

# THE GEFFEN PLAYHOUSE WRITING PROJECT

## EVALUATION REPORT 2012-2013

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## INTRODUCTION

The Geffen Playhouse Writing Project was a pilot project developed by the Geffen leaders and staff in collaboration with UCLA Center X, Partnership for Los Angeles Schools, and the 10<sup>th</sup> grade teachers and administration at the two high schools (Mathematics and Science; Engineering and Technology) comprising the Mendez Learning Center.

The overall goals of the program for students included increasing knowledge and appreciation of theatre, advancing student critical thinking and writing skills, increasing student confidence in writing, as well as first-time pass rates on the California High School Exit Exam (CAHSEE). Additional goals for teachers included advancing personal knowledge and appreciation of theatre and skills in teaching writing.

The project consisted of the following activities for 10<sup>th</sup> grade students and the two 10<sup>th</sup> grade teachers at Mendez:

- Student attendance at four play productions at the Geffen Playhouse
- Pre and post sessions for each play conducted by trained teaching artists in order to develop students' audience etiquette and theatre vocabulary, knowledge and appreciation of theatre and have targeted discussions about the plays to inform practice writing assignments
- Teacher development of writing prompts for student practice essays based on the different genres of the writing portion of the CAHSEE (e.g., biographical narrative, response to literature, expository, persuasive, and business letter)
- Teacher professional development by writing coaches to learn teaching strategies related to essay writing on the different genres and test-taking strategies specifically for the essay portion of the CAHSEE
- Session for students on effective essay writing and the various essay genres on the CAHSEE
- Cold writes of essays on each play based on different genres
- Sessions for students to get individualized feedback from teachers and writing coaches as well as peers on practice essay assignments
- Essay revision process by students

In order to examine the implementation and impact of the program on the students and teachers at Mendez, The Geffen Playhouse partnered with Vital Research to create and conduct a comprehensive process and outcome evaluation of The Writing Project.

## Guiding Evaluation Questions

The following questions guided the process and outcome evaluation for the 2012-13 academic year.

### Outcome Evaluation Questions

- How much knowledge do students gain about theatre after watching the plays?
- Do students have a greater appreciation for theater after watching they plays?
- How satisfied are students with the plays and facilitated discussion?
- Does the pass rate on the ELA portion of the CAHSEE exam improve from previous years?
- What factors (e.g., practice writing assignment scores, attendance at the plays, gender, EL status) predict scores on the CAHSEE?
- How satisfied are teachers with the professional development and coaching offered? How can it be improved?

### Process Evaluation Questions

- What feedback might teachers have about the program and implementation?
- How might the program be improved?
- What is the fidelity of program implementation?
- How do students' react to the program in the classroom (e.g., attentiveness, response to coaching)?

## EVALUATION METHODS

### DATA COLLECTION ACTIVITIES

#### Student Pre and Post survey

The pre and post survey assessed students' comfort level with and knowledge of live theatre, their reactions and satisfaction with each of the plays, as well as their confidence in writing and school. Additionally, the post survey included questions related to student experiences working with the teaching artists and writing coaches as well as experiences with the program overall and suggestions for improvement. Pre surveys were administered in October 2012 and post surveys in April 2013.

#### Observations

Trained researchers at Vital Research observed post-show sessions with teaching artists and students which took place the day after students watched the play. Post-show sessions were observed for the first and last play experiences. Researchers also observed the professional development conducted by the writing coaches with teachers and feedback session with writing coaches, teachers, and students. Feedback sessions were observed for the first and last writing assignments.

#### Student Focus Groups

In April 2013, two focus groups were conducted with students from each of the two 10<sup>th</sup> grade teachers' classes (N=26). The focus groups were intended to gain a more in-depth perspective on students' experiences attending plays, working with the teaching artists and writing coaches, as well as the impact of the program on their writing and confidence levels, as well as any suggestions they had for the program moving forward.

#### Teacher Training Evaluation

Teachers were asked to evaluate the effectiveness of the professional development and coaching to prepare them to work with students on the writing assignments in the classroom. Teacher evaluations were administered in November 2012.

#### Teacher Implementation Survey

Teachers were asked to share their interpretations of the key goals of the Writing Project, student engagement in the pre and post show sessions, effectiveness of the feedback sessions with writing coaches, as well as the impact of the plays and associated activities on students. The teacher implementation survey was administered mid-project in January 2013.

Table 1 includes the number of participants who completed surveys.

TABLE 1.SURVEY RESPONSES

DATA SOURCES	# OF RESPONSES
Student Pre Surveys	113
Student Post Surveys	99
Student Pre and Post Matched Surveys	83
Teacher Training Evaluation	2
Teacher Implementation Survey	2

### Practice Writing Assignment Scores

Scores on all four practice writing assignments for all students were collected and analyzed to determine if scores improved with greater practice.

### CAHSEE Scores

Individual student-level CAHSEE overall ELA scores and scores for the writing strands of the exam were collected and analyzed.

## ANALYSIS

All quantitative data were analyzed using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS). All qualitative data were content analyzed in *Microsoft Access* or the qualitative software analysis program *Atlas.ti*.

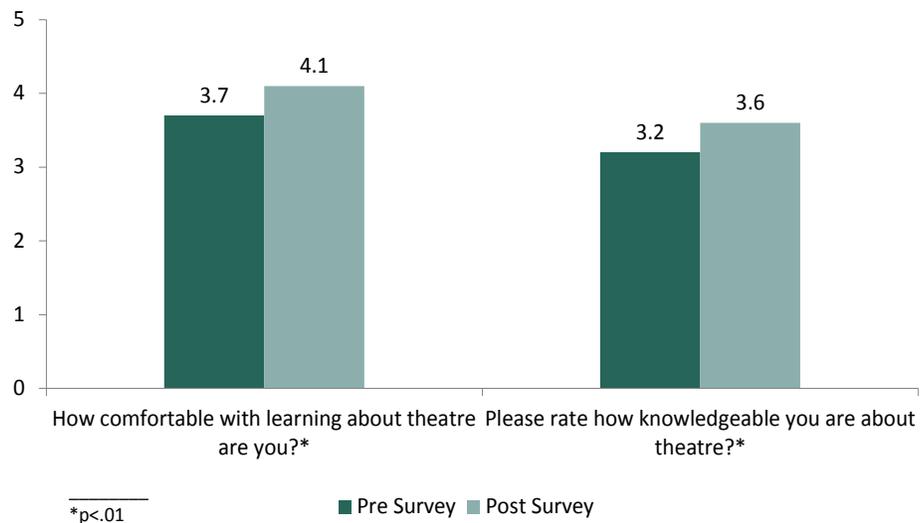
## EVALUATION RESULTS

### STUDENT OUTCOMES

#### Knowledge and Appreciation of Theatre

On surveys, student self-reports of comfort level with and knowledge about live theatre significantly improved from pre to post ( $p < .01$ ). Student average ratings of comfort level with learning about live theatre increased from 3.7 to 4.1 on a 5-point scale (1=Very Uncomfortable, 2=Uncomfortable, 3=Somewhat Comfortable, 4=Comfortable, 5=Very Comfortable), and average ratings of how knowledgeable students were about live theatre significantly improved from 3.2 to 3.6 on a 5-point scale (1=Not at all Knowledgeable, 2=Not too Knowledgeable, 3=Somewhat Knowledgeable, 4=Knowledgeable, 5=Very Knowledgeable) (See Figure 1).

FIGURE 1. STUDENT AVERAGE COMFORT LEVEL WITH AND KNOWLEDGE ABOUT LIVE THEATRE



Overall, students enjoyed their play experiences at the Geffen, with the majority (65% to 91%) indicating being satisfied with each of the four plays “some” to “a lot.” The most popular play among students was *Coney Island Christmas* (72% enjoyed the play a lot), followed by *By the Way, Meet Vera Stark* (54% enjoyed the play a lot) (See Figure 2). The majority of students cited enjoying the humor and funniness of both plays, as well as being able to relate to the characters and situations, particularly the young characters in *Coney Island Christmas*. Sample comments from students included:

*I enjoyed “By the Way, Meet Vera Stark” because it was my first time going to a theater and I enjoyed watching it because it was funny and nice. Also the “Coney Island Christmas” I like a lot because it was very fun and the actors were fun.*

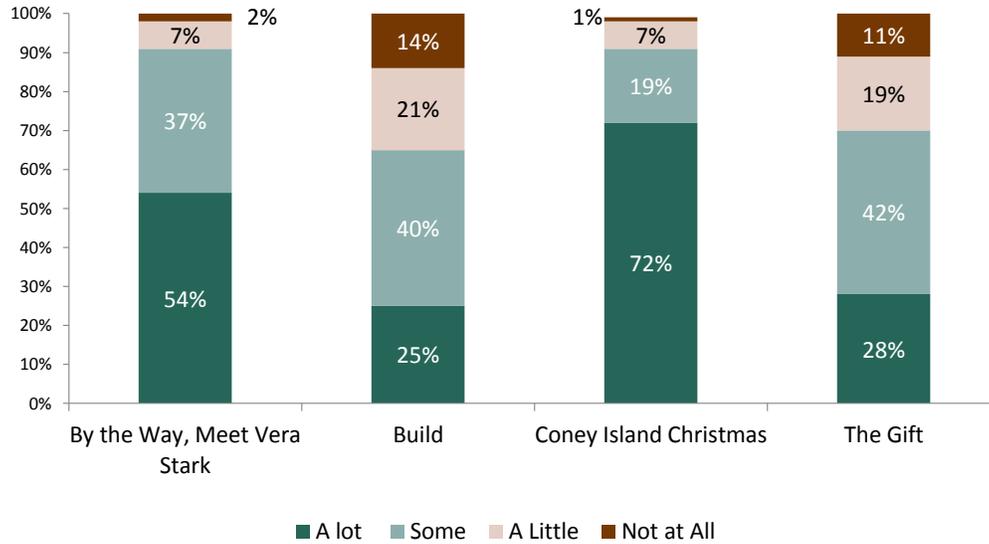
*“By the Way, Meet Vera Stark” was a really funny play. I loved it. It not only had real life problems, it also had this funny and interesting way of showing it.*

*I enjoyed some plays a lot because they were funny. Also because in some parts in would get intense. And I would see myself in their shoes.*

*Coney Island Christmas because it was humorous and it had some young actors that we as teens can relate to.*

*Because in Coney island Christmas the play was very funny and the characters somewhat were near our age.*

FIGURE 2. STUDENT ENJOYMENT WITH INDIVIDUAL PLAYS



When students indicated liking a play “a little,” to “not at all,” it was generally because they felt the play was confusing/difficult to understand or they were not engaged for a variety of reasons, including the play did not have enough action, was too serious, or they couldn’t relate with the characters/issues. Several students also commented on not liking the characters smoking in *By the Way, Meet Vera Stark*. Sample comments from students included:

*I didn’t really understand the theme or the whole concept about the play.*

*I didn’t enjoy “Build” because it was boring and confusing.*

*The Gift was too serious.*

*I enjoyed The Gift the least because it had older people problems.*

*I thought Build and the Gift were not interesting because I just couldn’t relate to those.*

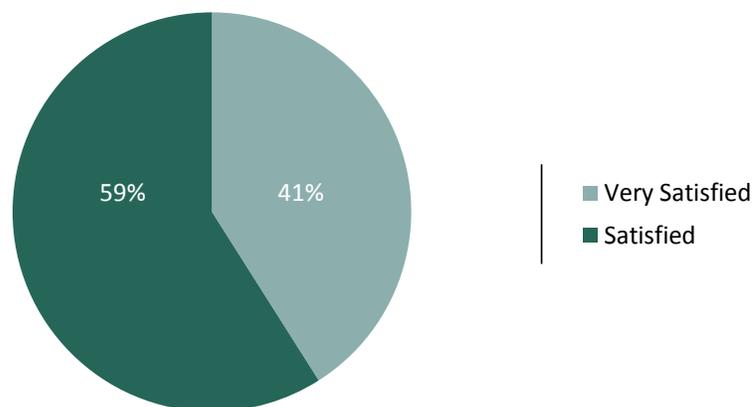
*Build was kind of boring, but it did catch my attention in some parts. The Gift did not interest me. I think because it was about adults?*

*By the Way, Meet Vera Stark had no action in it and had too much of the smoking.*

Despite some students commenting they had difficulty understanding plays, 94% of students reported that the class discussions and activities they did in class with the teaching artists were helpful in understanding each play, and 92% commented that they were helpful in understanding the experience of “theatre-going.” Specifically, students commented appreciating the different game activities done with the teaching artists (e.g., Zip Zap Zop), reading lines from the plays aloud, responding to photographs before each play and participating in the various improvisation activities.

Moreover, on post surveys, 100% of students reported being satisfied with their live theatre experiences at the Geffen this year, with almost half indicating they were **very satisfied** (41%) (See Figure 3).

FIGURE 3. OVERALL STUDENT SATISFACTION WITH LIVE THEATRE EXPERIENCE



Lastly, on post surveys, the majority of students expressed they would like to attend more live theatre in the future (84%) and felt that live theatre is something everyone should get to experience (82%).

### Confidence in Writing, Passing the CAHSEE, and School Overall

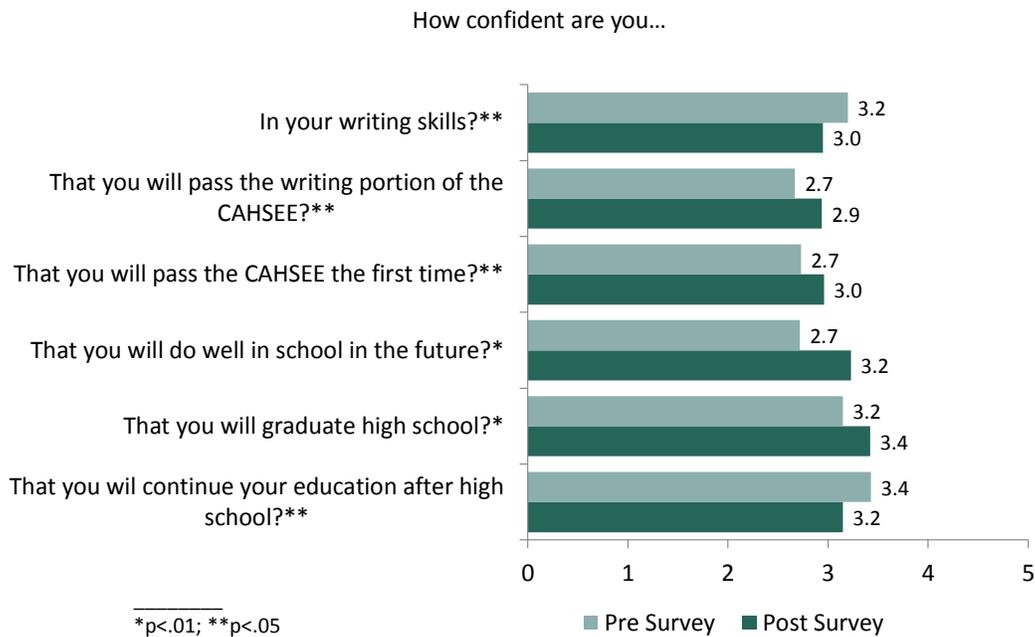
One of the goals of the evaluation was to examine students’ confidence in writing, and school overall, as well as confidence in passing the CAHSEE as a result of participating in the program. Notably, it was found that students’ confidence level in passing the writing portion of the CAHSEE and passing the CAHSEE the first time significantly increased from pre to post ( $p < .05$ ). The average rating for students’ confidence in passing the writing portion of the CAHSEE improved from 2.7 to 2.9 on a 4-point scale from pre to post (*1=Little to No Confidence, 2=Somewhat Confident, 3=Confident, 4=Very*

*Confident*) and 2.7 to 3.0 on a 4-point scale for passing the CAHSEE the first time (See Figure 4).

Additionally, students on average, significantly improved in their confidence about doing well in school in the future (2.7 to 3.2) and graduating from high school (3.2 to 3.4) ( $p < .01$ ) (See Figure 4).

Interestingly, although students felt more confident about their performance on the CAHSEE and doing well in school, students, on average, reported feeling significantly less confident in their writing abilities (3.2 to 3.0) ( $p < .05$ ) and continuing their education beyond high school (3.4 to 3.2) ( $p < .05$ ) (See Figure 4). Related to confidence in writing skills, this might be attributed to students' greater awareness of their own writing abilities and areas of weakness as the program really encouraged students to be reflective about their writing through feedback sessions and undergoing intensive revision of their writing. No open ended questions were asked to explore student educational and career plans beyond high school. Despite the decrease in average ratings for these two items, overall confidence still remained high from pre to post (average rating of 3.0 or higher).

FIGURE 4. STUDENT AVERAGE RATINGS FOR CONFIDENCE IN WRITING, CAHSEE PERFORMANCE, AND SCHOOL OVERALL



Additionally, students, in focus groups, shared that they felt their writing skills improved, citing that they learned more about different word choices/vocabulary, how to use transition words, develop their ideas, and how to start and finish an essay. Students commented:

*For me, in my writing, it helped with my word choices.*

*I think it helped me to improve with the sort of words that I use because sometimes I would use certain words but in the wrong sentence. Sometimes I would use them because I didn't know the right notation, the right definition. So I would make the mistake of using it. But they taught me that I have to be sure what the word means before I actually use it and also transition words from one paragraph to the other, not making the transition from the introduction to the first body paragraph the same as the second paragraph or the third paragraph. So the fact that they gave us a list of words for transitions and also, I think, they gave us a list of adjectives. It helped me increase my vocabulary which helped me in improving my writing skills.*

*I think it did because before, I wouldn't finish my essays. So now it gives more more ideas and stuff like that.*

*Yeah, I think my writing skills really improved because I'm not really an English person. I'm more of a math person, and I think it did increase because before, if they told me that I had to write something, I wouldn't know how to start it. But because we've been through this program, like going to the Geffen and everything...now I have an idea of how to start an essay or how to use examples, how to express myself in a writing assignment. So yeah, it helped me a lot.*

Moreover, in focus groups, students commented that their interest in writing also increased, as writing was a means of self-expression and fostering one's imagination/creativity. Two students commented:

*It showed me that it's a way to express yourself, how much you mean, to give your ideas on stuff.*

*Sometimes when I'm looking at something on TV, I kind of imagine me writing it down, like "oh, she dramatically did this," "this and that" I was like oh yeah, that's cool. Now I have an imagination of my own rather than somebody else telling it for me.*

Most students felt they learned "some to "a lot" about essay-writing from the writing coaches (90%). Additionally, the majority of students felt the feedback they received from the writing coaches (75%) and their teachers (82%) on practice essays were helpful to improving their writing, and the majority of students (83%) indicated that writing practice essays helped them with their essay on the CAHSEE ("some to "a lot"). As an added-benefit of the program, the majority of students (77%) also felt the writing skills learned in the program helped them in their other classes as well as outside of school.

One teacher poignantly shared about student experiences with the writing coaches: *The students recognize that they are pursuing something important. When coaches talk directly to them, as they did today, the students recognize credibility and reinforces that they are “worth” the high standards and expectations for their ability to navigate English Language Arts tasks.*

Teachers also echoed on the mid-year survey that as a result of the program *many students’ confidence and proficiency in writing was increasing* and students were *less intimidated by their own opinion*. One teacher reflected: *Because the dynamic quality of live theatre inspires immediate verbal reaction, the students are more likely to offer opinions, which is integral in critical thinking and writing*. Additionally, another teacher commented: *They are more comfortable with a variety of writing prompts, thesis statement development, coherent paragraph organization, etc.* The teacher went on to say that his/her students were *able to write more in a shorter amount of time* although writing under time pressure still remained a struggle for many.

Lastly, teachers underscored the importance of the writing assignments in helping students prepare for the CAHSEE. One teacher commented: *Yes. They [writing assignments] are very similar to the CAHSEE, but probably more challenging overall...which will hopefully make the actual CAHSEE seem more manageable.*

### Student Performance on the CAHSEE

Mendez had a personal goal of improving its ELA pass rate on the CAHSEE to 80% in 2012-13. For the 2012-13 school year, the ELA pass rate across both schools was **71%** (N=118), with the Math and Science School (N=56) impressively meeting its goal of an overall pass rate of **80%** and the Engineering and Technology School achieving an overall pass rate of **63%** in ELA.

Notably, there was a **significant increase** in the ELA pass rates of students across both the Math and Science and Engineering and Technology schools at Mendez in 2012-13 compared to the three previous school years: 2009-10, 2010-11, and 2011-12. Impressively, a significant increase in ELA pass rates from 2009-10 to 2012-13 was also observed by each school (See Figures 5-6). (Note: The sample for 2012-13 consists of the 10<sup>th</sup> grade students who participated in The Writing Project. Students who were 1) absent on the day of testing, 2) were not credit eligible, or 3) waived due to IEP classification, were not included in the data set.)

FIGURE 5. MATH AND SCIENCE SCHOOL ELA PASS RATES 2009-10 TO 2012-13

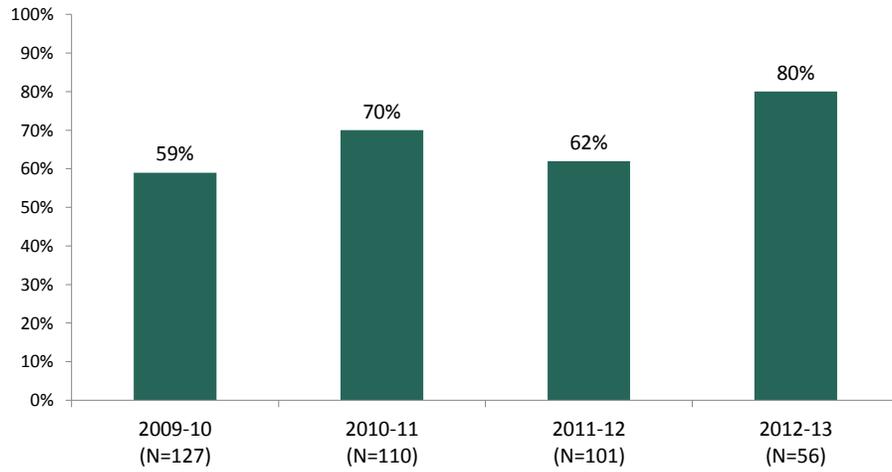
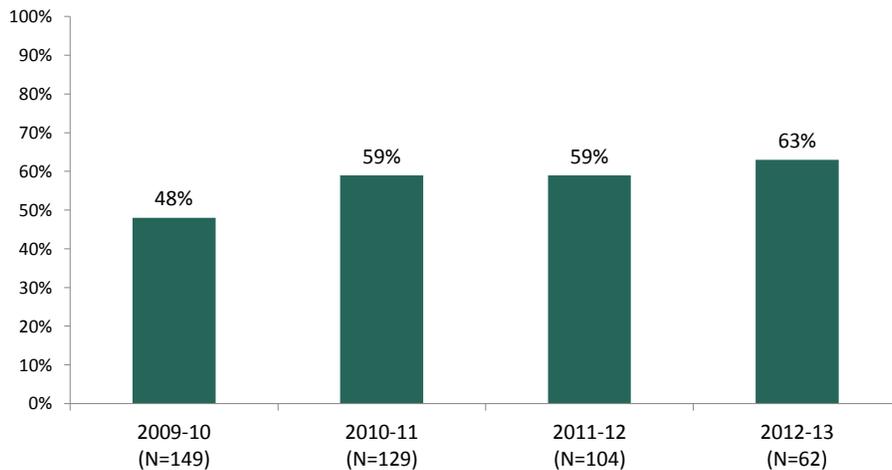


FIGURE 6. ENGINEERING AND TECHNOLOGY SCHOOL ELA PASS RATES 2009-10 TO 2012-13



Additional analyses of student-level data suggest that students who scored better on the 2<sup>nd</sup> attempt of their practice essay across the four essays they did in class tended to do better on the ELA portion of the CAHSEE overall as well as on each individual content strand (See Table 2). In most cases, students who scored 75% or higher on average across their four practice essays significantly outperformed students who scored lower on the practice essays for all areas of the ELA CAHSEE (See Table 2).

**TABLE 2. AVERAGE ESSAY SCORES AS A PREDICTOR FOR PERFORMANCE ON THE CAHSEE (ELA)**

AVERAGE ESSAY SCORE BASED ON 2 <sup>ND</sup> ATTEMPT	CAHSEE SCORE
<b>ELA Overall*</b>	
Under 50%	60%
50%-69%	72%
75% or higher	82%
<b>Word Analysis*</b>	
Under 50%	66%
50%-69%	77%
75% or higher	88%
<b>Reading Comprehension *</b>	
Under 50%	61%
50%-69%	70%
75% or higher	84%
<b>Literary Response*</b>	
Under 50%	62%
50%-69%	75%
75% or higher	81%
<b>Writing Strategies*</b>	
Under 50%	54%
50%-69%	67%
75% or higher	79%
<b>Writing Conventions*</b>	
Under 50%	57%
50%-69%	78%
75% or higher	86%
<b>Writing Application*</b>	
Under 50%	56%
50%-69%	55%
75% or higher	64%

\*Significant difference in CAHSEE scores based on performance on practice essays

## TEACHER OUTCOMES

### Professional Development

#### Planning Meeting

Overall, teachers were highly satisfied with the professional development they received from the writing coaches through the program. On training evaluations, teachers strongly agreed they were satisfied overall with the first meeting they had with the writing coaches to discuss student data and prepare for the first feedback session with students. Average ratings were a 3.5 or higher for all items (*Rating Scale: 4=Strongly Agree, 3=Agree, 2=Disagree, 1=Strongly Disagree*)(See Table 3).

TABLE 3. SATISFACTION WITH WRITING COACH MEETING ON OCTOBER 26, 2012

OBJECTIVES	AVERAGE RATING
1. The meeting objectives were clearly defined.	4.0
2. The meeting met all of its stated objectives.	4.0
3. The meeting was well-organized.	4.0
4. The meeting length was appropriate.	4.0
5. The meeting activities/experiences were valuable to me.	4.0
Writing Coaches	
6. The writing coaches were well-prepared and organized.	4.0
7. The writing coaches were knowledgeable.	4.0
8. The writing coaches effectively presented the material.	4.0
9. The writing coaches provided time for value interaction/exchange of ideas.	4.0
10. The writing coaches addressed my teaching needs.	4.0
11. The writing coaches used effective teaching strategies.	4.0
Training Experience	
12. The meeting provided me with the opportunity to....	
a. Assess students' writing needs.	3.5

OBJECTIVES	AVERAGE RATING
b. Prepare effectively for the feedback sessions.	3.5
c. Implement effective feedback sessions.	3.5
13. The training provided me with...	
a. Support for implementing the feedback sessions.	3.5
b. Useful strategies and techniques for working with students during the feedback sessions.	3.5
14. Overall, I was satisfied with the training.	4.0

According to teachers, the most important things learned from the meeting included *strategies for helping students deconstruct a writing program; a protocol for using a model essay, and how the writing coaches would make the needs of students accessible.*

Additionally, teachers felt the coaches were *knowledgeable, flexible, and collaborative* and that the time/location of the meeting was good and the agenda was presented well resulting in a clear plan.

As a suggestion for improvement, one teacher commented: *The format for written comments on student work could have been shared in advance of the meeting. We could have used Mendez students' essays to identify patterns in their writing.*

### Coaching Day

Teachers also received one day of coaching on November 14, 2012. Teachers overall with satisfied with the coaching day with average ratings of a 3.0 or higher for all items (*Rating Scale: 4=Strongly Agree, 3=Agree, 2=Disagree, 1=Strongly Disagree*) (See Table 4).

TABLE 4. SATISFACTION WITH COACH DAY ON NOVEMBER 14, 2012

OBJECTIVES	AVERAGE RATING
1. The objectives of the coaching were clearly defined.	3.0
2. The coaching met its stated objectives.	3.0
3. The coaching was well-organized.	3.0
4. The coaching length was appropriate.	3.0
5. The coaching activities/experiences were valuable to me.	4.0

OBJECTIVES	AVERAGE RATING
<b>Writing Coaches</b>	
6. The writing coaches were well prepared and organized.	4.0
7. The writing coaches were knowledgeable.	4.0
8. The writing coaches effectively presented the material.	4.0
9. The writing coaches provided time for value interaction/exchange of ideas.	3.5
10. The writing coaches addressed my teaching needs.	3.5
11. The writing coaches used effective teaching strategies.	3.5
<b>Coaching Experience</b>	
12. The coaching session provided me with the opportunity to...	
a. Discuss individual students' writing needs.	3.0
b. Develop a plan of action for addressing individual students' writing needs.	3.0
c. Address my individual needs as a writing teacher.	3.5
13. The coaching session provided me with...	
a. Tools for improving students' writing.	4.0
b. Skills needed to serve as an effective writing coach.	4.0
c. Methods to effectively critique students' writing.	3.5
d. Teaching methods that I will use in future writing instruction.	4.0

According to teachers, the most important things learned from the day included:

- *A step by step method for students to deconstruct a prompt: "Do/What/Details."*
- *How to organize the teaching tools.*

Both teachers mentioned the modeling done by coaches as an additional strength of the day:

- *Students had an opportunity to do hands on work with two model prompts.*
- *The students benefit from effective modeling. The students approach a new task better, I think when they see "their" teacher collaborating with other*

*teachers to help them meet their goals. The strengths in the presented material include the engagement the coach realized from the students.*

Suggestions for improvement to the day of coaching included:

- *More co-teaching (coach & teacher together – although this would have required more planning time, which is hard to come by.*
- *A way to check for understanding that assesses (even informally) the student's understanding.*

### *Experience Developing Student Writing Prompts*

On the mid-year survey, teachers were asked their thoughts about developing the student practice writing prompts. Overall, teachers had very positive experiences, with one teacher sharing: *It has been an engaging collaborative process between the two Mendez teachers, with active participation and feedback from the writing coaches and project director.*

## PROJECT IMPLEMENTATION

### PROJECT STRENGTHS

By far, one of the most unique and exceptional aspects of the program was the opportunity for students to attend multiple plays at the Geffen over the 5-month course of the program. One teacher commented on the benefits of the project:

*First, that students are given a most generous opportunity they may not have realized. The benefit of seeing more than one play is the most significant element of this opportunity. Students' lives are changed; they now know more not only of the theatre, but that there are modalities of themes of human experience that warrant their attention, and there are experiences that will lead to further exploration. This is absolutely life-changing and develops an intellectual sensibility for them. They will now be able to connect this experience to their lives and their roles as students.*

Students also reiterated that attending the plays was one of the the most valuable aspects of the program. However, they also highlighted all of the various program components, as being valuable, including having in-depth discussions about the plays with teaching artists, learning different forms of self-expression, learning about writing from the coaches, as well as practicing their writing and receiving feedback on their writing from their coaches and teachers. Sample comments from students included:

*The most valuable part of this program for me was going to the plays and then discussing them thoroughly in class.*

*Getting to experience different ways of expressing yourself, like in a play, and in writing.*

*The skills the writing coaches taught us was very helpful.*

*Going to the plays and coming back to school to write the essays with the help of the coaches was very valuable.*

*Well, just writing so much helped me improve and I got so good at it thanks to everyone who came and gave me feedback.*

Students also appreciated the dedication of The Writing Project staff in helping them improve in their writing/meet their educational goals and overall were grateful for the opportunity to participate in the program:

*Being able to interact with the teaching artists. The fact that they come to help us in becoming better writers is amazing.*

*Just knowing that there's people out there willing to help students improve themselves in education.*

*That they would choose this school to participate in such a new experience for us.*

## AREAS FOR ENHANCEMENT

According to teachers on surveys, the most needed area for improvement was around the scheduling/logistics of the program modules. One teacher commented that at times it was difficult to incorporate other classwork and calendar events, while another commented that there was not enough time to cover certain writing skills for a genre before the first draft writing assignment. Comments included:

*The organization of the modules was wonderfully efficient and so much was anticipated that the 'bases were covered' and that helps so much. The only challenge was incorporating our other classroom and other calendar events into the schedule of the modules but that was more expected than a challenge.*

*At times it felt rushed, in that there were not always opportunities to fully teach students the writing skills required to be successful for a given essay type before the first draft writing session.*

On surveys and in focus groups, students were also asked to share ways in which the program could be enhanced for quality improvement purposes. Several students

expressed wanting to attend more plays and having the opportunity to watch plays with characters they could relate to (e.g., teenagers):

*I think the program should let us see more plays.*

*I think it would be better to consider having plays about teenagers like us. I think most of us would enjoy them, and reflect more to them.*

A few students had suggestions on the writing prompts/essay topics:

*Try to make interesting prompts so more students could get motivated to write.*

*If possible, it could be a variety of essay topics for each play instead of just one.*

*Have better essay topics. Some topics were completely irrelevant to what we saw. What's the point in watching the play, just to write an essay on another topic.*

Some students shared that they wanted project staff to visit the classroom more frequently throughout the year and to continue to work with the Juniors at Mendez in the coming year:

*By coming more often to keep the motivation in me going throughout my great experiences at the Geffen Theater.*

*They should work with Juniors next year from Mendez, and the coaches should come more often to Mendez.*

Lastly, many students did not have any suggestions for improvement and **liked the program just as it was**:

*I really enjoyed the way the program worked. I don't know how it can get better.*

*This program is beneficial to students and I believe that there should be no changes done at all.*

*I think everything was almost perfect.*

*None, it's good as it is!*

## SUMMARY

In conclusion, the piloting of the Geffen Playhouse Writing Project was a highly successful endeavor. As evidenced on student surveys, knowledge and appreciation of theatre significantly improved from pre to post for students, as well as confidence levels in passing the CAHSEE and doing well in school in the future. Additionally, the 2012-13 ELA pass rates on the CAHSEE for Mendez provide strong evidence in support of students' increased confidence. ELA pass rates on the CAHSEE significantly improved for both the Math and Science and Engineering and Technology schools at Mendez from the three previously years. Furthermore, teachers at Mendez sung high praises of the program and the opportunity to work collaboratively with such dedicated project staff, including the director, writing coaches and teacher artists, in order to help students improve in their writing and overall achieve their goals. In moving forward in the 2013-14 school year, the program may want to reflect on some of the areas of enhancement mentioned earlier in order to most effectively meet the needs of the students and teachers served at Mendez.

Lastly, one student on the impact of his/her experience in the program movingly shared:

*I used to think it [theatre] was boring. I'd rather go watch a movie or something. But it changed because the type of plays I went to see at the Geffen were more interesting and you could actually see...As they said, it makes you wonder, it makes you think, it makes you go beyond it...I think the theatre- it changed my mind.*



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