



SWP and School Partnerships

A site-based, long-term professional development program
for improving writing

The Spartanburg Writing Project invites schools to apply to become a partner with SWP to develop strong writing programs.

The programs and projects offered in partnerships are based on best practices in teaching writing, reflect the South Carolina English Language Arts standards, and model effective teaching to help prepare students for standardized testing and for success in reading and writing beyond the classroom.

Partnerships include collaborative planning between the teachers and administrators of the school partner and the SWP staff. The needs and requests of the individual school determine the services offered, but typical programs include

- Teaching demonstrations
- Mentoring and coaching
- Research/book study groups
- Curriculum development
- Teacher writing groups
- Training workshops
- Assessing student writing to inform teaching
- Action Research/Case Studies

Applications are due by **June 5, 2009**. Schools accepted as partners and SWP staff will meet to begin planning programs for the 2009-2010 school year. Partnerships are for one year, but may be continued.

To apply, complete the attached application and return it to:

Tasha A. Thomas
Spartanburg Writing Project
USC Upstate
800 University Way
Spartanburg, SC 29303
tthomas@uscupstate.edu

SWP and School Partnerships

Application Cover Sheet

Please provide this information about your school.

School Name _____

Address _____

Phone _____ FAX _____

Grade span _____

Number of faculty _____

Number of students _____

Number reduced or free lunch eligible _____

Status: Title 1 _____ Other designations _____

Other relevant information:

Application contact person _____

To complete the application, respond to the questions on the following page.

Spartanburg Writing Project School Partnership Application

Please complete the following questions in brief, but specific, statements.

1. Explain why your school would like to partner with SWP. What are your concerns about the writing program and the teaching of writing at your school? You might want to consider the match between current research on what we know to be the best practice in teaching writing and the teaching of writing at your school. You may also want to mention student achievement concerns.
2. List the specific goals related to the teaching of writing that your school hopes to achieve in the 2006-07 school year.
3. Who will participate in the partnership? Will the entire faculty be involved or will the work involve a particular group of faculty (all ELA teachers or all first and second grade teachers, for example)? Are faculty required to participate or is their participation voluntary? Describe the level of interest and willingness of the faculty to participate in the partnership activities and to reconsider their teaching practices. How have you determined their interest?
4. How will your school administration be involved in the partnership? What are the levels of interest and willingness of the administration to support and maintain needed change? How do you know?
5. How will your school provide the time necessary to plan and support the partnership activities? Some workshops can be delivered after school, but other collaborative activities may need to occur at other times. Identify how many in-service days and other times your school will be available for partnership work. If possible, provide the specific dates. How will teachers be compensated (not necessarily monetarily) for meetings and activities held outside the regular school day?
6. We must be able to assess the outcomes of our partnership. Explain how your faculty and administration will document practice, reflection, and change. Some options might include educators maintaining journals, completing self-assessments, and providing peer assessment or videotaping. Student achievement could be documented through works in progress, published pieces, folders containing writing from across the curriculum and writing from across the year, and scored writing. These options are only suggestions. Please describe your own plan for documenting progress. To help you plan, you might want to consider the type of data and artifacts you collect for other purposes and to remember that data obtained for this project could be used for other reports or proposals.
7. Explain any financial commitment you can make to support the partnership. The Spartanburg Writing Project agrees to provide approximately \$3,000 in services to schools selected as partners. The exact dollar amount will depend on each selected school's needs and requests. To what degree can your school support the partnership financially? Some options might include purchasing books and materials for teachers, building a professional library for your school, paying for conference participation, providing substitute teachers or release time, photocopying class materials, or supporting a special parent or student program.
8. Who has prepared this report? What are your teaching or administrative assignments? Please include a brief statement from your principal indicating his/her support of the partnership.

School _____

Evaluator _____

Readers will use this rubric to evaluate your application.

SWP School Partnership Application Evaluation

Evaluator: Please put **X** in the appropriate rating box.

Add comments to elaborate if you'd like.

	Criterion	Weak	Adequate	Exceptional
I	Concerns about school writing programs	List	Developed list	Thoughtful discussion
	Connections to research	None, few	Mentioned	Significant connections
	Student achievement	Mentioned, not connected to proposal	Connected to proposal	Specific connections made
II	Goals for writing program	General	Specific	Specific, insightful
III	Interest and willingness of faculty and administration	Reported	Supported	Well-documented
	Method of determining	(Fill in method)	(Fill in method)	(Fill in method)
IV	Time for project	General or unreasonable time frame	Specific, reasonable time frame	Thoughtfully prepared; highly achievable time frame
	Plan for compensating	None, poor	Fair, reasonable	Fair, innovative
V	Assessment of project	Not likely to measure progress or hard to implement	Adequate, but outcomes might be general	High probability of measuring specific outcomes
VI	Financial Commitment	Low, insignificant support	Desire to support, but little funding available	Committed to support in substantive ways
VII	Preparation of Report	Single preparer and/or minor involvement of administrators and/or faculty	Group preparation and evidence of involvement of administrators and/or faculty	Crafted collaboratively, evidence of strong involvement of administrators and/or faculty
	Overall Impression	General discussion, not thoughtfully prepared, little awareness of needs, and no real chance of partnership affecting change	Typical discussion of general plans or goals, awareness of needs, and moderate chance of success for partnership	Thoughtful discussion of specific plans/goals, insightful awareness of needs, and high chance of success for partnership