

Redefining Success: Is the Disarticulation Between High School and College Written Composition a Deterrent to Student Learning?

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Abstract: Our mixed methods study (surveys, N=43; interviews, N=12; samples of student work from interviewees, N=50) of 12th-grade English teachers revealed three sources of disconnect between high school writing instruction and college-level writing. To better align instruction with college-level expectations high school teachers need time and opportunity to practice revising and editing with students, colleges need to explicitly state expectations in terms of high school academic standards, and students need a writing curriculum requiring them to write both formulaically (to pass standardized tests) and creatively (to overcome doldrums induced by writing formulaically). These points will be key in future investigations of the perceived disarticulation of high school and college written composition curriculum and instruction.

As long as ten years ago, the National Association of Colleges and Employers (2015), stated that 73.4% of employers value candidates with strong written communication skill. Today, with the prevalence of AI, colleges and high schools more than ever need to teach students to communicate via writing. Knowledge of how to write multi-sentence dialogic prompts that include such ELA factors as intended use and audience help satisfy employers’ needs (Fisher & Frey, 2025). Forty-three percent of sixth- through twelfth-graders already report they have used AI for idea generation/revision suggestions (Playing Catch Up, 2025). The 2017 NAEP (National Assessment of Educational Progress) assessments found 72% of students coming out of high school are not ready for college-level writing. (What would a hypothetical 2025 NAEP assessment say about writing preparedness and AI?) High school English teachers are working hard to prepare students for college and careers, so why are incoming first-year college students unprepared for the demands of college writing to the point their writing is negatively affecting first- to second-year college retention (Bowean, 2014; Cantor, 2019; Sanabria et al, 2020)?

To investigate this question, college presidents and school district superintendents invited a cadre of college professors and high school educators to join the Long Island Regional Advisory Council on Higher Education (LIRACHE). This consortium created the Writing Subgroup subcommittee that was tasked with examining the alleged disconnect between high school writing instruction and college writing instruction. To this end, some members of the subcommittee conducted a research project to investigate if and why the disconnect exists and how we can address it. The results of that study included a disarticulation of the way the writing process is taught and used in high school and college. Results were published in multiple publications (Giouroukakis et al., 2023; Giouroukakis et al, 2021; Kramer-Vida et al, 2021). To more closely investigate these results, we (Vicky and Louisa, two of the original researchers) conducted a follow-up case study of 12th-grade English teachers’ perceptions of their writing instruction and how it prepares students for their first-year college writing assignments. The two research questions examined were: What do 12th-grade high school English teachers perceive as appropriate writing curriculum and instruction to prepare students for college writing? and How do 12th-grade high school English teachers perceive their teaching of writing?

Data was collected from teachers in high, medium, and low-achieving public schools in our geographic area. Artifacts consisted of surveys, interviews, teacher assignments, and samples of

student work. We hypothesized that there would be a disconnect between college professors’ expectations of students’ written proficiency and high school English teachers’ perceptions of the writing skill that students need. The disconnect between high school and college expectations would negatively affect student achievement. This disconnect may account for many students not graduating from college in a timely manner and/or transferring to institutions that students feel more closely match their academic background. An additional potential problem arising from this disconnect is the establishment of non-credit remedial writing courses at the college level which are escalating the drop-out rate (Cantor, 2019; Sanabria et al, 2020).

What Writing Researchers/College Professors Want for/from Student Writers

Broadly speaking, writing researchers tend to advise a Writing Across the Curriculum (WAC — Bazerman, 2005) approach as appropriate for a high school English writing curriculum. Schmoker (2025) recommended authentic literacy, suggesting full length, purposeful in-class writing in all content areas with associated instruction. For example, one high school implemented a National Science Foundation grant that emphasized scenario-based assessments, that is, critically writing about real world topics based on primary sources and authentic data (Singer et al, 2024). Additionally, to transfer student writing skill to all classes, Griffith (2013) suggested a genre awareness class where students could connect their own background, their values, and what they have previously learned to the new genres to which they will be exposed in different academic areas. In addition, Rhodes et al (2003) advocated for an interdisciplinary, thematic, inquiry-based course to enhance collaboration between high school and college curricula. Marakoff (2019) suggested assigning multiple, discipline-specific tasks, valuing process over product, and not teaching formulaic strategies. Coskie et al (2022) proposed writing assignment choices, creating one’s own norms, utilization of technological support tools, time-on-task, peer discussion, and focusing on the communicative value of the whole text to create successful classroom writing groups that parallel the characteristics of successful book clubs. Additionally, Kline and Kang (2022) advised reflecting, re-imagining, and revisiting a piece as a framework for centering critical writing pedagogy. In this scenario, student writers looked at their pieces cognitively, socio-culturally, and critically in terms of genre, grammar and language, agency and participation, and the use of technology and digital media. Gee and Zhang (2024) discussed using AI to develop flexible writing that is composed of problem solving, creativity, and metacognition around community events, coding and modding (modifying code), interdisciplinary activities, and transmedia storytelling. Expository, argumentative, creative, dialogic, collaborative and reflective writing should be taught within the bigger concepts of art and design, video production, photography, and music and sound. This cybersapien integrative writing emphasizes the analytical and processing capabilities of AI combined with human creativity, intuition, and emotional intelligence in online affinity spaces.

In general, professors want students to write disciplinary research well. Robinson (2014) noted that well written arguments were essential for college writing success, and another author noted that college assigned tasks were typically criticism and argument development, identifying a problem and suggesting a solution, and analyzing audience (HS Writing Gap, 2007). Additionally, an experienced first-year writing professor often noticed gaps in citation knowledge, use of a long five-paragraph template, quoting as the sole source of evidence, students looking for prompts rather than developing as personal-choice-driven writers, students not seeing narration, exposition, description, and persuasion as modes of expression, and editing instead of revising (Marakoff & Thomas, 2019). Per Hammond and Barber (2024), instruction

should help students self-actualize, imagine, and engage in different social discourses, focusing on the process, not the end product. As noted in Edcuration (2022), in college, students need to write research papers and long essays that explore multiple perspectives supported by data, in a scholarly academic presentation style. However, many students struggle to do so. We wondered if this was a result of how and what students had been taught in high school English.

An issue that might be impacting the high school/college writing disconnect is the emphasis in high school on formulaic writing for standardized tests. Fifteen years ago, Fanetti et al. (2010) noted a stress on “power” and modal writing for the essays that are part of many standardized tests. The academic weight given to the tests tends to diminish instructional focus on process writing and portfolio assessment. Streibel (2014) agreed, noting the lack of instruction on writing for authentic audiences and real context. However, college-level writing does not lend itself to formulaic mastery nor adherence to standards-based benchmarks which can be replicated by AI (Hammond & Barber, 2024). Even the College Board’s Advanced Placement (AP) program was criticized for teaching students to write to a prompt and for rubric-based scoring, rather than teaching students the skill taught in a college-level introductory Writing course (Fleitz, 2007). In addition, an emphasis on writing shorter answers instead of rigorous, longer, thought pieces may not be preparing college-going students with the reasoning-out composition skill they will need for full-length essays and other long writing assignments (Edcuration, 2022). Benjamin and Wagner (2021) noted such highly effective writing processes as allocating ample time for writing and instructor-guided, scaffolded, non-linear cycles of drafting, reviewing feedback, and revising should be high school writing expectations in all content areas if we want to ready students to become cognitive apprentices when they get to college. Additionally, Collier (2022) noted that teachers should focus on the National Council of Teachers of English (NCTE) principles. NCTE concepts include genre study, using writing as a tool for thinking, reflecting about writing, and revising based on self, peer, and instructor feedback. Students should write in different modalities and model their writing on mentor texts that reflect who the students are both as individuals and as writers. Help in this regard may be found in how Writing teachers are taught to teach Writing. For example, widespread instructional commitment to the way the National Writing Project (NWP), through their College, Career, and Community Writing Program (C3WP) professional development sessions, trains teachers in the pedagogy of argumentative writing (NWP, 2021) could solidify teacher commitment to the importance of revision as the “missing link” between high school writing and college-level writing. However, it remains an open question as to what high school teachers want for/from their students as writers. As well, it remains an open question what sort of opportunities high school teachers have to fulfill their wishes for their students and to fulfill the wishes of Writing researchers and college professors. Our study addresses these two questions.

High School Teachers and Writing Instruction

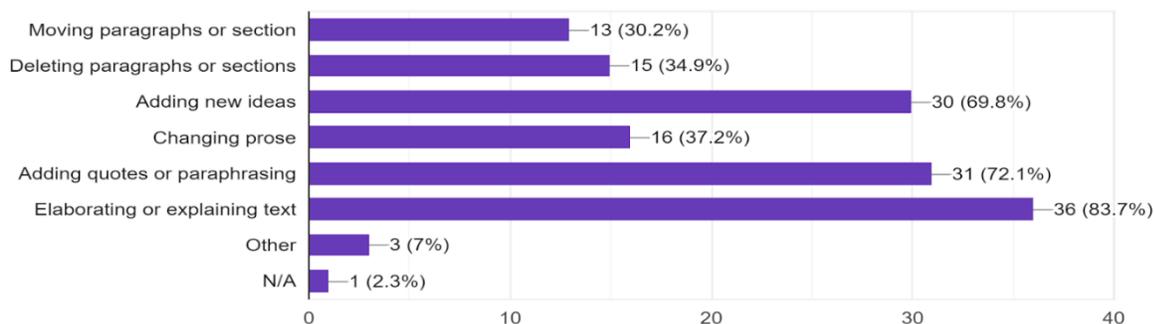
Our research questions, recall, deal with the perceptions of 12th-grade English teachers in our geographic area regarding appropriate Writing curriculum and instruction to prepare students for college-level writing. Based on our past research (Giouroukakis et al., 2023; Giouroukakis, et al., 2021; Kramer-Vida, et al., 2021), we hypothesized that there would be a disconnect between college professors’/Writing researchers’ expectations of students’ preparedness for college writing and high school English teachers’ beliefs that their instruction met those expectations. We wondered if the 12th-grade English teachers we interviewed, most of whom were teaching students who had already passed the English Regents, would comment on the potential high

school/college disconnect stemming from emphasizing formulaic writing. Data was collected from schools in two counties and consisted of surveys, interviews, and artifacts that included written assignments and sample student work. The survey was sent to school administrators who were asked to forward it to their 12th-grade English teachers. Responses were anonymous and voluntary. The survey was also distributed via listservs and our own personal contacts. It included 23 questions on a Likert scale (Always, Often, Sometimes, Never, N/A).

We collected data from September 2022 through January 2023. Forty-three usable surveys were completed and returned by a diverse cross section of teachers with various years of experience (1-5 years; 6-10 years; 11-15 years; 16-20 years; 21+ years) and teaching assignments (e.g., credit-bearing college-level course; honors-level course; remediation course for at-risk students; stand-alone English as a New Language course). To further inform the survey results, we interviewed six 12th-grade English teachers from high, medium, and low achieving districts (two from each level), disaggregated based on their students’ results on the English Regents. Some of these teachers had indicated in the survey that they were willing to be interviewed and some agreed after being asked by their school administrators. Each interview was conducted in a semi-structured format via Zoom and then transcribed. As part of the interview protocol, we asked the teachers to submit artifacts for our review: four or five of their longer writing assignments and some of their student responses to these assignments. From January through February 2023, we quantitatively and qualitatively analyzed the survey results, the interviews, and the artifacts that had been submitted. We perused Google generated charts and graphs of the data, and a statistician formally analyzed the survey results through a MANOVA analysis. The MANOVA analysis grouped the survey questions into the following themes: revision, editing, and process writing techniques/assignments. Using the themes as lenses, we analyzed the interviews and the submitted artifacts looking for patterns that ran through all of our data sources. Analysis of the data yielded the following findings:

Factor 1: Revision: Approximately 60% of the 12th-grade English teachers who were surveyed indicated that their students *often or always used revision techniques* for major and longer writing assignments, with the predominant change being elaborating or further explaining what they had written (83.7%). About 72.1% of the teachers noted that their students added quotes or paraphrased, while 69.8% of the surveyed teachers said that their students added new ideas. Some teachers also noted that their students changed their prose (37.2%) and deleted (34.9%) or moved (30.2%) paragraphs or sections (Figure 1 below).

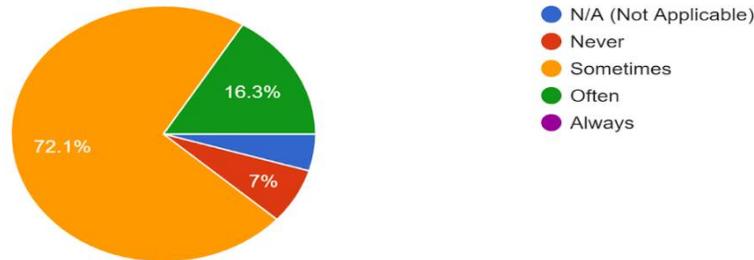
7. The revision strategy(ies) my students use the most (for major and longer writing assignments) is/are:
43 responses



Even though the majority of teachers indicated that they taught revision to a certain extent and that their students were implementing revision techniques, about 80% of them indicated that they were only *sometimes or never satisfied* with the revisions (Figure 2 below).

10. I am satisfied with the extent to which my students revise their writing to produce a final draft (for major and longer writing assignments).

43 responses

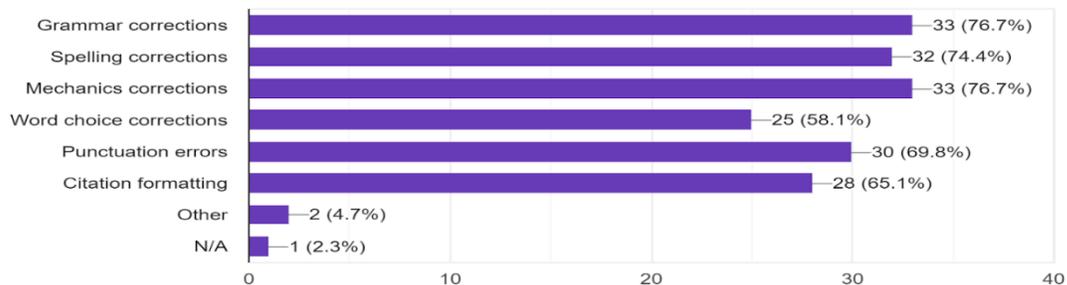


From the follow-up interviews, the teachers we spoke with indicated that many students resisted even guided revision and several students engaged in revision only because the revisions were graded. Some students required much scaffolded instruction and guidance in what revision is, how it differs from editing, and how to revise in order to improve written performance. Therefore, although teachers required revision as stated in their survey responses, interviews, and assignments/student samples, student revision was not satisfactory, and the time teachers spent teaching revision and the time allotted for students to revise their work was limited/constrained.

Factor 2: Editing: Considering the results above, it is interesting that 60% of the surveyed teachers indicated that their students *often or always revised*, but only about 44% of their students *often or always used editing and proofreading techniques*. Surprising to us, as we assumed that students would be doing more editing than revising, given that revising is more intellectually demanding. So, what editing techniques did the educators feel that their students were using? About 74%-76% of teachers indicated that their students were correcting mechanics, grammar or spelling (Figure 3 below).

12. The editing/proofreading technique(s) my students use the most (for major and longer writing assignments) is/are:

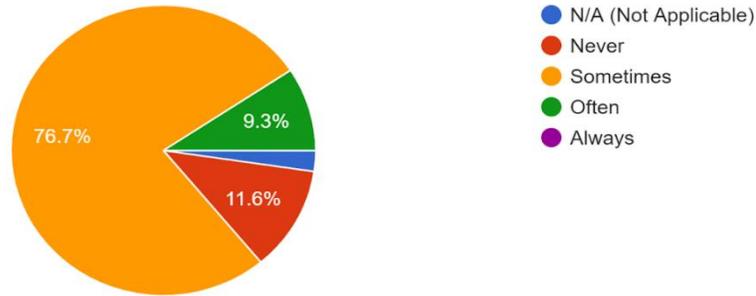
43 responses



Teachers said students sometimes edited and proofed throughout the writing process, but 88% of the teachers were only *sometimes or never satisfied* with the result (Figure 4, top next page).

15. I am satisfied with the extent to which my students edit/proofread their writing to produce a final draft (for major and longer writing assignments).

43 responses

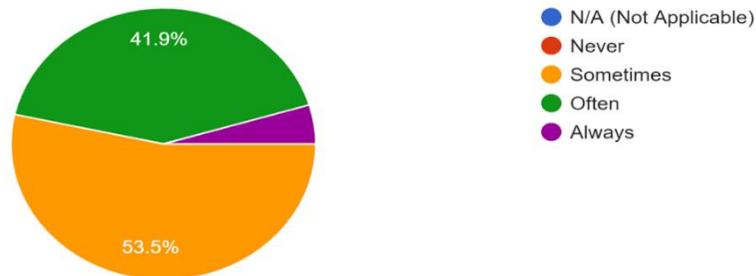


This result aligns with the revision result above, that most teachers are not satisfied with students’ use of revision. In the survey responses and the interviews, teachers stated that students were required to edit, but that some students seemed to confuse editing with revision.

Factor 3: Process Writing Techniques/Assignments: The surveyed teachers stated that only about 54% of them *sometimes* assigned major papers for their students to complete (Figure 5).

1. My students are assigned to produce major and longer writing assignments (not on-demand).

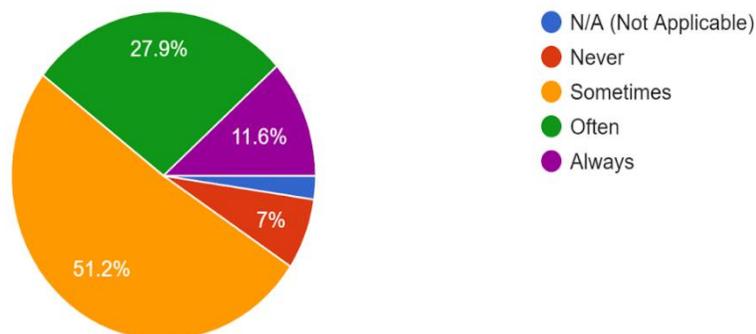
43 responses



Only about 51% indicated students *sometimes* wrote for authentic audiences (Figure 6 below).

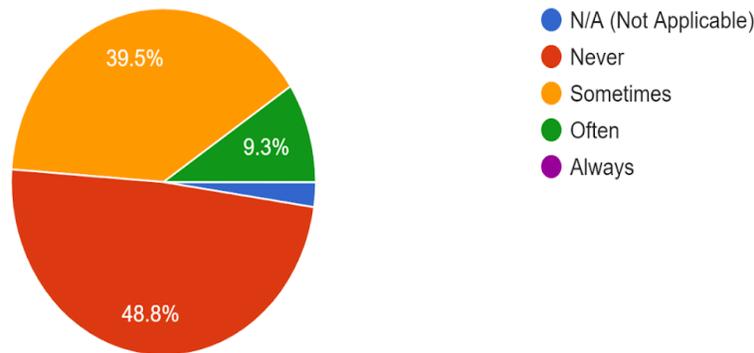
19. My students write for an authentic audience (for major and longer writing assignments).

43 responses



Additionally, according to the teachers, about 49% of their students *never publish* their pieces (Figure 7 below).

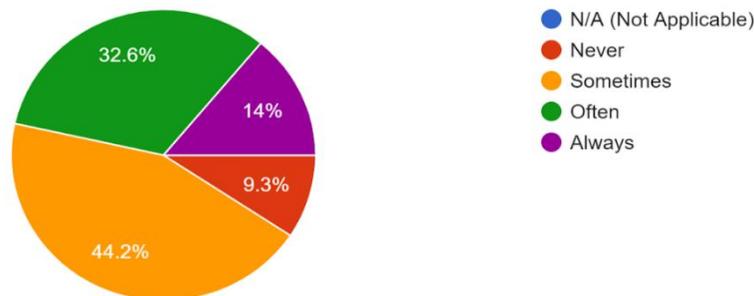
22. My students publish (make available to others) their final draft (for major and longer writing assignments) (e.g., via the classroom bulletin board,..., a class blog, school newsletter, online journal).
43 responses



If they publish anywhere, 37.2% of students publish in Google Classroom, followed by publishing in a portfolio (32.6%), and presenting their work to others (30.2%). In fact, 23.3% of the teachers surveyed chose *not applicable* for the question about sharing a final draft of a major assignment.

Yet, for assigned writing, the teachers did indicate approximately 70% of the students used the writing process either *often or always*. Per the teachers, about 63% of the students appeared to do so recursively. Unfortunately, according to the educators, using the writing process did not stop some students (47%) from writing formulaically either *often or always* (Figure 8 below).

20. My students use a formula (e.g., writing frame, graphic organizer, sentence starters) to produce a final draft (for major and longer writing assignments).
43 responses



MANOVA Analysis: The MANOVA analysis of the Google Form survey responses did not show significant differences at the alpha = .05 level of significance for any of the Revision, Editing, or Process factors across all groups. At the factor level, the analysis showed no significant differences at the alpha = .05 level of significance for the Revision and Process factors for all

groups. However, during post-hoc analysis — using the Games-Howell, Dunnett T3 post-hoc test for unequal variances — significant differences in the Editing factor were seen: *Values for teachers of At-Risk students were significantly higher than those for teachers of AP/College classes ($p < .05$)*. In general, teachers of at-risk students focus more on the editing process than do teachers of Advanced Placement or college preparation students. Perhaps this is due to the perceived need for at-risk students to become skillful at the most fundamental aspects of writing.

Results from Artifacts and Interviews: According to the interviewed teachers, writing is messy, fun, and risky, but the teachers did not feel that students saw composing in the same way. They said that many students seem to see writing as hard work and something that they need to do for the teacher for a grade or to pass a course or test. Thus, their writing lacks voice and can be formulaic. Teachers also did not perceive many of their students as readers by choice which may account for their lack of strong reading/writing schemata. In terms of the artifacts, there were more similarities than differences among the assignments in spite of the three levels of school achievement where the instructors taught. However, the researchers saw differences in the depth and breadth of student responses across the levels, with more creative and analytic responses from advanced students and shorter, more basic answer-the-question type of responses from the lower-level students. Medial students, unsurprisingly, fell somewhere in the middle, profiting from the additional scaffolding offered to stretch their less detailed and less interpretive first drafts toward a more penetrating and compelling product.

The 12th-grade English teachers all admitted feeling pressure to prepare students for the State exam. Test prep writing practice had negative consequences for writing instruction. Teaching to the test contributed to teaching formulaic writing and crowding out other more creative writing assignments that might appeal more to students' interests. Once students passed the mandated New York State Regents Exam in 11th grade, some teachers stated that they made it a pedagogical point to spend 12th grade trying to undo the negative effects of formulaic writing by varying their writing assignments and expectations. They assigned more creative writing and expected students to enjoy writing. By that point, however, interest in writing or in being creative or in writing long papers or writing in different genres for different purposes had waned for many students. Teachers of the most at-risk students lamented their students lacked fundamental skill, did not see writing as thinking, and did not see themselves as writers. Teachers of Advanced Placement students also stated that they devoted time to preparing students for the AP exams that the students sat for at the end of the year. Whatever the teachers are surmising is causing the effect discussed in the interviews, they unanimously advocated for student use of the writing process with as much teacher directed, scaffolded, guiding steps as necessary for the students to be successful writers. Most interviewed teachers were uncertain about college writing demands and whether or not they were preparing their students to meet those demands. Two teachers, who were adjunct college instructors, had a clearer understanding of higher education expectations which facilitated their instruction at the high school level.

A Needs Assessment for High School Writing Instruction

We hypothesized that the disconnect between college professors' expectations of students' written proficiency and high school English teachers' perceptions of the writing skill college students need were affecting student achievement. Analysis of the survey responses, interviews, and artifacts we collected yielded the following themes, which comprise a list of needed changes in high school writing instruction to better align it with college writing expectations: the need for

revision and editing in writing/instruction; the need for articulation among high school teachers of college writing expectations; and the need for real-world writing to undo the negative consequences of test-driven writing instruction.

The Need for Revision and Editing in Writing Instruction: Results indicated that, although teachers required revision, student revision was not satisfactory, and the time teachers spent on teaching revision and the time allotted for students to revise their work was limited/constrained. According to the teachers we surveyed and interviewed, the majority of them are not satisfied with the level or amount of revision and editing that students perform on their writing. This may be attributed to students’ approach to revision and editing. Many students, novices in particular, have difficulty identifying errors in their writing and ways to address them (Hayes & Flower, 1986). As a result, they may resist revision, but even if they are open to it, they may not know how to tackle it. Many students make superficial changes, not meaningful ones that will significantly improve their writing (Adams et al., 2010). The AP teachers we interviewed also noted being constrained by teaching the assigned curriculum and preparing students for the Regents exam (in prior years) or the AP exam (currently) which left little time for teaching or allowing for student revision or editing. This finding supports the idea that teachers need to allot more guided time to both teaching editing and revision techniques and to allowing more class or home time for students to complete these processes. This approach may strengthen students’ writing, which will benefit performance on standardized exams and college and career writing.

Another finding, according to the teachers, is the lack of connection between literacy and other subjects and, therefore, the lack of emphasis on revision and editing in content-area instruction. Per the ELA teachers, other subject teachers, in spite of the Standards’ emphasis on disciplinary literacy, focus on content, rather than form, and consider themselves to be content experts. It should come as no surprise, then, that researchers have found that precious little reading or writing goes on in most content area classes (AdLit, n.d., para. 2). Unless content teachers see themselves also as supporters of students’ reading and writing development, English teachers will have the heavy burden and nigh on impossible task of teaching students to be successful writers in all content areas.

The Need for Articulation of College Writing Expectations: About half of the survey respondents indicated that they assign major, long papers and that their students use the writing process much of the time. This may not be enough to prepare students for college as the majority of collegiate writing assignments are long papers that are research-based and supported by outside sources (Edcuration, 2022). Students need to be able to write long works that explore multiple perspectives, include more advanced analytical and critical thinking, incorporate citations, and are presented in a scholarly way. It is apparent from the interviews and submitted artifacts that the teachers worked hard and went to great lengths to teach writing to their students in ways that prepared them for the demands of college writing. Yet, the teachers were not on the same page as the professors in terms of their perceptions of the demands of college writing. With the exception of the two teachers who were part time college instructors, the rest did not seem confident that they had a clear understanding of what college professors assign or expect from student writing. Maybe being well-versed in P-16 Standards is a big part of the answer.

One document that does outline effective college-level writing is the Framework developed by The Council of Writing Program Administrators, the National Council of Teachers of English, and the National Writing Project (2011, 7) which describes the rhetorical and 21st century skill, as well as the habits of mind and experiences, that are critical for college success.

Teachers are encouraged to "foster these habits of mind" through "writing, reading, and critical analysis" that will develop students' rhetorical knowledge, critical thinking, writing processes, knowledge of conventions, and ability to compose in multiple environments. We strongly encourage high school and college educators to begin by engaging in meaningful conversations about the needs they see for writing in their respective fields and how they propose to teach their students to write successfully in these areas. We hope these conversations lead to publications that outline uniform expectations for effective writing and writing instruction in grades K-16.

The Need for Real-World Writing to Repair Test Prep Damage: The survey respondents also indicated that half of their students used a formula (e.g., writing frame, graphic organizer, sentence starters) to produce a final draft. The interviewed teachers all stated the formula was a necessary evil to scaffold writing for all students to pass the State exam. The pressure to prepare students for standardized testing has influenced writing instruction for a long time (Hillocks, 2003; Nichols & Berliner, 2007; Pella, 2015). As we have discovered, "The goal for succeeding on the text-based response [test items] becomes the standard number of paragraphs for many questions which is often five: an introduction with a thesis, three supporting paragraphs, and a concluding paragraph" (Giouroukakis et al., 2021, 38). The AP teachers also stated feeling pressure to prepare their students for the AP exam at the end of the year, another round of testing taking time away from more sophisticated forms of writing instruction. Once students passed the exam, some teachers purposely avoided assignments utilizing test-prep techniques such as on-demand writing prompts, outlines, writing frames, graphic organizers, and scoring rubrics. Instead, they tried to assign more creative activities (e.g., poetry and fiction writing, mimicking literary texts, journal and dialogue writing, playwriting, etc.); but to no or little avail.

According to Giouroukakis et al. (2021, 38): "

The thinking behind giving students writing formulas is that if students have a structure they can use, they can then deviate from the structure as they become better writers and thinkers, but the problem with this is many students use the formulas even after they graduate high school and, thus, their writing skills do not develop. Formulas and other scaffolding tools are meant to be used initially to provide support for students and then taken away once students have reached more writing independence. The analogy of "scaffolds as training wheels" is appropriate here; they need to be removed or else they will hold students back.

Connolly and Giouroukakis (2006) argued that it is possible to help students succeed on the mandated tests without relying on the formula and sacrificing teachers' values and creativity. They presented a lesson planning approach for the secondary classroom that generates test success as a byproduct of comprehensive literacy learning. By identifying the skillful and strategic thinking needed to be successful on standardized tests and making test writing part of a comprehensive literacy curriculum, we are not only preparing students for the writing portion of these exams, but also for college, career, and life. For example, Pella's (2015) study on writing instruction focused on two middle school teachers, Rachel and Laura, who sought to develop their pedagogies to be responsive to the needs of their diverse students. Pella discovered that: "Rachel and Laura's efforts to develop equity writing pedagogy prompted them to design multi-modal and what they called "flexible" writing activities, the test-driven school culture motivated them to maintain their use of various standardized approaches. As a result, these two teachers sought to develop an eclectic writing pedagogy — one that integrated divergent practices... [in] a balanced approach to teaching and learning where both standardized and more flexible

approaches were integrated.” Rachel and Laura point a way forward by incorporating both sorts of writing, formulaic and creative, into literacy learning.

The fact that students do not read much, according to the interviewed teachers, is disconcerting. Researchers agree: “To make our students effective writers in any genre, we teachers need to facilitate their reading of that genre and guide them as they think carefully and reflectively about what choices expert authors in that genre make and why they make them” (Ferlazzo, 2-22, *A Four-Step Process*, para. 1). By showing students how reading and writing go hand in hand, students may understand what the writing process entails and how it impacts the reader. Giving students authentic examples of effective writing techniques and how they can apply them to their own writing makes them better writers. Related to this idea is writing authentically and meaningfully. That’s what has an impact on the reader. Our study shows that, in the opinion of their teachers, many students are not writing for authentic audiences or publishing their work. This may be diminishing their ability to see the true meaning of writing as a societally necessary mode of expression, as well as the multiple benefits derived from writing for developing, expressing, and sharing voice. In terms of the impact on their college writing performance, students may not be able to complete college-level writing assignments in all content areas as they may still perceive writing as a product solely for consumption by their instructors. According to Driscoll (2011, 23), students need to use writing outside of the classroom and in other writing situations and “although no course can cover all possible genres, giving students exposure to a variety of genres and discourse community norms — and describing their explicit connections — can begin to help facilitate transfer [of writing skill to other contexts.] Examples of this work include writing letters to editors of local newspapers, writing to their government representatives, asking students to analyze various [disciplinary] documents.”

Steps Forward

Case studies and small samples, like the ones we used in our study, are rarely generalizable. Thus, a larger scale study — with more participants selected from wider, geographical areas — on (re)connecting high school and college writing instruction is indicated. Furthermore, future studies should include both college and high school student voices in addition to teacher and researcher voices. As the field moves forward to strengthen connections between high school and college writing, the following are implications of our research for K-12 writing instruction:

Improved Editing and Revising:

There should be long and more creative, analytical, research-based writing in content areas for real audiences where the communication mode is as important as the content.

All content area teachers need to value and evaluate both content and ELA conventions; the literacy standards in all content areas need to be implemented and evaluated.

Students need to be taught the difference between revising for meaning and editing for mechanics.

Students need ample time to write and ample opportunity for use of guided and scaffolded non-linear cycles of drafting, feedback, and revision (Benjamin & Wagner, 2021).

Improved High School-College Communication:

K-12 schools and institutions of higher education need to discuss and develop uniform writing expectations, maybe based on and extending the Next Generation Standards (Connolly & Giouroukakis, 2016).

Improved Writer Voice to Offset Formulaic Writing for Tests

Pressure to teach to the test leads to formulaic writing.

Developing students’ research, analysis, and revision skill is encouraged, as is the development of creativity as writers.

Students’ individual writing processes need to be respected, valued, and encouraged.

Publishing should be a valued part of the writing process in both high school and college where both process and product are celebrated.

Writing needs to be seen as a lifelong practice that is real, meaningful, purposeful, and impactful.

Hopefully, all these points will be key in future investigations of the perceived disarticulation of high school and college written composition curriculum and instruction and help improve student outcomes on the 12th-grade and first-year college levels.

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