

# An Evaluator's Perspective on Federal Support of the National Writing Project

April 2006

Inverness Research Associates

# Inverness Research Associates

- An educational research and evaluation group located near San Francisco
- Evaluator of the NWP for over 10 years
- Evaluator of dozens of federally funded programs, including math and science

# THESIS

The National Writing Project  
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*Why is this so?*

1. Writing is a basic skill that is vital to the success of US students and US competitiveness. Student writing needs to improve.
2. The NWP knows how to help teachers improve student writing.
3. The NWP has the capacity to provide continuing high-quality professional development to teachers across the nation.

# Point 1.

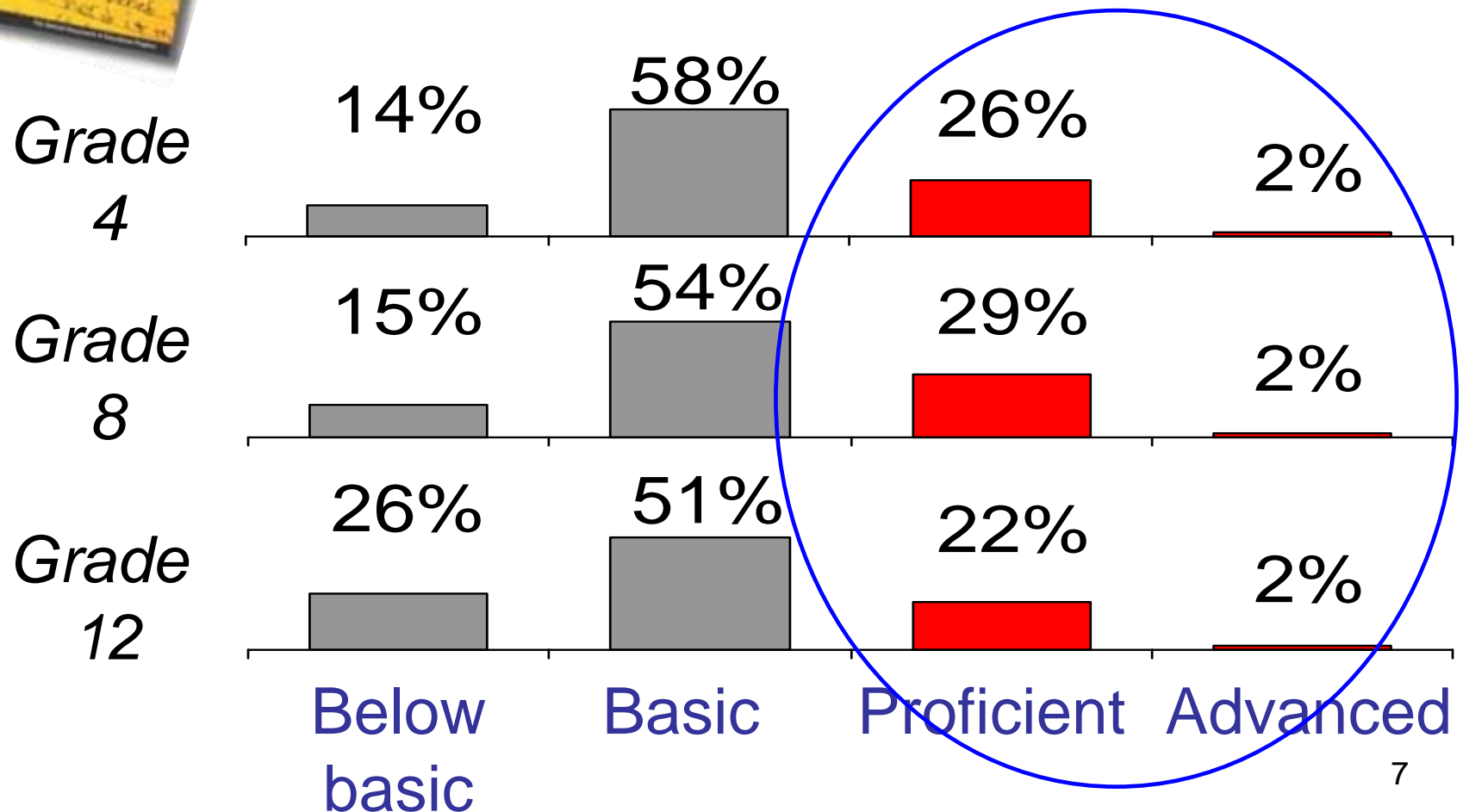
Writing is a basic skill that is vital to the success of US education and US competitiveness.  
Student writing needs to improve.

Writing is foundational to literacy. Students need to know how to write well to succeed in school and life.

- Writing strengthens thinking
- Writing supports reading
- Writing fosters learning in all subjects, including math and science
- Writing is fundamental to communication



## NAEP writing scores show that too few students are proficient



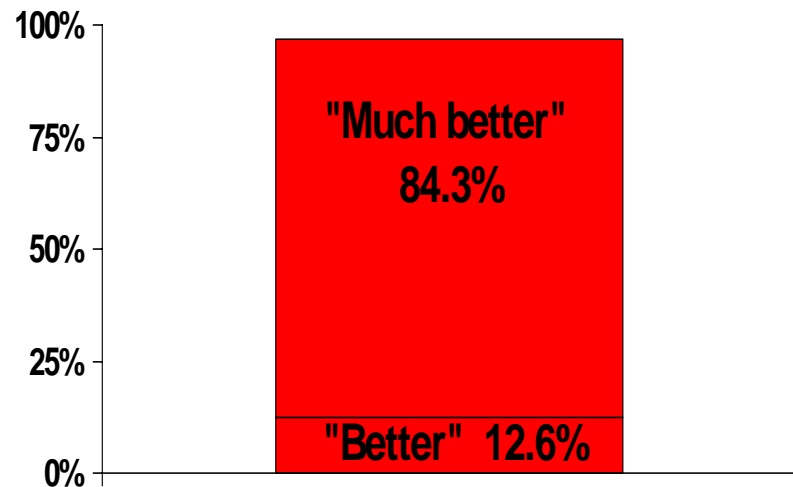
## Point 2.

The National Writing Project knows  
how to help teachers improve  
student writing.

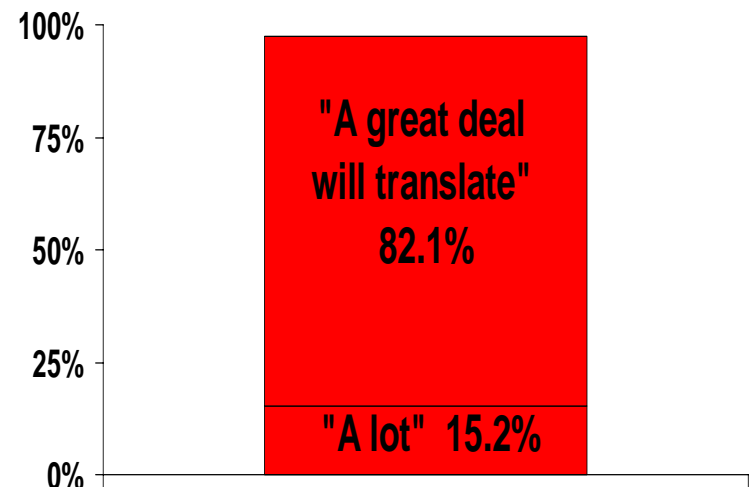


# 97% of teachers at NWP institutes say—

**NWP is better than other professional development:**



**What they learn translates into improved writing skills for their students:**



# NWP serves teachers in depth

## Invitational Institute: 123 hrs

Every year, 3000 teachers at Invitational Institutes receive, on average, about 7 hours per day for 18.5 days.

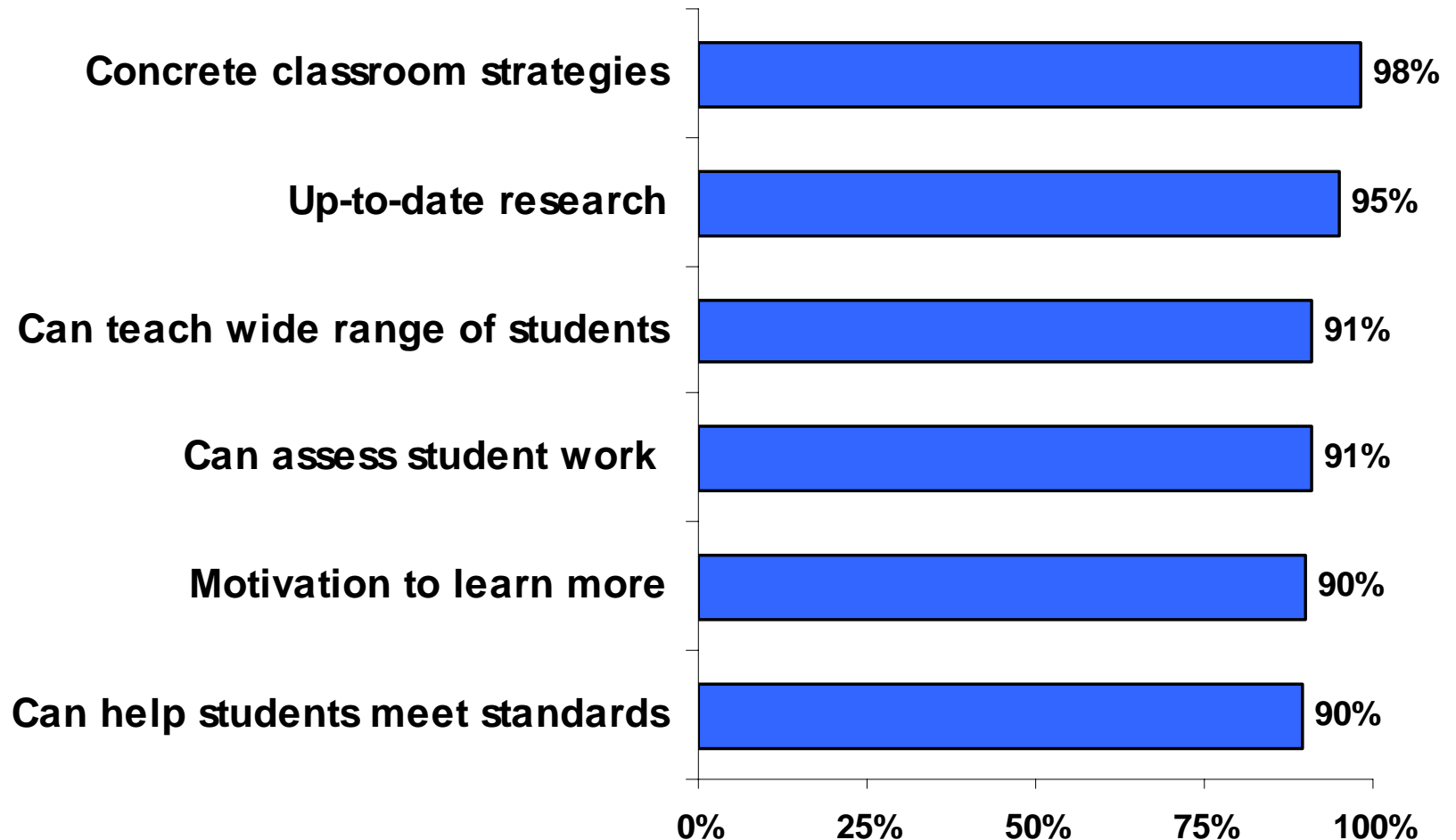
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All other programs: 16 hrs

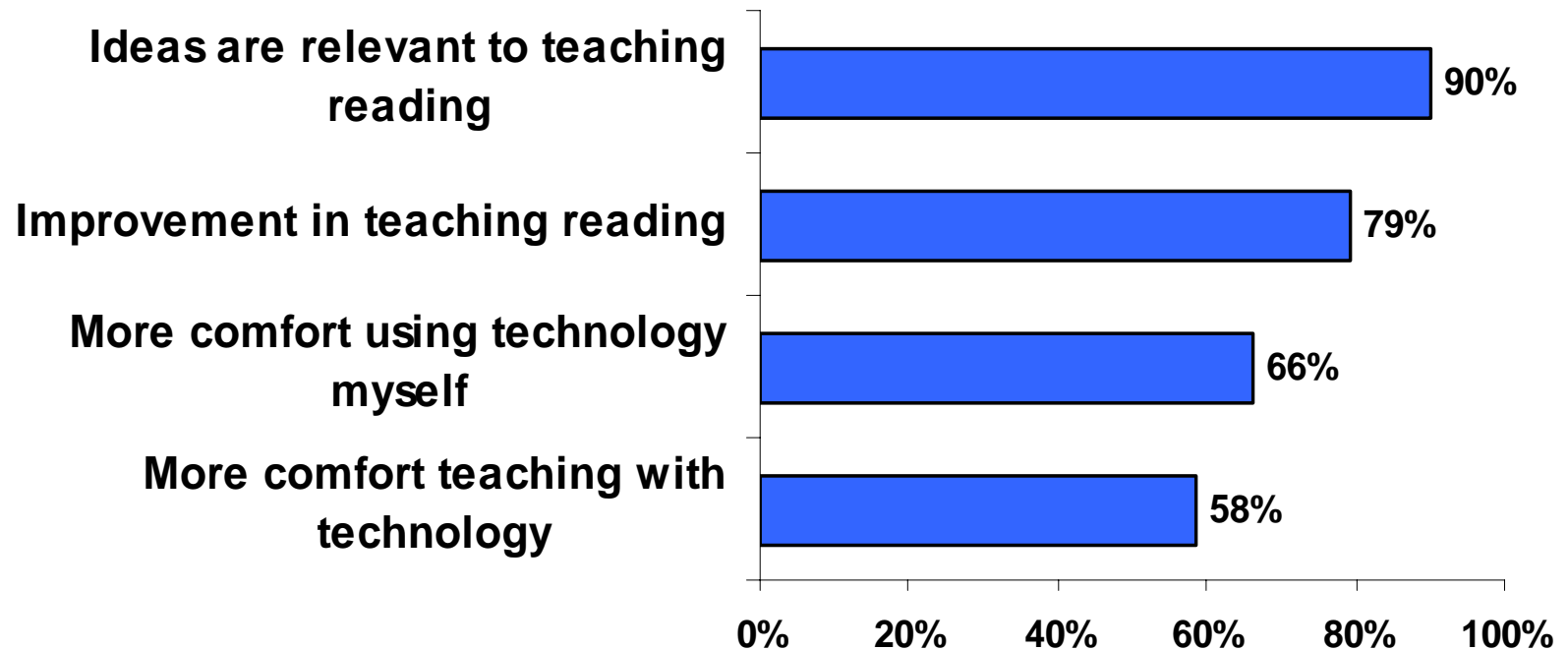
M	Tu	W	Th	F

Over 80,000 teachers a year receive, on average, about 4 hours per day for 4 days in other programs.

# Institute participants say they gain knowledge and skills for teaching writing

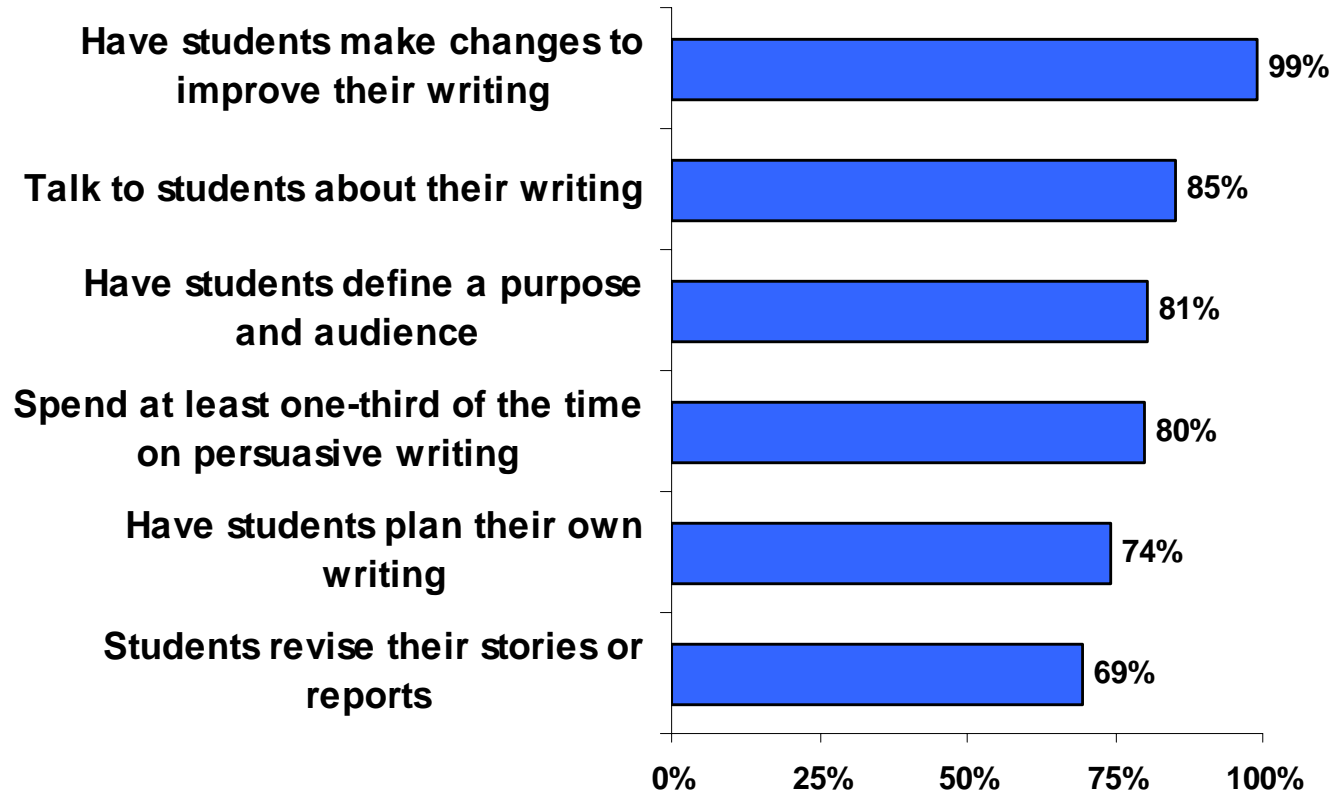


# Institute participants also get help with teaching reading and using technology



# NWP institutes promote classroom practices associated with writing achievement

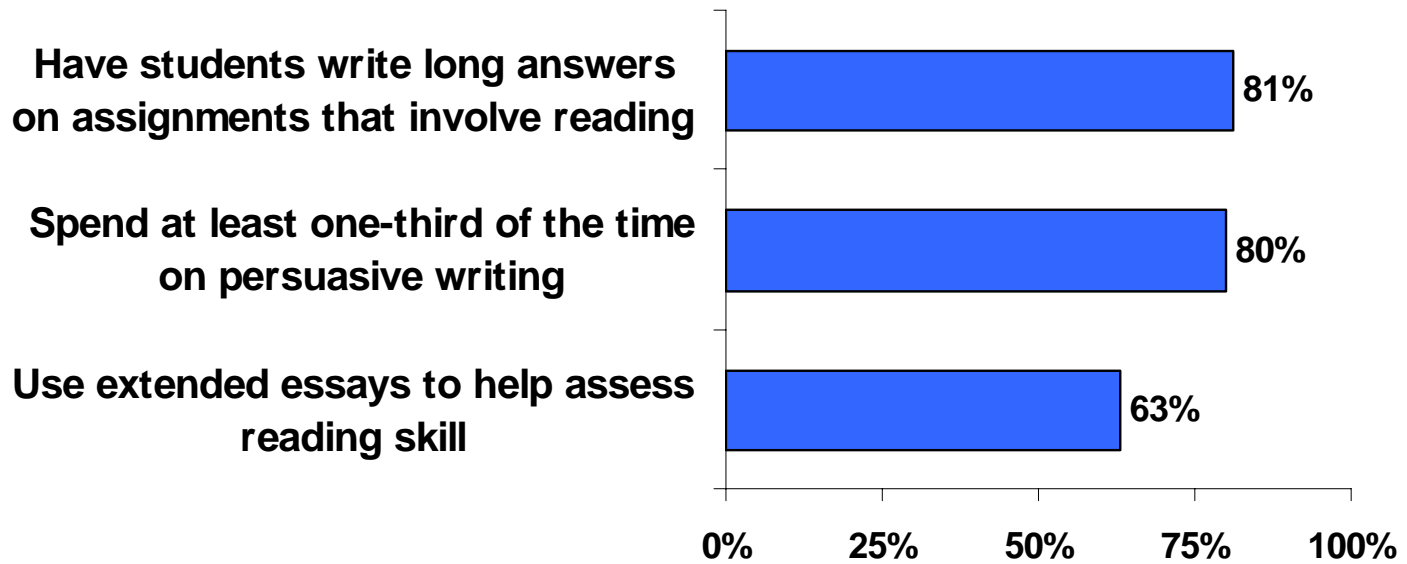
*NWP institute participants report that they:*



*These practices are correlated with higher scores nationwide on the 2002 NAEP writing assessment.*

# Institutes also promote practices important to reading achievement

*NWP institute participants report that they:*



*These practices are correlated with higher scores nationwide on the 2002 NAEP writing assessment.*

## Point 3.

The NWP has the capacity necessary  
to provide  
continuing, high-quality  
professional development to teachers  
across the nation.

The NWP can provide continuing high-quality professional development to teachers across the nation.

- A. The NWP is able to function at a large national scale
- B. The NWP provides US teachers with broad, equitable access to their services
- C. The NWP is cost effective and leverages federal funding
- D. The NWP is a national network that provides customized local professional development services

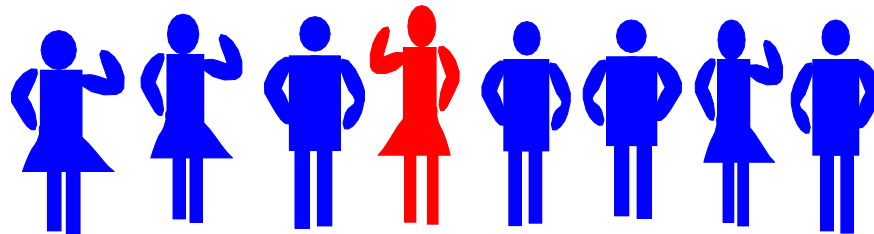


A. The NWP is able to  
function at a large national  
scale



# Percentage of teachers in the nation served each year by the NWP

- 3% of total K-12 teaching force (~1 in 35)
- 12.5% (~1 out of 8) who are directly responsible for teaching writing



# Overall scale of work that NWP supports in one year (2004-05)

All programs	7,288
Active teacher-consultants	12,402
Participants served	193,578
Educator-participants served	141,587
Individual educators served	94,881
Hours on average per individual educator	19

B. The NWP provides US teachers with broad, equitable  
access to their services

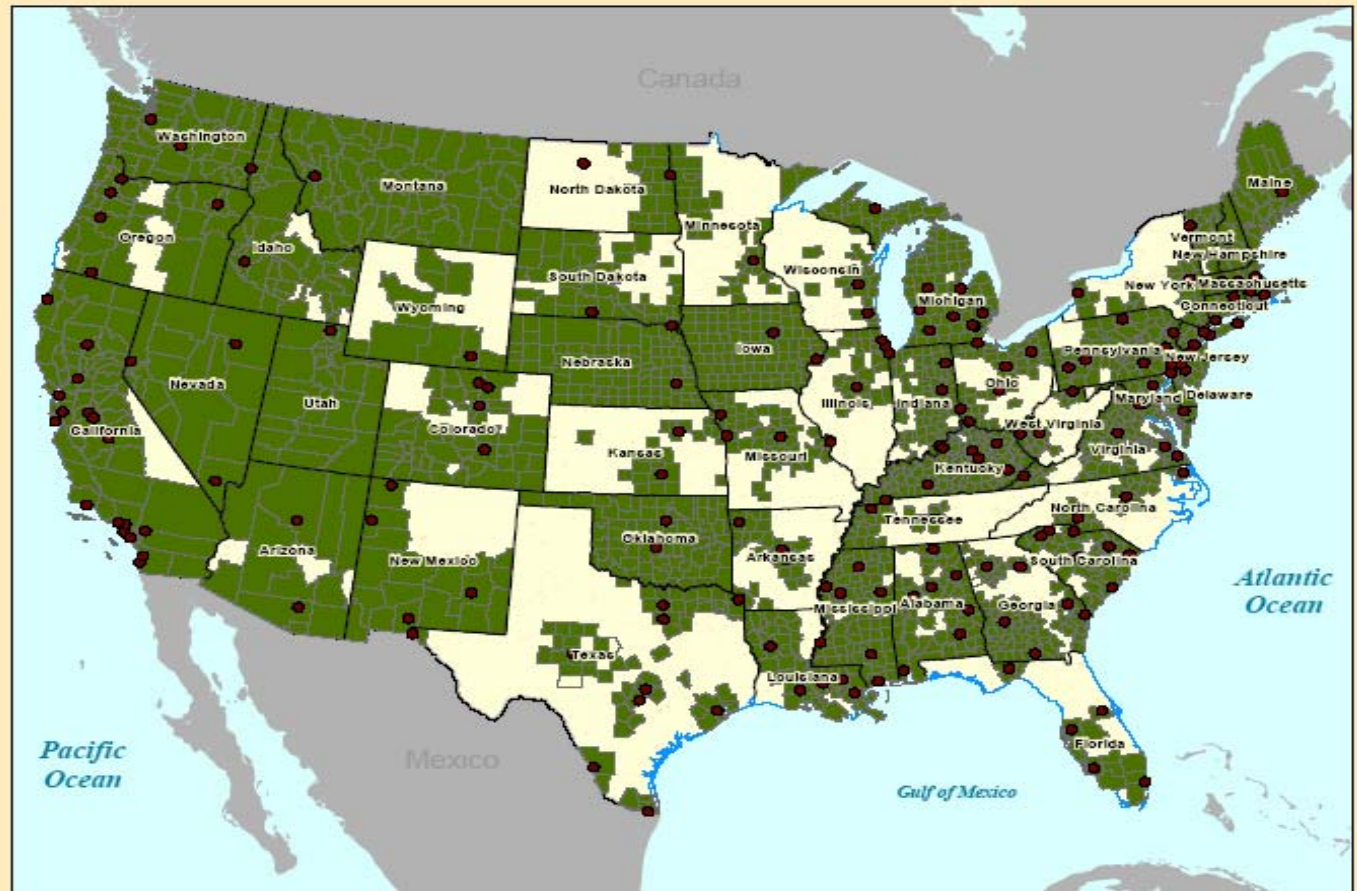


NWP current service area covers 2/3 of the nation's counties and 3/4 of the nation's districts

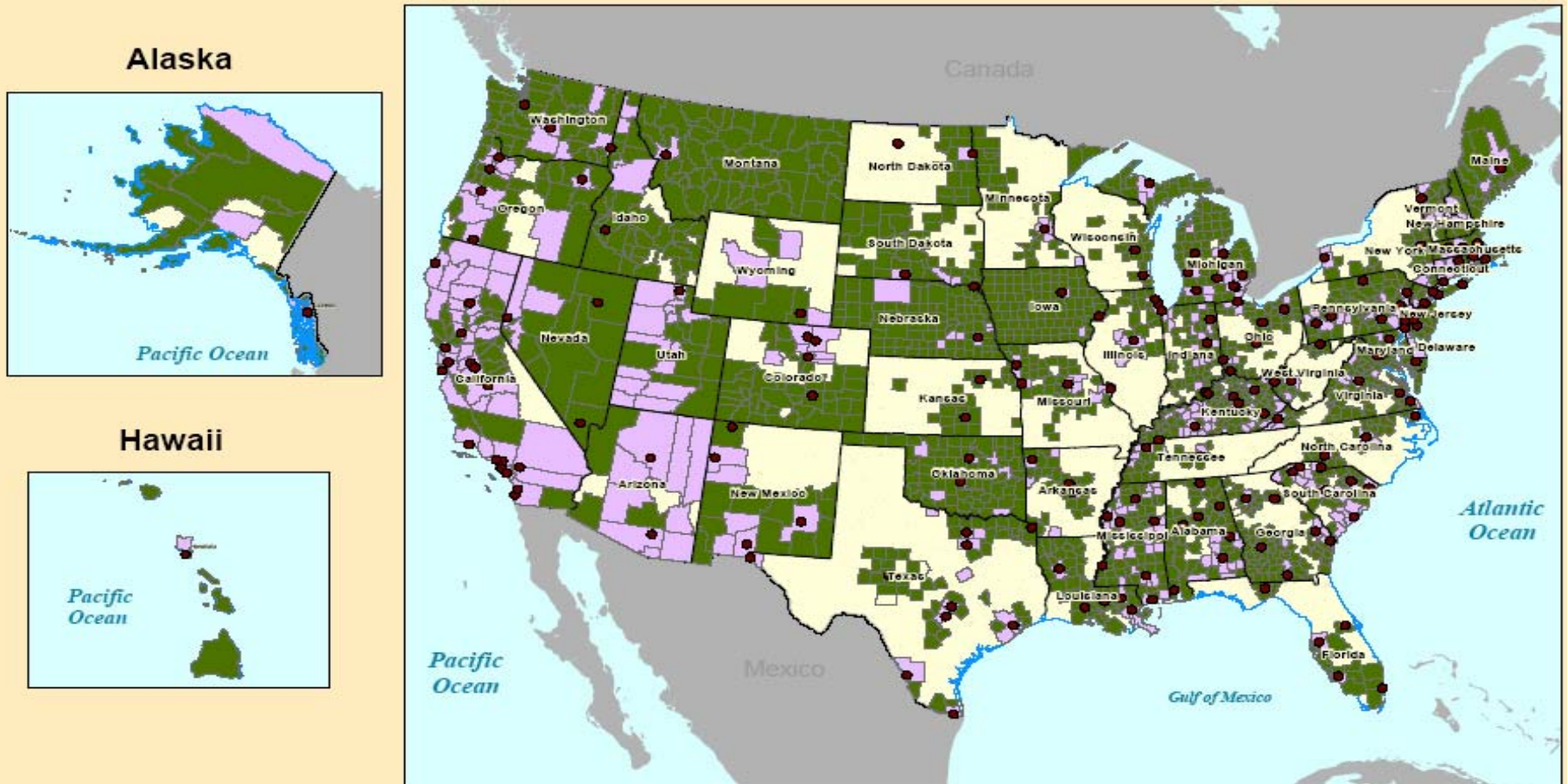
Alaska



Hawaii



# NWP services actually reached teachers in 850 counties in 2004-05



# NWP programs serve large numbers of counties, districts, schools and students (2004-05)

	<u>In the U.S.</u>	<u>In NWP Service Area</u>	<u>Served by NWP Programs</u>
# counties	3,216	2,028	850 (26%)
# districts	16,577	12,704	1,657 (10%)
# schools	95,965	77,422	2,904 ( 3%)
# students	47 million	41 million	1.9 million* (4%)

*\* # students estimated as 20 students per individual educator served*

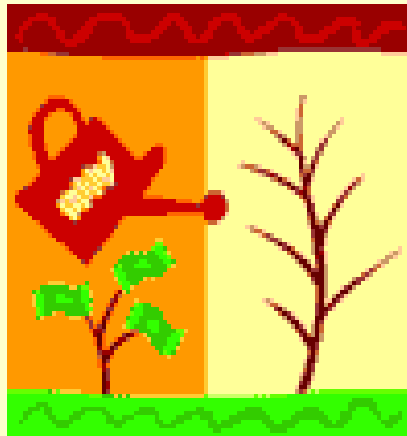


# Students of NWP summer institute teachers are representative of those attending schools nationwide

	Nationwide	In classrooms of NWP SI teachers
% students of color	41%	42%
% English Language Learners	8%	13%
% eligible for free and reduced lunch	37%	35%



C. The NWP is cost effective and leverages federal funding

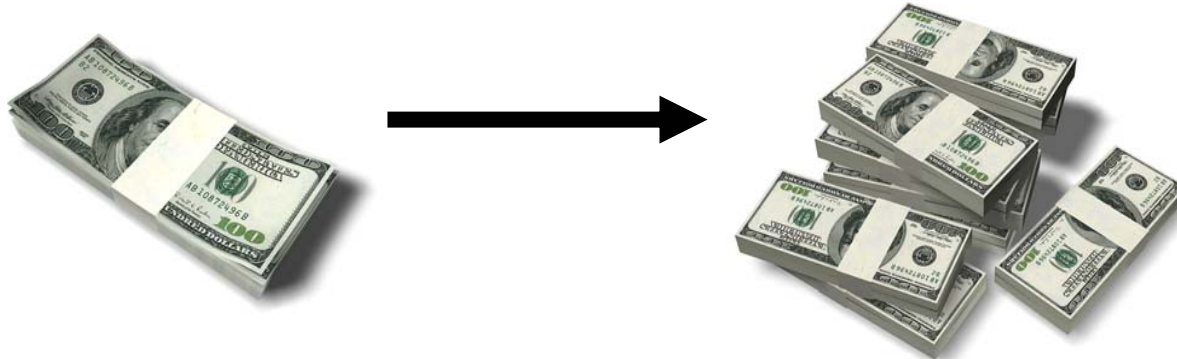


# On average, over the past five years...

- The federal cost per teacher contact-hour is \$2.27



- Sites leverage \$3.62 in local funds for every federal \$1.00



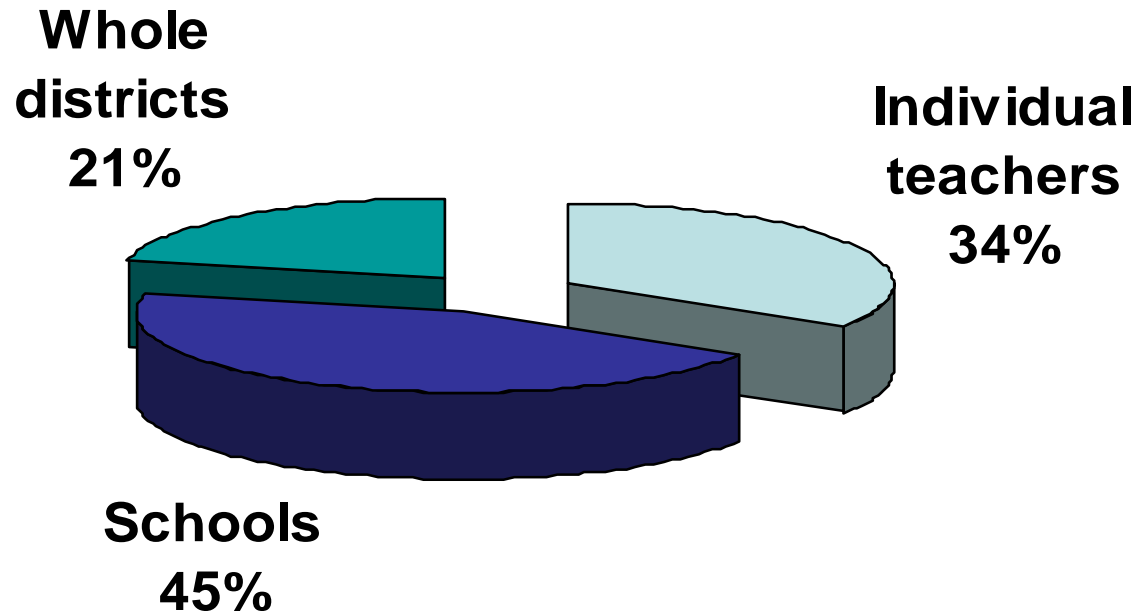
D. The NWP is a national network that provides customized local professional development services

Each of the 195 NWP sites creates a program of varied offerings for local teachers

*The average NWP site offers—*

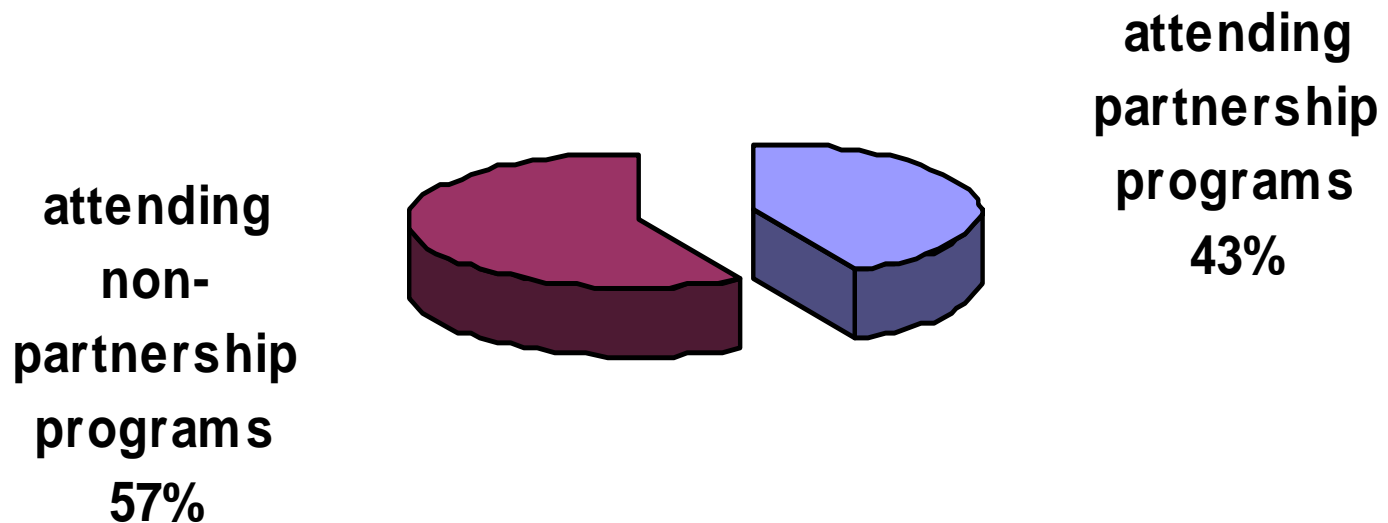
- 1 Invitational institute
- 12 Continuity programs
- 21 Inservice programs
- 4 Youth and community programs

# Local sites work with teachers in different contexts (% of all teachers served)

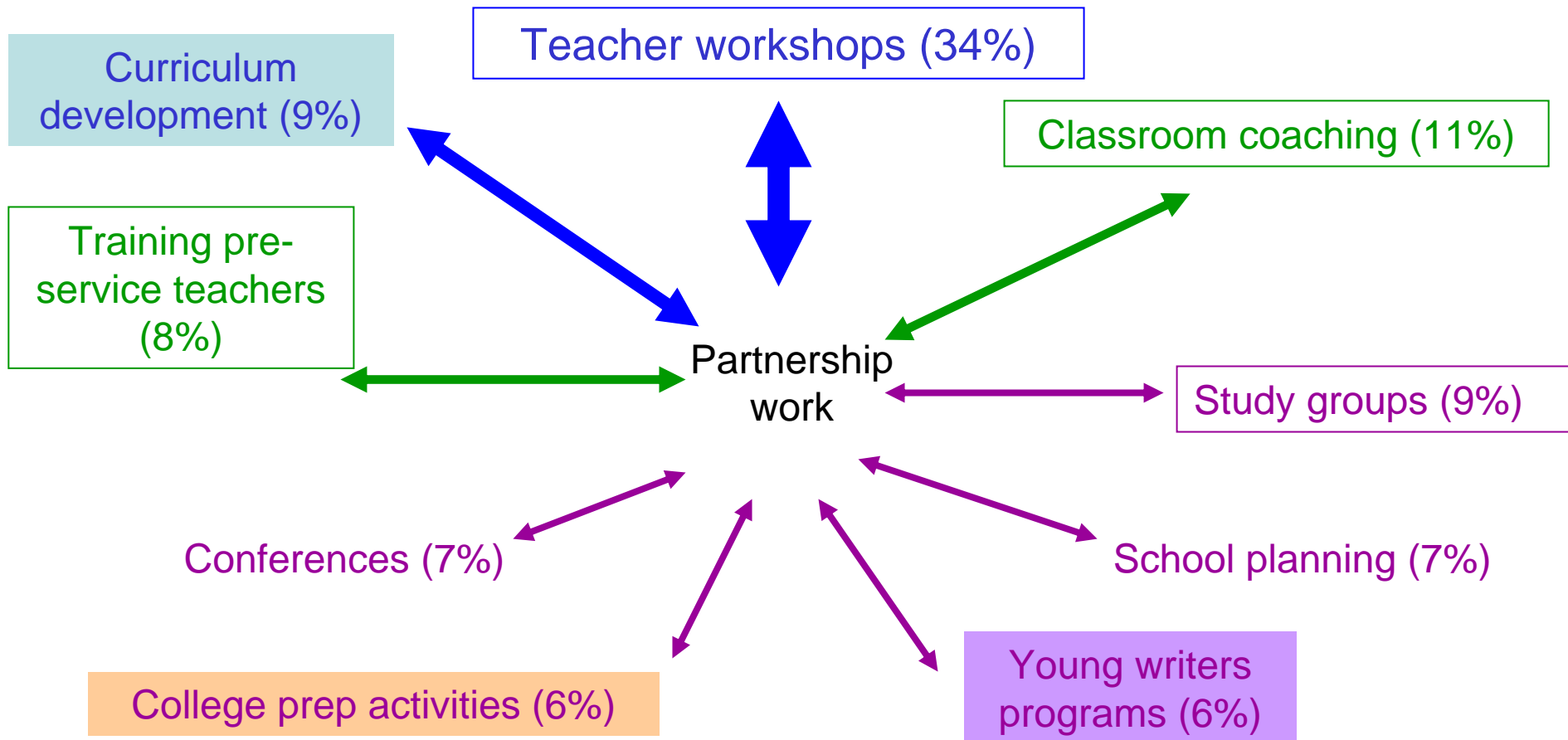


# The growing importance of partnerships:

43% of all teachers receive inservice in the context of a long-term partnership



# Partnerships promote a wide range of activities customized for local context



*23% of partnership work involved other activities such as coaching TCs, writing assessments, continuity work, other youth and community programs.* 31

# SUMMARY OF POINTS



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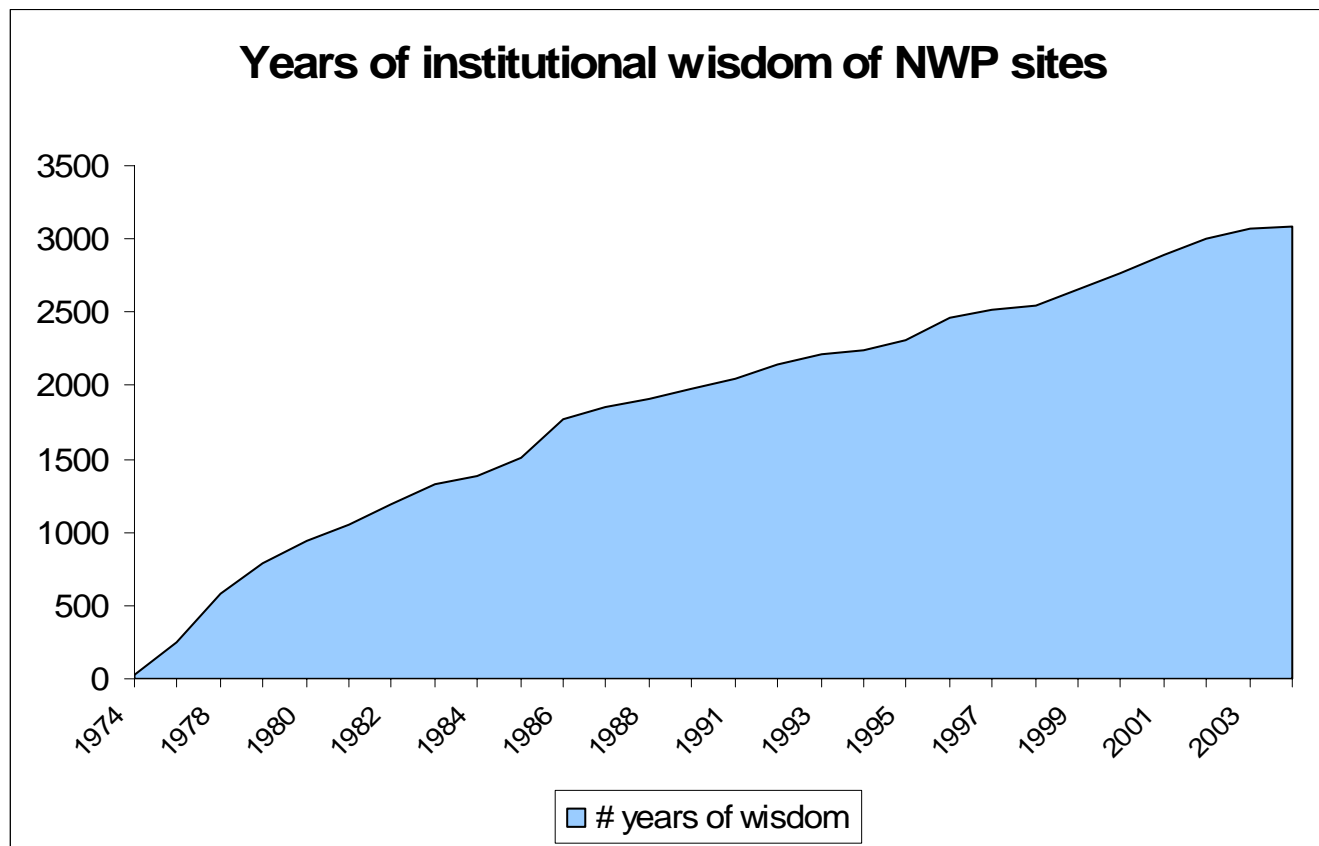
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# The NWP is not just another project!

A national infrastructure developed over 30 years...

The NWP network has accumulated **3,126** “site-years” of experience!



# National Competitiveness and Investment in Education Infrastructure

- Long term competitiveness depends upon the health of the nation's education infrastructure.
- Federal support of the NWP is an investment in the infrastructure that can support ongoing educational improvement in the US.
  - A case of a return with compound interest!

END