

Title: Teachers' Perception of the Impact of the Pennsylvania Writing Assessment on Classroom Writing Instruction

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ABSTRACT

There has been a growing trend across the nation in the development of state educational standards and state exams to mark district achievement. The Pennsylvania Department of Education mandated annual large-scale writing assessments for all public schools in the state in 1990. While research in the field of writing instruction and assessment strategies has influenced the teaching of writing, few studies have focused on the impact which large-scale writing assessments, such as those required in Pennsylvania, have had on classroom instruction. This study focuses on teachers' perceptions of how the state writing assessment has influenced their day to day classroom practices and teaching methodology.

In this study, a cross-sectional comparison of Pennsylvania public secondary and elementary teachers responsible for writing instruction was conducted through an original survey instrument. The survey was designed to examine teachers' perceptions regarding writing instruction, professional development activities, and their knowledge and use of Pennsylvania writing assessment information and results.

A description analysis of responses summarizes the frequency rates for various classroom practices and the level of agreement with items regarding teaching methodology. In addition to these summaries, a statistical analysis of the influence of factors including gender, teaching responsibility and grade level assignment, teaching experience and training, the use of local

assessments, district enrollment and class size, minority enrollment, and school description is presented.