

Wireless Writing Program: Peace River North Summary Report on 2009-2011 Cohort Group

Jarrold Bell, Principal of Technology

Toni Thompson, Wireless Writing Mentor Teacher

Context

The Wireless Writing Project (WWP), which began in 2001, provides a laptop computer to every student and teacher in Grades 6 and 7 in the Peace River North School District. The WWP is designed to improve student achievement and engagement in writing as well as be used across the curriculum. District assessments performed twice a year along with Provincial assessments, and Teacher action-research projects have consistently shown gains for students in the WWP.

For the two years of 2009-2010 and 2010-2011 students were tracked in a matching-pair cohort. Students were assessed on their writing skill in the fall and spring of both years and their progress was tracked. All students and teachers in grade 6 and 7 are asked to participate in the cold writes (impromptu writing) each year as it is an excellent formative assessment which uses the BC Performance Standards for evaluation. This cohort studies was in grade 6 at the beginning of 2009 and the same students were included in grade 7 the following year.

Only those students (n=300) with both fall and spring samples for both years were included in the results for analysis. Teachers used the BC Performance Standards appropriate to the grade to assess their students' writing and submitted copies of the evaluations and writing. Teachers had opportunities to assess writing pieces together and were provided with exemplars from previous years.

Questions of particular interest through the cohort are:

- Is there a gap between boys and girls and does it change?
- How does the achievement level of our students change?

Results

During the Grade 7 year of the 2009-2011 cohort the percentage of all students meeting expectations (minimally, fully, exceeding) grew from 85% to 94%. For Aboriginal students the percentage that met expectations rose from 73% to 86%. The percentage of students minimally meeting expectations also decreased, and there was a substantial increase in the number of students at the upper end of the scale fully meeting and exceeding expectations. In spring of 2011, 62% of student writing samples were assessed as fully meeting or exceeding expectations, as compared with 30% in the fall of 2009.

Over two years the percentage of boys meeting expectations rose from 79% to 88%; girls, 90% to 99%. The percent of students fully meeting or exceeding expectations increased from 23% to 50% for boys; 36% to 73% for girls from 2009-2011. There is a noticeable achievement gap between boys and girls in writing in Grades 6 and 7.

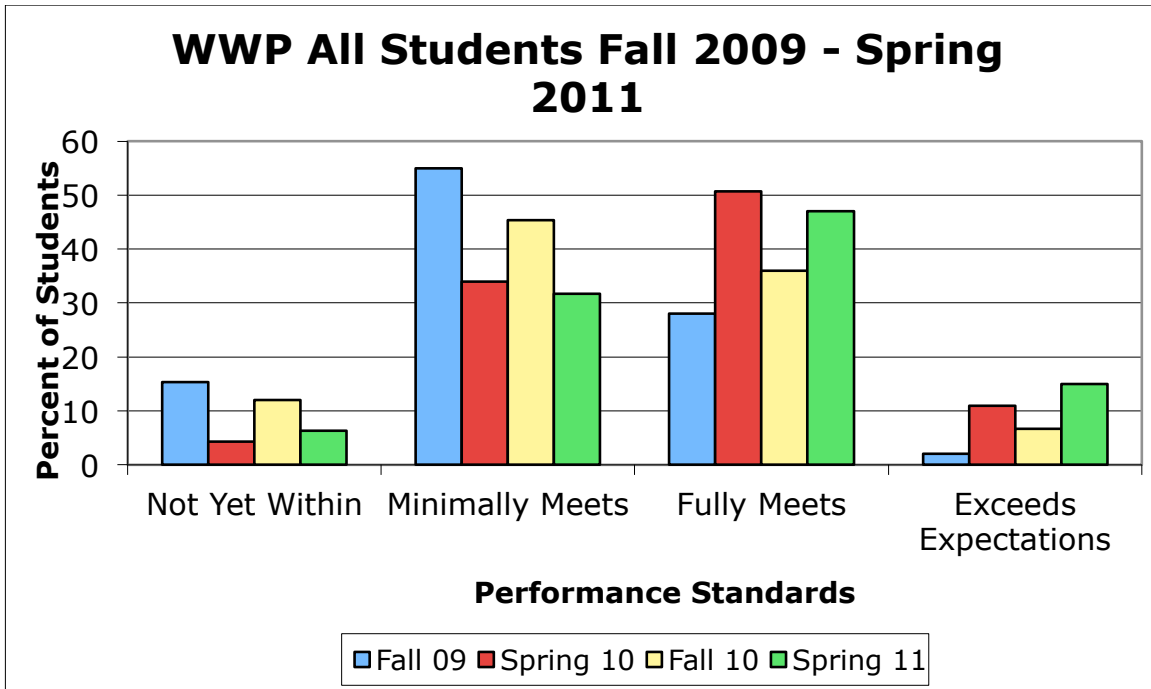
Over two years the percentage of Aboriginal boys meeting expectations rose from 62% to 72%; Aboriginal girls, 83% to 100%. The percent of Aboriginal students fully meeting or exceeding expectations increased from 7% to 38% for boys; 30% to 53% for girls from 2009-2011. There is a noticeable achievement gap between Aboriginal boys and girls in writing.

While the number of students not yet meeting expectations between grades 6 and 7 decreases from 15% to 6% for all students, there are still more boys not yet meeting expectations at the end of Grade 7 compared to girls.

Not Yet Meeting Expectation by Gender and Aboriginal Status

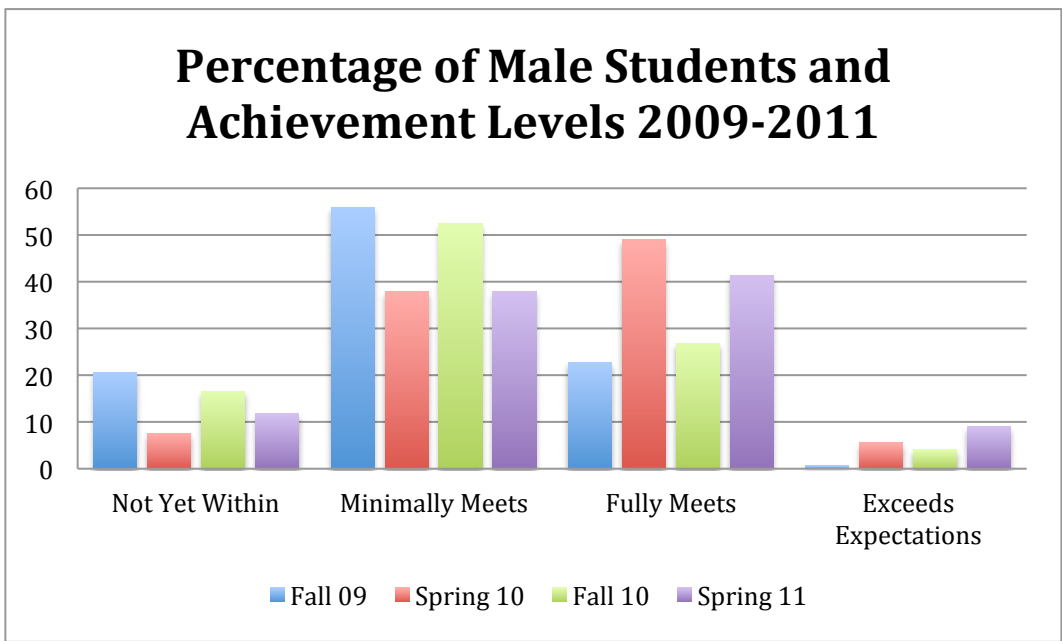
	Not Yet Meeting (Fall 2009)	Not Yet Meeting (Spring 2011)
All Boys	21%	12%
Aboriginal Boys	38%	28%
All Girls	10%	1%
Aboriginal Girls	17%	0%

All Students (n=300)

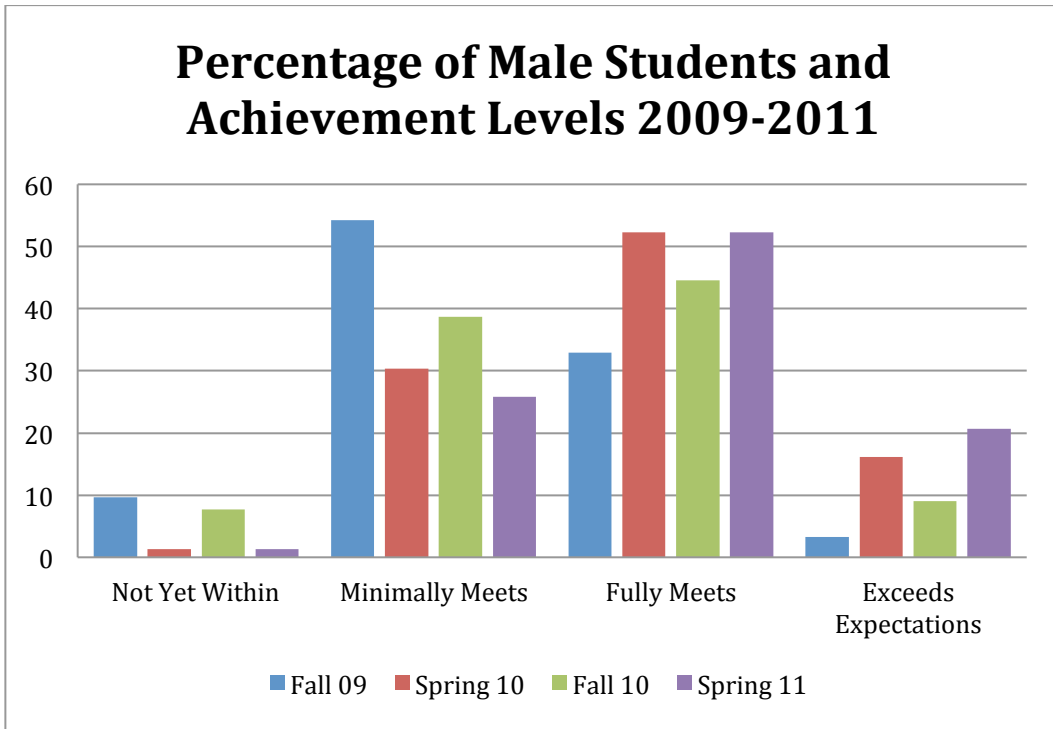


Meeting or Exceeding	Fall 2009 85%	Spring 2011 94%
Fully or Exceeding	Fall 2009 30%	Spring 2011 62%

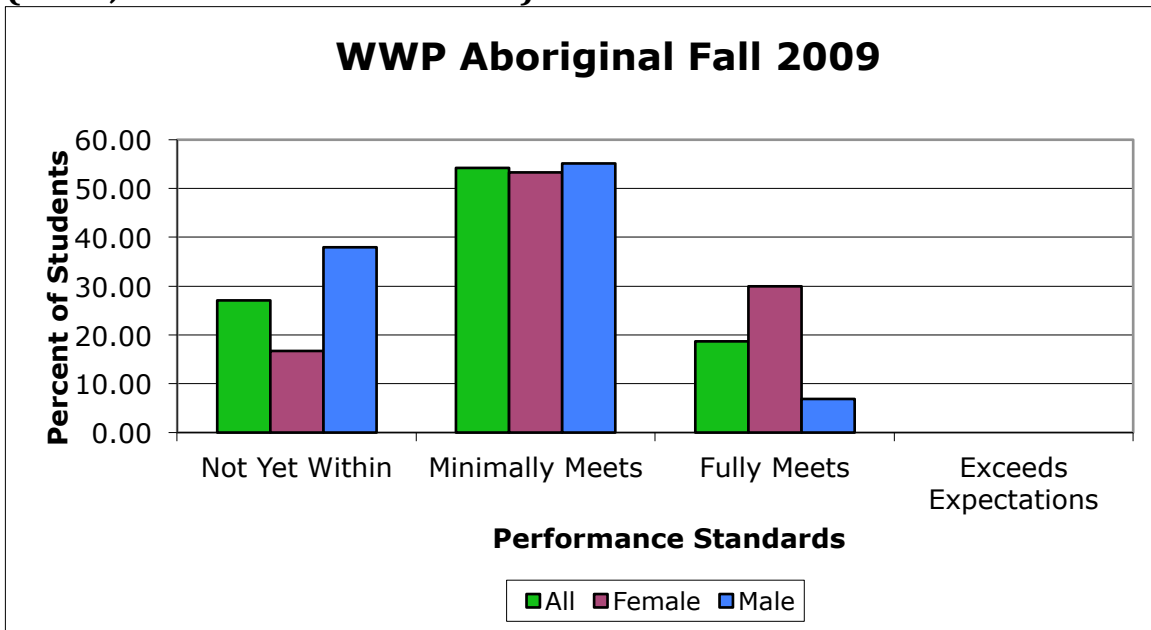
Percentage of Male Students and Achievement Levels (n=145)



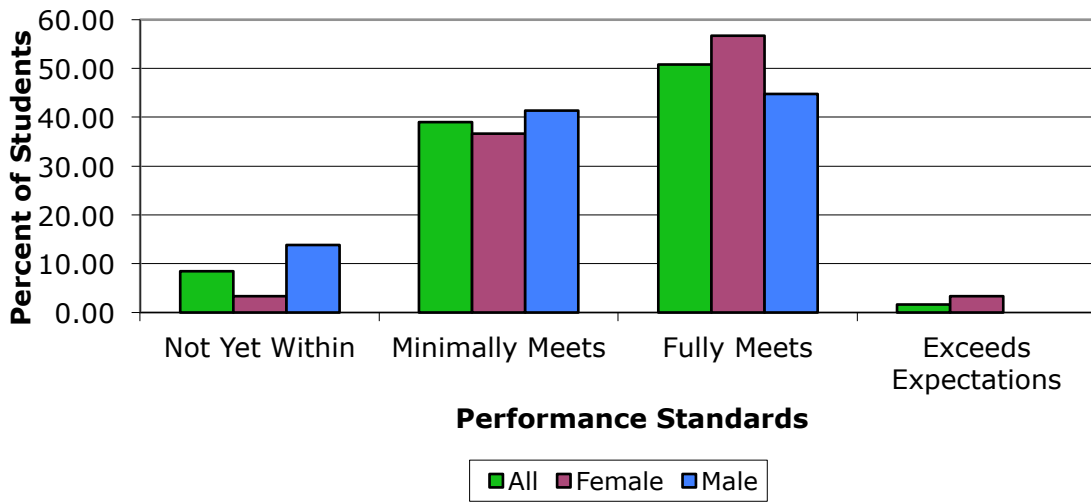
Percentage of Female Students and Achievement Levels (n=155)



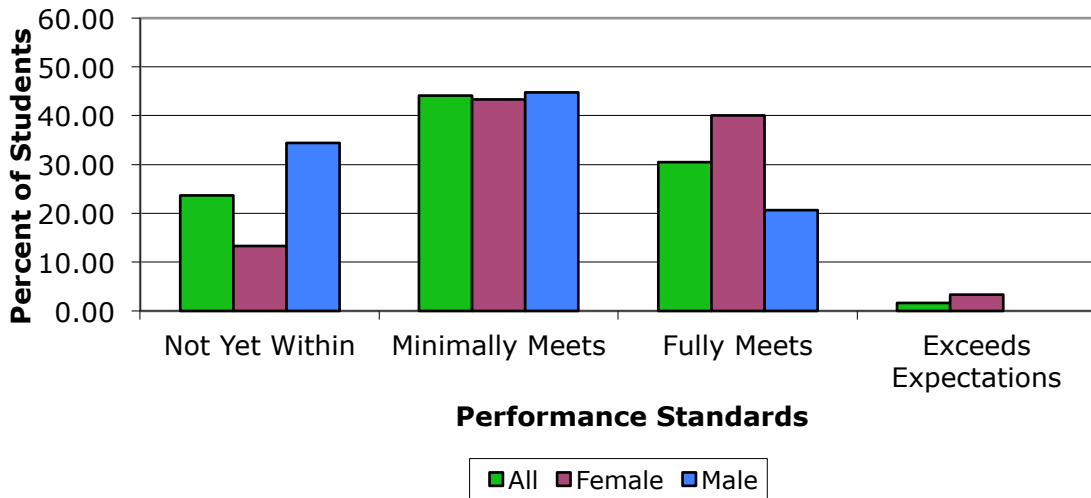
Percentage of Aboriginal Students and Achievement Levels (n=59, 30 Female and 29 Male)

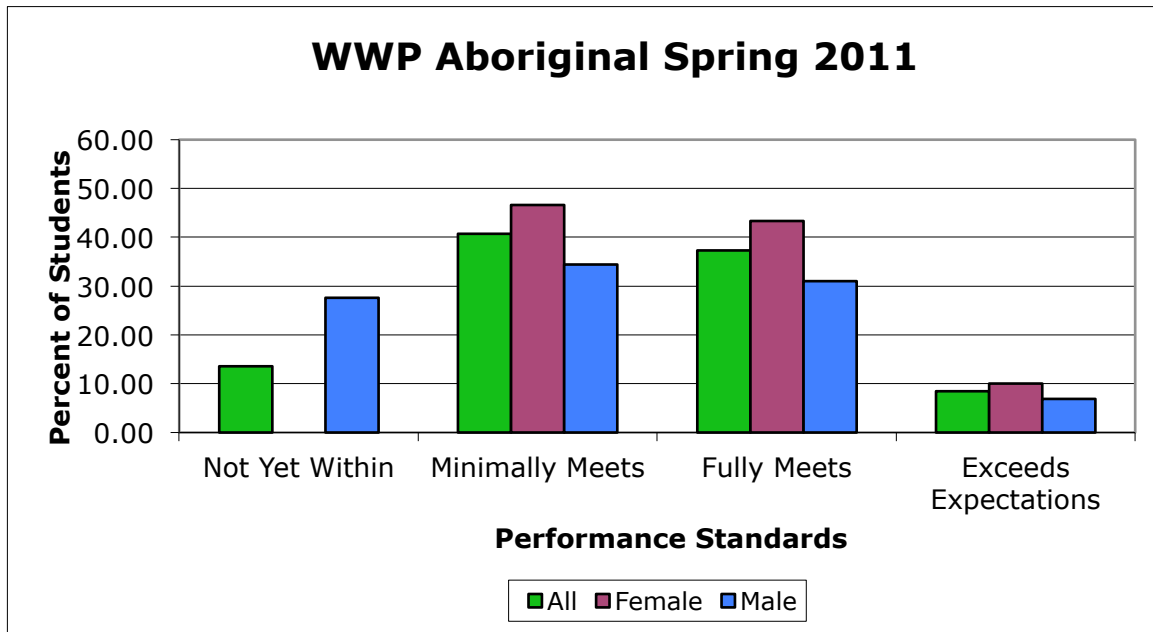


WWP Aboriginal Spring 2010



WWP Aboriginal Fall 2010





Summary

Grade 7 students achieve at a high level in impromptu writing. Almost all students meet at least a minimal level of expectations (94%) with close to two thirds fully meeting or exceeding expectations (62%).

A significant increase in achievement occurs in grade 6 and is sustained and slightly increased in grade 7.

There is an achievement gap between Boys and Girls. Girls begin and end with higher levels of achievement. There is a roughly 10% differential between them.

Future Goals

Our goal will be to continue to aim for 95% of all students meeting expectations for writing at the end of Grade 7.

A goal should be established in consultation with our Aboriginal Education staff to increase the number of Aboriginal Boys meeting expectations for writing at the end of Grade 7

For More information regarding the Wireless Writing Program in School District 60 please contact

Jarrold Bell
Principal of Technology
jbelle@prn.bc.ca
250-262-6013
@jbellsd60