

Model Program and Practices #2 – Schoolwide Expository Writing Program

Description of the Model Program/Practices:

A few short years ago Anderson Union High School had some of the lowest CAASPP ELA scores in our county and we were low compared to similar school rankings state wide. In an attempt to rectify this problem Anderson Union High School's Schoolwide Expository Writing Program was developed.

Through data analysis and collaboration with parents and teachers we learned that most of our students were simply skipping the essay portions on the CAASPP test. They would read the narratives and answer the multiple choice questions but ignore the essay portion on the ELA test and they would also ignore the written performance task on the Math test as well.

As a result, the staff at Anderson Union High School developed our Schoolwide Expository Writing Program. Each week students are writing essays in all English classes and at least one essay within one other content area, so every week of the school year students are writing at least two essays per week. The monthly writing schedule was structured to ensure students are not overwhelmed with too much writing in any given week. We chose expository writing to be aligned with the content literacy standards within the Common Core Curriculum. Students are taught to use expository writing to present reasons, explanations, or steps in a process to illustrate a point or a claim. Logical order should be used with appropriate sequencing of ideas within this process. Effective expository writing should contain a main idea, supporting details (facts and evidence) as well as a conclusion.

Students immediately learned that they had to write in all classes. They learned that when they wrote they had to substantiate their claims with facts, reasons, and examples. Quickly, expository writing became part of our school culture and our incoming freshman know nothing different than a culture of expository writing.

Implementation and Monitoring of Model Program/Practices:

Implementation of our Schoolwide Expository Writing Program began in the fall of 2016 after we had a dismal performance on our spring of 2016 CAASPP scores. Initially students were reluctant to have to write within all content areas. The common student question was, why do we have to write in this class...it's not English? However, in time they learned that a brief expository essay does not really take very much time to write once you have established the main idea of your topic and you use facts and evidence to support your claim using a five paragraph model.

We recognized that any new program/practice would have some problems. For example, holidays and other breaks in the school calendar could wreak havoc with the writing schedule, but we were willing to stick with it in hopes that students would

become accustomed to writing and would not shy away from writing tasks on the CAASPP tests or general classroom assignments. During PLC meetings, faculty meetings and monthly collaboration meetings the departments discussed the noticeable improvement in writing. It was noted that many students were less apathetic about the writing process in general. Some departments even began to use interdisciplinary writing assignments to promote cross curricular instruction.

The acceptance of this new schoolwide expository writing atmosphere did not occur overnight but it wasn't as difficult as we thought it would be. Any new student who enrolls in our school has an adjustment period just as all new incoming freshman do, but the students quickly assimilate into the culture of our campus. This is our third year of implementation so not even one full four-year cohort has graduated from Anderson Union High School while participating in this model program. However, the CAASPP test results over the last two year have shown remarkable improvements. Anderson Union High School believes this model program/practice is a large factor in that progress.



Monthly Expository Writing Schedule

- WEEKLY - English: 2-3 page written response from performance task type prompts.
- WEEK ONE - Social Science: 1-2 page written response from content area prompts.
- WEEK TWO - Math: 1-2 page written response from performance task type prompts.
- WEEK THREE - Science: 1-2 page written response from content area prompts.
- WEEK FOUR - VAPA/FA/FL: 1-2 page written response from content area prompts.

Distinguished Model Program/Practices in Relationship to our District LCAP:

As previously mentioned in the narrative of our Model Programs/Practices regarding our Achievement Period the primary focus of our District LCAP is to prepare students academically for post-graduation success in college and/or career. We will accomplish this through the following overarching actions: 1. Provide an academic program that prepares students to meet the requirements of college expectation regardless if the student actually chooses to enroll or not. 2. Through specific counseling and classroom activities engage parents in the four-year academic plan for their student(s). 3. Provide

multiple opportunities to support students who struggle academically and/or socially so they may reach their full potential.

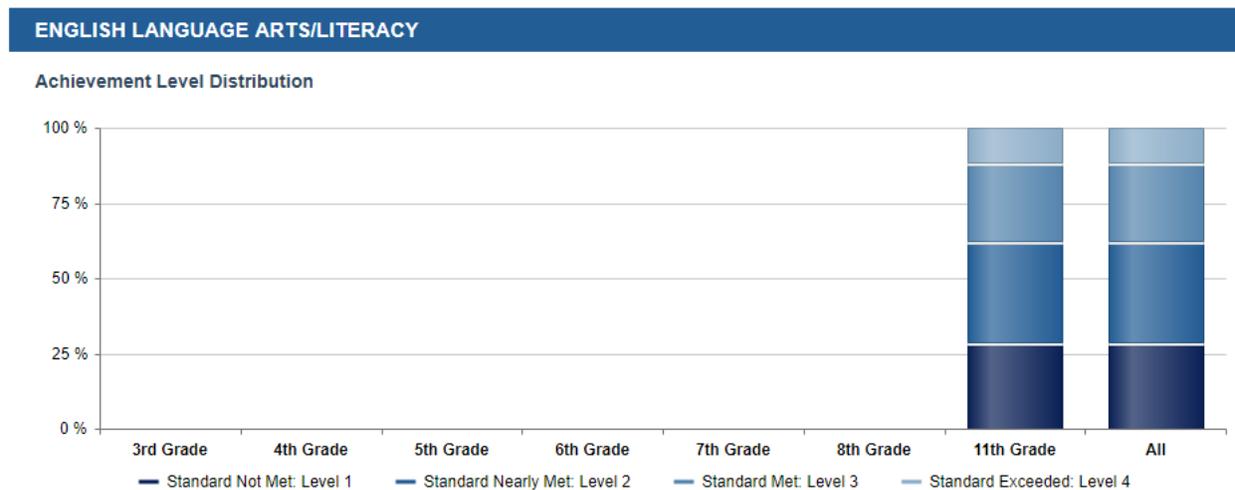
The Anderson Union High School Schoolwide Expository Writing Program is closely aligned with the first and third action plan goals of the Anderson Union High School District LCAP. Action plan #17 of the Anderson Union High School District LCAP references ELA intervention as a plan to increase academic achievement. Anderson Union High School does have a Title I ELA intervention class on campus and this program is successful for the small amount of students who are participating in that intervention class. However, the Schoolwide Expository Writing Program *distinguishes* itself from the district model because it targets all students in all classes instead of just certain subgroups.

Results and Outcomes of Model Programs/Practices:

As mentioned earlier in this narrative, the ELA CAASPP scores of Anderson Union High School in 2015 and 2016 were dismal. With the implementation of our Schoolwide Expository Writing Program they went up a staggering 36% in 2017. We were concerned that this could have been a one-time phenomenon but in 2018 we were able to maintain those high scores and actually increase them by .6%.

Another positive outcome of the program was that our students Early Assessment Program for UC/CSU entrance also increased. This allows our students to take credit bearing classes immediately versus having to take remedial classes their first year of college. We are excited for the future of our students and we plan to continue with this writing program into the future. Please see the ELA CAASPP results below and notice how many more students met or exceeded the standards at Anderson Union High School in 2017 and 2018 compared to the prior years before we began using the Schoolwide Expository Writing Program.

Smarter Balanced Results (2015)

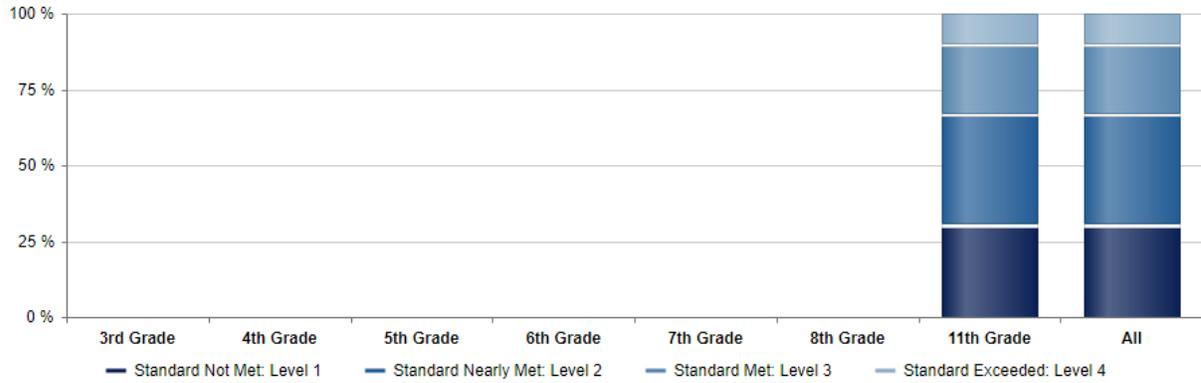


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Smarter Balanced Results (2016)

ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS/LITERACY

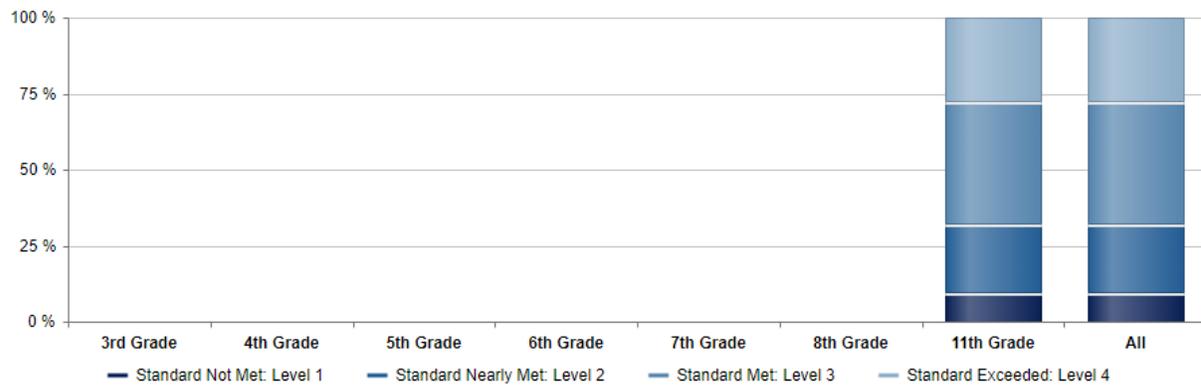
Achievement Level Distribution



Smarter Balanced Results (2017)

ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS/LITERACY

Achievement Level Distribution



Smarter Balanced Results (2018)

ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS/LITERACY

Achievement Level Distribution

