

**California State University San Marcos  
COLLEGE OF EDUCATION**

Distinguished Teacher in Residence Program  
Assigned Time Grant Proposal submitted for AY 2011-12

**COVER SHEET  
(Submit with Proposal)**

Title of Grant Proposal: Facilltating effective writing instruction in English Language Development middle school classrooms

Involved Faculty: Laurie Stowell

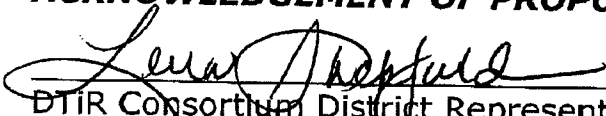
Partnering District(s): Escondido Union School District

Number of units requested: 3

**SIGNATURE(S):**

  
CSUSM Faculty Member

**ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF PROPOSAL SUBMISSION:**

  
DTIR Consortium District Representative  
(See District Listing for eligible signatures)

**California State University San Marcos  
COLLEGE OF EDUCATION**

Distinguished Teacher in Residence Program  
Assigned Time Grant Proposal submitted for AY 2011-12- PHASE II

**Checklist**  
(Submit with Proposal)

Objectives are clearly stated and appropriate	X
Procedures are clearly stated and achievable	X
Clear explanation of how involved parties will benefit from the proposed assigned time in accordance with the COE mission statement	X
Timeline demonstrates a match between units requested and depth of work proposed	X
Clear description of an evaluation process that is likely to yield useful information about the project's effectiveness	X
Letters of support from teachers and/or administrators	X
If this is a continuing project, is there a clear explanation of why this grant should be refunded?	

DTiR grant for 10-11?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
If yes, is interim or final report attached?	<input type="checkbox"/> Interim <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Final
DTiR grant for 09-10?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
If yes, has final report been submitted to Donna Matanane?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> Attached
This is a new project	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
This is a continuing project	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Signature of acknowledgment from district representative is included	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes

**Facilitating effective writing instruction in English Language Development middle school classrooms**

**Escondido Union School District**

Proposal for the Distinguished Teacher in Residence Assigned Time Grants, 2011-2012  
3 units

Laurie Stowell, Professor  
Director, San Marcos Writing Project  
College of Education  
427 University Hall 750-4286  
[lstowell@csusm.edu](mailto:lstowell@csusm.edu)

**A. Objectives:**

(1) To coach teachers at Mission Middle School and Hidden Valley Middle School to implement cohesive, effective writing instruction in ELD classrooms, 2) To assist middle school language arts teachers to integrate reading and writing instruction, 3) Support students' writing to raise writing achievement and 4) Begin to implement California Common Core Standards in writing

**B. Justification:**

Success in high school, college, and beyond is closely related to how well students write. Students have to do more than write five paragraph essays and pass writing tests. They have to write well enough to communicate their understanding in content areas. They have to write well in high school and college. A college degree is essential to enter *attractive* fields. Even students agree. A 2008 study titled *Writing, Technology and Teens* from the National Commission on Writing and the Pew Internet and American Life Project confirms that 86 percent of teenagers believe that writing well is important to success in life. People who write well have access to more lucrative work. "Writing well may not guarantee advancement, but writing poorly jeopardizes success." (Lindemann, 2001, p. 4) Poorly written legal briefs may lose a case. Badly written lab findings may not win FDA approval. Many high paying careers require good writing skills: attorneys, engineers, scientists, and corporate executives. But students are generally surprised to discover the amount of writing required by jobs they do not believe use writing. Effective writing instruction in middle school is essential for success in high school and post secondary education.

Writing is a craft that can be taught, can be learned and can be improved with guided instruction. Just as writing is a craft, so is the teaching of writing. Writing involves choices on the part of the writer and the teacher of the writer. The more informed the writer and the teacher, the better the choices the writer is able to make. To be informed, teachers must constantly examine what good writing is, understand the writers she or he is working with, understand what it means to be a writer, and use assessment data to inform his or her instruction.

The National Commission on Writing, established by the College Board, reported on a crisis in American education and that is the neglect of the teaching of writing (*The neglected R*, 2003). In response to NAEP scores, California's State Superintendent, Jack O'Connell, also called for an increased California focus on writing. No Child Left Behind identifies highly qualified teachers and quality professional development as crucial to improving education in America. However, teachers

have little training in basic writing instruction, let alone advanced writing instruction. The National Commission on Writing recommends that common understandings about writing should be developed across disciplines and grade levels through in-service designed to help teachers understand good writing and develop as writers themselves.

Before former Distinguished Teacher Mae Chaplin finished her two-year tenure at CSUSM, she asked if I would be interested in working with her and the teachers at her school when she returned to her district. We taught together on the middle level teacher education team and she is a teacher leader in the San Marcos Writing Project. Gina Melanson is also a teacher leader in the San Marcos Writing Project. Recently, she accompanied six teachers on her staff to a workshop sponsored by the San Marcos Writing Project and when she learned I was applying for time to work with Mae at Mission Middle School, she asked if I could also work with the ELD teachers at Hidden Valley Middle School as well.

The mission statement of the School of Education is to “collaboratively transform public education” and “advance professional practices.” This proposal provides an opportunity for Escondido Middle School teachers to transform the teaching of writing in the Escondido Union School District. It would also advance all of our professional practices. Lifelong learning and reflective practice are also commitments of the SOE faculty. Through this proposal, Escondido middle school teachers will have the opportunity to reflect upon and advance their practice through new instructional methods regarding writing. We will also continue to reflect upon and learn from the practices of the teachers and from the students in their classes as well.

Six stakeholders will benefit from this project. In the table below I describe the potential involvement and benefit for each of these stakeholders.

<u>Involvement</u>	<u>Benefit</u>
<b>CSUSM Faculty:</b> I will participate in department-wide meetings with teachers and administrators to develop and implement effective writing instruction and reading and writing integration. I will provide professional development, coaching and demonstration teaching for middle school teachers and students.	I will have ongoing first hand experience with the challenges of implementing a district wide middle level writing curriculum. Then I will have a better understanding of the needs of teachers in middle school in terms of professional development in writing. As director of a writing project, instructor to credential students and practicing teachers, this knowledge is crucial to my own professional development.

**Escondido teachers and appropriate administrators**

Teachers and administrators will	Teachers can gain new knowledge about
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<p>participate in the development and implementation of effective writing instruction and follow up professional development.</p>	<p>quality writing instruction, using technology as a tool to increase writing achievement, network with one another about teaching writing, gather new writing strategies and possibly set up partnerships for observation opportunities, presenting at conferences and writing professional publications. Teachers will also receive many ideas, lesson plans and enrichment from their colleagues and myself.</p>
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### **CSUSM Credential Students**

<p>Pre-service teachers will not be directly involved. But we do have many student teachers placed in Escondido middle schools and it is possible they could attend professional development and be involved in meetings.</p>	<p>Pre-service teachers will benefit from the knowledge that their instructors gain and pass on from understanding a district-wide assessment plan and district writing needs. We will also be able to more closely align “theory and practice” as well as what best prepares pre-service teachers and in-service teachers for North San Diego County Classrooms.</p>
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### **CSUSM and its mission & goals**

<p>CSUSM will provide the resources and release time for faculty.</p>	<p>CSUSM will forge stronger links with the immediate public school community and be recognized for providing leadership in the larger educational community. CSUSM will fulfill its mission in the spirit of partnership of “initiating and offering programs to further intellectual, professional and personal development within the diverse community it serves.”</p>
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### **Escondido Union School Districts Students**

<p>Students at selected grade levels will be involved in the writing instruction. They will also be involved through their teachers’ instruction. They will provide the writing samples that will further our knowledge and inform our professional development and areas of additional study. They will always be a felt presence in all our discussions.</p>	<p>Students will benefit from quality, age appropriate, effective writing instruction and become better writers and thinkers.</p>
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**C. & D. Procedures and Timeline:**

**October 2011:** Meet with lead teachers, department chairs and principals to develop professional development plan. Determine implementation time line. Begin meeting with individual and grade level groups of teachers to determine their needs and set up class visits for planning and coaching.

**November and December 2011:** Continue to meet with middle school language arts teachers at both middle schools. Determine appropriate professional development and coaching. Administer needs assessment to teachers.

**January 2012:** Meet with lead teachers and principals, reflect on first semester work, determine further professional development in writing.

**January through May 2012:** Continue to meet with the English Language Arts Departments. Implement professional development plan based on teacher's needs. Provide in-service with teachers at school sites on effective writing instruction. Visit classrooms, co-teach, continually assess needs and assist teachers.

**June 2012:** Conduct evaluation of the year's work in writing by analyzing evaluations from professional development. Collect exemplars of writing activities, lessons and student work; publish this for the teachers' use in the district

**E. Evaluation:**

Evaluation will consist of: (1) examination of data from writing scores; (2) analyze evaluations of district professional development based on what learned from assessment data; and (3) meetings with curriculum directors to determine effectiveness of the plan, pilot and professional development and next steps.

**F. Request:**

I request three (3) credits of reallocated time to work in Escondido Union School District during the 2011-2012 school year. I will each spend between seventy and eighty (1.5 units of reallocated time) hours in the district and planning during each semester of the academic year.



## *Hidden Valley Middle School*

2700 Reed Rd., Escondido, CA 92027

Office: 760-432-2457 Fax: 760-480-0845

*Trent Smith, Principal*

*A California Distinguished School*



September 29, 2011

To the Members of the Distinguished Teacher in Residence (DTiR) Assigned Time Proposal Committee:

I am writing this letter in support of a DTiR Assigned Time Grant proposal written by Dr. Laurie Stowell to work in partnership with Hidden Valley Middle School to provide professional development in the area of writing to our English Language Arts teachers.

I worked with Laurie when I attended the San Marcos Writing Project's Summer Institute and have continued to work with her through the San Marcos Writing Project at Cal State San Marcos. Hidden Valley Middle School would like to bring some of the effective strategies used in the San Marcos Writing Project to our students' English Language Arts classrooms. Laurie's assistance could be a great resource to us as we develop a cohesive school-wide vision for writing instruction, implement California Common Core Standards, and improve writing achievement.

I look forward to working further with Laurie and developing a university-school partnership with Cal State San Marcos and Hidden Valley Middle School. I hope you will give this proposal serious consideration, as it will benefit the teachers and students of the Escondido Union School District.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Gina Melanson". The signature is fluid and cursive.

Gina Melanson  
ELA Department Chair  
Hidden Valley Middle School

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Trent Smith". The signature is bold and stylized, with a long horizontal line extending from the end.

Trent Smith  
Principal  
Hidden Valley Middle School



# MISSION MIDDLE SCHOOL

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September 28, 2011

939 E. Mission Avenue, Escondido, CA 92025

Main Office (760) 432-2452

Fax (760) 737-9085

To the Members of the Distinguished Teacher in Residence (DTiR)  
Assigned Time Proposal Committee:

I am writing this letter in support of a DTiR Assigned Time Grant proposal written by Dr. Laurie Stowell to work in partnership with Mission Middle School in the area of writing instruction.

I worked with Laurie when I was a Distinguished Teacher at California State University, San Marcos and have continued to work with her through the San Marcos Writing Project. My school site is eager to bring some of the effective strategies used in the San Marcos Writing Project to benefit our teachers and students. Laurie's assistance will be a great help to us as we develop a cohesive school-wide vision for writing instruction, implement California Common Core Standards, and improve the writing achievement of our students. Our Principal, Jeff King, also gives his full support to this proposal and believes that Laurie's guidance will be of great value to our students and Mission Middle School community.

I look forward to working with her and the continued development of a university-school partnership with California State University, San Marcos and Mission Middle School. I hope you will give this proposal serious consideration, as it will benefit the Mission Middle School community of teachers and learners.

Sincerely,

Mae S. Chaplin  
EL Literacy Coach  
Mission Middle School  
Escondido, CA

**Developing and implementing a school-wide vision for writing instruction**  
**Vista Magnet Middle School**  
**Vista Unified School District**  
3 units  
Final Report  
Submitted by Laurie Stowell

I had a relationship with and developed this proposal with the Assistant Principal Nancy Pace-Skinner. In the fall of 2010, Nancy left Vista Magnet Middle School and joined the faculty of Murray Alternative High School. I attempted to meet with and develop a new plan to support the teachers at Vista Magnet Middle School in the fall but it never panned out. Therefore I did not take the three units in my load.

**Facilitating effective writing instruction and integrating technology in grades 6-12**  
**San Marcos Unified School District**  
**2010--2011**  
**3 units**  
Final Report  
Submitted by Laurie Stowell

**Objectives:**

(1) To coach middle and high school language arts teachers and teach students in San Marcos Unified School District to implement cohesive, effective writing instruction, and  
2) To assist middle school language arts teachers to integrate technology as a tool to support students' writing.

1. **Met and planned with Nancy Peterson (secondary curriculum director) and the three middle school technology TOSAs** to plan writing professional development days. We met in May, August and several times throughout the school year.
2. **Provided four all day workshops to all San Marcos Middle and High School English teachers:** We met four times (all day) in September, October, November, and January (depending on the group) to effective writing instruction and integrating writing and technology.
3. **Met with the San Marcos High School English Department:** I was invited to join a couple of meetings of the English Department to talk about facilitating high school students' transition to college in composition.
4. **Met with grade level groups of teachers:** When requested, I met with smaller groups of teachers by grade level on early release Wednesdays (primarily middle school Language Arts departments) and some other days where we could discuss and I could respond to specific questions and needs.
5. **Met with individual teachers to plan writing curriculum and assessment:** Several middle school teachers and third grade teachers invited me to plan with them.
6. **Demonstration teaching** Six different teachers invited me into their classrooms to demonstrate writing instruction with their students. Sometimes I taught a couple of periods and other members of the language arts department observed. Sometimes I taught all day.
7. **Final Evaluation:** Teachers evaluated each professional day that was offered. Nancy Peterson sent me the middle school writing scores and all three schools improved in writing achievement due to several efforts taking place, but Nancy did say she thought my work with the teachers was a factor. School District scores are public record.