

Exhibit B-2A

Teachers will be contacted and asked for their cooperation as part of the continual self-improvement that is a hallmark of the NWP. (Draft letters to teachers appear in Exhibits B-2A and B-2B.) Initially, sampled teachers will be asked to provide four writing assignment examples from the fall of the 2007-08 school year (the school year immediately preceding their attendance at the institute, i.e., pre-institute). To determine improvement in the quality of writing assignments given by teachers over time, teachers will be contacted again beginning in late 2008 and asked to provide four examples from the fall of the 2008-09 school year (i.e., post-institute). Teachers who have more than four writing assignments in the sampled time period will be given specific instructions on how to select assignments to be submitted for review. It is expected that four examples of writing assignments over the two-month period will provide adequate representation of the level of quality of assignments given without overburdening teachers or expert panel members.

The four pre-institute and four post-institute writing assignment examples that a teacher submits will be part of the pre- and post-*Teacher Packets*. It is understood that assignments are not dispensed to students in a vacuum; assignments emerge from teacher instructional themes or units. Accordingly, the teachers will be asked to supply the necessary context for understanding the assignment, such as unit plans. Importantly, it is not necessary for the teacher to supply entire units—just adequate context for panelists to make informed judgments regarding assignment quality. Teachers will be asked to identify the grade level and subject for each writing assignment.

Exhibit B-2A (continued)

**Draft Letter to Teachers
(pre-institute materials)**

Dear <<Teacher's Name>>:

I am writing to inform you that you have been randomly selected to participate in an important new data collection that will provide needed information about the National Writing Project (NWP) program to the U.S. Department of Education (ED) and Congress. In compliance with the *Government Performance and Results Act of 1993 (GPRA)*, ED is required to collect and report on the performance of all programs funded with federal dollars. The National Writing Project (NWP) at <<summer institute site name>> is partially funded through a federal grant to the National Writing Project, located at the University of California at Berkeley.

The <<summer institute site name>> identified you as a participant in its 2008 summer training institute. To help with this important information collection, I am requesting that you provide four examples of assignments you gave your students that required writing. These can be parts of lesson plans or unit plans that identify the assignments using writing. These should be assignments given between October 1, 2007, and November 30, 2007. The enclosed instructions provide details on how to select assignments and supporting materials. If you did not teach during the 2007-08 school year, or you are not planning on returning to the classroom for the 2008-09 school year, please contact <<contact name>> at Synergy, our contractor.

The information being collected is meant to strengthen data reporting for the NWP and thus, help measure the NWP program's progress toward meeting its overall goal of improving the quality of student writing and learning. ED has established the following measure to report on the quality of various aspects of NWP's process to meet this goal:

The percentage of NWP summer institute training session participants who improve the quality of the writing assignments given, as demonstrated through an independent review of lesson plans by a panel of qualified experts.

The lesson plans and supporting materials submitted by participants will be reviewed by a panel of experts in writing content and pedagogy who have been identified by ED. Although your participation is voluntary, without your help ED will not have the information it needs to monitor the program and report that information to Congress. All information you provide pursuant to this request will be kept strictly confidential. Individual teachers and schools will not be identified to expert panel members, or in any reports about the program.

Thank you for your cooperation and participation in providing this important information to Congress for the NWP program. We will contact you again in the spring of 2009 to request examples of fall 2008 lesson plans and writing assignments.

Exhibit B-2A (continued)

Please send the materials in the postage-paid envelope provided. If you have any questions, please contact <<contact name>> at Synergy. <<He/She>> can be reached at xxx-xxx-xxxx or <<email address>>.

Sincerely,

Margarita L. Meléndez
NWP Program Manager
U.S. Department of Education

Enclosures

OMB #: xxxxxxxxx
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Exhibit B-2A (continued)

Instructions for Selecting Assignments

1. Look at your lesson plans and/or unit plans for the period October 1, 2007, through November 30, 2007.
2. Identify the assignments you gave to your students that involved writing. These can be parts of lesson plans or unit plans that identify the assignments using writing. Do not include writing samples from students even if they were used as part of the assignment.
3. Count and number the assignments involving writing across all classes that you teach.
4. Selecting assignments:
 - a. If four or fewer assignments were given, then select all.
 - b. If more than four assignments were given during the period, order the assignments by date given, and use the table below to determine which assignments to select.

Number of assignments	Select assignment number:
5	1, 2, 4, 5
6	1, 2, 5, 6
7	1, 3, 5, 6
8	1, 3, 6, 8
9	1, 4, 6, 9
10	1, 4, 7, 10
11	1, 5, 7, 11
12	1, 5, 8, 12
13 or more	Call Synergy contact

5. On the cover sheet provided for each assignment selected, fill in the grade level, subject area, and class or course level (e.g., special education, gifted, honors, AP, IB, ESL, remedial). Provide portions of lesson or unit plans that describe the assignments' timeframe and assessment method only if this information is not apparent in the assignments themselves.
6. Return the materials in the postage-paid envelope.

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Exhibit B-2A (continued)

Assignment Cover Sheet

Instructions: Please attach this sheet to the front of each selected assignment and provide the following information.

Grade Level(s): _____

Subject area: _____

Class/Course level: _____

Timeframe for assignment: _____

Assessment method: _____

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