceive themselves as more successful in their new roles. This finding is further substantiated by Wyant, Reinhard, and Arends (1980, pp. 132-148). Using data extrapolated

from 11 case studies they identified behavior patterns in principals that were deemed important in the development and maintenance of innovative curriculum projects. A specific list of these behaviors includes the principal's demonstrated: (a) knowledge of the project, (b) commitment to the project, (c) willingness to communicate this personal commitment and active involvement, (d) ability to obtain the resources necessary to sustain the project, (e) ability to balance competing factions to ensure project support, (f) skill in defining role expectations to staff members, (g) finesse in selling the project and thereby gaining staff support, and (h) willingness to give feedback to participants and evaluate the project.

A study by Moody and Amos (1975) noted a sharp decline in reading and mathematics scores when the principal's involvement in the program declined. The scores of second, third, and fourth graders in the study improved markedly when the principal once again resumed the role of instructional leader.

In 1980 DeGuire also concluded that principals exercising leadership in the reading program do have a positive impact on reading scores. This study compared five schools with improving reading scores in the sixth grade with five schools showing a decline in their sixth grade reading scores. The major difference between these groups appeared to be the instructional leadership of the principal. It is interesting to note that teachers and principals in the 10

schools expressed the same belief that principals should be knowledgeable about the reading program. They also believed that fiscal support and periodic evaluation of the program were important functions of the principal.

These studies reinforce the belief that as instructional leaders principals do have the power to impact positively on programs. The question remains as to how effective are they in using this power to induce needed changes in the writing curriculum? A survey conducted with American Association of School Administrators (AASA) members for a Critical Issues Report found that 50% of the administrative respondents considered student writing in their district a "minor problem" (Neill, 1982, p. 7). One questions the awareness level of these administrators given the data cited previously indicating a national crisis in student writing. Neill also notes that in spite of the breakthroughs in the teaching of writing, i.e., teacher inservice, research into the process of writing and improved evaluation methods, major difficulties lie ahead for those seeking to improve the writing curriculum. These include the reluctance of school administrators to attend inservice in writing to update their knowledge of current research regarding the writing process. Without such inservice administrators are poorly equipped to evaluate or to attempt to improve writing programs in their schools.

The support and leadership that can be provided by principals is critical if needed changes are to be

incorporated into the teaching of writing at the school site level. The AASA survey previously mentioned (Neill, 1982) documents that 92% of the respondents feel that their districts emphasize writing more than they did 3 years ago. Mandated minimum competency testing may account for this surge of interest in writing. The form of renewed emphasis most often taken was increased time given for writing. However, research indicates that increased time alone will not result in better writing skills (Haynes, 1978; Heys, 1962). Couple this with the fact that only 43% of the administrators indicate that they had provided some type of inservice for their staff and the accuracy of Applebee's (1981) description of the writing curriculum in schools becomes more apparent.

The observations above lead this researcher to believe that to date most principals are poorly prepared to assume their roles as instructional leaders in improving the writing curriculum. The decline in SAT scores and the dismal performance of students on mandated competency tests and results of national surveys such as that done by National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) have served to raise the awareness level of most administrators. However, the major research findings regarding the teaching of writing occurred after 1970, postdating the training of most administrators. This lack of training has the potential to contribute to the low priority given to the teaching of writing in schools. Teahcers, students, and

parents are likely to reflect the same priority placed on writing as do their principals. Many principals also lack the necessary skills to develop and manage a comprehensive curriculum program necessary in an effective school-wide effort to improve writing.

It is the belief of this researcher that valuable insight into ways of improving writing instruction may be gained by investigating the attitudes of principals toward written composition. Therefore, one purpose of this study was to assess the attitudes of principals regarding the importance of research findings in written composition. The second purpose of this study was to assess attitudes of principals toward instructional leadership practices which the review of the literature suggests would be essential to the management of an effective school writing program. Findings of this study will provide a basis for making recommendations for principal training and inservice programs and for overall suggestions of ways that principals can provide instructional leadership in written composition.

In order to accomplish these purposes this study will examine and compare the attitudes of three groups of principals:

1. Secondary and elementary principals who have a staff member trained by SDAWP Summer Institute.

2. Secondary and elementary principals who have staff members trained in SDAWP district level inservice programs.

3. Secondary and elementary principals selected from the general population of principals in San Diego County.

Statement of Hypotheses and Rationale

This study measured the attitudes of principals toward two issues of concern to educators in their efforts to improve student writing performance. Attitudes of principals toward research supported practices in the teaching and evaluation of written composition was the first issue assessed. Secondly, the attitudes of principals toward instructional leadership practices identified by research as being effective methods of increasing student achievement was assessed. Currently, little is known about principals and their role as instructional leaders in the development of school-wide writing programs. In order to obtain a more definitive picture of principals and their attitudes toward these two issues, the following hypotheses were tested:

Hypothesis 1--There is no significant difference between the mean scores of principals selected from the general population, principals who have staff members trained in the San Diego Area Writing Project's Summer Institute, and principals who have staff members trained by the project's district level inservice programs.

Hypothesis 2--There is no significant difference between the total mean scores of principals based on their attendance at written composition inservice programs.

Hypothesis 3--There is no significant difference between the total mean scores of principals based on the principal's professional training in written composition.

Hypothesis 4--There is no significant difference between the total mean scores of principals grouped according to elementary or secondary supervision levels.

Hypothesis 5--There is no significant difference between the total mean scores of principals based on the principal's years of experience as an administrator.

Hypothesis 6--There is no significant difference between the total mean scores of principals based on the principal's years of teaching experience.

Hypothesis 7--There is no significant difference between the total mean scores of principals grouped according to sex.

Definition of Terms

1. Attitude--indicates a predisposition to perceive and act toward a cognitive object (Kerlinger, 1964).

2. Attitude Scale--refers to a scale designed to assess an individual's feelings and tendencies toward action.

3. Instructional leadership--refers to all activities of the principal that direct the attention of the teacher toward improvement of instruction for students.

4. <u>Leadership behavior</u>--refers to the extent to which principals involve teachers, students and parents in the school's writing program.

5. <u>Background characteristics</u>--refers to a principal's sex, years of teaching and administrative experience, professional expertise and training in written composition, and administrative level.

6. <u>Student involvement</u>--refers to activities in which the principal works with students to improve the writing program. The activities are stated in items 4, 5, 20, 31, 35, 37 on the questionnaire located in Appendix A.

7. <u>Teacher involvement</u>--refers to ways in which the principal involves the teacher in the improvement of writing instruction. The activities are stated in items 6, 7, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 26, 28, 29 on the questionnaire located in Appendix A.

8. <u>Parent involvement</u>--refers to activities that pertain to ways in which the principal might work with parents to improve the writing program. The activities are stated in items 19, 21, 22, 23, 24 on the questionnaire located in Appendix A.

9. <u>Writing as a process</u>--refers to the multiple stages of writing including prewriting, writing, responding, revising, editing, developing skills with the convention of writing, evaluating and postwriting.

10. <u>Writing across the curriculum</u>--refers to a school-wide effort to involve writing as a means of learning in all curriculum areas.

11. <u>Holistic scoring</u>--refers to a method of evaluating samples of student writing which focuses on the overall effectiveness of the writing to communicate the appropriate message to the audience rather than on identified structural or grammatical errors.

12. <u>Analytical scoring</u>--refers to a method of evaluating student writing. The common areas of evaluation are punctuation, syntax, grammar, paragraph development, and organization.

13. <u>Sentence-combining</u>--refers to a technique for combining short sentences into longer, more elaborately constructed sentences.

Significance of the Study

Various studies on the attitudes of principals with regard to their role as instructional leaders in specific curriculum areas have been conducted. Attitudes demonstrated in these studies have been shown to directly influence the performance of the principal in his/her role as the school's instructional leader. Increased involvement of principals in specific curriculum areas has proven to raise the achievement scores of students. As described in the background of this study, information about principals' attitudes toward writing is very limited.

Principal involvement with written composition instructional theory and program development has been limited. There is a need for basic research to formulate an informational base upon which to build recommendations for principal training and writing program development in order to increase principal involvement. The significance of this study lies in its contribution to this information base.

Assumptions of the Study

1. It is assumed that principals will respond to the questionnaire in a manner which will allow them to express their attitudes honestly and thoughtfully.

2. It is assumed that the questionnaire reflects relevant areas related to written composition instruction and program development.

3. It is assumed that the population under study accurately represents the general population of principals in each group.

Study Limitations

This study was designed to assess the attitudes of principals toward recent research findings about the teaching of writing and their attitudes toward instructional leadership practices essential to the management of an effective school writing program. There are three major limitations to the study. First, it is limited to the

self-report of attitudes by the principals. There was no
opportunity to interview staff members to gain confirmation
of the principals' expressed attitudes. A second limita-
tion includes the lack of direct contact with all
principals. A comparison group of 10% of the principals
with staff members trained as San Diego Area Writing
Project (SDAWP) Teaching Fellows was interviewed. Prin-
cipals from the general population and those principals
with staff members trained by the SDAWP district level
inservice programs were not interviewed. A comparison of
data obtained through interviews with principals from all
the groups represented in the sample would have been bene-
ficial in confirming the validity of the responses.
Thirdly, the study involves principals from San Diego
County only. Therefore, the ability to generalize the
findings will be limited.

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

Lack of improvement in student writing performance has been a concern for educators nationally. Researchers have developed theories regarding teaching and evaluation of written composition. Training programs at the university level and within school districts have been developed to improve and update the skills of writing teachers. However, to date there is no concrete evidence that student writing performance has improved measurably. Consequently additional solutions to the problem warrant investigation.

Current research into effective schools indicates that the school principal is an important and perhaps indispensable person in bringing innovation to the school curriculum. Change and innovation are needed if student writing performance is to improve. The role of principal as the instructional leader in written composition programs has not been thoroughly investigated. More information is needed to describe the attitudes of principals about written composition research and program development. Therefore, the review of the literature is concerned with three separate issues: research supported practices

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documented as effective in the teaching and evaluation of writing, competencies and characteristics of principals as effective instructional leaders, and the purposeful involvement of students, parents and teachers by principals to increase achievement.

Research into the Teaching and Evaluation of Writing

Writing Theory

Researchers have identified three major approaches to teaching writing. Each of these approaches is based on different assumptions and has different implications for the teaching and evaluation of writing. Miles Myers (1983) identifies these teaching approaches as distancing, modeling and processing.

Distancing is an approach in which the writer focuses on the audience. Assignments are organized around the rhetorical distance between the writer and the audience or subject. The rhetorical distance from the speaker to the subject produces changes in the form the writing will take. Myers shows, as an example of distancing, how writing on a personal topic may result in an autobiography, as opposed to a more distant subject which could become a biography. Distancing presumes that writing is generated within the social context of the writer, an audience, a reality, and a message. Writing assignments are structured to reflect an increase in the rhetorical distance between the writer and the audience, thus requiring greater sophistication on the

part of the writer. Piaget's child development theories and James Moffet's discourse theory are said to parallel distancing assignments structured to reflect a child's natural egocentrism and the child's progress to higher levels of abstraction (Myers, 1983).

Traditionally teachers have experienced two problems with the distancing approach. Real audiences for student writers are somewhat limited. Expanding the number of available audiences is a challenge to teachers. The second problem is experienced during the transition from narration to exposition. Increased audience rhetorical distance greatly influences topic selection. Topics become less personal and more general. These topics may depend on facts with which the student has little personal knowledge. The challenge for the instructor becomes one of how to structure the writing assignment so that the facts can be used in a manner which would still allow the writer to interject his/her ego into the composition. A social studies teacher requiring that her junior high school students use the facts learned about the western expansion in the United States to produce a journal of the student's imagined participation on a wagon train is an example of such a transition (Myers, 1983).

Modeling as the second approach to the teaching of writing is based on two assumptions. The first is reflective of the behavioral theorists' view that writing is imitated behavior which has been reinforced by others.

The second assumption is that the ability to write is
innate in humans and that it is developed as the result of
language in the learner's environment. The three instruc-
tional components of modeling are drills, sentence
combining and imitation. Drill involves the introduction
and reinforcement of language convention. Students are
taught sentence structure and the identification of parts
of speech. Writing focuses on the acquisition of discrete
skills; skills such as complete sentences, proper spelling
and punctuation, and adherence to a specific topic. A
study in New Zealand examined the use of drills in the
classroom. Three classrooms were observed over a 2-year
period. The approaches in these classrooms were writing
instruction based on transformational grammar, traditional
grammar and writing within the context of literature
comparisons. At issue was whether or not grammar instruc-
tion contributed to the development of the writing skills
of students. It was the conclusion of the researchers,
Elley, Barham, Lamb and Wylie, that the study of grammar
using drills has little influence on the development of
writing and language skills (Myers, 1983). Both Glatthorn
(1981) and the editors of the California State Department
of Education's handbook (Nemetz, 1983) cite numerous other
studies to prove that the teaching of formal grammar is not
directly related to improved writing skills. Abrahamson
(1977) summarizes several research projects in which formal
grammar instruction is compared to the effect of sentence

combining activities in improving writing skills. Sentence combining instruction resulted in the greatest degree of improvement.

The second instructional component of modeling, sentence combining, is considered a more functional method of introducing grammar instruction. There is little formal terminology associated with sentence combining. Like drills, sentence combining focuses on a discrete part of writing, the sentence. Unlike drills, however, sentence combining activities encourage different responses from students. This allows students to develop intuitive insights into the structure of language and encourages experimentation, thus enhancing writing proficiency.

There are three methods of teaching sentence combining (Gray, 1983). The Mellon sentence transforms two or three simple sentences into one. The second method involves the removal of connectives (e.g., and, so, then, because, although). Teachers provide simple sentences to groups of students. As a group, the students transform these sentences into one, more descriptive sentence. On suc-ceeding days students are told they are to rewrite the same simple sentences using a decreasing list of connectives. This forces the students to explore the flexibility of the simple sentences. The third method, developed by Francis Christensen (1983) involves a concept identifed as the "generative rhetoric of the sentence." His method encourages the use of extensive modifiers in sentence

construction. Examples are taken from noted authors, clauses identified and patterns noted. Students are then encouraged to experiment with these clauses and patterns in their own sentences. This encourages style development on the part of the student writers. James Gray (1983) provides an instructional model for introducing student writers to Christensen's method of sentence combining in his paper titled "Sentence Modeling."

The third method used in the modeling approach is imitation. Unlike sentence combining which focuses on the sentence, imitation focuses on given texts.

There are three forms of imitation: genre models, dictation, and paraphrasing (Myers, 1983). In genre modeling students are given sample compositions representa- tive of various discourse types, i.e., descriptive, narrative, persuasive and expository. Student compositions are developed which imitate these genre models.

During dictation exercises, students are asked to copy as instructors read from literary works. The assumption is that students will internalize good speech patterns and the style of noted authors. Variations of the dictation method include memorization of passages for recitation, and stu- dent dictation of stories with the teacher acting as a recorder.

Paraphrasing is the third technique used in imitation. Students are given passages to read and then are asked to write them in their own words. This may involve the

reduction of long passages into a paragraph. Some
activities include the paraphrasing of passages using a
prescribed vocabulary. Other techniques involve the use of
the structural model given in a selected passage, but
require that the student change the subject matter.

Writing as a process is the third major approach to
writing instruction identified by research. This research
into the teaching of writing has effectively delineated a
complex process which involves memory, cognition, language
and psychomotor behaviors (Britton, 1970; Glatthorn, 1981).
Writing is a process which researchers have divided into
many different stages that are interactive and overlapping.
Students need to have an awareness of each stage although
the process is not necessarily sequential or linear. In
the Handbook for Planning an Effective Writing Program,
developed by the California State Department of Education,
the stages are identified. The stages are prewriting,
writing, responding, revision, editing, developing skills
with writing conventions, evaluating and postwriting
(Nemetz, 1983, p. 9). Glatthorn (1981) suggests that there
are two major implications from findings regarding the
writing process. Teachers need to make students aware of
the writing process and help them to evaluate when compo-
nents of the process might be counterproductive in their
writing. He also suggests that by "fractionating" and
"routinizing" the writing process, teachers can simplify
the task for their students.

Gail Siegel (1982) has analyzed the process stages that very young writers go through in grades K-3. These developmental stages include:

1. <u>Transcribing Stage</u>: Children dictate simple thoughts to the transcribing adult regarding illustrations they have produced to express their ideas. The illustrations are usually more detailed than what is dictated. The pictures are more graphic in their portrayal of feelings and details than the child can express verbally.

2. <u>Re-copying Stage</u>: This stage usually occurs during the beginning of the first grade. Students copy simple sentences constructed by the teacher. Student writing is a laborious process involving the use of unfamiliar tools such as pencils and erasers and the act of copying specific texts in correct form. Such writing is usually done in the first person and is experiential or fantasy. Student writers still depend on illustration for the detail they are unable to incorporate in their writing.

3. <u>Sentence/Whole Phrases Stage</u>: Student writing includes the independent expression of thoughts. Students may require adult help with phrases or even whole sentences in order to express themselves. Errors in spelling and grammar are inconsequential as writing is what is important to the child.

4. <u>Independent Stage</u>: During this stage the child seeks to gain fluency with the language and coherence or correctness with its form. The students gain from the

experience of hearing their work read and the opportunity to redraft the writing.

Siegel's experience with children at the K-3 level suggests that these stages are flexible. At each grade level students may be observed functioning at any of these stages. The writing level of students is presumed to correlate with their language development, i.e., fluency, coherence and correctness. The instruction sequence for young writers includes oral language, prewriting, group writing, individual writing and sharing or rethinking. Siegel recommends this instructional sequence for primary level students regardless of the stage of writing proficiency.

Intermediate students in grades 4-6 also need experience with writing as a process. Lynda Chittenden (1982) has combined research about the writing process into an instructional sequence. There are two major components in this instructional sequence. First, students are evaluated on their developmental stage as writers. This includes an assessment of their fluency with the language as they write. Coherence or the ability to make sense as a writer is also assessed. Lastly, the correctness or mechanics of writing, such as spelling, punctuation and usage, are evaluated. The second component of Chittenden's instructional sequence involves the process experienced in each writing assignment. This includes the stages identified by many authors as prewriting, writing, responding, revision,

editing, evaluation and postwriting (Chittenden, 1982;

Glatthorn, 1981; Nemetz, 1983).

Writing as a process is a concept that is still rele-

vant to secondary students in grades 9-12. The maturity

level of each grade is reflected in the way students

experience the writing process (Jensen, 1982). Freshmen

students demonstrate lack of maturity at the prewriting

stage. Difficulty is experienced in the selection of voice

by the author and in the identification of an audience for

the composition. During the composing stage these students

are most comfortable with descriptive or narrative composi-

tions. Revision is considered the process of producing a

"clean copy." Sophomore students are better able to

examine their use of the language through sentence com-

bining activities and imitation of authors. The focus is

on the composing and editing stages of writing. Junior and

senior students are better able to explore advanced dis-

course types such as expository writing using the full

range of activities developed in the writing process.

In summary, the three approaches to teaching writing,

distancing, modeling and writing as a process, are all well

founded in research theory and practical experience. Myers

(1983) suggests that the most effective writing programs

recognize the strengths of each of these approaches to the

teaching of writing. Such writing programs seek to develop

practices which implement all of the theories into a

comprehensive approach to the teaching of writing.

Relationship Between Reading and Writing Skill Development

Programs which place a strong emphasis on reading as a model for good writing are also very effective. The more widely read students are, the more likely they are to have internalized concepts about the structure of the language which will be beneficial to them in their writing experience (Glatthorn, 1981). Remedial writing instructor Jan Wall (1982) believes that as a practitioner it is important to remember the developmental sequence in language use. This sequence involves listening, speaking, reading and writing. Effective writing programs depend upon a student's ability to read. Gebhard (1983, p. 207) cites research which concludes that reading and writing are complementary language processes. Student skill development in writing, encoding and composing, is assisted by the skills required to be a good reader: decoding and comprehension.

Writing Across the Curriculum

Effective writing programs are implemented school-wide. Principals who are experienced in the development and management of comprehensive curriculum programs should be better prepared to do the same in writing. The Handbook for Planning an Effective Writing Program (Nemetz, 1983, p. 23) describes a program for writing across the curriculum in which principals need to provide instructional leadership. Glatthorn (1981, pp. 11-18) provides examples

of assessment instruments that can be used by principals in
evaluating the comprehensiveness of their writing programs.

The success or failure of a school-wide writing pro-
gram depends on the support, belief in and participation in
such a program by the site administrator. Shuman (1984)
cites an example of a successful school-wide writing pro-
gram in which all teachers on staff were required to attend
a 2-week summer workshop designed to improve the teaching
of writing. The principal demonstrated support for this
project by attending the entire 2-week inservice.

When teachers and administrators attend such projects
together, the benefits accrued to the entire school are
threefold. First, there is an increased understanding of
subject matter and a development of higher level thinking
skills for students. A unity within faculties based on
their common goal to increase the writing and thinking
skills of their students is the second benefit that is
frequently experienced by schools adopting a writing across
the curriculum approach. Lastly, students who write in
all subject areas have more opportunities to develop
writing skills. This may also have subtle but positive
influence on their attitudes about writing (Glatthorn,
1981, p. 45).

Frequency of Writing

One of the major contributors to the writing crisis is
the low priority writing is given in the schools' curricu-
lum. Arthur N. Applebee (1981) conducted a study in which

he observed that secondary students were given paragraph or longer writing assignments only 3% of the time. Homework assignments also involved limited writing. Paragraph length assignments were required only 3% of the time. Student reports of assigned writing tasks in the 1979 writing assessment by the National Assessment of Education Progress (NAEP) support Applebee's observation. One-third of the 13-year-olds and one-fourth of the 17-year-olds responding to the survey had been required to write one report or no report in the 6 weeks preceding the assessment. A report by the American Association of School Administrators (AASA) surveyed principals about writing in their schools. Respondents (92%) said their districts were emphasizing writing more. Most of the principals indicated that increased time spent writing was the major improvement in their writing programs (57% elementary principals and 56% secondary principals). However, only 43% of the respondents indicated that they provided inservice for teachers to train them to teach writing. Therefore, the quality of that increased time spent writing is questionable. Without a commitment to improve the quality of writing instruction, the value of a quantitative increase in time alone is useless. Studies (Haynes, 1978; Heys, 1962) indicate that growth in writing competency is more likely when instruction is specific to the task and provides a review during the writing process which facilitates communication. There is real danger in the belief

that increased time on task is sufficient to improve writing. Educators become complacent and are lulled into believing that writing is being improved by increasing the amount of time spent writing. Energies needed to pursue the goals of improving writing instruction and evaluation are dissipated.

Peer Feedback and Editing

The rationale for response groups may be found in the nature of the relationships developed within the groups. Peers are the most significant others in the lives of students. Therefore, the motivation to perform and improve as a writer is increased. Writers are also given the opportunity to observe the effect their writing has on others. This facilitates the writer's skill in developing a sense of audience. Development of the variety of voices that may be expressed in writing and an appreciation for the effect these voices have on the audience is also encouraged (Beaven, 1977).

Peer feedback and peer editing offers students unique opportunities to improve their writing skills. Glatthorn (1981) cites summary studies in which the evaluation of student writing by peers has proven to be a valuable learning tool. These studies note the importance of structuring the type of review, editing, and response which the group should provide in order to increase the effectiveness of the feedback.

Mary K. Healy (1982) notes that several important characteristics develop in student writing as a result of participation in peer response groups. Writing includes more specificity in details. Supporting examples and transitional and introductory phrases are more evident in the compositions. The fluency is greater in pieces of writing produced by response group participants. She also emphasizes the importance of structured response from the group.

Writing as an Adjunct to
the Thinking/Learning Process

One of the major themes expressed in the report by the National Commission on Excellence in Education is that schools have failed in their task to teach higher level thinking skills such as synthesis, analysis, and evaluation. Writing, like reading, involves the learner in a heuristic process involving the highest level of cognitive functioning. Therefore, instruction in reading and writing needs to allow the student to participate in activities which require synthesis, analysis and generalization. Applebee (1981) notes that student writing assignments usually consist of short answer, fill in the blank and brief note taking formats. Paragraph or longer compositions are required less than 3% of the time. Rexford Brown, in a presentation to the National Council of Teachers of English Convention in 1982, is quoted by Boiarsky and Johnson (1983) as saying that overdependence

on basal text materials is the chief cause of declining scores on the latest National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP). The real decline in scores is not in a lack of basic skills, but rather the decline in tasks requiring students to comprehend and write using higher cognitive skills. To teach reading and writing is to teach the art of thinking (Boiarsky & Johnson, 1983).

Effectiveness of Teachers
as Writing Models

One of the basic philosophical tenets of the National Writing Project is that teachers of writing must also be writers (Penfield, 1980). The hypocrisy of teachers who claim that writing is an important skill, but do not them- selves write, is thought to be an untenable position (Perez, 1983). The value of the teacher as a model in writing instruction can not be underestimated. As an example, Perez recounts the experiences of Robert Frost as a young child. Believing that he was seeing the teacher compose an original poem for the class, Frost became fas- cinated with her facile use of language. This fascination continued as he attempted to emulate the teacher. Frost was later to learn that the poem was a quote from another author; however, his interest in writing and language con- tinued. His admiration was merely transferred to the true author.

Perez also warns against the danger of teachers as negative writing models. Students should have the

opportunity to see teachers write more than brief comments on their papers, notes to parents, and class assignments on the chalkboard. Singular writing such as these examples will lead students to view writing as perfunctory, a job to be completed.

A teacher that writes knows the value of the writing process. They have firsthand experience with the craft of writing. Patrick Bizzaro (1983) analyzed his own processes as a writer. It was his opinion that this facilitated his teaching of writing. Bizzaro also uses his own writing when demonstrating for students. Unfinished pieces of writing were revised with the help of the students. Bizzaro now considers himself not only a teacher of writing, but a researcher. This is because in his expanded role as a teacher-writer, questions about how students write are major considerations as he teaches. Being comfortable with himself as a writer has allowed him to internalize writing theory and verbalize his own inner experiences as a writer. Being a model writer for his students is a critical part of the instruction process for this teacher.

Contributors to the Handbook for Planning an Effective Writing Program concur that it is important for teachers to provide models for student writers (Nemetz, 1983). Students need the opportunity to observe writers as they ponder, compose, revise and edit. Teachers must actively demonstrate the value they place on writing if

students are to appreciate fully this complex, often frus-

trating method of expressing one's thoughts.

Teacher Correction of
Student Writing

Specific techniques for the evaluation of student

writing samples will be dealt with in subsequent sections

of this chapter. However, it is important to address the

issue of teacher corrections on student compositions as

practitioners frequently struggle with the issue of the

type and intensity of corrections that should be made.

Discussions usually are polemic and reflect the differing

positions ranging from the belief that any correction

stifles fluency to the belief that all errors should be

"red penciled." Students do require feedback about their

writing performance. Teachers can be effective agents

for improving student writing through the type of feedback

they provide. Research indicates that teachers who praise

what students do well are more effective than those who

focus on what is wrong with the composition (Glatthorn,

1981; Nemetz, 1983). Moderate correction of errors or

corrections which focus on specific features of the writing

are more effective than intensive correction. Positive

critiques of student writing by teachers are positively

associated with more positive attitudes about writing by

students. This should not be construed to mean that

corrective or constructive criticism is never appropriate.

In fact, it probably is essential to the improvement

process. It is the degree and intensity of the correction that influences its effectiveness.

Evaluation of Writing

There are two methods to assess student writing performance: indirect measurement and direct measurement.

The first of these, indirect measurement, involves the use of an objective test. These may be norm-referenced or criterion-referenced tests. The format is usually multiple-choice questions. The questions are designed to assess knowledge of language mechanics (e.g., spelling, punctuation, grammar, usage and vocabulary).

Some of these standardized tests have proven predictive validity by comparison to scores received by students in writing courses. However, Lee Odell (1981) is critical of standardized tests as measures of student writing performance. He cites as examples a test which measures the student's ability to recognize correctly written English. The skill of identifying correct written English is very limited and not representative of the skill of writing. Another of Odell's criticisms of multiple-choice tests is that the learner must choose from given alternatives. Odell notes that in reality a writer's problem is the generation of these alternatives. Writers must create their own choices. One should use caution in the selection of standardized tests of written composition. One needs to be aware of the limitations of depending on standardized scores as the sole measure of writing performance. These

scores also have limited value in providing information for formulating an effective writing curriculum.

Improvements are being made in indirect measurements. The California Assessment Program (CAP) has recently revised the sixth and eighth grade writing assessment tests (Nemetz, 1983). Students are asked to identify strengths and weaknesses from writing samples. This is an attempt to assess writing requiring skill beyond the usual editing skills assessed on most objective tests. Data regarding frequency of writing, attitudes about writing and student performance will also be available for program planners as a result of the improvements on the CAP test of written composition.

Direct measurement involves the evaluation of student writing samples. Holistic evaluation of writing is a planned procedure for ranking student compositions. The scoring occurs quickly and is reflective of the immediate first impressions of the reader. Holistic evaluation is based on a rubric (scoring guide) which identifies the high, medium and low quality levels for specific aspects of the writing. Evaluators must be trained adequately to recognize and agree upon the quality levels and specific features of the writing that are considered descriptive of these quality levels. The scores can provide a reliable rank-ordering of the compositions. With proper training of raters a scoring reliability of .90 is possible (Cooper, 1977).

Holistic scoring is predicated on the belief that writing consists of a complete message. The composition is directed to a specific audience and the author has a purpose for the writing. Cooper (1977) identifies seven types of holistic evaluations: essay scale, analytic scale, dichotomous scale, feature analysis, primary trait scoring, general impression marking and "center of gravity" response. The common characteristic of these evaluations is that they do not require the reader to count or tally identified characteristics of the writing. The evaluator uses the identified characteristics of the writing only as a general guide upon which to make the final holistic judgment.

Essay scale evalutions employ the use of sample essays. These sample pieces are rank ordered to provide a scale based on the quality of the writing. The evaluator must match the pieces of writing to be evaluated with those on the scale. There are several published scales available through the National Council of Teachers of English in Urbana, Illinois. Essay scales have several uses. They may be used for class discussion, the training of teacher-evaluators, and to develop a range of abilities of students in a given writing program.

Analytic scales specify characteristics of the writing. These characteristics may include main idea, organization, syntax or mechanics. Readers interpret the

scale by using the agreed upon definitions to determine the high-mid-low values for each characteristic.

Dichotomous scales are used to determine group scores. This is unlike the previous scales which are designed to provide evaluations of individuals. The evaluation is based upon an agreed upon statement of standards for the group. The evaluator decides if the piece has the feature agreed upon in the statement of standards.

Feature analysis allows the evaluator to focus on one feature of the composition. As an example, the selected feature might be the use of detail in the essay. A scale would be developed to evaluate this particular feature.

Primary trait scoring is similar to analytical scoring. The major difference is that usually only one trait is evaluated. The assumption is that a particular piece of writing has a specific purpose and audience. The trait that is considered most important for a given writing assignment is the trait evaluated. As with other holistic assessment methods, the rubric defines specific character-istics of the trait to be assessed. Raters must be trained to be familiar with these standards. The advantage to primary trait scoring is that a precise assessment of a student's performance on selected charcteristics such as organization, coherence or rhetorical style is possible.

General impression marking is a simple method of rank ordering the papers produced for a specific assignment. Raters may develop a rubric as a guide to aid in their

decision as to the placement of papers within the range of performance on given assignments. However, the rubric is usually concerned with how well the author addresses the question or prompt and with general features of the writing.

Center of gravity response is an example of an informal response guide. Peter Elbow developed this procedure, not to evaluate writing, but to provide structured feedback to the author (Cooper, 1977). Readers are asked to respond to four questions. First, the reader tells the author what he/she assumes are the main points of the writing, that is its "center of gravity." Secondly, the reader summarizes his/her first impression statement into one sentence. At the third response level, the reader summarizes impressions into one word from the writing. Lastly, the reader summarizes the "center of gravity" into one word not contained in the writing. Reader responses using this or other similar guided responses are particularly helpful to the writer in the revision stage. A method similar to Elbow's scheme can be used at all grade levels.

The reliability of results obtained from evaluation of writing samples is frequently criticized. Cooper (1981), in a discussion of this issue, notes that several researchers such as Stalnaker in 1934 and Moslemi in 1975 have confirmed that with proper training rater reliability can improve from a range of .30 to .75 before training to a

range of .73 to .98 after training. Reliability ratings in the after training range are sufficient to give confidence in program or indiv_dual assessments obtained through writing samples. Reliability does not have to be an issue in the decision on whether to use writing samples as measures of student performance in written composition.

Neill (1982) and Nemetz (1983) outline several advantages to direct measurement using a writing sample. When writing is measured by a writing sample, students and teachers are more likely to focus on the writing process than on the components of writing such as grammar and spelling. This method of assessment is more defensible to the community and parents, both of whom have expressed concern about the crisis in student writing. Writing samples are evidence that writing is being taught and evaluated. As districts, schools and English departments work together in the development of prompts (essay questions) and rubrics (scoring guides) they must cooperate in the development of standards for their writing programs. Diagnosis of weakness in student writing based on the outcomes of direct measurement of writing samples can become the basis for program changes. Staff development plans can be designed to facilitate the changes deemed necessary to correct writing deficiencies.

In summary, direct measurement (writing sample) and indirect measurement (objective tests) both provide valuable information about student writing performance.

They answer different questions related to student per-
formance and therefore can be complementary assessments.
Neill (1982) reviews a guide developed by the Los Angeles
County Schools. The purpose of the guide was to assess the
value of indirect and direct measures of student writing
performance. The authors of the guide conclude that
districts should make use of both methods for a compre-
hensive evaluation of writing performance.

Background Characteristics of Principals

There is little specific information available in the
literature regarding the type of background the principal
needs to best lead the development of an effective writing
program in the schools. One must deduce from the litera-
ture available in other curriculum areas what the needs
might be.

If the principal is to provide strong leadership in
the curriculum area of writing, a knowledge of the research
into the teaching and evaluation of writing would certainly
be necessary. Ideally, the principal would have acquired
firsthand knowledge of this field through recent course
work or inservice in the field of writing. For instance, a
study of elementary principals by Zinski (1975) indicated
that those principals who were most actively involved in
the planning, coordination and evaluation of reading
programs had completed course work in reading supervision
at the graduate level.

Several directors of State Writing Projects, curriculum coordinators and superintendents were interviewed to define the role of the principal in the development of an effective school-wide writing program (Neill, 1982). Persons interviewed agreed that the typical principal does not have an English/language arts background. The concern expressed was that without training in written composition, principals are likely to foster a basic, drill oriented teaching approach in their staff members. Principals will be unfamiliar with classrooms organized around a writing lab model which reflects the philosophy that writing is a process. This process approach encourages students to work in groups and interact. Frequently this process is noisy. Teacher-centered instruction such as that found in traditional English/language arts classrooms is not congruent with a writing lab model of instruction.

One superintendent is quoted as saying that principals need at least "average expertise" or knowledge of curriculum in order to maintain credibility with the teaching staff. Others interviewed for this American Association of School Administrators (AASA) study agreed that principals need not have as much training in written composition as teachers but enough training to facilitate evaluation of programs and teaching performance is essential (Neill, 1982). Note is also made of the fact that writing programs are complex, involving multiple grade levels and disciplines. Principals informed about research into the

teaching and evaluation of written composition are better able to provide the support necessary to implement a school-wide writing program. An uninformed, poorly trained principal may present an insurmountable obstacle to plans for developing an effective writing program.

Principals are frequently viewed as the "gatekeepers of change" in the school. If a new, more effective writing program is to be developed, prior experience with curriculum innovation would be desirable. Researchers have indicated that a principal's active support of an innovative project greatly increases chances of teacher change and teacher perceptions of success of the project (Berman & McLaughlin, 1975).

It is the belief of some authors that changes of the magnitude required to engineer improvements in student writing performance are impossible without the support of the principal (Lipham, 1981). Principals as the designated instructional leaders have the primary responsibility for program change and curriculum innovation. The authority and power associated with the role of the principal are important factors which insure at least a hearing for proposed changes. As evidence to support these beliefs in the importance of principals as change agents, Lipham notes that the most frequently cited reason for abandonment of program change is that "the principal left."

Lipham also suggests that effective program innovations are managed by principals familiar with the process

of change. Such principals recognize that change is time-consuming. Staffs need to be apprised of the magnitude of the proposed change. Principals as instructional leaders must have a complete understanding of the change and how it is to be implemented in order to inform all who will be involved. As program planners, principals must insure that time allocated for the proposed change is adequate for planning, implementation and evaluation.

Staff development experience would also be a necessary part of an effective principal's background. Joyce and Showers (1980) concluded that inservice projects which are jointly managed by teachers and administrators are most likely to be considered effective. Participatory leadership on the part of the principal is frequently a key factor in the success of staff development projects. The authors of the <u>Handbook for Planning an Effective Writing Program</u> concur with this belief. Involving the teaching staff in the planning of the inservice program insures ownership in the plan. This plan should reflect genuine needs of the staff. Consideration should be given to the time requirements made on potential participants. It is an accepted fact that to be effective inservice can not be "one-shot, one-day" (Neill, 1981; Nemetz, 1983). Therefore participant input into this commitment is essential.

Principals need to be considerate of the fact that staff members who have been involved in the selection of the source of the inservice (consultants, colleagues or a

combination of both) are more likely to respect and support the presentations (Neill, 1982; Nemetz, 1983). The quality of the programs and presenters is of prime importance. Principals need to insure that these programs reflect suggested practices based on research findings related to the teaching of writing. Presenters should be selected based on the adequacy of their training and experience as teachers of writing (Nemetz, 1983).

Principals must assume the responsibility for insuring that the inservice plan has the support of all concerned such as the community, the school district governing board, superintendent, and curriculum support staff. Staff members need continued evidence of support for the program from the principal. This includes principal participation in the inservice, follow-up classroom observations, and recognition of participants' implementation of the inservice topics. Principals also demonstrate support by insuring that adequate resources are allocated to implement the inservice plan. These resources should include plans not only for specific staff inservice programs, but travel and conference funds, support for membership in professional organizations and acquisition of professional libraries covering subjects related to the teaching of writing (Nemetz, 1983).

Principal's Leadership Behavior Involving
Others in Program Improvement

The principalship encompasses a multitude of roles, including instructional leader, chief site administrator and site manager (Block, 1982). As the instructional leader, the principal determines the quality of the educational program through the supervision of curriculum content and instructional processes. As the administrative chief, the principal is responsible for the implementation of district goals and policies. The daily operation of the school is under the direction of the principal as the site manager. To fulfill these roles the principal is inevitably involved in frequent and sustained interactions with significant members of the school community. It is the principal's ability to involve effectively these significant school members, i.e., students, parents and teachers, which ultimately determines the success or failure in achieving the school's agreed upon mission. This section of the review of the literature will focus on leadership behaviors of principals which result in the effective involvement of others in curriculum innovation resulting in increased achievement.

The Principal and Teacher
Involvement in Curriculum
Innovation

A study reviewed by Block (1982, pp. 39-43) compared 30 elementary principals from innovative schools with 31 principals from traditional schools. Data from the study

described innovative principals as participative leaders.
As innovators, these principals attributed the formulation
of curriculum objectives and the implementation of these
objectives to both teachers and the principal. These prin-
cipals also viewed the principal and teachers as the
preferred source of change within the school. Budget
preparation was also a shared responsibility. Innovation
in the instructional process appears to be highly asso-
ciated with shared decision-making. Principals capitalize
on teachers' desires for increased participation in the
decision making (Block, 1982, p. 28).

Lipham (1981) does not correlate shared decision
making with weak, diffused leadership. The implication is
that shared decision making is a more potent form of
leadership based on cooperative effort to attain organiza-
tional goals. The strong task oriented, assertive
leadership style associated with principals of high
achieving schools (Block, 1982; Eubanks & Levine, 1983) is
seen as compatible with participative decision making which
may have the added benefit of enhancing relationships with
the staff.

Studies conducted by the Maryland and California State
Departments of Education (Block, 1983, chap. 3) confirmed
that high achieving schools are generally associated with
greater control of curriculum by administrators. Greater
control of curriculum by administrators was not perceived
as depriving teachers of meaningful involvement in the

decision-making process, nor was it found to have a nega-
tive impact on the freedom prized by teachers in
determining classroom instruction. Principals appreciated
and made use of the expertise of the teaching staff.
Teachers who were expected to implement curriculum innova-
tions benefited from shared or delegated decision making.
These teachers also reported more positive feelings about
their work assignment. In an analysis of several research
projects, Block (1983) concludes that it is the ability to
balance the teacher's need for classroom autonomy and the
principal's need for a strong leadership role that ulti-
mately leads to mutual satisfaction and goal attainment.

Principals in high achieving/innovative schools
demonstrated their support and high expectations for the
teaching staff in a variety of ways. Demonstrations of
support included classroom visitations, staff development
projects, articulation of instructional goals and objec-
tives, and program evaluation.

Researchers noted that effective principals were
frequent observers in classrooms (Block, 1983). Their
visitations had specific objectives and focused on instruc-
tional assessment and evaluation. The effect of these
visits was twofold. They demonstrated concern and support
for the classroom teacher. The visits also kept principals
better informed about classroom needs and what type of
assistance teachers might need.

Effective staff development programs are indicative of concern by the principals for their teaching staff. Murphy and Pruyn (1983) identify five elements they consider key to effective staff development. The first of these elements is inservice content which is relevant to instructional goals. Secondly, teacher participation depends on the nature of the content. It may involve the entire staff or specific groups within the staff such as the English department. The third element addresses the importance of voluntary participation by staff members. Principals insuring that follow-up will occur in each classroom is the fourth element in effective inservice. Lastly, planning and implementation should reflect collegial relationships among staff members.

As instructional leaders, principals are responsible for directing the process by which instructional objectives will be determined, communicating the objectives to the school community and evaluating the progress made toward achievement of these objectives. Well defined instructional goals and high expectations for achieving these goals creates an environment in which success is most likely. Teachers develop strong beliefs in their ability to teach and in the ability of students to learn. Principals play a major role in supporting these beliefs (Block, 1983; Murphy & Pruyn, 1983). The effective use of information obtained through program evaluation insures that participants have feedback about the degree to which

instructional goals have been met. Evaluation also provides information necessary for future planning.

The Principal and
Student Achievement

In a review of six studies which examined character-istics of exemplary schools, Austin (1981) states that

> the greatest asset of an exemplary school is its firm
> leadership; because of that leadership, students in
> exemplary schools believe that they can control their
> own destinies. (p. 43)

"Effective principals place the achievement and happiness of students first in their priorities" (Leithwood & Montgomery, 1980, p. 320).

Phi Delta Kappa researchers ("Why Do Some," 1980) also conclude that principals are a key factor in raising the achievement of students. Principals who possess and communicate high expectations for student achievement are most likely to be associated with successful schools. Students also demonstrate greater degrees of self-discipline, higher motivation and concern for others when the principal is viewed as a strong leader and is highly visible in the classroom ("Why Do Some," 1980, pp. 132-135).

Principals who are assertive instructional leaders, strong disciplinarians and who assume the responsibility for program evaluation were found to be most often asso-ciated with improving schools according to a study by Brookover and Lezotte (1979, pp. 66-67).

The impact of principal leadership on student achieve-ment is demonstrated in a study by Moody and Amos (1975).

This study details the sharp decline in reading and mathematics scores for second, third and fourth graders following the cessation of extensive involvement by the principal in the instructional program. This decline followed 2 years in which scores had increased as a result of principal involvement. Increases in scores were also noted when the principal resumed an interactive role with teachers supportive of program improvement.

Principals that maintain and communicate high expectations for achievement to the students are also likely to be associated with successful schools according to these researchers. Venesky and Winfield (1979) report that principals attempt to coordinate curriculum goals and methods of teachers in order to maximize learning for students throughout the grades.

Several studies Block (1983) reviewed describe characteristics of students in high achieving schools. These students have positive attitudes about their schools and expect to continue their schooling for a longer period of time than did their lower achieving peers. Students exhibited a stronger attachment to their schools. Behavior was less disruptive. Students demonstrated attentiveness and more genuine interest in the instruction. Regular attendance and infrequent tardies were also characteristics associated with high achievement.

Murphy and Pruyn (1983) discussed several elements in the school climate which research associates with

increasing student achievement. Effective schools
encourage students to become involved in the governance of
the school. Students have opportunities to serve the
school community. Most importantly, students are provided
with opportunities to acquire skills that make their
involvement in school a successful experience. Excellent
work and appropriate behavior are rewarded. Reward systems
are evident at the classroom level and at the school level.
There are numerous opportunities to win awards in different
areas such as citizenship, participation and service.
However, highest awards are reserved for academic
excellence.

Relationships between teachers and students are
cohesive and supportive. Activities are planned which
reinforce school attachment (e.g., honor assemblies, school
dances, and athletic events). Symbols of valued school
norms (e.g., achievement awards and citizenship certifi-
cates) are received at numerous school ceremonies. There
are ample opportunities for students to interact with
teachers, both in and outside of the classroom. Such
interactions provide opportunities for role modeling.

These student characteristics and school climate
factors do not occur without the leadership of the site
principal. This leadership serves to unite the efforts of
the school community towards the action necessary to create
a positive school climate thereby insuring the development

of student characteristics most supportive of academic

achievement.

The Principal and
Parent Involvement in
Program Improvement

Decisions made by principals in representing the

community or parents depend greatly on their personal

definition of the role of principal. Mann (1971) reported

a study in which three styles of representation are identi-

fied:

Trustee:

Someone whose decisions are based on his own values
(in the case of school administrators, usually
expertise) even though those whom he represents may
disagree.

Delegate:

Is guided by expressed citizen preferences even at the
expense of his own best judgment.

Politico:

Someone who borrows from both trustee and delegate
styles as dictated by situations but who has some
internally consistent rationale for doing so. (Mann,
1971, pp. 42-43)

The degree of responsiveness of the principal to the com-

munity or parent involvement in program improvement is a

reflection of themselves as administrative trustees.

Zirchykov, Davies, and Chrispeels (1980) conducted a

study which examined school advisory councils in three

states where these are mandated. They note a study in

which differences in perception of the role of parents in

these councils is discussed (p. 92). In general,

principals favored less involvement by parents in the
decision-making process than did the parents. The councils
were viewed by principals as effective in promoting a
better understanding of school programs and as a method of
improving responsiveness to parent concerns by the school
(Tirozzi, 1973, p. 197).

Murphy (1983, p. 20) outlines four types of activities
in which parents are effectively involved in the improve-
ment of the instructional program. The first three involve
(a) two-way communication between home and school, (b)
parent involvement in decision making, and (c) parent
involvement in school support organizations such as booster
clubs and parent-teacher organizations. The fourth
activity involves parents working with their children on
homework tasks. Murphy deems this parent activity as the
most powerful in raising student achievement. The school
offers workshops to train parents to be effective tutors
and the school provides work packets and other materials
necessary for them to be successful.

Other studies have documented the effectiveness of
involving parents in the instructional program. Smith,
Carter, and Dapper (1970) reviewed several projects which
successfully involved mothers as tutors in the reading
program. When principals actively sought parental help the
response was overwhelming (pp. 40-45). Loffey (1980) noted
that when parents are involved in development of reading
program goals and have an adequate understanding of these

goals they are more likely to participate in and support the instructional program (p. 634).

Effectiveness studies also note a high correlation between parental involvement and student achievement (Block, 1983, pp. 35-37). Parents of students in higher achieving schools demonstrated support and concern by more frequent classroom visits and attendance at school functions such as P.T.A. meetings. Two exceptions to these generalizations occurred. In a high SES school parent participation was low. The researcher (cited in Block, 1983) indicates that these parents apparently did not participate as long as they were satisfied with student achievement and school programs. In Brookover's study (cited in Block, 1983), parent involvement was associated with declining schools. However, involvement initiated by the parents was greater in improving schools. The suggestion is made that researchers should investigate the nature of parent involvement. Overall, studies cited by Block indicate a positive association between parent involvement and student achievement.

Schools with high achieving students made different kinds of efforts to involve parents (Gervais & Levine, cited by Block, 1983). Parents were asked to serve as volunteers and tutors within the classroom. In the home setting, parents provided help with homework and provided quiet study space and time. Schools provided inservice designed to give parents necessary skills to tutor

children. Parents also had opportunities to construct

materials to be used at home in support of the school

program.

In summary, it may be said that parents are a resource

that principals have used effectively to improve student

achievement. There are negative findings regarding parent

involvement in some studies. However, researchers suggest

that there are underlying reasons for these results which

can be explained. Principals who view parents as a poten-

tial resource for improving student achievement may take

corrective measures to alleviate those underlying negative

results.

Summary of the Review of the Literature

The literature reviewed in this section focused upon

three major areas. First, the review examined current

research-supported practices documented as effective in

the teaching and evaluation of writing. Next, background

characteristics of principals and the competencies deemed

important to be an effective instructional leader were

reviewed. Third, the role of the principal in involving

teachers, parents and students in program improvement was

reviewed.

Studies of the teaching and evaluation of writing

indicate that there are three major theoretical frameworks

for the teaching of writing. Writing as a process is the

framework generally accepted; however, instructional

techniques from the other theoretical frameworks may be appropriate at different stages of the writing.

Evaluation of writing is twofold. It involves indirect measurement such as standardized tests and direct measurement through the use of writing samples. Of the two methods of evaluation, direct measurement is preferred by most research authors. Several methods of evaluating writing samples were reviewed. Studies proving the reliability of holistically scored writing samples were cited. Most researchers agree that standardized tests which have been carefully constructed to measure writing offer practitioners much information about large groups of students. Standardized tests have a high predictive validity. Therefore, they are useful to program planners.

Comprehensive evaluation of a writing program should include both direct and indirect methods of evaluation. They answer different types of questions about student performance.

Few studies were available to describe the principal and competencies needed to provide instructional leadership in written composition. However, studies describing effective principals were cited. These indicate a need for knowledge about the theory, practice, and evaluation of written composition. Principals also need experience in implementing innovative curricular change and staff development.

Research suggests that to achieve program improvement, principals must be able to insure the cooperation of students, parents, and teachers. Studies were cited which discussed the leadership style which might be most effective in enlisting the help of these persons to achieve program improvement. Studies were also cited in which principals were not always effective in their interactions with these persons. However, the majority of studies were positive, indicating that effective involvement of these significant persons increased student achievement.

CHAPTER III

RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

One purpose of this study was to assess the attitudes of principals toward recent research findings as they relate to the teaching of writing. The second purpose of this study was to assess attitudes of principals toward the instructional leadership practices which would be essential to the management of an effective school-wide writing program according to the recent research literature on writing. Findings of this study have provided a basis for making recommendations for principal training and inservice programs and for overall suggestions of ways that principals can provide instructional leadership in written composition. This chapter is divided into five main sections. These are: selection of subject samples, description of instrumentation, pilot program, methods of data analysis and hypotheses projected and tested.

Selection of Subject Samples

In order to accomplish the purposes of this study, attitudes of three groups of principals were examined:

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1. Secondary and elementary principals who have had a staff member trained by SDAWP Summer Institute. Hereafter this group will be referred to as Group A.

2. Secondary and elementary principals who have staff members trained in SDAWP district level inservice programs. Hereafter this group will be referred to as Group B.

3. Secondary and elementary principals selected from the general population of principals in San Diego County. Hereafter this group will be referred to as Group C.

Using the San Diego Area Writing Project's (SDAWP) participant lists and the 1984 Directory of School and Community College Districts and San Diego County Office of Education, issued by the San Diego County Office of Education, a random sample of 60 principals from each group was drawn. This sample was stratified within each group to represent the percentage of elementary and secondary principals in San Diego County (74% elementary and 26% secondary). The sample also reflected the ratio of San Diego Unified District schools to county schools (33% San Diego Unified and 67% San Diego County Schools). Twenty-two county school districts were represented in the sample out of 48 school districts in San Diego County.

A comparison group, 10% of the principals with staff members trained as San Diego Area Writing Project (SDAWP) Teaching Fellows, was interviewed to determine:

1. Practices in their schools which related to research findings regarding effective components of a writing program.

2. Practices which demonstrate instructional leadership in directing teachers, parents and students toward the development, implementation and achievement of an effective writing program.

The reason for selecting principals from San Diego County was that it encompasses a cross-section of districts representing urban, suburban and rural districts. These districts range in size from the second largest in the state, San Diego Unified, to districts such as Dehesa which consists of one elementary school.

Principals with staff members trained by the San Diego Area Writing Project (SDAWP) as Teaching Fellows (Group A) or those principals with staff members trained by SDAWP's district level inservice program (Group B) were selected as a comparison group to be investigated because of the significance the writing projects have had in training teachers as leaders in providing inservice in written composition. The assumptions of the project also include the belief that teachers trained by the project raise the awareness level of teachers and administrators at their schools, thereby impacting in a positive way on the effectiveness of written composition programs throughout their schools. Therefore, it was important to determine if

these principals do indeed express more positive and informed attitudes about written composition.

Description of Instrumentation

The questionnaire used in this survey was developed by this researcher based on a review of the literature. The items were designed to sample principals' attitudes regarding:

1. Research findings defining effective methods of teaching writing.

2. Research of effective schools describing methods used by principals in their role as instructional leaders to improve curriculum.

The survey consisted of 40 items. These items surveyed the principals' attitudes regarding five major subcategories:

1. Extent to which the principal should be involved in the writing program to demonstrate instructional leadership.

2. Research findings related to the teaching of written composition.

3. Extent to which the principal should involve parents in the writing program.

4. Extent to which the principal feels students should be involved in the writing program.

5. Extent to which the principal should give direction to teachers in the school's writing program.

The subjects were asked to rate each item on a five-point scale:

A = Strongly Agree   +2

B = Agree   +1

C = Undecided   0

D = Disagree   -1

E = Strongly Disagree   -2

The scoring involved changing the signs of questionnaire items 2, 3, 5, 8, 13, 14, 15, 16, 19, 20, 21, 24, 27, 30, 32, 33, 34, and 36 (Appendix A). The purpose of this was to guard against the subject developing a response set toward the perceived "right answer."

Validity of the instrument was determined by having a pilot group of educators respond to the questionnaire, and through a review of the items by experts in the field of written composition. Each educator in the pilot group was asked to critique the items and to evaluate the appropriateness of the item on the survey regarding application to written composition curriculum. Expert opinions were solicited confirming the research base from which the questions were formed. Appendix B lists the reference sources upon which questionnaire items were based.

Reliability of the questionnaire was determined through use of the split-half procedure. Responses to the questionnaire by the pilot subjects were used as data in the reliability test.

The interview schedule used in this study was designed by the researcher based on a review of the literature. Primarily, the generic model of an effective writing program developed in the Handbook for Planning an Effective Writing Program was the basis for the interview schedule (Nemetz, 1983, p. 41). The questions were directed to a 10% sample of principals with SDAWP Summer Institute trained staff members who responded to the questionnaire. The practices of these principals as they relate to research findings were the subject of the interview questions.

Pilot Program

A group of 15 educators acted as pilot subjects for this study. This group included principals, vice-principals, curriculum specialists, and teachers trained by the writing project. Respondents to this pilot testing were asked to provide additional comments regarding the clarity of the questions and appropriateness of the items to this subject area. As previously stated, reliability and validity of the instrument was determined by calculations from this testing. Responses by the group were also used to make final revisions in the questionnaire.

Methods of Data Analysis

The analysis of the data was accomplished through the use of the University of California at San Diego's (UCSD) VAX--77/780 computer and the SPSS Program.

The computer program for the t test and one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) were used to determine significant differences between or among means for each hypothesis. Differences between responses to specific items on the questionnaire were tested by chi-square.

Data obtained from the interview schedule were used to describe practices of principals most likely to be impacted by the SDAWP inservice program. This provided a comparison between attitudes expressed by principals in general and specific practices of SDAWP principals. This comparison was included in the summary analysis of the study.

Hypotheses Projected and Tested

To guide in the analysis of data relative to principals' attitudes about written composition instruction and program development, certain hypotheses were formulated. These hypotheses were stated in the null form.

Hypothesis 1--There is no significant difference between the mean scores of principals selected from the general population, principals who have staff members trained in the San Diego Area Writing Project's Summer Institute, and principals who have staff members trained by the project's district level inservice programs.

Hypothesis 2--There is no significant difference between the total mean scores of principals based on their attendance at written composition inservice programs.

Hypothesis 3--There is no significant difference between the total mean scores of principals based on the principal's professional training in writtten composition.

Hypothesis 4--There is no significant difference between the total mean scores of principals grouped according to elementary or secondary supervision levels.

Hypothesis 5--There is no significant difference between the total mean scores of principals based on the principal's years of experience as an administrator.

Hypothesis 6--There is no significant difference between the total mean scores of principals based on the principal's years of teaching experience.

Hypothesis 7--There is no significant difference between the total mean scores of principals grouped according to sex.

CHAPTER IV

ANALYSIS OF DATA

Introduction

The purposes of this study were twofold. First, the study assessed the attitudes of principals regarding recent research findings concerning the teaching of writing. Assessment of principals' attitudes toward instructional leadership practices which would be essential to the management of an effective school-wide writing program was the second purpose of the study. These findings are to provide a basis for making recommendations for principal training and inservice programs and for overall suggestions of ways that principals can provide instructional leadership in written composition.

This chapter is divided into six major sections. The first section provides a detailed description of the sample population. Section two describes the pilot program which was used in the development of the survey instrument. Demographic information related to the subjects is the topic for section three. An analysis of the survey items is contained in section four. Analyses of the hypotheses are the subject of section five. The last section is a

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summary of what has preceded in this chapter and touches upon what will be presented in Chapter V.

Description of Sample Population

In order to accomplish the purposes of this study, the attitudes of three groups of principals were examined. These groups were:

1. Secondary and elementary principals who have had a staff member trained in the San Diego Area Writing Project (SDAWP) Summer Institute. Hereafter this group will be referred to as Group A.

2. Secondary and elementary principals who have staff members trained in SDAWP district level inservice programs. Hereafter this group will be referred to as Group B.

3. Secondary and elementary principals selected from the general population of principals in San Diego County. Hereafter this group will be referred to as Group C.

Using SDAWP participant lists and the 1984 Directory of School and Community College Districts and San Diego County Office of Education, issued by the San Diego County Office of Education, a random sample of 60 principals from each group was drawn. This sample was stratified within each group to represent the percentage of elementary and secondary principals in San Diego County (74% elementary and 26% secondary). The sample also reflected the ratio of county schools to schools in the San Diego Unified District (33% San Diego Unified and 67% San Diego County Schools).

Twenty-two county school districts were represented in the sample from a total of 48 districts. Of the 180 surveys mailed, a total of 105 principals responded (58%). There were 103 valid, usable surveys, a return of 57%. The two surveys considered unusable included one in which the proper group assignment could not be determined. The second survey was omitted at the participant's request. Within each group, the sample return was approximately the same percentage as that of the total group. Group A principals had a 58% return (N = 35). Principals in Group B returned 59% of the surveys (N = 36). A return of 53% was received from Group C (N = 32).

Pilot Program

The questionnaire was sent to a group of 15 educators in July 1984. These subjects were asked to:

1. Respond to the survey according to the directions.

2. Make comments regarding the clarity and appropriateness of each item as related to the topic of written composition.

3. Comment on clarity of the transmittal letter.

4. Suggest improvements in the directions should they feel that they are necessary.

The subjects included three principals, three language arts curriculum directors and two Chapter I Resource Specialists. The remaining seven subjects were San Diego Area Writing Project (SDAWP) Teacher Fellows. These

persons have served as inservice presenters for the project
and are considered knowledgeable in the field of written
composition. A total of 10 subjects returned the question-
naire. One of the returned questionnaires was considered
unusable.

Comments from the participants included:

1. Directions are clear.

2. Questions #19 and #36 must be re-read to
understand directionality for the response.

3. Socioeconomic status of the students would impact
on the response to some of the questions.

4. Items are germane to written composition
instruction and research.

Their comments resulted in minor changes to the final
survey. Socioeconomic status of students was not included
as the purpose of this study was to discern attitudes and
knowledge of principals about written composition. As only
one subject commented regarding questions #19 and #36, only
minor revisions were made in the items.

Reliability of the instrument was determined through
the use of the split-half procedure. The Spearman-Brown
Formula was used to determine a reliability of .81 for the
total instrument. A list of representative reliabilities
of standardized tests by Helmstader shows a range of .47
(low) to .98 (high) for attitude scales (Borg & Gall, 1979,
p. 218). The median for such scales is .79 or .02 less
than the reliability for this instrument.

Content validity of the instrument is evidenced by the relationship between the review of the literature and the items included in the survey (Appendix B). Each question was constructed to reflect current practices that researchers support as effective instructional practices in the teaching and/or evaluation of written composition. Items also included research supported attitudes and practices evidenced by principals who have been successful in providing curricular leadership.

Face and content validity are further confirmed by the participants in the pilot study. Each has evidenced considerable expertise in written composition and curricular development and leadership. The instructions in the pilot study solicited their opinion regarding the content of the survey as related to the purpose of the study. No negative responses were noted from those responding to the pilot instrument.

Demographic Information

This section details the responses contained on page 1 of the survey (Appendix A). All tables in this study do not always equal 103 total responses as some respondents omitted items.

The following tables list the number of principals responding in each category. The tables also display relative frequency of response as a percentage of the total 103 respondents and the adjusted frequency as the percentage of

actual respondents to that questionnaire item. Cumulative

adjusted frequency is listed in the final column and is

derived from the percentage obtained from adding successive

adjusted frequency percentages in the previous columns.

The demographic information will include the item from

the survey as found in Appendix A and the table giving

percentages of actual responses. An explanation of each

table will also be included.

Demographic Item 1

1.   Administering grades: K-6__ 6-8__ 9-12__ .

Table 1 indicates that the ratio of elementary (74%)

to secondary (26%) principals in the original sample is not

maintained in the group of responding principals. Ele-

mentary principals represent 56% of the responding

principals. Secondary principals comprise 44% of the

group.

Demographic Item 2

2.   Years of experience as an administrator.

Table 2 indicates that 43 of the respondents have less

than 10 years administrative experience. The largest

number of principals (56) have between 6 and 15 years of

administrative experience. Principals with over 20 years

experience as administrators totaled 19 of the respondents.

Demographic Item 3

3.   Years of teaching experience.

Table 1

Administration Level

Category	Number	Relative frequency (%)	Adjusted frequency (%)	Cumulative adjusted frequency (%)
K-6	56	54.4	56	56
7-9	23	22.3	23	79
9-12	21	20.3	21	100
	100			
No response	3			

Table 2

Years of Experience as an Administrator

Category	Number	Relative frequency (%)	Adjusted frequency (%)	Cumulative adjusted frequency (%)
0-5 years	12	11.7	11.7	11.7
6-10	31	30.1	30.1	41.8
11-15	25	24.2	24.2	66.0
16-20	16	15.5	15.5	81.5
21-25	11	10.7	10.7	92.2
26-32	8	7.8	7.8	100.0
	103			
No response	0			

Table 3 shows that of the 102 respondents, 22 had less than 5 years of teaching experience. The majority (71) have between 6 and 15 years of teaching experience. Fewer than 10 of the respondents had more than 15 years experience as teachers.

Demographic Item 4

4.   Grade levels (taught).

Table 4 shows 61 of the principals had experience teaching at the elementary level and 40 principals have secondary experience. It should be noted that Table 1 indicates that approximately the same number of respondents are elementary principals (56). The remaining respondents from Table 1 are secondary principals (44).

Demographic Item 5

5.   Sex: Female__ Male__ .

Table 5 indicates that 77 of the respondents were male principals and 25 were female principals. The original sample of 180 principals was composed of 144 males and 66 females.

Demographic Item 6

6.   In the following curriculum areas please rate your expertise as derived from your professional training.

   A = Above Average (recent college course(s) work and/ or inservice)

   B = Average (inservice and 1 or 2 courses)

   C = Very Little (some inservice, perhaps 1 course)

   D = None

Table 3

Teaching Experience

Category	Number	Relative frequency (%)	Adjusted frequency (%)	Cumulative adjusted frequency (%)
0-5 years	22	21.4	21.5	21.5
6-10	43	41.8	42.2	63.7
11-15	28	27.2	27.5	91.2
16-20	4	3.9	3.9	95.1
21-33	5	4.9	4.9	100.0
	102			
No response	1			

Table 4

Grade Level Taught

Category	Number	Relative frequency (%)	Adjusted frequency (%)	Cumulative adjusted frequency (%)
Elementary	61	59.2	60.4	60.4
Secondary	40	39.6	39.6	100.0
	101			
No response	2			

Table 5

Sex of Respondents

Category	Number	Relative frequency (%)	Adjusted frequency (%)	Cumulative adjusted frequency (%)
Male	77	74.8	75.5	75.5
Female	25	24.3	24.5	100.0
	102			
No response	1			

A summary of Table 6 suggests that most principals

(75% or better) rate themselves as having average or above

average expertise in:

Reading   89.8%

Written Composition   83.7

Math   79.4

Social Studies   76.7

Physical Education   75.3

There are three curriculum areas in which approxi-

mately 50% of the respondents feel that they lack

expertise. They rate themselves as having little or no

expertise in:

Fine Arts   56.7%

English/Literature   45.0

Science   39.2

It should be noted that there is a major difference in

the responding principals' perceptions of their expertise

in the related fields of written composition and English/

literature. Of the respondents, 55.6% rate themselves as

having average or above expertise in English and litera-

ture. In written composition 83.7% rate themselves as

having average or above expertise.

Demographic Item 7

7.   Have you attended a writing inservice within the
     last 5 years? Yes/No (circle)
     If yes, please indicate by placing a check next to
     the topics listed.

Table 6

Curriculum Expertise

Category	Number	Relative frequency (%)	Adjusted frequency (%)	Cumulative adjusted frequency (%)
		Reading		
A Above Average	50	48.5	51.0	51.0
B Average	38	36.8	38.8	89.8
C Little	8	7.7	8.2	98.0
D None	2	1.9	2.0	100.0
	98			
No response	5			
		Written Composition		
A Above Average	39	37.8	39.4	39.3
B Average	44	42.7	44.4	83.7
C Little	14	13.5	14.4	98.2
D None	2	1.9	2.0	100.0
	99			
No response	4	3.8		
		Science		
A Above Average	20	19.4	20.6	20.6
B Average	39	37.8	40.2	60.8
C Little	28	27.2	28.9	89.7
D None	10	9.7	10.3	100.0
	97			
No response	6	5.8		

Table 6--continued

Category	Number	Relative frequency (%)	Adjusted frequency (%)	Cumulative adjusted frequency (%)
Math				
A Above Average	33	32.0	34.0	34.0
B Average	44	42.7	45.4	79.4
C Little	19	18.4	19.6	99.0
D None	1	.9	1.0	100.0
	97			
No response	6	5.8		
Social Studies				
A Above Average	34	33.0	34.3	34.3
B Average	42	40.7	42.4	76.7
C Little	20	19.4	20.2	96.9
D None	3	2.9	3.0	100.0
	99			
No response	4	3.8		
Fine Arts				
A Above Average	11	10.6	11.3	11.3
B Average	31	30.1	32.0	43.3
C Little	42	40.8	43.3	86.6
D None	13	12.6	13.4	100.0
	97			
No response	6			

Table 6--continued

Category	Number	Relative frequency (%)	Adjusted frequency (%)	Cumulative adjusted frequency (%)
		Physical Education		
A Above Average	32	31.6	33.0	33.0
B Average	41	39.8	42.3	75.3
C Little	15	14.5	15.5	90.8
D None	9	8.7	9.3	100.0
	97			
No response	6			
		English/Literature		
A Above Average	27	26.2	27.8	27.8
B Average	27	26.2	27.8	55.6
C Little	27	26.2	27.8	83.4
D None	16	15.5	16.5	100.0
	97			
No response	6	5.8		

Analysis of Table 7 indicates that within the last 5 years 73 of the 103 respondents had attended an inservice in written composition. Table 7 also lists each written composition inservice topic separately. The percentages in Table 7 indicating attendance at these specific topic presentations are based on responses from the total group of respondents (N = 103). The rationale for reporting the data in this manner is that recommendations for training and inservice will be made based on a composite of the needs of all principals. Therefore, it is important to note that only one topic, writing as a process, has been attended by a majority of respondents (66%). The range among the remaining topics is from a low of 17.5% (journal writing) to a high of 47.5% (conferencing). Only two respondents listed additional inservice topics. Both of these respondents listed clustering as the topic in which they had received inservice.

The figures in Table 8 reflect the total number of times inservice topics were cited by respondents in each group. The percentages are derived from the total number of responses.

Groups A and B, whose members have had contact with the San Diego Area Writing Project, account for a total of 78.8% of the inservice topics checked by the respondents. Only 21.5% of the topics were checked by the general population of principals.

Table 7

Inservice: Attendance and Topics

Category	Number	Relative frequency (%)	Adjusted frequency (%)	Cumulative adjusted frequency (%)
Attendance				
Yes	73	70.9	70.9	70.9
No	30	29.1	29.1	100.0
	103			
No response	0			
Holistic Scoring				
Yes	19	18.4	18.4	18.4
No	84	81.6	81.6	100.0
	103			
No response	0			
Conferencing				
Yes	49	47.6	47.6	47.6
No	54	52.4	52.4	100.0
	103			
No response	0			
Writing Across the Curriculum				
Yes	32	31.1	31.1	31.1
No	71	68.9	68.9	100.0
	103			
No response	0			

Table 7--<u>continued</u>

Category	Number	Relative frequency (%)	Adjusted frequency (%)	Cumulative adjusted frequency (%)
		Journal Writing		
Yes	18	17.5	17.5	17.5
No	85	82.5	82.5	100.0
	103			
No response	0			
		Sentence Combining		
Yes	32	31.1	31.1	31.1
No	71	68.9	68.9	100.0
	103			
No response	0			
		Peer Evaluation of Essays		
Yes	48	46.6	46.6	46.6
No	55	53.4	53.4	100.0
	103			
No response	0			
		Writing as a Process		
Yes	68	66.0	66.0	66.0
No	35	34.0	34.0	100.0
	103			
No response	0			

Table 8

Total Group Response to Inservice Topics

Category	Cumulative response number	Relative frequency (%)	Adjusted frequency (%)	Cumulative adjusted frequency (%)
Group A	110	44.8	44.8	44.8
Group B	83	33.7	33.7	78.5
Group C	53	21.5	21.5	100.0
	246			
No response	0			

Note. Group A = principals with staff members trained as Teaching Fellows by the SDAWP; Group B = principals with staff members trained by SDAWP district level inservice programs; Group C = principals from the general population.

Survey Item Analysis

One purpose of this study was to determine adminis-
trative leadership attitudes about written composition
instruction which demonstrate commitment to program
improvement. Currently several forces in education such as
declining enrollment, the back to basics movement, studies
regarding time on task and the increased emphasis on math
and science have combined to influence curriculum priori-
ties. Principals as instructional leaders are frequently
in the position of having the effectiveness of their school
programs evaluated by standardized tests which test writing
only in an indirect way. Resources are scarce and must be
apportioned to all areas of the curriculum. The plethora
of demands on principals for time, energy and school
resources tends to diffuse efforts to implement any major
curriculum reforms. Written composition is a curriculum
area in which improvement would require the allocation of a
major portion of the school's resources. Principals must
have the vision and commitment to realize that efforts to
improve writing have the potential to impact positively on
all curriculum areas. Students who write well have better
organizational skills, are better able to articulate the
learning in each subject area and demonstrate higher level
thinking skills.

This survey and other research projects indicate that
principals do have a higher awareness level than they once
did about the need for improved student writing skills

(Neill, 1982). However, commitment under the conditions outlined above means more than awareness of the problem is needed. It means specific knowledge, commitment to major changes, and significant reallocation of resources. It is the opinion of this researcher that only those principals with strongly held beliefs about the teaching of writing are representative of principals who will be effective, purposeful change agents in the reform of school writing programs. It is these principals that this study seeks to identify. Therefore, the analysis of the data in this section will focus on strongly agree/disagree responses recorded in Table 9 (page 92). The reader is reminded that the survey items were constructed so that the response pattern most supportive of current research findings was alternated randomly between strongly agree and strongly disagree in order to prevent a response set on the part of the participant.

The results will be presented for the percentage of strongly held responses for each of the groups as well as for the total group of respondents. Group A represents principals who have staff members trained by the San Diego Area Writing Project (SDAWP). Group B principals have staff members who have received training in the SDAWP district level inservice program. Principals from Group C are representative of general population principals.

The following is a summary analysis of the responses to the items on the questionnaire. Questions with common

themes have been grouped to facilitate analysis of response. These questions are clustered to include the principals' attitudes about: (a) writing as a process, (b) involving parents in the writing program, (c) involving students in the writing program, (d) administrative leadership, and (e) instructional process.

Questions inquiring as to the attitudes of principals regarding writing as a process include: Questions 9, 10, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 33, 34, 35 and 40. Response to these questions ranged from 0% strongly agree/disagree to a high percentage of 55.3. The average percentage of strongly agree/disagree responses to these questions was 29.3. Approximately 25% of the respondents indicated that they were undecided on five of these questions. These results suggest that principals as a group are not well informed about the writing process and its components.

Questions 19, 21, 22, 23 and 24 relate to the principal's attitude regarding parents in the writing program. The range is 19.4% to 56.9% of those responding to strongly agree/disagree. The average of the percentages is 25.5 or less than one third of the principals, indicating a strong, positive attitude toward involving parents in the writing program. Two of the five questions had a significant number of principals select the undecided category.

Four questions (20, 31, 32 and 37) relate to the importance of involving students in the writing program

through display of their work, using abilities acquired in other subject areas and knowledge of school-wide standards for writing. The results indicate that principals feel students need to know the importance of writing skills (question 31--response, 74% agree). Responses to questions 20, 32 and 37 indicate that only one third of the principals have strongly agree/disagree attitudes about student involvement.

Another major category which the survey addresses is administrative leadership. Staff development, program evaluation, goal setting and instructional practices are components of administrative leadership.

Staff development or inservice activities for teachers is the subject of questions 2, 3, 7, 26 and 27. All principals generally expressed a positive attitude toward the need for these activities (range, 40.8% to 67.0%). However, when asked about their attitudes toward teacher release time for inservice (question 27), only 23.3% expressed a strong agreement with 25% indicating that they are undecided.

Question 6 indicated that principals strongly agree that program evaluation is an important part of a writing program (63.0%). However, question 18 solicits principals' attitudes toward holistic scoring as a method of evaluation. Many were undecided about its value (33.7%). Only 21.8% strongly agreed that it was a valid method of evaluation.

A major function of a principal is the articulation of instructional goals to his/her staff. Questions 1, 4, 25, and 28 relate to the principals' attitudes toward conveying the importance they place on writing to the teaching staff. All groups of principals express strong positive attitudes toward the importance of goal setting (range, 50.0% to 94.4%.

Principals' attitudes toward the importance of establishing and maintaining an effective instructional process based on research approved methods are critical to a school's writing program. Questions 5, 8, 28, 29, 30, 36, 37, 38, and 39 survey the principals' attitudes on this topic. If students spend more time writing, they will be better writers, is the attitude expressed by 92% of the principals (question 5). However, the other questions which relate to writing instruction and practices supported by research findings indicate a less strong and less informed attitude. Two of the questions had a substantial number of principals marking undecided (questions 38 and 39). On this cluster of questions the percentage range of principals expressing strongly agree/disagree attitudes ranged from 10.9% to 44.7%. The average percentage of strongly agree/disagree responses was 31.8%.

Research indicates that, alone, increased time spent writing will not improve student skills. Therefore, it becomes a critical issue when only one-third of the principals express strong opinions about the instructional

process. Experience with the writing process and specific instruction in writing skills are needed to improve student writing.

A chi-square analysis was completed for each question. Questions 12, 16, 22, 32, and 35 all showed significant differences among the distributions if the level of significance was set at the 0.10 level. However, questions 16 and 22 had a number of empty cells. When these cells were collapsed, the significant differences between the groups disappeared. Questions 32 and 35 continued to have significant differences below the 0.10 level (for question 32, chi-square = 8.24, $\underline{df}$ = 4, $\underline{p}$ = 0.08; for question 35, chi-square = 5.35, $\underline{df}$ = 2, $\underline{p}$ = 0.069).

Only question 12 continued to show significant results once the empty cells were removed. These results are presented in Table 10. As can be seen here, there was a significant difference in the distributions of the three groups (chi-square = 11.50, $\underline{df}$ = 4, $\underline{p}$ = 0.02). In terms of the response, the principals with trained SDAWP teachers strongly supported the idea that having students read, respond to and edit other students' work helps students learn to write. The other two groups responded more in the categories of agree or undecided with this particular question than they did with the strongly agree. On this one question, then, there was a striking difference among the three types of principals in their responses.

Table 9

Survey: Principals' Attitudes Regarding Written Composition

Question 1: Writing should be considered an integral part of the
school's total curriculum.

Group	Percent Strongly Agree
A	94.4
B	91.4
C	96.9
Total response	94.2

Question 2: Administrators would not benefit from written composition
inservice.

Group	Percent Strongly Disagree
A	55.6
B	68.6
C	58.1
Total response	60.8

Question 3: Time and money spent on staff development projects related
to the teaching of writing could be better spent in other curriculum
areas.

Group	Percent Strongly Disagree
A	50.0
B	37.1
C	34.4
Total response	40.8

Question 4: Principals should encourage the display and sharing of
student compositions.

Group	Percent Strongly Agree
A	55.5
B	65.7
C	53.1
Total response	58.3

Question 5: The best way to insure that students will be good writers
is to increase the time spent writing.

Group	Percent Strongly Disagree
A	8.3
B	5.7
C	9.4
Total response	7.8

Note. Group A = principals with staff members trained as Teaching
Fellows by the SDAWP; Group B = principals with staff members trained by
SDAWP district level inservice programs; Group C = principals from the
general population.

Table 9--continued

Question 6: Systematic assessment of student writing to evaluate individual progress and program effectiveness is essential in a writing program.

Group	Percent Strongly Agree
A	63.9
B	62.9
C	62.5
Total response	63.1

Question 7: Having key staff members trained to provide leadership in writing instruction would benefit the total school's writing program.

Group	Percent Strongly Agree
A	72.2
B	71.4
C	56.2
Total response	67.0

Question 8: The support of district level staff would not improve written composition programs in the schools.

Group	Percent Strongly Disagree
A	38.9
B	40.0
C	56.3
Total response	44.7

Question 9: The teaching of formal grammar is positively associated with improvement in student writing.

Group	Percent Strongly Disagree[a]
A	13.9
B	11.8
C	15.6
Total response	13.7

Note. Group A = principals with staff members trained as Teaching Fellows by the SDAWP; Group B = principals with staff members trained by SDAWP district level inservice programs; Group C = principals from the general population.

[a]It should be noted that 26.5% of the respondents marked the "undecided" category.

Table 9--continued

Question 10: Sentence combining is a practice that has proven beneficial to student writers.

Group	Percent Strongly Agree[a]
A	17.6
B	11.8
C	6.9
Total response	12.4

Question 11: A student that is widely read is more apt to be a better writer.

Group	Percent Strongly Agree
A	36.1
B	42.9
C	28.1
Total response	35.9

Question 12: Having students read, respond to and edit other students' work helps students learn to write.

Group	Percent Strongly Agree
A	61.1
B	42.9
C	21.9
Total response	42.7

Question 13: Marking all mistakes on a paper does help a student to improve his/her writing.

Group	Percent Strongly Disagree[b]
A	0.0
B	0.0
C	0.0
Total response	0.0

Note. Group A = principals with staff members trained as Teaching Fellows by the SDAWP; Group B = principals with staff members trained by SDAWP district level inservice programs; Group C = principals from the general population.

[a]It should be noted that 33.0% of the respondents marked the "undecided" category.

[b]It should be noted that 22.8% of the respondents marked the "undecided" category and 35.6% marked the "strongly agree" category.

Table 9--continued

Question 14: When rating a student's paper, negative comments by the teacher improve future compositions.

Group	Percent Strongly Disagree[a]
A	20.0
B	26.4
C	25.0
Total response	23.8

Question 15: Having student revise their compositions does little to improve their writing skills.

Group	Percent Strongly Disagree
A	41.6
B	28.6
C	34.4
Total response	35.0

Question 16: Pre-writing activities such as role-playing, discussion, clustering and brainstorming should be dropped in favor of more writing time.

Group	Percent Strongly Disagree
A	44.9
B	34.3
C	15.6
Total response	32.0

Question 17: Writing is a process involving many different stages and a wide variety of skills.

Group	Percent Strongly Agree
A	55.6
B	54.3
C	56.3
Total response	55.3

Note. Group A = principals with staff members trained as Teaching Fellows by the SDAWP; Group B = principals with staff members trained by SDAWP district level inservice programs; Group C = principals from the general population.

[a]It should be noted that 21.8% of the respondents marked the "undecided" category.

Table 9--continued

Question 18: Holistic scoring is a reliable and valid method of judging students' writing performance.

Group	Percent Strongly Agree[a]
A	25.7
B	17.6
C	21.9
Total response	21.8

Question 19: Parents are less supportive of the writing program when they know that teachers and administrators consider writing an important part of the school's curriculum.

Group	Percent Strongly Disagree
A	58.3
B	51.4
C	61.3
Total response	56.9

Question 20: Student publications and displays of student writing contribute little to student achievement in written composition.

Group	Percent Strongly Disagree
A	48.6
B	51.4
C	46.9
Total response	49.0

Question 21: Parent volunteers are ineffective as editors or in giving feedback to students about their writing.

Group	Percent Strongly Disagree[b]
A	27.8
B	14.3
C	14.3
Total response	19.4

Note. Group A = principals with staff members trained as Teaching Fellows by the SDAWP; Group B = principals with staff members trained by SDAWP district level inservice programs; Group C = principals from the general population.

[a]It should be noted that 33.7% of the respondents marked the "undecided" category.

[b]It should be noted that 26.2% of the respondents marked the "undecided" category.

Table 9--continued

Question 22: Parents should encourage students to write at home with activities such as maintaining a journal.

Group	Percent Strongly Agree
A	30.6
B	25.7
C	37.5
Total response	31.1

Question 23: Parents should receive training in ways they can support the school's writing program.

Group	Percent Strongly Agree[a]
A	25.0
B	20.0
C	28.1
Total response	28.3

Question 24: It is unnecessary for parents to know how writing is evaluated or how to assess their students' writing.

Group	Percent Strongly Disagree
A	38.9
B	34.3
C	46.9
Total response	39.8

Question 25: Principals need to communicate to teachers that writing is an important part of the curriculum.

Group	Percent Strongly Agree
A	83.3
B	68.6
C	84.4
Total response	78.6

Question 26: Teachers need the opportunity to participate in inservice activities directly related to the teaching of writing.

Group	Percent Strongly Agree
A	77.8
B	62.9
C	59.4
Total response	67.0

Note. Group A = principals with staff members trained as Teaching Fellows by the SDAWP; Group B = principals with staff members trained by SDAWP district level inservice programs; Group C = principals from the general population.

[a]It should be noted that 11.7% of the respondents marked the "undecided" category.

Table 9--continued

Question 27: Releasing teachers from the classroom to participate in professional organizations or conferences directly related to the teaching of writing is not the best use of their time.

Group	Percent Strongly Disagree[a]
A	25.0
B	20.0
C	21.9
Total response	22.3

Question 28: Teachers should be involved in the development of school-wide standards regarding the quality of student writing.

Group	Percent Strongly Agree
A	50.0
B	45.7
C	46.9
Total response	47.6

Question 29: Teachers can serve as an important role model for students by writing at the same time students are engaged in a writing activity.

Group	Percent Strongly Agree
A	38.9
B	28.6
C	40.6
Total response	35.9

Question 30: It is unnecessary for teachers to have a school or district published writing curriculum guide.

Group	Percent Strongly Disagree
A	28.6
B	34.3
C	31.3
Total response	31.4

Note. Group A = principals with staff members trained as Teaching Fellows by the SDAWP; Group B = principals with staff members trained by SDAWP district level inservice programs; Group C = principals from the general population.

[a] It should be noted that 25% of the respondents marked "undecided" or "agree."

Table 9--continued

Question 31: Students in my school should be aware that writing is an important skill in all subject areas.

Group	Percent Strongly Agree
A	82.9
B	77.1
C	62.5
Total response	74.5

Question 32: There is no need for students to understand the school-wide standards for quality in student writing in order to be better writers.

Group	Percent Strongly Disagree[a]
A	28.6
B	22.9
C	46.9
Total response	32.4

Question 33: Involving students in peer evaluation and editing of student compositions does not help them become good writers.

Group	Percent Strongly Disagree[b]
A	34.3
B	22.9
C	25.0
Total response	27.5

Question 34: Writing to a wide variety of audiences does not help students become better writers.

Group	Percent Strongly Disagree
A	31.4
B	22.9
C	31.3
Total response	28.4

Note. Group A = principals with staff members trained as Teaching Fellows by the SDAWP; Group B = principals with staff members trained by SDAWP district level inservice programs; Group C = principals from the general population.

[a]It should be noted that 10.8% of the respondents marked the "undecided" category.

[b]It should be noted that 11.8% of the respondents marked the "undecided" category.

Table 9--continued

Question 35: Students that have the opportunity to participate in all phases of the writing process are more likely to be competent writers.

Group	Percent Strongly Agree
A	54.3
B	28.6
C	50.0
Total response	44.1

Question 36: Eliminating writing assignments in other subject areas assists students to clarify and articulate their learning.

Group	Percent Strongly Disagree
A	62.9
B	48.6
C	50.0
Total response	53.9

Question 37: Students in this school should be encouraged to take notes in class to record important concepts.

Group	Percent Strongly Agree[a]
A	31.4
B	25.7
C	28.1
Total response	28.4

Question 38: Opportunities to write longer reports based on their research of a particular topic help students to become better writers.

Group	Percent Strongly Agree[b]
A	14.3
B	5.7
C	12.9
Total response	10.9

Note. Group A = principals with staff members trained as Teaching Fellows by the SDAWP; Group B = principals with staff members trained by SDAWP district level inservice programs; Group C = principals from the general population.

[a] It should be noted that 10.8% of the respondents marked the "undecided" category.

[b] It should be noted that 29.7% of the respondents marked the "undecided" category.

Table 9--continued

Question 39: Writing is a way for students to learn inquiry skills.

Group	Percent Strongly Agree[a]
A	20.0
B	8.6
C	25.0
Total response	17.6

Question 40: Students should be given the opportunity to write in a variety of discourse types.

Group	Percent Strongly Agree
A	41.2
B	26.5
C	43.8
Total response	37.0

Note. Group A = principals with staff members trained as Teaching Fellows by the SDAWP; Group B = principals with staff members trained by SDAWP district level inservice programs; Group C = principals from the general population.

Note. Appendix C is a copy of the questionnaire items. This appendix includes percentages of total group response to each item using the full five-point scale.

[a] It should be noted that 13.7% of the respondents marked the "undecided" category.

Analyses of the Hypotheses

Hypothesis 1

> There is no significant difference between the mean
> scores of principals selected from the general
> population, principals who have staff members trained
> in the San Diego Area Writing Project's Summer Insti-
> tute, and principals who have staff members trained
> by the project's district level inservice programs.

In terms of their participation, 36 principals, or 35%

of the sample population, came from a group who had a staff

member trained by the Writing Project. Thirty-five of the

principals, or 34%, had a teacher who had experienced

training in written composition at the district level, and

32, or 31%, of the participants were from the general popu-

lation of principals in San Diego County.

The data derived from the survey used in this study

were analyzed with a one-way analysis of variance. The

results of this analysis, which appear in Table 11, indi-

cate that there was no significant difference between the

three groups of principals (F (2,100) = .44, p = 0.645).

Therefore, Hypothesis 1 is not rejected. That is,

there are no significant differences among the three groups

on their total score.

Hypothesis 2

> There is no significant difference between the total
> mean scores of principals based on their attendance
> at written composition inservice programs.

Using the results from the survey, this hypothesis

evaluated whether there were any differences between the

two groups of principals, those who had attended an

Table 10

Crosstabulation of the Three Principal Groups by Their Responses
to Question 12: Having Students Read, Respond to and Edit Other
Students' Work Helps Students Learn to Write

| | Principals | | |
Response category	Group A	Group B	Group C
Strongly Agree	22 (61%)	15 (43%)	7 (22%)
Agree	13 (36%)	16 (46%)	21 (65%)
Undecided	1 (3%)	4 (11%)	4 (13%)

Note. Group A = principals with staff members trained as Teaching
Fellows by the SDAWP; Group B = principals with staff members trained by
SDAWP district level inservice programs; Group C = principals from the
general population.

Table 11

Analysis of Variance Comparing the Three Groups of Principals on
Their Total Score on the Written Composition Survey

Source	df	Sum of squares	Mean squares	F ratio	F probability
Between Response Categories	2	118.6239	59.3128	.4418*	.6447
Within Response Categories	100	13,450.7353	134.5874		
Total	102	13,569.3592			

*p < .05.

inservice in written composition, and those who had not.
The mean score of principals who had not attended a writing
inservice was 41.43. This compares to a mean score of
45.23 for principals attending an inservice. The results
of a t test indicated that the two groups were basically
equal in terms of their overall attitude (t = 1.53, df =
101, p = 0.129).

Therefore, in spite of the differences in the mean
scores, the second null hypothesis is not rejected.

Hypothesis 3

There is no significant difference between the total
mean scores of principals based on the principal's
professional training in written composition.

To test this hypothesis, the principals selected from
four response categories indicating their expertise in
written composition. Table 12 shows the number of
principals from each group and how they rated their
expertise in written composition.

The analysis for this hypothesis appears in Table 13.
As can be seen from this analysis, there was no significant
difference between the principals rating themselves as
having above average, average, very little or no expertise
in written composition (F (3,95) = 0.97, p = 0.41). This
means that the principals scored equally in terms of their
attitudes on the survey regardless of how they rated their
expertise in written composition. Therefore, Hypothesis 3
is not rejected.

Table 12

Expertise in Written Composition

	Principal groups						All principals	
	A		B		C			
Response category	No. of responses	% of total	No. of responses	% of total	No. of responses	% of total	No. of responses	% of total
Above Average	18	50.0	11	31.4	8	25.0	37	35.9
Average	9	25.0	15	42.9	14	48.8	38	36.9
Very Little	6	16.7	7	20.0	7	21.9	20	19.4
None	0	0.0	2	5.7	2	6.3	4	3.9
No Response	3	8.3	0	0.0	1	3.1	4	3.9

Note. Group A = principals with staff members trained as Teaching Fellows by the SDAWP; Group B = principals with staff members trained by SDAWP district level inservice programs; Group C = principals from the general population.

Hypothesis 4

> There is no significant difference between the total
> mean scores of principals grouped according to
> elementary or secondary supervision levels.

To test the difference between the two groups, a t

test was used. This test indicated that there was no sig-

nificant difference between the groups (t = 0.81, df = 98,

p = 0.42). Once again, the two groups scored very close to

each other in their total survey scores (Table 14) (ele-

mentary principals' mean = 44.93, secondary principals'

mean = 43.03). As a result, the fourth null hypothesis is

not rejected.

Hypothesis 5

> There is no significant difference between the total
> mean scores of principals based on the principal's
> years of experience as an administrator.

Principals were categorized across a range of 5 years

of administrative experience. Category 1 principals had 0

to 5 years experience. Principals with 6 to 10 years

experience represent Category 2. Categories 3 and 4 have

11 to 15 and 16 to 20 years experience. Those principals

with over 20 years experience are represented in Cate-

gory 5. An analysis of variance was used to test this

hypothesis. The results of this analysis appear in

Table 15. As reflected in this table, there was no sig-

nificant difference among the five categories tested (F

(4,98) = 2.12, p = 0.084).

Though the results indicated no significant differ-

ences among the five categories tested, a Tukey least

Table 13

Analysis of Variance Comparing Professional Training of the
Principals on the Total Score on the Written Composition Survey

Source	df	Sum of squares	Mean squares	F ratio	F probability
Between Response Categories	3	390.3741	130.1247	.9728*	.4090
Within Response Categories	95	12,707.6461	133.7647		
Total	98	13,098.8282			

*p < .05.

Table 14

Attitudes of Elementary and Secondary Principals in Response
to Questionnaire

	No. of principals responding	Mean score
Elementary	56	44.93
Secondary	44	43.03

significant difference procedure was conducted to discover any difference that might occur between them. This analysis appears in Table 16. As can be seen in this table, there was a significant difference between Category 1 and Categories 4 and 5. This indicates that those principals with the least administrative experience scored significantly higher than did the principals with 16 or more years of administrative experience.

In summary, though the analysis of variance indicated that there was no significant difference among the groups, there appeared to be some specific differences between the least experienced group and the most experienced ones. As a result, the fifth null hypothesis is rejected.

Hypothesis 6

There is no significant difference between the total mean scores of principals based on the principal's years of teaching experience.

To test this hypothesis, the principals were divided into four categories, using a method similar to that used for Hypothesis 5. In general, principals were grouped by 0 through 5 years, 6 through 10, etc., until all the principals were grouped appropriately.

The results for this analysis appear in Table 17. As can be seen, there was no significant difference between the principals based on their years of teaching experience in terms of their score on this survey (F (3,98) = 0.21,

Table 15

Analysis of Variance Comparing the Years of Administration
Experience on the Total Score on the Written Composition Survey

Source	df	Sum of squares	Mean squares	F ratio	F probability
Between Response Categories	4	1,081.3275	270.3319	2.1214*	.0838
Within Response Categories	98	12,488.0317	127.4289		
Total	102	13,569.3592			

*$p < .05$.

Table 16

Tukey's Least Significant Difference A Posteriori Test for the
Differences in Administrative Experience

Categories	Administrative experience	N	Mean score	Categories	1	2	3	4	5
1	0-5 years	12	51.4					*	*
2	6-10 years	31	44.8						
3	11-15 years	25	44.6						
4	16-20 years	16	44.2						
5	21 plus years	11	40.1						

*The asterisk (*) denotes pairs of categories significantly different
at the .05 level.

p = 0.89). Since there were no significant differences among the groups, the sixth null hypothesis is not rejected.

Hypothesis 7

There is no significant difference between the total mean scores of principals grouped according to sex.

Table 18 presents the information on the participation across the three groups, crosstabulated by sex. Seventy-seven of the participants were male, while only 25 were female. However, there was no significant difference in terms of the ratio of male to female across the three groups (chi square = 2.45, df = 2, p = 0.29).

An analysis was completed using a t test and indicates that there was a significant difference between the two groups (t = 2.52, df = 100, p = 0.0130). The data indicate that the male group scored much lower (mean = 42.48) than did the female group (mean = 49.04). As a result, the seventh null hypothesis is not accepted. There is a significant difference between the mean scores of male and female principals.

Table 17

Analysis of Variance Comparing the Years of Teaching
on the Total Score on the Written Composition Survey

Source	df	Sum of squares	Mean squares	F ratio	F probability
Between Response Categories	3	84.6410	28.2138	.2066*	.8916
Within Response Categories	98	13,386.2708	136.5946		
Total	101	13,470.9118			

*p < .05.

Table 18

Crosstabulation of the Three Principal Groups by Sex

Sex	Principal groups A	B	C	Total	Mean score
Male	28	28	21	77	42.48
Female	7	7	11	25	49.04

Note. Group A = principals with staff members trained as Teaching Fellows by the SDAWP; Group B = principals with staff members trained by SDAWP district level inservice programs; Group C = principals from the general population.

Summary

This chapter has reviewed the various analyses that were completed on the data collected for this study. The outcomes on the analysis of the data from five of the seven hypotheses indicate little or no difference between the variables tested. Female participants (Hypothesis 7) and principals with 0 to 5 years administrative experience (Hypothesis 5) had significantly higher mean scores than did the comparison groups, thus indicating a more positive, informed attitude toward writing instruction.

The lack of differences between the variables tested in the remaining hypothesis may be accounted for by the fact that overall the scores of principals were high. General knowledge of the crisis in writing has promoted an awareness of the need to improve student performance in written composition. However, it should be noted that the average percentage of principals responding strongly agree/disagree is low. The range of strongly held attitudes expressed toward each question is from a low of 0% to a high of 94.2%. By averaging the percent of strongly agree/disagree responses to all of the questions it becomes evident that only one-third of the principals responded consistently with strongly held attitudes. It appears that a high awareness level about the crisis in writing does not translate into strongly held attitudes. In fact, it is possible to question whether principals have more than general knowledge about writing research. In 13 of the 40

questions a number of principals indicated that they were
undecided, thereby in effect expressing insufficient
knowledge on which to base an attitudinal response. The
responses to remaining questions indicated at least a
superficial familiarity with the topics. This familiarity
with the research findings regarding effective practices in
teaching written composition and effective instructional
leadership practices does not appear to be a major deter-
miner of attitude. Items on the questionnaire are
reflective of research findings which provide specific
directives regarding program development and written compo-
sition instruction. Implementation of these directives
will depend on the strong commitment of principals as
instructional leaders. Therefore, it is the belief of this
researcher that less than strongly held attitudes will not
result in changes in the practices of principals as they
seek to provide the instructional leadership necessary to
improve student writing.

Responses to the questionnaire have provided much
descriptive information about principals. Information is
now available regarding how principals self-rate their
expertise in written composition and other curriculum
areas. It is possible to determine the inservice needs of
principals based on the reported attendance at inservice
sessions. A comparison of responses to specific questions
such as question 18 regarding holistic scoring and
attendance at an inservice program in which holistic

scoring was the topic can help persons planning principal training and inservice programs to identify specific topics where major deficiencies in skills exist.

The questionnaire was developed by the researcher. Items were constructed to reflect specific instructional leadership practices and research findings related to written composition. Further refinement of the instrument may be needed to detect more subtle differences between the variables.

The next chapter will provide a summary of this research, discuss the meaning of these results, suggest conclusions and then make recommendations that follow from this study.

CHAPTER V

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS, IMPLICATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Summary

The increased awareness that students continue to demonstrate poor skills in written composition in spite of advances made by research defining the writing process, and increased efforts to retrain writing teachers, suggested that additional solutions to program effectiveness needed to be investigated. Research indicates that principals can and do play an important part in the instructional programs of effective schools. Studies have indicated that direct involvement in the instructional program on the part of the principal can mean increased scores in math and reading for students. However, little is known about principals and their efforts to improve writing instruction. Therefore, it was considered important to conduct a survey of principals' attitudes toward written composition. One purpose of this study was to assess the attitudes of principals regarding the importance of research findings in written composition. The second purpose of this study was to assess attitudes of principals toward instructional leadership practices which the review of the literature suggests

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would be essential to the management of an effective school writing program. Findings from this study will provide a basis for making recommendations for principal training and inservice programs and for overall suggestions of ways that principals can provide instructional leadership in written composition.

Research Design and Instrument

The research design selected for this study was a survey. The questionnaire was developed by this researcher based on a review of the literature and consisted of 40 items. The literature reviewed effective practices in the teaching, evaluation and process of writing. Effective instructional leadership practices of principals was the second focus of the review of the literature. A questionnaire checklist consisting of seven items was utilized to gather demographic and experiential variables of the respondents. A pilot study was conducted in July of 1984. Results of the pilot were used to refine the survey instrument and to determine reliability of the instrument.

Sample

The sample for this study included a total of 180 elementary and secondary principals from San Diego County. The principals represented three different groups. These groups were identified as:

Group A--secondary and elementary principals who have had a staff member trained in the San Diego Area Writing Project (SDAWP) Summer Institute.

Group B--secondary and elementary principals who have staff members trained in SDAWP district level inservice programs.

Group C--secondary and elementary principals selected from the general population of principals in San Diego County.

The sample was stratified within each group to represent the percentage of San Diego County Schools to schools in the San Diego Unified District (67% San Diego County and 33% San Diego Unified). The sample also reflected the ratio between elementary and secondary principals in San Diego County (74% elementary and 26% secondary).

Procedure

The survey was mailed to the 180 subjects in the fall of 1984. A total of 105 principals responded to the survey (58%). There were 103 valid, usable surveys, a return of 57%. Within each group, the sample return was approximately the same percentage as that of the total group. Group A principals had a 58% return (N = 35). Principals in Group B returned 59% of the surveys (N = 36). A return of 53% was received from Group C (N = 32).

Analysis of Data

Analysis of data was accomplished by applying t tests, one-way analysis of variance and chi square. All analyses were computer assisted.

Findings

The attitudes of principals toward written composition appear to be strongly associated with common knowledge about the crisis in student writing. This is evidenced quite clearly in the 94.2% of principals who strongly agree with survey item 1: Writing should be considered an integral part of the school's total curriculum. Question 5: The best way to insure that students will be good writers is to increase the time spent writing, had 83% of all principals responding that they agree or strongly agree.

However, a closer analysis of responses to the questionnaire indicates confusion and lack of knowledge on the part of principals. Each item on the questionnaire reflects specific and concrete findings from research studies conducted by various researchers over many years. Therefore, a response less than strongly agree or strongly disagree may be indicative of lack of knowledge or only a vague familiarity with the facts associated with the question. Responses to the questionnaire indicate that in 28 out of the 40 items, less than half of the principals expressed strong attitudes toward the issues. In 13 of the 40 questions a significant number of principals marked the undecided category (10.8% to 33.7%). Therefore, it may be

concluded that while principals generally have a positive attitude toward writing, an item analysis suggests that they are not always well informed about effective techniques for teaching writing. They may also lack the level of commitment necessary to provide the instructional leadership needed to develop and maintain effective writing programs. A more specific analysis of the responses to the questions will be provided in the recommendations portion of this chapter.

An analysis of the relationship between attitudes and experiential and demographic variables provided additional information regarding principals and writing instruction. These results are summarized below for each hypothesis tested.

Hypothesis 1:

There is no significant difference between the mean scores of principals selected from the general population, principals who have staff members trained in the San Diego Area Writing Project's Summer Institute, and principals who have staff members trained by the project's district level inservice programs.

This hypothesis was tested with a one-way analysis of variance. The results of this analysis indicate that there was no significant difference between the three groups of principals (F (2,100) = .44, p = 0.645). It may be concluded that while project Fellows receive excellent training in the teaching of writing and project inservice participants have the opportunity to upgrade their skills as writing teachers, attitudes of site administrators are

not being impacted by the increase in the skill and knowl-

edge level of their teachers.

Hypothesis 2:

There is no significant difference between the total
mean scores of principals based on their attendance
at written composition inservice programs.

This hypothesis evaluated whether there were any dif-

ferences between the two groups of principals, those who

had attended an inservice in written composition and those

who had not. The overall mean score of principals who had

not attended a writing inservice was 41.43. This compares

to a mean score of 45.23 for principals attending an in-

service. The results of a t test indicated that the two

groups were basically equal in terms of their overall atti-

tude (t = 1.53, df = 101, p = 0.129). Therefore, the

effectiveness of present inservice programs may be ques-

tionable.

It is also important to note that of the 77 principals

indicating that they had attended an inservice in the last

5 years, the average number of inservice topics checked was

only 3.22. As noted, the mean scores are not significantly

different between principals attending and not attending

inservice in written composition. However, this may be

another indicator that principals have a generally positive

attitude about the need to improve student writing, but

lack specific skills and knowledge upon which to base their

improvement plans.

<u>Hypothesis 3</u>:

There is no significant difference between the total
mean scores of principals based on the principal's
professional training in written composition.

A one-way analysis of variance was used to test this

hypothesis. There was no significant difference between

the groups ($\underline{F}$ (3,95) = 0.97, $\underline{p}$ = 0.41). It is important to

note that when the groups are compared based on percentage

of principals indicating that they have above average

expertise in written composition the differences are

noteworthy. Fifty percent of the Group A principals report

that they have above average expertise. Principals in

Group B indicate that 31.4% have above average expertise.

Those principals in Group C report a 25% rate of above

average expertise.

Principals who have staff members associated with the

writing project, either as Teaching Fellows or as partici-

pants in SDAWP inservice programs, consider themselves to

have better training in written composition. This personal

expertise may have influenced these principals to support

staff members in their efforts to improve writing instruc-

tion.

<u>Hypothesis 4</u>:

There is no significant difference between the total
mean scores of principals grouped according to
elementary or secondary supervision levels.

To test the difference between the two groups, a $\underline{t}$

test was used. This test indicated that there was no

significant difference between the groups ($\underline{t}$ = 0.81, $\underline{df}$ =

98, p = 0.42). The two groups scored very close to each

other in their total survey scores (elementary principals'

mean = 44.93, secondary principals' mean = 43.03).

Hypothesis 5:

There is no significant difference between the total
mean scores of principals based on the principal's
years of experience as an administrator.

Principals were grouped across a range of 5 years of

administrative experience. Category 1 principals had 0 to

5 years experience. Principals with 6 to 10 years experi-

ence represent Category 2. Categories 3 and 4 have 11 to

15 and 16 to 20 years experience. Those principals with

over 20 years experience are represented in Category 5. An

analysis of variance was used to test this hypothesis. No

significant difference was found among the five categories

tested (F (4,98) = 2.12, p = 0.084). Though the results

indicated no significant differences among the five groups

tested, a Tukey least significant difference procedure was

conducted to discover any differences that might occur

between categories. This procedure indicated that those

principals with the least administrative experience (0 to

5 years) had significantly higher overall mean scores than

did principals with 16 or more years of administrative

experience.

The major research projects regarding the teaching of

writing and effective instructional leadership practices

have been conducted within the last decade. It is

reasonable to assume that those principals with the least

tenure in their positions have been involved in recent administrative training programs which may have included information on these two topics or perhaps they were trained in composition while they were teachers.

In general the role of the principal is being redefined to reflect emphasis on the principal as the instructional leader rather than as the school site manager. The selection process for new principals also emphasizes the need for principal candidates to demonstrate their abilities as instructional leaders. Less tenured administrators would be more likely to assume this philo-sophical position and therefore hold strong attitudes about the need to improve student writing which has been defined as a national crisis in curriculum.

Hypothesis 6:

There is no significant difference between the total mean scores of principals based on the principal's years of teaching experience.

To test this hypothesis, principals were divided into four groups, each group representing 5 years of teaching experience. A one-way analysis of variance was used to test this hypothesis. There was no significant difference between the principals based on their years of teaching experience (F (3,98) = 0.21, p = 0.89).

Hypothesis 7:

There is no significant difference between the total mean scores of principals grouped according to sex.

This analysis was completed using a t test and indi-cates that there was a significant difference between the

two groups ($\underline{t}$ = 2.52, $\underline{df}$ = 100, $\underline{p}$ = 0.013). The data indicate that the male group scored much lower (mean = 42.43) than did the female group (mean = 49.04). The participants included 77 males and 25 females. There was no significant difference in terms of the male/female breakdown across the three groups (chi square = 2.45, $\underline{df}$ = 2, $\underline{p}$ = 0.29). In terms of their experience as administrators, the males averaged much higher than the females (male mean = 15.3 years, female mean = 8.0 years).

Conclusions

Based on the results of the present study, the following conclusions were made.

Elementary and secondary principals generally hold positive attitudes toward the importance of written composition in the school curriculum. A high percentage rate themselves as having average or above expertise in written composition (83.7%). These attitudes are apparently based on common knowledge of the crisis in writing. However, analysis of items on the questionnaire indicated a lack of specific knowledge regarding writing research and instructional leadership practices.

There was no conclusive evidence that staff members trained by the San Diego Area Writing Project are able effectively to influence the attitudes of site administrators about the importance of research supported instructional practices in the teaching of writing and the need

for principals to provide instructional leadership to improve the schools' writing program. However, principals in Groups A and B account for 78.5% of the reported number of attendees at a writing inservice. Principal Groups A and B generally tended to express stronger, more positive attitudes toward issues surveyed by the questionnaire.

An analysis of inservice attendance shows that 74% of all respondents had attended some type of inservice within the last 5 years. However, of the seven topics listed only one topic, writing as a process, was attended by over half of the principals. The range of percentage attending inservice in the other topics was from a low of 17.5% to a high of 47.6%. In most topics less than one-third of the principals had attended an inservice. Only two principals wrote in additional topics.

Those principals with the most tenure in their position have the least positive attitudes toward written composition. Principals with tenure in the 0 to 5 years range are most likely to be better informed and have strong positive attitudes toward writing. Female principals are also more likely to have positive attitudes about writing. This may be associated with their tenure as administrators since females have a mean of only 8.0 years as experienced principals while males averaged 15.03 years of experience as principals.

Implications

Presently there are generic models of effective writing programs such as that designed by the California State Department of Education in the Handbook for Planning an Effective Writing Program (Nemetz, 1983). However, specific information about effective writing programs is limited. One of the major implications of this study suggests the need to develop a model of the principal as the instructional leader of an effective writing program. The belief that this need is genuine is based on two facts. First, the review of the literature contains much information about research into the teaching and evaluation of writing. It also provides information about principals as effective instructional leaders in several other curriculum areas. However, literature provides little specific information about principals who have assumed the initiative as instructional leaders in writing programs. Secondly, data received from this study suggest that principals recognize a need to improve student writing, but lack the skills to be successful at implementing an effective school-wide writing program. Therefore, a model of peers who are successful instructional leaders in written composition would benefit all principals.

In order to develop an instructional model and to make recommendations based on the data obtained from this study, a comparison group of 10% of the principals with staff

members trained in the San Diego Area Writing Project
Summer Institute were interviewed.

The criteria for selection of these principals
included: (a) score on the questionnaire, (b) recommenda-
tion by SDAWP Coordinator, and (c) comments they included
on the questionnaire about their school's writing program.
This group consisted of seven principals: two elementary,
two junior high/middle school and three senior high school
administrators. One middle school principal and one senior
high principal were female.

The interview schedule (Appendix D) was designed to
determine:

1. Practices in their schools which are related to
research findings regarding effective components of a
writing program.

2. Practices which demonstrate instructional leader-
ship in directing teachers, parents and students toward the
development, implementation and achievement of an effective
writing program.

A composite of these principals' responses combined
with an analysis of the data obtained from this survey will
be used to develop recommendations for principal training
and inservice. These responses will also be used to
develop overall suggestions of ways principals can provide
instructional leadership in written composition.

Principal Interview
Schedule Responses

Principal 1: Principal 1 is an elementary school
principal with 14 years experience. He came to his current
position with 7 years of teaching experience. Professional
training in written composition and reading include recent
college course work and inservice. The expertise derived
from this training is rated as above average. Within the
last 5 years he has attended written composition inservice
on a variety of topics: (a) writing across the curriculum,
(b) writing as a process, (c) poetry writing, (d) holistic
scoring, (e) peer evaluation of essays, (f) paragraphing,
(g) sentence combining, (h) journal writing.

The school has been designated as a language arts
magnet for the past 6 years. Approximately 20-25% of the
students are there by choice.

The following are summary responses to the interview
schedule questions.

Question 1:   List the three most important components of
                an effective writing program. Explain your
                response.

Response: 1. Inservice: This cannot be once a year.
                It is a process which must be continuous.

                2. Instruction: Teachers must strive for
                written fluency in their students. This
                means time to write and it must be an
                integral part of the total curriculum.

                3. Motivation: This is very important.

This principal includes monthly activities for all
classes that are related to writing. Yearly a language
arts fair is held. Contests are held in which students

submit their work to be judged. Teachers throughout the building plan a series of lessons on the same topic. The school cooperates with the California Arts Council in a 10-week series of lessons. Students have the opportunity to interact with a "Poet in Residence." Student work is published in a variety of ways, including selections in the Parent Newsletter.

Question 2:   How effective do you feel your school's writing program is? What suggestions would you make for improvements?

Response: It is effective in that it has removed the negative attitude of students toward writing. The major suggestion for improvement would be more resources. Funding cuts have resulted in the loss of some resouces. These need to be reinstated. These cuts include loss of: 1. A technician to operate our television system. This limits visual literacy components of the program. 2. Creative drama. 3. Reading teachers.

Currently this principal is seeking to work through the Adopt-A-School program and thereby to develop a liaison between the school and a local newspaper. This cooperative effort would be directed toward improving writing instruction.

Question 3:   Describe ways that you transmit to teachers, parents and students the priority you place on written composition in the school's curriculum.

Response: 1. The School Site Council (including parents and teachers) is used as a vehicle to plan cooperatively the school's writing program.

                 2. All curriculum components of the school plan include methods to incorporate writing with other subjects.

3. The principal communicates to the Parents Club suggestions on how to help students with their writing.

Question 4: What are some ways you determine which personnel, materials and staff development resources will be allocated to your school's writing program?

Response: The commitment of the staff and the community is to Language Arts. Therefore resources are allocated to meet this first priority. This sometimes is to the detriment of the other subject areas.

Question 5: What are some ways that you effectively involve parents in your writing program?

Response: Parents are involved in the annual Book-Fair. They also volunteer in the library program.

Question 6: Are there any other comments that you would like to make regarding your school's writing program?

Response: Much of the program's success is due to a strong, effective inservice program. This long-term commitment has resulted in a high level of comfort and success that teachers experience with the writing process.

Principal 2: Principal 2 is an elementary school principal with 7 years experience as an administrator. Prior to his years as an administrator, he had 4 years teaching experience. By his own estimation, he has above average expertise and professional training in the following curriculum areas: English/literature, written composition, science and math. Within the last 5 years he has participated in written composition inservice covering the following topics: (a) peer evaluation of essays, (b) journal writing, (c) writing as a process, (d) writing

across the curriculum, (e) holistic scoring, and (f) clustering.

This school receives school improvement and Chapter I funding. It is rated as a top compensatory education school in the state of California. Its students achieve at the 90th percentile or better on the California Achievement Program (CAP) test.

The following are summary responses to the interview schedule questions.

Question 1: List the three most important components of an effective writing program. Explain your response.

Response: 1. Staff development: This is critical to the development of and the sustainment of a writing program such as ours. We have relied heavily on the SDAWP to help us with our inservice program.

2. Time allocated to writing: Sufficient time is required to develop writing skills in all subject areas.

3. Focus: As a school, we need to focus on writing as a primary skill. It takes everyone working together to make it work.

Question 2: How effective do you feel your school's writing program is? What suggestions would you make for improvements?

Response: I feel that it is moderately effective. We have been working for 5 years. Overall the quality is variable. Some staff members lack a willingness to make such a commitment. Improvement will come when we all reach the same high level of achievement and commitment that most staff members demonstrate.

Question 3: Describe ways that you transmit to teachers, parents and students the priority you place on written composition in the school's curriculum.

Response:	This has been a major goal for this school for approximately 5 years. I see that writing is a topic in staff meetings and that it is included in our parent news-letter. Continuity is important. I have resisted the temptation to set a new goal. I am interested in the long-term effect. To improve our program I try to model the behavior that I expect from staff members in relation to the teaching of writing. Setting expectations is also important. I have included this in the Stull objectives that teachers write. Writing Standards are included in our school plan for each component. These standards are an important part of our grade level articulation plan.
Qustion 4:	What are some ways you determine which personnel, materials and staff development resources will be allocated to your school's writing program?
Response:	We will spend what it takes to meet our objective. The improvement of student writing is a major goal for us. Therefore, what we spend is worth it. Usually deci-sions to expend resources are consensus decisions within our planning groups.
Question 5:	What are some ways that you effectively involve parents in your writing program?
Response:	We have a homework policy. We have provided inservice training for our parents regarding how to be effective as a homework tutor. Anita Archer was the presenter to a standing-room-only audience. Our newsletter to parents discusses our school priorities. The School Site Council was involved in our decision to make writing our major goal. We also have a very effective parent volunteer program. These volunteers help students with their writing.
Question 6:	Are there any other comments that you would like to make regarding your school's writing program?
Response:	Staff development through SDAWP has been a 5-year focus at this school. Improvements in the quality of student work have been significant. Teacher acceptance of the importance of writing has also increased dramatically.

Principal 3: Principal 3 has had 19 years experience as an administrator. She is currently principal of a middle school. Her teaching experience was 5 years at grades 4 through 11. Social studies and written composition are the curriculum areas in which she rates herself as having above average expertise. Inservice training within the last 5 years includes: (a) holistic scoring, (b) journal writing, (c) writing as a process, (d) conferencing, and (e) peer evaluation of essays.

The following are summary responses to the interview schedule questions.

Question 1: List the three most important components of an effective writing program. Explain your response.

Response: 1. Staff development: This is essential to the development of an effective writing program.

2. Leadership: It is necessary to have an administrator or a teacher who is knowlegeable in this area to provide leadership and "spark" the remaining staff members. We currently have on staff two mentor teachers whose expertise is in the area of writing.

3. Time set aside that is ample for writing instruction: Writing is a process. It takes time for instruction and to give students experience in the various steps of the process.

Question 2: How effective do you feel your school's writing program is? What suggestions would you make for improvements?

Response: We are in the second year of our writing plan. The effectiveness of the program is increasing. This is evidenced by the fact that our students have more of their writing published in district level publication as well as at the building level. Our language scores are improving on both the California

Achievement Program (CAP) and the Comprehensive Test of Basic Skills (CTBS).

As methods of continuing to improve our program, two grants have been written by myself and other staff members. We are looking forward to the implementation of these two programs by the second semester of the 84/85 school year. Writing Across the Curriculum is the subject of one cooperative grant with San Diego State University. The Bank of America is the sponsor for the second grant. These are excellent sources of funds for program improvement. Staff development will be the major focus in the second grant.

Question 3: Describe ways that you transmit to teachers, parents and students the priority you place on written composition in the school's curriculum.

Response: Writing improvement is a major part of our school's mission statement. The staff was involved in this decision. Through our building level goal statement, we were able to influence the district and writing is now included in the district mission statement. I also ask that my staff include one objective about improving writing in their Stull objectives. A major part of our "back to school" activities included an inservice with Dr. G. Rico, author of <u>Writing the Natural Way</u>. The topic was methods of using clustering to teach writing. We are developing a professional library also. We included 20 copies of her book in our staff library.

Question 4: What are some ways you determine which personnel, materials and staff development resources will be allocated to your school's writing program?

Response: Our school has bi-weekly cabinet meetings with curriculum team leaders. These meetings are used to determine needs and for allocation of resources. Curriculum issues are the focus of these meetings.

Question 5: What are some ways that you effectively involve parents in your writing program?

Response: We have a creative writing elective that was parent initiated through our School Site

Council. Our gifted students are expected
to maintain a journal of their activities
when they participate in special trips and
outside experiences with parents. I also
received copies of the State Compensatory
Education pamphlet titled "How to Help
Students Be Better Writers." This was
mailed to all our Chapter I parents.

Question 6:   Are there any other comments that you would
like to make regarding your school's writing
program?

Response: Staff development is the key. My staff
member who is a SDAWP Fellow provides the
stimulation for me to act. I then motivate
other staff members. Our mentor teacher
program in which two teachers are released
1 hr. per day to provide inservice for staff
members and to help them plan their writing
curriculum is invaluable.

Principal 4: Principal 4 is a male supervising a

county middle school. He has had 8 years of teaching

experience and 7 years of experience as an administrator.

His area of curriculum expertise is social studies. He

self-rates himself as above average in this curriculum

area. He has attended inservice in the area of written

composition within the last 5 years. The topics with which

he is familiar are: (a) writing across the curriculum,

(b) peer evaluation of essays, (c) holistic scoring, and

(d) writing as process. This principal has attended

conferences sponsored by the San Diego Area Writing

Project. Four of his staff members are Fellows. The

school has a writing lab based on the SDAWP philosophy.

The following are summary responses to the interview

schedule questions.

Question 1:   List the three most important components of
               an effective writing program.   Explain your
               response.

Response: 1. Staff inservice: This is essential to a
               good writing program.

               2. Writing across the curriculum: It takes
               all teachers working together.   Writing is
               not just the responsibility of language
               teachers.

               3. Support for staff members: As an admin-
               istrator, I feel that it is important to
               support their efforts to improve writing and
               to let them know that I support them.

               4. Writing lab: Our writing lab has been
               operating for three years.   Each teacher
               receives mentoring from the writing
               specialist during the time that their
               students are exposed to the writing process
               in the lab.

Question 2:   How effective do you feel your school's
               writing program is?   What suggestions would
               you make for improvements?

Response: I rate our program very effective.   My
               evaluation is the result of teacher feedback
               and solicited comments from our feeder high
               school staff.   It is their opinion that this
               year's freshman class has better writing
               skills than any class in memory.   These
               students would have had the benefit of the
               lab for the last two years.   We holistically
               score our district proficiencies.   I have a
               major concern about the rubric that the dis-
               trict developed.   This is a problem we are
               working on.
                   The areas for improvement that I see
               involve methods to maintain the energy and/
               or awareness level for teachers outside the
               language arts area.   Writing across the
               curriculum is a concept and process that all
               are not proficient in using.   The relation-
               ship of reading readiness to writing readi-
               ness is another area of concern.   I feel
               more thought needs to be given as to which
               areas of the writing process are appropriate
               for students.

Question 3:   Describe ways that you transmit to teachers,
               parents and students the priority you place

on written composition in the school's curriculum.

Response: I heartily endorse writing competition among our students. Display of student work is encouraged in classrooms and about the school. Our writing lab publishes a writing journal which contains a sample of every student's work. Tips to parents on how to encourage students to write is a regular feature of our monthly Newsletter.

Question 4: What are some ways you determine which personnel, materials and staff development resources will be allocated to your school's writing program?

Response: Currently I am funding half of a teaching position from my staffing budget. This person operates our writing lab. Chapter I funds are limited and in concert with another school we are funding a language arts specialist position. Through staff suggestion we have had one writing inservice for the entire staff. Currently we are sponsoring 5 teachers to a writing conference to be held at the county. The School Site Council is involved in these decisions.

Question 5: What are some ways that you effectively involve parents in your writing program?

Response: We have had limited success in involving parents in our writing program. Our district has a parent support group. Our writing lab specialists provided this group with a demonstration of the writing process. Our school parent night program had an emphasis on writing and our efforts to improve student writing. It was poorly attended.

Question 6: Are there any other comments that you would like to make regarding your school's writing program?

Response: Students lack critical thinking skills. The changes in the CAP test of social studies skills will primarily deal with thinking skills. It is my opinion that the more students write, the more they can use thinking skills. Peer response groups force students to publicly verify their opinions. Peer response to their ideas further

stimulates their thinking and encourages
them to refine this thinking. At our
school, we are banking on writing to help
teach critical thinking skills.

Principal 5: Principal 5 is an experienced adminis-

trator. He has had 21 years of experience as a principal.

Prior to the time spent as an administrator, he taught

grades 9 through 14 for 10 years. He rates himself as

having above average expertise in four major curriculum

areas. These are: social studies, English/literature,

written composition and reading. His recent inservice

experience in the field of written composition includes the

topics: (a) writing across the curriculum, (b) confer-

encing, (c) peer evaluation of essays, (d) holistic

scoring, and (e) writing as a process. This principal's

doctoral dissertation topic dealt with writing instruction.

The following are summary responses to the interview

schedule questions.

Question 1:   List the three most important components of
                an effective writing program. Explain your
                response.

Response: 1. Writing is a process. Teachers, parents
                and students need to understand this and
                writing must be taught in this manner.

                2. Writing across the curriculum:
                Improving writing must be a total, school-
                wide commitment.

                3. Recognition for good writing: Both
                teachers and students need recognition for
                good writing performance. This is an
                important part of my job as an adminis-
                trator.

Question 3:   How effective do you feel your school's
                writing program is? What suggestions would
                you make for improvements?

Response: Our current program is effective, but even a good program can be improved. A good program depends on the enthusiasm of your teachers. Most of our teachers share this enthusiasm for teaching writing. As a suggestion for improvement, I would like more time to help teachers who do not seek opportunities that are available to help them improve their skills in this area.

Question 3:   Describe ways that you transmit to teachers, parents and students the priority you place on written composition in the school's curriculum.

Response: I take the opportunity to speak to classes from time to time. During these times, I discuss with students the importance of developing their writing skills. This topic is also included in our daily bulletin for both staff and students. Communications to parents also stress writing skills and how to help students be more successful. Our Parent Teacher Association (PTA) has also included the topic of writing on its agenda. Faculty meetings also provide an audience for concerns about student writing.

Question 4:   What are some ways you determine which personnel, materials and staff development resources will be allocated to your school's writing program?

Response: Most funds are discretionary; however, I am able to divert assistance to the English Department. They have funding for writer assistants. I also encourage personnel to apply for grants. We currently have two or three projects related to writing.

Question 5:   What are some ways that you effectively involve parents in your writing program?

Response: Parents act as tutors in the classroom. We ask that they provide help to students with their homework. Parents are encouraged to provide an audience for student writing, react to their students' writing and encourage their students to write. Our five major departments have published guides for parents on how to assist their student study. As part of our emphasis on writing across the curriculum, instructions are also

included on the writing standards for the different curriculum areas.

Question 6:   Are there any other comments that you would like to make regarding your school's writing program?

Response: Writing is thinking and it must be taught as a process.

Principal 6: Principal 6 is a high school administrator with 7 years experience. She has had 6 years of teaching experience at grade levels 9 through 12. English/literature, science and physical education are her areas of curriculum expertise. Although she has not attended a written composition inservice, she rates her expertise in writing as average. The high school of which she is principal currently has three San Diego Area Writing Project trained Fellows. A major concern for her is the philosophic difference expressed among teachers in the English Department at her school. The issue is between a traditional grammar approach to the teaching of language and writing and the process approach which is the philosophy of the writing project.

The following are summary responses to the interview schedule questions.

Question 1:   List the three most important components of an effective writing program. Explain your response.

Response: 1. Teacher training and commitment: These two ingredients are essential to a good writing program.

2. Class size: Writing is a difficult subject to teach. Unless class size is taken into consideration the burden on the

classroom teacher is excessive. The paper load becomes unmanageable.

Question 2: How effective do you feel your school's writing program is? What suggestions would you make for improvements?

Response: The assessment of our program is difficult. Our top students consistently perform better than similar students on standardized tests. However, in written expression on the CAP test, we are merely within our expectancy band. It appears that we could be doing a better job with the majority of our students.

Question 3: Describe ways that you transmit to teachers, parents and students the priority you place on written composition in the school's curriculum.

Response: All teachers in the school have been asked to require more writing from their students. We have nine major, agreed upon goals for our students. Writing improvement is one of those goals. All college preparatory classes must require a term paper during the semester. This is to enforce our belief in the importance of writing across the curriculum.

Question 4: What are some ways you determine which personnel, materials and staff development resources will be allocated to your school's writing program?

Response: Unfortunately class size is dictated by our contract. I am able to work within the department in order to reduce the size of our writing classes. Literature classes contain extra students thereby reducing writing class size. We are also able to provide a reader for our English classes. Currently we have no specific staff development budget for writing. English teachers are encouraged to take advantage of inservice offered through the San Diego County Office of Education. We have also applied for a grant to purchase eight word processors for our writing classes.

Question 5: What are some ways that you effectively involve parents in your writing program?

Response: Our program does not currently involve
               parents in the instructional program.

Question 6:   Are there any other comments that you would
               like to make regarding your school's writing
               program?

Response: Our elective program offers many oppor-
               tunities for students to develop their
               writing skills. There are elective courses
               in creative writing, fundamentals of writing
               and expository writing. We require that
               students select these electives during their
               junior year. Freshmen and sophomores are
               required to take a course which stresses the
               fundamentals of writing.

Principal 7: Principal 7 is an administrator at a San

Diego County high school. He has 10 years of experience as

an administrator and 9 years teaching experience. This

administrator considers himself to have above average

expertise in social studies. In other curriculum areas,

including written composition and English/literature, the

respondent rates himself as having average expertise.

Within the last 5 years he has attended written composition

inservice in the following topics: (a) holistic scoring,

(b) writing across the curriculum, (c) writing as a

process, (d) peer evaluation of essays, and (e) journal

writing.

     The following are summary responses to the interview

schedule questions.

Question 1:   List the three most important components of
               an effective writing program. Explain your
               response.

Response: 1. Training of teachers. Without an
               effective inservice program little can be
               accomplished.

2. Time assigned to writing. Students must have adequate time in which to practice their skills.

3. Writing instruction in the process of writing. Without proper instruction, students will not learn the process of writing.

Question 2:	How effective do you feel your school's writing program is? What suggestion would you make for improvements?
Response:	Assessment of our program based on the feedback I receive from my teachers is very encouraging. I do not have other means to evaluate the program. As far as improving the program we want to expand writing across the curriculum. This is a long-term goal. Currently three departments are involved. These are English, Social Studies and Science. I plan to send teachers from other disciplines to be trained by the San Diego Area Writing Project. We are writing a grant in support of this. I also have two teaching fellows from the project who provide inservice at the building level.
Question 3:	Describe ways that you transmit to teachers, parents and students the priority you place on written composition in the school's curriculum.
Response:	Students know that samples of their work are sent to me. I provide feedback to them about the work I receive. Monitoring the classroom is another method I use. These visits are useful in providing immediate feedback. I try to model for the staff and see that I follow through when I make a commitment to writing. Our School Site Council agenda is a source of information for our parents. We also have a Newsletter which is sent to all parents. This contains information about our writing program and the goals we have for our students.
Question 4:	What are some ways you determine which personnel, materials and staff development resources will be allocated to your school's writing program?
Response:	We have a process whereby each department is responsible for its budget. This budget

must reflect efforts to meet agreed upon goals. Improved student skills in writing is one of our major goals. I also mentioned to you that we are writing a grant to help finance our inservice goals in writing.

Question 5: What are some ways that you effectively involve parents in your writing program?

Response: Our parent involvement is very limited. They do serve on our Site Council, but direct involvement with writing is not being used.

Question 6: Are there any other comments that you would like to make regarding your school's writing program?

Response: We recognize that our commitment to improving writing is a long-term goal. It is important to our students that we be successful.

Interview Schedule Summary

The purpose of interviewing principals was to determine their practices as the instructional leaders of their schools' writing program. From these interviews a composite model of instructional practices was to be developed for comparison with results of the attitude survey conducted for this study. Responses to the interview schedule are summarized below. The summary is divided into the two main categories of instructional leadership practices and effective methods of teaching writing.

Leadership practices include:

1. Personal knowledge and expertise.

2. Goal setting activities.

3. Allocation of resources.

4. Staff development.

5. Involving others, i.e., parents, students and teachers in program development, implementation and evaluation.

6. Program evaluation.

Specific practices related to effective methods of teaching of writing as evidenced by a review of the literature include:

1. Writing across the curriculum.

2. Writing as a process.

3. Methods of evaluation.

Principals from Group A that were asked to respond to the interview schedule have a high degree of personal knowledge and expertise in the field of written composition. College course work and recent inservice training in written composition confirm their belief that they are qualified to provide leadership in this curriculum area.

As a group, these principals place a high priority on writing in their schools. They have well articulated plans to insure the cooperative efforts of teachers, students, and parents in promoting the writing curriculum. Their personal support for writing programs is well publicized. Particular strategies for the development of long-term and short-term goals to promote improved writng are included in their school plans.

In this time of scarce resources, these principals have shown a willingness to make major commitments to their writing programs. They have also been creative in their

attempts to secure the necessary resources for writing. Grant-writing and effective use of community resources are two examples of creative financing.

Each of these principals was committed to a vigorous staff development plan. These plans included all staff members, not only English teachers. Staff members with expertise in written composition were used as mentors for other teachers. Outside consultants were also used as part of the inservice plan. County Department of Education and San Diego Area Writing Project inservice programs were supported by these principals. District level inservice opportunities were also encouraged by these principals.

The principals interviewed sought to provide the instructional leadership necessary to secure the active involvement of students, parents and teachers in the improvement of the writing program. Predictably they indicated that their major successes have been with teachers. They cite inservice activities, inclusion of teachers in the decision-making process and requirements for teaching objectives related to writing in the teacher's evaluation process. Students are involved through motivational as well as evaluation activities. Each principal cited methods of communicating progress in writing to students. Students were encouraged to become involved in the publication of their work. Peer evaluation and feedback regarding compositions was encouraged by most of these principals. Each principal indicated a willingness and need to

communicate to students their personal regard for writing as an important educational tool. Efforts to involve parents as active supporters of the writing program were not universally successful as reported by the principals. School Site Councils included parents in the goal setting process. Principals communicated their concerns regarding student writing to parents in their public communiques. Inservice activities for parents had been offered by some principals. Parents were also asked to volunteer as tutors and/or editors to assist students with their writing. However, three of the seven principals feel that they are not successful in their efforts to gain parental support for their school's writing program.

Plans for evaluation of the school's writing program were an important part of the program planning that was mentioned by each principal. These plans included evaluation plans at the building, district, and state level. Each principal had a clear understanding of the degree to which his/her students were attaining the goals of the school's writing program. They also shared these results with staff and community members. The methods of evaluation included standardized tests as well as holistic scoring of student writing samples. However, standardized tests were mentioned most often as the method of evaluation.

The importance of writing across the curriculum was emphasized by each of the responding principals. Several

principals indicated that they were in the process of phasing in such a program on a school-wide basis. Their plans included inservice for teachers of every subject area. Course of study requirements in each subject area included writing standards. The requirements for each course also specified an increase in the number of required writing assignments. Principals recognized that acquiring and maintaining enthusiasm for writing in other subject areas was difficult.

The process of writing was an inservice that six of the seven principals had attended. Their responses to the interview schedule made frequent references to this issue. Program plans included ample time for students to be engaged in the total process of writing. It also included a variety of writing experiences. Peer and adult editors were available to assist students in their writing. Several of the schools had established writing labs. Student work was published as evidence of the completed writing process.

As a group, these principals tended to evaluate their students' progress in writing at the summative level through standardized test results. Holistic scoring as a diagnostic method of evaluating student writing was not universally in use. It was a topic with which many of the principals indicated that they had no experience. Informal evaluations were used. These informal evaluations included comments from the teaching staff about student performance.

Feedback regarding the higher entry level of skill that students had as they entered the next grade was another indicator of achievement. Teachers also expressed a greater enthusiasm for teaching writing as a result of program changes initiated by the principal. In general, evaluation of writing tended to be associated most strongly with achievement in the California Assessment Program (CAP) and other standardized testing programs required by the school district. Research would suggest that these may not be the most effective measures of student achievement in writing.

Implication of the Future Needs for
Principal Inservice and Training

The California State Department of Education has published the Handbook for Planning an Effective Writing Program (Nemetz, 1983). This handbook was developed through the cooperative efforts of a consultant committee under the direction of George F. Nemetz, Consultant in English, California State Department of Education. The handbook represents the compilation of the latest research into the teaching of writing and the components necessary to an effective writing program. Contained in this handbook is a section titled "Checklist for Assessing a School's Writing Program." This researcher has elected to use the outline of this checklist as a comparison base for the data obtained for this study. Recommendations for principal training and inservice will be made based on

comparisons of the response data to the model writing pro-
gram represented in this document.

It is this researcher's opinion, based on the atti-
tudes expressed in the questionnaire, the interview
schedule summary and the demographic data recorded on the
survey, that most principals are deficient in the knowledge
of the research findings regarding written composition and
the instructional leadership techniques necessary to
develop and maintain an effective writing program. These
deficiencies warrant the recommendation of further training
and inservice for principals in the following areas.

Writing as a Process

Responses to the questionnaire indicate that most
principals are not well informed about writing as a
process. The percentage of principals responding with
strongly agree/disagree attitudes on survey questions
relative to writing as a process ranged from 0% to a high
of 55%. The average percentage of principals expressing
strongly agree/disagree attitudes was 29%. In contrast,
all principals responding to the interview schedule
acknowledged the importance of this concept in planning
their instructional program (question 1). In the Handbook
for Planning an Effective Writing Program, the checklist
for assessing a school's writing program includes methods
for assessing the effectiveness of a school's writing
program in providing for student experience with the
writing process (Nemetz, 1983, pp. 42-47). Therefore,

writing as a process should be considered a necessary topic
in principal training and inservice.

Implementing a School-wide
Writing Program

Writing across the curriculum was an integral part of
the school plan for each of the principals interviewed.
The attitudes of principals responding to the survey indi-
cated that they consider writing important in all subject
areas (questions 1, 21 and 31). However, there appears to
be less positive attitudes toward practices which would
insure writing instruction in all curriculum areas (ques-
tions 36, 37, 38 and 39). Writing across the curriculum is
a research supported concept deemed necessary to effective
writing programs. The leadership of principals in imple-
menting this program goal is essential. Knowledge and
skills necessary to effectively implement a school-wide
writing program should be included in principal training
and inservice.

Standards and Evaluation
of Student Writing

Principals responding to the interview schedule and
questionnaire agree that assessment of student writing is
important (interview question 2 and questionnaire ques-
tion 6). Principals in the interview sample indicate that
they depend most often on standardized test results as the
measure of program effectiveness. Only one principal
interviewed mentioned holistic scoring as an evaluation

tool. Nine questions on the questionnaire referred to evaluation of students' writing (questions 12, 13, 14, 15, 18, 24, 28, 32 and 33). The percentage of strongly agree/ disagree responses to these questions ranged from 0% to a high of 48%. Many principals marked undecided on questions related to evaluation techniques. Methods of evaluating student writing are clearly areas of concern and should be included in inservice or training programs for principals.

Staff Development

All principals responding to the interview schedule indicate the need for a vigorous inservice plan. They include plans for allocating resources to see that this is accomplished. Questionnaire responses indicate that principals believe teachers should be trained to be better writing instructors (question 26, 67% in favor). However, only 22% of these principals are in favor of release time for staff development (question 27). Forty-one percent feel that the allocation of time and money spent to improve writing is as important as the application of these resources to other curriculum areas (question 3). Less than half of the principals have a positive attitude toward the support and expertise that district level staff bring to the writing inservice program (question 8). Clearly more specific commitment and action are needed if staff development is to be an effective part of a principal's plan to improve writing instruction. Principals need training in the development and implementation of staff

development programs. They also need the opportunity to explore innovative methods of acquiring the resources necessary to implement these programs.

Principal Retraining

Demographic data supplied by the survey indicate that long tenure as a principal is strongly associated with less positive and informed attitudes about writing instruction and instructional leadership practices. Programs need to be designed which would allow these principals to update their skills as instructional leaders, and districts must insist on such training for their most experienced adminis-trators.

Modeling

While the general responses to the questionnaire indicate that many principals need support in their efforts to improve writing instruction, it is also evident that there are principals who have been successful in their efforts to provide instructional leadership in written composition. These principals need to be identified and thereby provide valuable models for other administrators.

Inservice Topics

The data indicate that approximately 74% of the responding principals had attended an inservice in written composition within the last 5 years. However, of all the suggested topics only one, writing as a process, had been attended by a majority of respondents (66%). The range

among the remaining topics checked is from a low of 17.5%
(journal writing) to a high of 47.6% (conferencing). The
items within the questionnaire also suggest topics neces-
sary to better inform principals about research into the
teaching of writing. The responses and the percentage
indicating attendance at these conference topics suggest
that inclusion of topics such as holistic scoring, confer-
encing, writing across the curriculum, journal writing,
sentence combining, peer evaluation, grammar instruction,
and writing as a process are still appropriate when
planning future inservice sessions.

Parent Involvement

Responses to the questionnaire and interview schedule
suggest that principals have not been very effective in
providing the leadership necessary to involve parents in
the writing program. Most involvement is seen at the
School Site Council level. Other efforts are directed at
informing parents about the importance of writing in the
school's total writing program. Little has been done to
involve them as class tutors, editors of student work or as
monitors of student writing in. the home. Principals need
to be aware of the potential for improving student writing
that is available by involving parents in their writing
program. Opportunities to share ideas and explore new pos-
sibilities about the involvement of parents would be an
important aspect of inservice and training for principals.

Inservice and Training
Programs for Principals

Currently the National Writing Project, a synergistic organization that links together all of the writing project sites that are modeled after and partially funded by the Bay Area Writing Project (BAWP), represents one of the most complete and organized sources of information about writing research. The project has presenters trained to provide inservice and training to practitioners in the teaching of writing. The focus of these projects has been primarily in the retraining of teachers. However, BAWP now encourages administrators to attend their summer program. This is a 5-week training program in which research findings into effective methods of teaching writing are welded with practical, proven methods of classroom instruction. for the past 2 years, the San Diego Area Writing Project (SDAWP), in cooperation with the San Diego County Office of Education, has conducted a spring seminar directed specifically at administrators. This seminar is limited to a 3-day time commitment on the part of administrators. Presenters, SDAWP Fellows, give the administrators the opportunity to become familiar with specific topics in written composition such as writing as a process, writing across the curriculum, and journal writing. The philosophy of the Writing Project includes the belief that to teach and understand the writing process you must personally experience it by being a writer. Administrators become writers as part of this inservice experience.

Programs such as these have great potential for increasing the awareness level of administrators about written composition instruction and current research in the field of writing. However, it is the opinion of this researcher that more will be needed for principals to translate a collection of instructional methods into a viable, effective writing program which must be cross-disciplinary and articulated between grade levels. To accomplish this, principals need to be familiar with instructional leadership theory and practice. They also would benefit from information about models of effective writing programs. The <u>Handbook for Planning an Effective Writing Program</u> developed by the California State Department of Education provides such a generic model for an effective writing program. This model is based on research in written composition instruction and effective writing programs. Principals who have successfully developed writing programs (for example, some of those interviewed for this study) could provide specific information about written composition program development, implementation and evaluation.

It is the belief of this researcher that principals are a necessary and as yet untapped resource in the goal of improving writing instruction. Therefore, inservice and training must include opportunities for principals to increase their knowledge of:

1. Research regarding the teaching and evaluation of written composition.

2. Components of an effective school-wide writing program.

3. Instructional leadership practices validated by research, which result in program improvement and increased student achievement.

4. Models of practitioners who have implemented the above into an observably effective school-wide writing program.

The National Writing Projects' affiliates currently have the organization and expertise necessary to accomplish the first two of these inservice and training goals. By extending their basic philosophy to include training of administrators in written composition program development, the last two inservice goals might be accomplished. Project philosophic assumptions (Penfield, 1980) which need to be extended to include administrators are paraphrased by this researcher as follows:

1. School-wide writing problems and program development are shared responsibilities of the universities and the schools. Therefore, they need to be addressed cooperatively. Inservice and training need to include research findings generated at the university level which address writing instruction and instructional leadership in program development. Practitioners need to provide concrete examples of the implementation of these research findings.

2. Teachers and administrators are not adequately trained to teach and/or administer writing programs. Opportunities need to be provided for administrators as well as teachers in which total immersion into writing instruction and program development are possible.

3. Successful teachers of writing and administrators of effective writing programs can be identified. The best practices of these successful teachers and administrators can be demonstrated.

4. The best teacher of teachers and administrators is another teacher or administrator who has had success in a similar situation.

5. Much is known about the teaching of writing and the administration of effective writing programs, although teachers and administrators are often unaware of that knowledge. This information must be disseminated to those practitioners in the school who are responsible for instruction and program development.

6. Teachers and administrators of writing programs must themselves write. We value that which we understand through direct experience. Students and peers perceive the value we place on writing through the model of teachers and administrators as writers.

It is recommended by this researcher that the above amended assumptions of the National Writing Projects form the basis for principal inservice and training in written composition instruction and program development. The

projects represent a viable beginning for such an undertaking; however, this need not exclude university or district level training programs. These assumptions may provide the philosophic directives for a variety of program training models.

Recommendations for Further Study

The recommendations listed below are for further research into the role of principals as instructional leaders in written composition.

1. The subjects in this study were from San Diego County only. Further research involving subjects selected on a national basis would increase the generalizability of this study.

2. Ethnographic research in which the researcher would have the opportunity to observe the leadership behaviors of principals might provide a more definitive model for principal inservice and training. Results could also be compared with results of the survey methods used in this study.

3. Further research needs to be conducted to determine the influence of demographic variables. This study indicates that there were statistically significant differences based on the respondent's tenure as a principal and the sex of the principal. Further research might be designed to determine the cause of these differences.

4. Although no statistical differences in attitudes and knowledge were found among the three groups of principals, it is recommended that further investigation into the influence of the San Diego Area Writing Project, as a representative of the National Writing Projects, be conducted. A survey of principals attending inservice provided by this group might be compared with results from this survey.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX A

SURVEY: PRINCIPALS' ATTITUDES REGARDING
WRITTEN COMPOSITION

169

PRINCIPALS' ATTITUDES REGARDING
WRITTEN COMPOSITION

Introduction:

The purpose of this questionnaire is to survey your attitude regarding the research findings related to written composition and your attitudes about written composition in your school's curriculum.

Instructions:

1. Demographic data responses are to be recorded on the questionnaire. Circle the letter indicating your response choice to questions 1 through 40.

2. All questions have five possible responses. The response categories are:

    A = Strongly Agree
    B = Agree
    C = Undecided
    D = Disagree
    E = Strongly Disagree

3. Please answer every question. Should you be unable to answer a question from your own personal knowledge, please mark the box designated "undecided."

4. The questionnnaire is to be returned by _____ in the enclosed envelope.

THANK YOU FOR YOUR COOPERATION.

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Demographic Data:

Your current position _____

Administering grades: K-6 _____ 6-8 _____ 9-12 _____

Years of experience as an administrator _____

Years of teaching experience _____ Grade levels _____

Sex: Female ____ Male ____

In the following curriculum areas please rate your expertise as derived from your professional training (record the letter indicating your response).

A = Above Average (recent college course(s) work and/or inservice)
B = Average (inservice and 1 or 2 courses)
C = Very Little (some inservice, perhaps 1 course)
D = None

1. Reading   ____   5. Science   ____

2. English/Literature   ____   6. Fine Arts   ____

3. Composition   ____   7. Math   ____

4. Reading   ____   8. P.E.   ____

Have you attended a writing inservice within the last 5 years?

        Yes/No (circle)

If yes, please indicate by placing a check next to the topics listed.

1. Holistic scoring   ____   5. Sentence combining   ____

2. Conferencing   ____   6. Peer evaluation of essays   ____

3. Writing across the   7. Writing as a process   ____
    curriculum   ____

4. Journal writing   ____   8. Other (list topics on back of
                                         page 1)

A = Strongly Agree   B = Agree   C = Undecided   D = Disagree   E = Strongly .Disagree

Circle the letter indicating your response

1. Writing should be considered an integral part of the school's total curriculum.	A B C D E
2. Administrators would not benefit from written composition inservice.	A B C D E
3. Time and money spent on staff development projects related to the teaching of writing could be better spent in other curriculum areas.	A B C D E
4. Principals should encourage the display and sharing of student compositions.	A B C D E
5. The best way to insure that students will be good writers is to increase the time spent writing.	A B C D E
6. Systematic assessment of student writing to evaluate individual progress and program effectiveness is essential in a writing program.	A B C D E
7. Having key staff members trained to provide leadership in writing instruction would benefit the total school's writing program.	A B C D E
8. The support of district level staff would not improve written composition programs in the schools.	A B C D E
9. The teaching of formal grammar is positively associated with improvement in student writing.	A B C D E
10. Sentence combining is a practice that has proven beneficial to student writers.	A B C D E
11. A student that is widely read is more apt to be a better writer.	A B C D E
12. Having students read, respond to and edit other students' work helps students learn to write.	A B C D E
13. Marking all mistakes on a paper does help a student to improve his/her writing.	A B C D E
14. When rating a student's paper, negative comments by the teacher improve future compositions.	A B C D E
15. Having students revise their compositions does little to improve their writing skills	A B C D E

A = Strongly Agree   B = Agree   C = Undecided   D = Disagree   E = Strongly Disagree

Circle the letter indicating your response

16. Pre-writing activities such as role-playing, discussion, clustering and brainstorming should be dropped in favor of more writing time.	A B C D E
17. Writing is a process involving many different stages and a wide variety of skills.	A B C D E
18. Holistic scoring is a reliable and valid method of judging students' writing performance.	A B C D E
19. Parents are less supportive of the writing program when they know that teachers and administrators consider writing an important part of the school's curriculum.	A B C D E
20. Student publications and displays of student writing contribute little to student achievement in written composition.	A B C D E
21. Parent volunteers are ineffective as editors or in giving feedback to students about their writing.	A B C D E
22. Parents should encourage students to write at home with activities such as maintaining a journal.	A B C D E
23. Parents should receive training in ways they can support the school's writing program.	A B C D E
24. It is unnecessary for parents to know how writing is evaluated or how to assess their students' writing.	A B C D E
25. Principals need to communicate to teachers that writing is an important part of the curriculum.	A B C D E
26. Teachers need the opportunity to participate in inservice activities directly related to the teaching of writing.	A B C D E
27. Releasing teachers from the classroom to participate in professional organizations or conferences directly related to the teaching of writing is not the best use of their time.	A B C D E
28. Teachers should be involved in the development of school-wide standards regarding the quality of student writing.	A B C D E
29. Teachers can serve as an important role model for students by writing at the same time students are engaged in a writing activity.	A B C D E

A = Strongly Agree   B = Agree   C = Undecided   D = Disagree   E = Strongly Disagree

Circle the letter indicating your response

30. It is unnecessary for teachers to have a school or district published writing curriculum guide.	A B C D E
31. Students in my school should be aware that writing is an important skill in all subject areas.	A B C D E
32. There is no need for students to understand the school-wide standards for quality in student writing in order to be better writers.	A B C D E
33. Involving students in peer evaluation and editing of student compositions does not help them become good writers.	A B C D E
34. Writing to a wide variety of audiences does not help students become better writers.	A B C D E
35. Students that have the opportunity to participate in all phases of the writing process are more likely to be competent writers.	A B C D E
36. Eliminating writing assignments in other subject areas assists students to clarify and articulate their learning.	A B C D E
37. Students in this school should be encouraged to take notes in class to record important concepts.	A B C D E
38. Opportunities to write longer reports based on their research of a particular topic help students to become better writers.	A B C D E
39. Writing is a way for students to learn inquiry skills.	A B C D E
40. Students should be given the opportunity to write in a variety of discourse types.	A B C D E

Your comments regarding this subject will be greatly appreciated.

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

(continue on back if necessary)

APPENDIX B

REFERENCE SOURCES UPON WHICH QUESTIONNIARE
ITEMS WERE BASED

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REFERENCE SOURCES UPON WHICH QUESTIONNAIRE
ITEMS WERE BASED

Source	Questionnaire Items
Abrahamson (1977)	9, 10
Applebee (1981)	1, 4, 5, 6, 12, 16, 17, 34, 36, 37, 38, 39, 40
Bailey (1983)	1, 31, 36, 37, 38, 39
Baker (1983)	31, 36, 37, 39
Beaven (1977)	15, 33
Bizzaro (1983)	29
Block (1982)	3, 7, 8, 19, 21, 23, 24, 25, 26, 27
Boiarsky (1983)	1, 11, 31, 34, 36, 37, 39
Braddock (1963)	9
Britton (1970)	12, 16, 17
Christensen (1983)	10
Cooper (1975)	12, 29
Cooper (1977)	6, 18
Dieterich (1972)	13, 14
Gebhard (1983)	1, 11
Glatthorn (1981)	1, 2, 6, 12, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22, 23, 25, 26, 28, 30, 31, 33, 34, 35, 36, 39, 40
Gray (1983)	10
Healy (1982)	12, 15, 32, 33
Jensen (1982)	11
Joyce & Showers (1980)	2, 3, 7, 8, 26, 27
Lipham (1981)	3, 25, 28
Mellon (1969)	10

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Source	Questionnaire Items
Meyers (1980)	18
Meyers (1983)	9, 10, 17
Moody (1975)	25
Neill (1982)	1, 2, 3, 6, 7, 8, 18, 25, 26, 28, 30, 31
Nemetz (1983)	1, 3, 4, 6, 7, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22, 26, 28, 29, 30, 31, 33, 34, 35, 36, 39, 40
Odell (1981)	6, 18
Perez (1983)	29
Shanahan (1984)	11
Shuman (1984)	1, 31, 32, 34, 36, 39
Siegel (1982)	16, 17
Stock (1983)	11, 39
Wall (1983)	11

APPENDIX C

SURVEY ITEMS INDICATING THE PERCENTAGE OF
PRINCIPALS RESPONDING IN EACH CATEGORY

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SURVEY ITEMS INDICATING THE PERCENTAGE OF
PRINCIPALS RESPONDING IN EACH CATEGORY

1. Writing should be considered an integral part of the school's total curriculum.

   Strongly Agree   94.2*
   Agree   5.8

2. Administrators would not benefit from written composition inservice.

   Strongly Agree   2.9
   Agree   3.9
   Undecided   3.9
   Disagree   28.4
   Strongly Disagree   60.8*

3. Time and money spent on staff development projects related to the teaching of writing could be better spent in other curriculum areas.

   Strongly Agree   1.0
   Agree   5.8
   Undecided   5.8
   Disagree   46.6
   Strongly Disagree   40.8*

4. Principals should encourage the display and sharing of student compositions.

   Strongly Agree   44.7*
   Agree   37.9
   Undecided   9.7
   Disagree   7.8
   Strongly Disagree   .0

5. The best way to insure that students will be good writers is to increase the time spent writing.

   Strongly Agree   44.7
   Agree   37.9
   Undecided   9.7
   Disagree   7.8
   Strongly Disagree   .0*

*The asterisk (*) indicates the preferred response based on research supported practices.

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6. Systematic assessment of student writing to evaluate individual progress and program effectiveness is essential in a writing program.

Strongly Agree	63.1*
Agree	33.0
Undecided	2.9
Disagree	1.0

7. Having key staff members trained to provide leadership in writing instruction would benefit the total school's writing program.

Strongly Agree	67.0*
Agree	31.1
Undecided	1.9

8. The support of district level staff would not improve written composition programs in the schools.

Agree	2.9
Undecided	7.8
Disagree	44.7
Strongly Disagree	44.7*

9. The teaching of formal grammar is positively associated with improvement in student writing.

Strongly Agree	3.9
Agree	18.6
Undecided	26.5
Disagree	37.3
Strongly Disagree	13.7*

10. Sentence combining is a practice that has proven beneficial to student writers.

Strongly Agree	12.4*
Agree	53.6
Undecided	33.0
Disagree	1.0

11. A student that is widely read is more apt to be a better writer.

Strongly Agree	35.9*
Agree	53.4
Undecided	6.8
Disagree	3.9

12. Having students read, respond to and edit other students' work helps students learn to write.

Strongly Agree   42.7*
Agree   48.5
Undecided   7.8
Disagree   1.0

13. Marking all mistakes on a paper does help a student to improve his/her writing.

Strongly Agree   35.6
Agree   41.6
Undecided   22.8
Strongly Disagree   .0*

14. When rating a student's paper, negative comments by the teacher improve future compositions.

Agree   5.9
Undecided   21.8
Disagree   48.5
Strongly Disagree   23.8*

15. Having students revise their compositions does little to improve their writing skills.

Strongly Agree   1.0
Agree   2.9
Undecided   10.7
Disagree   50.5
Strongly Disagree   35.0*

16. Pre-writing activities such as role-playing, discussion, clustering and brainstorming should be dropped in favor of more writing time.

Strongly Agree   1.9
Agree   2.9
Undecided   16.5
Disagree   46.6
Strongly Disagree   32.0*

17. Writing is a process involving many different stages and a wide variety of skills.

Strongly Agree   55.3*
Agree   43.7
Undecided   1.0

18. Holistic scoring is a reliable and valid method of judging students' writing performance.

    Strongly Agree   21.8*
    Agree   41.6
    Undecided   33.7
    Disagree   1.0
    Strongly Disagree   2.0

19. Parents are less supportive of the writing program when they know that teachers and administrators consider writing an important part of the school's curriculum.

    Strongly Agree   2.9
    Disagree   40.2
    Strongly Disagree   56.9*

20. Student publications and displays of student writing contribute little to student achievement in written composition.

    Agree   2.9
    Undecided   4.9
    Disagree   43.1
    Strongly Disagree   49.0*

21. Parent volunteers are ineffective as editors or in giving feedback to students about their writing.

    Strongly Agree   2.9
    Agree   8.7
    Undecided   26.2
    Disagree   42.7
    Strongly Disagree   19.4*

22. Parents should encourage students to write at home with activities such as maintaining a journal.

    Strongly Agree   31.1*
    Agree   60.2
    Undecided   7.8
    Disagree   1.0

23. Parents should receive training in ways they can support the school's writing program.

    Strongly Agree   24.3*
    Agree   64.1
    Undecided   11.7

24. It is unnecessary for parents to know how writing is evaluated or how to assess their students' writing.

Agree   1.9
Undecided   3.9
Disagree   54.4
Strongly Disagree   39.8*

25. Principals need to communicate to teachers that writing is an important part of the curriculum.

Strongly Agree   78.6*
Agree   21.4

26. Teachers need the opportunity to participate in inservice activities directly related to the teaching of writing.

Strongly Agree   67.0*
Agree   32.0
Undecided   1.0

27. Releasing teachers from the classroom to participate in professional organizations or conferences directly related to the teaching of writing is not the best use of their time.

Strongly Agree   1.9
Agree   11.7
Undecided   11.7
Disagree   52.4
Strongly Disagree   22.3*

28. Teachers should be involved in the development of school-wide standards regarding the quality of student writing.

Strongly Agree   47.6*
Agree   48.5
Undecided   2.9
Disagree   1.0

29. Teachers can serve as an important role model for students by writing at the same time students are engaged in a writing activity.

Strongly Agree   35.9*
Agree   39.8
Undecided   15.5
Disagree   6.8
Strongly Disagree   1.9

30. It is unnecessary for teachers to have a school or district pub-
lished writing curriculum guide.

Strongly Agree   1.0
Agree   2.9
Undecided   7.8
Disagree   56.9
Strongly Disagree   31.4*

31. Students in my school should be aware that writing is an important
skill in all subject areas.

Strongly Agree   25.5*
Agree   74.5

32. There is no need for students to understand the school-wide
standards for quality in student writing in order to be better
writers.

Undecided   10.8
Disagree   56.9
Strongly Disagree   32.4*

33. Involving students in peer evaluation and editing of student
compositions does not help them become good writers.

Agree   3.9
Undecided   11.8
Disagreee   56.9
Strongly Disagree   27.5*

34. Writing to a wide variety of audiences does not help students
become better writers.

Strongly Agree   1.0
Agree   2.0
Undecided   6.9
Disagree   61.8
Strongly Disagree   28.4*

35. Students that have the opportunity to participate in all phases of
the writing process are more likely to be competent writers.

Strongly Agree   44.1*
Agree   55.9

36. Eliminating writing assignments in other subject areas assists
students to clarify and articulate their learning.

Undecided   1.0
Disgree   45.1
Strongly Disagree   53.9*

37. Students in this school should be encouraged to take notes in class to record important concepts.

    Strongly Agree   28.4*
    Agree   55.9
    Undecided   10.8
    Disagree   3.9
    Strongly Disagree   1.0

38. Opportunities to write longer reports based on their research of a particular topic help students to become better writers.

    Strongly Agree   10.9*
    Agree   39.6
    Undecided   29.7
    Disagree   17.8
    Strongly Disagree   2.0

39. Writing is a way for students to learn inquiry skills.

    Strongly Agree   17.6*
    Agree   66.7
    Undecided   13.7
    Strongly Disagree   2.0

40. Students should be given the opportunity to write in a variety of discourse types.

    Strongly Agree   37.0*
    Agree   58.0
    Undecided   4.0
    Strongly Disagree   1.0

APPENDIX D

INTERVIEW SCHEDULE

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INTERVIEW SCHEDULE

1. List the three most important components of an effective writing program. Explain your response.

2. How effective do you feel your school's writing program is? What suggestions would you make for improvements?

3. Describe ways that you transmit to teachers, parents and students the priority you place on written composition in the school's curriculum.

4. What are some ways you determine which personnel, materials and staff development resources will be allocated to your school's writing program?

5. What are some ways that you effectively involve parents in your writing program?

6. Are there any other comments that you would like to make regarding your school's writing program?

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APPENDIX E

TRANSMITTAL LETTER TO SUBJECTS OF THE PILOT STUDY

188

Dear _____

As part of my doctoral research project I am conducting a pilot study to be used to determine the reliability of the survey instrument. I would appreciate it greatly if you would consent to be a participant in this pilot. You were selected because of your expertise in written composition and/or your experience in administration.

Responding to the survey should not take more than 1/2 hour of your time. I would appreciate it if you would:

1. Respond to the survey according to the directions.

2. Make comments regarding the clarity and appropriateness of each item as related to the topic of written composition.

3. Comment on clarity of the transmittal letter.

4. Suggest improvements in the directions should you feel that they are necessary.

Please return the survey by _____. Should you be unable to participate in the pilot, I would appreciate it if you would return the survey in the enclosed self-addressed envelope.

The results of my research depend on the feedback that I receive from this pilot. Therefore I thank you very much for your time.

Sincerely,

Patricia R. Parlin

APPENDIX F

TRANSMITTAL LETTER ADDRESSED TO PRINCIPALS
OF SDAWP PARTICIPANTS

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Dear Principal,

As a vice-principal at a local junior high school, I can certainly appreciate the fact that principals deserve a relaxing summer after a busy and productive school year. However, I would like to ask for just 15 minutes of your time. I am completing my doctoral dissertation at the University of San Diego. My research involves obtaining an attitude statement from area principals regarding written composition research findings and school level practices.

I am particularly interested in obtaining your response because as the instructional leader in your school you can well appreciate the critical issues involved in trying to improve the writing skills of students. In addition, you currently have a faculty member who was recommended by you or your district and who received training/inservice through the San Diego Area Writing Project. This is additional evidence of your concern for the critical issues involved in the writing competency of students.

Your responses to the enclosed survey will be confidential and will be used only in combination with others from throughout the county. At no time will you or your school be identified in any published reports.

The time you spend completing the attached survey will be greatly appreciated by me. It is also my belief that the results will provide useful information to practitioners such as yourself about ways we can improve writing in our schools. Please return the survey by _____.
A self-addressed, stamped envelope has been enclosed. A summary of the survey results will be mailed to you if you so desire. Please write your name and address on the survey only if you wish to receive the results.

Thank you for your cooperation. A commemorative olympic stamp has been enclosed as a token of my appreciation for your time.

Sincerely,

Patricia R. Parlin
Vice-Principal
Cajon Valley Junior High School

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APPENDIX G

TRANSMITTAL LETTER ADDRESSED TO GENERAL
POPULATION OF PRINCIPALS

192

Dear Principal,

As a vice-principal at a local junior high school, I can certainly appreciate the fact that principals deserve a relaxing summer after a busy and productive school year. However, I would like to ask for just 15 minutes of your time. I am completing my doctoral dissertation at the University of San Diego. My research involves obtaining an attitude statement from area principals regarding written composition research findings and school level practices.

I am particularly interested in obtaining your response because as the instructional leader in your school you can well appreciate the critical issues involved in trying to improve the writing skills of students. Your insight and experience will contribute greatly to the information generated by this questionnaire.

Your responses to the enclosed survey will be confidential and will be used only in combination with others from throughout the county. At no time will you or your school be identified in any published reports.

The time you spend completing the attached survey will be greatly appreciated by me. It is also my belief that the results will provide useful information to practitioners such as yourself about ways we can improve writing in our schools. Please return the survey by _____. A self-addressed, stamped envelope has been enclosed. A summary of the survey results will be mailed to you if you so desire. Please write your name and address on the survey only if you wish to receive the results.

Thank you for your cooperation. A commemorative olympic stamp has been enclosed as a token of my appreciation for your time.

Sincerely,

Patricia R. Parlin
Vice-Principal
Cajon Valley Junior High School

APPENDIX H

PILOT STUDY QUESTIONNAIRE

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PRINCIPALS' ATTITUDES REGARDING THE IMPORTANCE OF RESEARCH FINDINGS AND INSTRUCTIONAL LEADERSHIP PRACTICES NECESSARY TO IMPLEMENT AN EFFECTIVE WRITING PROGRAM

Introduction:

The purpose of this questionnaire is to survey your knowledge of the research findings regarding written composition and your attitudes about written composition in your school's curriculum. Should you be unable to answer a question from your own personal knowledge, please mark the box designated "undecided." Your knowledge and/or attitudes based on your experience as the school administrator are what is important. Please answer every question on the survey.

Instructions:

1. Demographic data on page 2 are to be recorded on the questionnaire.

2. Responses to questions 1 through 40 are to be recorded directly on the survey. Circle the letter indicating your response choice.

3. All questions have five (5) possible responses. The response categories for each item are:

   A = Strongly Agree
   B = Agree
   C = Undecided
   D = Disagree
   E = Strongly Disagree

4. Although some questions may warrant a yes or no response, the response categories permit you to indicate the intensity of your feelings in relation to the item.

5. The questionnaire is to be returned by _____.
   A self-addressed envelope has been enclosed for your convenience.

THANK YOU FOR YOUR COOPERATION.

Demographic Data:

Your current position _____

Supervising grades: K-6 _____ 6-8 _____ 9-12 _____

Years of experience as an administrator _____

Years of teaching experience _____ Grade level _____

Sex: Female ____ Male ____

In the following curriculum areas please rate your administrative expertise as derived from your professional training (record the letter indicating your response).

A = Above Average (recent college course(s) work and/or inservice)
B = Average (inservice and 1 or 2 courses)
C = Very Little (some inservice, perhaps 1 course)
D = None

1.	Reading ___	5.	Science ___
2.	Math ___	6.	Fine Arts ___
3.	Social Studies ___	7.	Physical Education ___
4.	Written Composition ___	8.	English/Literature ___

Have you attended a writing inservice within the last 5 years?

     Yes/No

If yes, please indicate the topics discussed by placing a check next to the topic(s) in the following list.

1.	Writing across the curriculum ___	5.	Sentence combining ___
2.	Holistic scoring ___	6.	Peer evaluation of compositions ___
3.	Conferencing ___	7.	Writing as a process ___
4.	Journal writing ___	8.	Other (list topics)

_____

_____

_____

A = Strongly Agree   B = Agree   C = Undecided   D = Disagree   E = Strongly ·Disagree

Circle the letter indicating your response

1.	Writing should be considered an integral part of the school's total curriculum.	A B C D E
2.	Administrators would not benefit from written composition inservice.	A B C D E
3.	Time and money spent on staff development projects related to the teaching of writing could be better spent in other curriculum areas.	A B C D E
4.	Principals should encourage the display and sharing of student compositions.	A B C D E
5.	The best way to insure that students will be good writers is to increase the time spent writing.	A B C D E
6.	Systematic assessment of student writing to evaluate individual progress and program effectiveness is essential in a writing program.	A B C D E
7.	Having key staff members trained to provide leadership in writing instruction would benefit the total school's writing program.	A B C D E
8.	The support of district level staff would not improve written composition programs in the schools.	A B C D E
9.	The teaching of formal grammar is positively associated with improvement in student writing.	A B C D E
10.	Sentence combining is a practice that has proven beneficial to student writers.	A B C D E
11.	A student that is widely read is more apt to be a better writer.	A B C D E
12.	Having students read, respond to and edit other students' work helps students learn to write.	A B C D E
13.	Marking all mistakes on a paper does help a student to improve his/her writing.	A B C D E
14.	When rating a student's paper, negative comments by the teacher improve future compositions.	A B C D E
15.	Having students revise their compositions does little to improve their writing skills	A B C D E

A = Strongly Agree   B = Agree   C = Undecided   D = Disagree   E = Strongly Disagree

Circle the letter indicating your response

16. Pre-writing activities such as role-playing, discussion, clustering and brainstorming should be dropped in favor of more writing time.   A   B   C   D   E

17. Writing is a process involving many different stages and a wide variety of skills.   A   B   C   D   E

18. Holistic scoring is a reliable and valid method of judging students' writing performance.   A   B   C   D   E

19. Knowing that teachers and administrators consider writing an important part of the school's curriculum does not encourage parent support for writing instruction.   A   B   C   D   E

20. Student publications and displays of student writing contribute little to student achievement in written composition.   A   B   C   D   E

21. Parent volunteers are ineffective as editors or in giving feedback to students about their writing.   A   B   C   D   E

22. Parents should encourage students to write at home with activities such as maintaining a journal.   A   B   C   D   E

23. Parents should receive training in ways they can support the school's writing program.   A   B   C   D   E

24. It is unnecessary for parents to know how writing is evaluated or how to assess their students' writing.   A   B   C   D   E

25. Principals need to communicate to teachers that writing is an important part of the curriculum.   A   B   C   D   E

26. Teachers need the opportunity to participate in inservice activities directly related to the teaching of writing.   A   B   C   D   E

27. Releasing teachers from the classroom to participate in professional organizations or conferences directly related to the teaching of writing is not the best use of their time.   A   B   C   D   E

28. Teachers should be involved in the development of school-wide standards regarding the quality of student writing.   A   B   C   D   E

29. Teachers can serve as an important role model for students by writing at the same time students are engaged in a writing activity.   A   B   C   D   E

A = Strongly Agree   B = Agree   C = Undecided   D = Disagree   E = Strongly Disagree

Circle the letter indicating your response

30.	It is unnecessary for teachers to have a school or district published writing curriculum guide.	A B C D E
31.	Students in my school should be aware that writing is an important skill in all subject areas.	A B C D E
32.	There is no need for students to understand the school-wide standards for quality in student writing in order to be better writers.	A B C D E
33.	Involving students in peer evaluation and editing of student compositions does not help them become good writers.	A B C D E
34.	Writing to a wide variety of audiences does not help students become better writers.	A B C D E
35.	Students that have the opportunity to participate in all phases of the writing process are more likely to be competent writers.	A B C D E
36.	Writing assignments in other subject areas do not assist students to clarify and articulate their learning.	A B C D E
37.	Students in this school should be encouraged to take notes in class to record important concepts.	A B C D E
38.	Opportunities to write longer reports based on their research of a particular topic help students to become better writers.	A B C D E
39.	Writing is a way for students to learn inquiry skills.	A B C D E
40.	Students should be given the opportunity to write in a variety of discourse types.	A B C D E

Your comments regarding this subject will be greatly appreciated.

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

(continue on back if necessary)

APPENDIX I

MEMO TO ALL PARTICIPANTS IN THE STUDY

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Dear Principal,

I would like to take this opportunity to extend a special thank you to those of you that returned the Principals' Attitudes Regarding Written Composition survey that I sent you. As you know the rate of survey return is extremely important in any research project. Sept. 27th is the date when collection must be completed. There is still time to get the survey in the mail if you have not already done so.

Misplaced it? I'll be happy to send a new one. Call me at _____.

Thank you!

Patricia R. Parlin

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