

November 10, 2009

Dear Writing Project Friends:

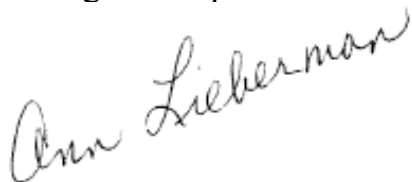
In my over 40 years in education having done many studies of educational reform, I can honestly say that none of them have equaled the incredible power, engagement and learning we saw when we studied the Writing Project. Many teachers who we met, before the study, said that the Writing Project was like “magic”. So we set to work trying to find out what that meant. What we found was a set of social practices that are unique to the Writing Project and responsible for its 35-year history.

What we saw (and continue to see) is that the summer institute and the yearlong programmatic courses, conferences and meetings support the single most successful professional development program in the United States. And there is a reason for this. Through these 35 years, the writing project has never lost site of its core strengths. Teachers teach one another; they engage in reading and discussing relevant literature and research; and there is provision for opportunities to write and share their writing. Although there have been several other new initiatives, the writing project has never lost the core of its success.

I consider it a rare privilege to have found the Writing Project as a research site, both because the research provided the kind of evidence that the public needs to know: that teacher’s learning and leadership is the foundation of any educational reform that is expected to succeed and because it provides a model for *how* it is organized locally and nationally.

Writing is of extreme importance in our contemporary society and the writing project has shown the world the way to engage teachers in their professional lives. This is a model not just for California or the United States, but for the world.

With great respect and sincerity,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Ann Lieberman". The signature is written in dark ink and is positioned above the typed name.

Ann Lieberman, Senior Scholar at Stanford University