

WCCUSD Protocol for Calibrating and Scoring Writing Benchmarks

Introduction:

Calibration is both an art and a science. The art is in the focused conversation necessary to develop a precise understanding of a rubric. The science is in the use of a measurement (the rubric) to measure student work.

Purpose:

Examine student writing proficiency in context; to what degree does the student's writing demonstrate an understanding of/competency with specific, discrete writing standards

Preparation

In the summer, ELA teachers came together to develop benchmark assessments and developed new rubrics that are standards aligned. The scores of 1-4 reflect how often the student demonstrates their level of understanding of each writing standard. Benchmark assessments are not scored on a holistic basis. Teachers are strongly encouraged to use ongoing classroom writing assignments that can be scored holistically. During the transition to Common Core Standards, we are encouraging lead teachers to facilitate **further** conversation and *paired scoring* of the assessments.

The Process

1. Lead Teacher or Department Chair reviews the Writing Benchmark calendar and selects dates for the collaborative conversation and scoring of student work.
2. All ELA teachers are then encouraged to bring their students' work and with a partner support each other in scoring the benchmarks.
3. Before scoring, the Lead Teacher or Department Chair reviews the standards-based rubric for their grade level and topic so that they can calibrate as a department their understanding of each ranking on the rubric. (little or no evidence, inconsistently, frequently, consistently)
4. The essays should be scored on a standard by standard basis; do NOT combine individual scores for a single comprehensive score.
5. The information gathered measures student competency with the selected writing standards.
6. The next steps include designing future lessons to mitigate student "misunderstandings" and to inform adjustments needed for future instruction to prevent ongoing misunderstandings.