

# Student-Centered Standards for Teaching and Learning

## INCREASE

Student Ownership and responsibility by:

- Helping students choose their own topics and goals for improvement
- Using brief teacher-student conferences for assessment and reflection
- Teaching students to review their own processes and progress

Class time spent on writing whole, original pieces through:

- Establishing real purposes for writing and involve students in the task
- Instruction in and support for all stages of the writing process
- Pre-writing, drafting, revising, editing

Teacher modeling of writing (drafting, revising, sharing) as a fellow author, and as a demonstrator of the process

Learning of grammar and mechanics in context, at the editing stage and as needed

Writing for real audiences, publishing for the class and for wider audiences.

Making the classroom a supportive setting for shared learning, using:

- Active exchange and valuing of student ideas and thoughts
- Collaborative small group work
- Conferences and peer critiquing that gives responsibility for improvement to authors rather than teachers

Writing across the curriculum as a tool for reflective learning

Ongoing, constructive and efficient assessment that involves:

- Brief, informal oral responses as students work
- Thorough grading of just a few, student-selected polished pieces (portfolio)
- Focus on a few errors at a time
- Cumulative view of growth and self-evaluation
- Encouragement of risk-taking and honest expression

## DECREASE

Teacher control of decision-making by:

- Teacher deciding all writing topics
- Suggestions for improvement dictated by teacher
- Learning objectives determined by the teacher alone
- Instruction given as a whole-class activity only

Time spent on isolated drills on “subskills” of grammar, vocabulary, spelling, paragraphing, penmanship, etc.

Writing assignments given briefly, with no context or purpose, completed in one step.

Teacher talks about writing but never writes or shares own work or processes

Isolated grammar lessons, given in order determined by the testbook and before writing is begun.

Assignments read only by teacher

Devaluation of student ideas and input through:

- Students viewed as deficient in knowledge and ability
- Sense of class as competing individual
- Work with fellow students viewed as cheating, disruptive

Writing taught only during “language arts” period (i.e. infrequently)

Evaluation seen as negative burden for teacher and student by:

- Marking all papers heavily for all errors, making teacher a bottleneck
- Teacher editing paper after completed, rather than encouraging student-led improvement
- Grading seen as punitive, focused on errors and not growth

*Source: Daniels, Hyde, Zemelman. “Best Practice: New Standards for Teaching and Learning in America’s Schools.” Heinemann, 1993.*