



Transition to the Common Core
with a District-wide Writing Campaign

Darlene Messinger,
Instructional Services
Saddleback Valley School District
and
Charlotte Knox, Knox Education



KnoxEducation
knoxeducation.com

1

The Need

- ❖ Transition to the Common Core State Standards while also assuring performance on the CST
- ❖ Improve writing instruction district-wide
- ❖ Support English Learners and accelerate their achievement
- ❖ Integrate PD with data team cycles already in place

2
2

The District

30,000 Students
4,128 English Learners (2012)
23 Schools (9 are Title I)



3

The District - Context

Instructional Shifts:

- ❖ Building knowledge through content-rich nonfiction
- ❖ Reading, writing, and speaking grounded in evidence from text, both literary and informational
- ❖ Regular practice with complex text and its academic language
- ❖ www.achievethecore.org

4

Supporting PD

Literacy coaches demonstrated key strategies at sites and at after-school sessions

Principals conducted focused walk-throughs

9
9

Assessment

Benchmark on-demand writing assessments aligned with Professional Development

Prompts mimic Smarter Balanced assessments and included strategies from PD

Grade 3 Prompt

Other people do not think these animals should be in zoos at all, because they do not believe any animals should live in zoos. They believe it is unhealthy and that animals should only live in the wild.

What do you think?

Is it better for animals to live in the wild or in a zoo?

Writing Directions

Write an opinion piece to support your point of view about whether animals should live in the wild or in a zoo. Be sure to state your opinion about whether you think animals should live in the wild or in a zoo. Be sure to give specific facts or reasons to support your opinion. End with a conclusion.

Scoring

Your writing will be scored on how well you write an opinion piece that:

- Introduces the topic you are writing about.
- States your opinion about if animals should live in the wild or in the zoo.
- Supports your opinion with reasons or facts.
- Organizes these reasons or facts in a logical order.
- Provides a conclusion.
- Uses correct spelling, grammar, capitalization and punctuation.

10

Incorporation of the 4 Cs

Incorporated an experience with the 4 Cs in PD

C

reativity

C

ollaboration

C

ritical thinking

C

ommunication

11

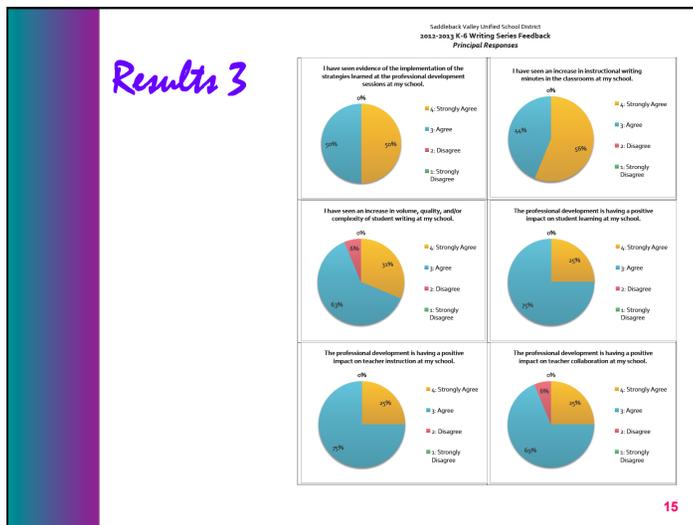
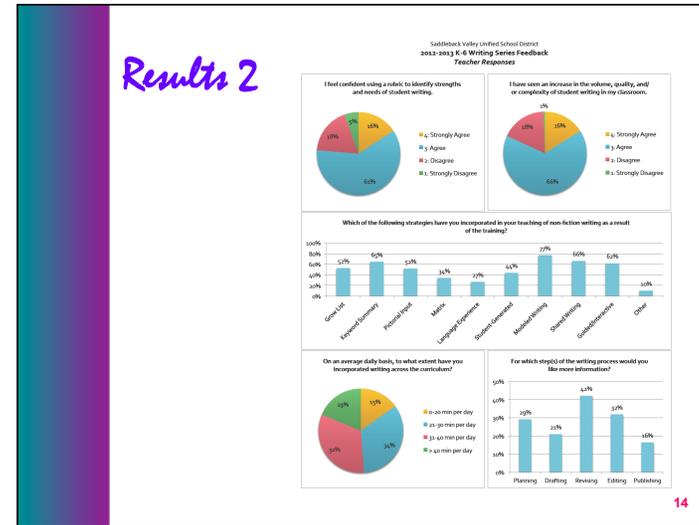
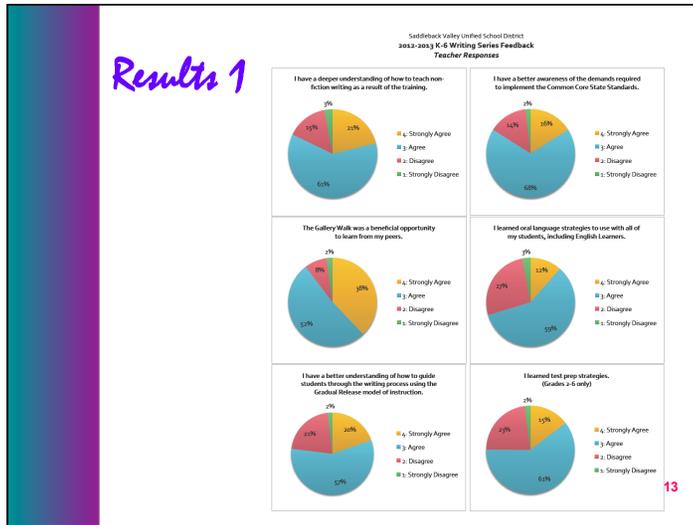
How Did it Go?

See packet

I have a deeper understanding of how to teach non-fiction writing as a result of the training.

Response	Percentage
4: Strongly Agree	21%
3: Agree	61%
2: Disagree	15%
1: Strongly Disagree	3%

12



- ### What Worked?
1. Professional Development for all teachers
 2. Proven, effective strategies
 3. Ongoing partnership with Charlotte Knox
 4. Support of Instructional Services members
 5. Support of Superintendent
 6. Buy-in from Principals
 7. Coaching support
- 16

What was Challenging?

- Culture
- Communication
- Principal's understanding of writing expectations
- Teacher concerns for time spent on writing, assessing and benchmarks

17

Next Steps...

- Continue with one more PD cycle with Narrative Writing
- Meet with Administrators to reflect and plan for 2013-14
- Compare writing strategies scores from CST
- Add additional Writing Benchmark for Narrative Writing
- Continue strategy support for teachers
- District-wide Literacy Goals for each school
- Collaborate with Educational Technology

18

Photos from the Project...

19