



GRETNA PUBLIC SCHOOLS EMBEDDED WRITING INSTITUTE

Because the best teachers of writing are writers themselves.

HOW IT WORKS

Since 2013, the Gretna Education Foundation has partnered with the Nebraska Writing Project in funding an embedded writing institute for Gretna's educators who are interested in improving their skills as teachers of writing. Year after year, participants have been thrilled to discover that the benefits of the institute extend far beyond writing instruction and into other areas of pedagogy, cross-curricular collaboration, and personal writing in every mode.



WHO WE ARE



The Gretna Writing Institute is open to all educators in the Gretna School District. In the past 8 years, nearly 100 educators have participated, including ELA teachers from all levels as well as administrators, media specialists, elementary teachers, guidance counselors, foreign language and special education faculty, secondary science and math teachers, and many others.

WHAT WE DO

Meeting once a week for 15 weeks, institute participants are involved in three areas of focus: individual EQUIP projects, a collaborative inquiry presentation, and personal writing. The EQUIP allows teachers the opportunity to model his or her best teaching of writing practice or idea for their professional peers to gain feedback, while also giving the class a collection of everyone else's best ideas. During the inquiry phase, research teams work together to solve shared classroom or curricular issues. Finally, all participants work in small writing groups on personal writing pieces from any genre. A middle school Science teacher might be developing a research article for publication while a 4th grade team leader is writing a poem. This invaluable element of the institute allows educators to experience the many emotions our students face as writers every day.

AMBER BAILEY

Kindergarten Teacher,
Whitetail Elementary

I love this class! I look forward to it every week! It is great to be in a room full of teachers in the same district who understand the stress, demands, and joy of teaching.

TESTIMONIALS

KARI BULGRIN

Librarian, Gretna High

The Gretna Writing Institute was a stepping stone for me. I was asked to join a group of school librarians in four graduate-level classes at UNO. The last time I took a class was fourteen years ago. Completing the Gretna Writing Institute gave me confidence in my writing skills and pushed me to think outside the box when it comes to my role in writing in the classroom.

KILEY LUCHSINGER

Drama & ELA, Gretna High

Taking the institute benefitted me in a multitude of ways. I was able to become a student again and understand the difficulties of writer's block while hearing a variety of new ideas from other teachers I hadn't known. Not only did I become a better teacher, it helped me in my personal life, too. This course is time well-spent!

KRISTEN PHILLIPS

2nd Grade Teacher

Whitetail Elementary

It has been neat to see how some of the lessons that are done at a high school level can be modified so I can use them in my second grade classroom. I feel that I will step away from this experience with a wide range of lessons that are easy to implement for my students.

TESTIMONIALS

KELSEY CORDERO

5th Grade teacher, Gretna Elementary

I loved having the chance and excuse to find the time to write each week. Without an incentive like this class, I find that other things take precedence over my writing, even though writing is a great form of self-care for me. It's soothing to get your thoughts and ideas on paper for no reason other than that you want to, especially in a world where we constantly feel like we "need" to be productive.

SHEA GRANGER

Spanish Foreign Language

Gretna High

I loved getting to know staff members I don't typically get a chance to interact with. And it was a great opportunity to get and share ideas!

***FOR MORE INFORMATION ABOUT
THE GRETNA WRITING INSTITUTE
CONTACT FACILITATOR JENNIFER LONG.***

EMAIL ADDRESS

jlong@gpsne.org

PHONE NUMBER

(402)332-3936

Jennifer Long is a member of the secondary English faculty at Gretna Public Schools and is a co-director of the Nebraska Writing Project.