

Oakland Unified School District Teaching American History Project

Third Year Evaluation Report July 1, 2006 – June 30, 2007

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Table of Contents

Executive Summary	1
Introduction	2
Program Implementation	2
Program Context	2
Program Goals	3
Evaluation Methods	3
Logic Model	4
Selected Instruments	5
Evaluation Reporting	6
No Child Left Behind Statute	6
Progress Toward Meeting Objectives	7
Objective One	7
Objective Two	13
Objective Three	16
Conclusions and Recommendations	18
Attachments	
Teacher Survey Results from 06-28-2007	A

Executive Summary

The Oakland Unified School District Teaching American History Project has successfully completed its third year of implementation. The purpose of the grant is to improve both teacher content knowledge and instruction in American History. The project served two groups and 40 teachers in grades 5, 8, and 11 during its third year. Twenty-one teachers comprised the 5th grade group and 19 teachers participated in the 8th and 11th grade group.

During year 3 of the grant, the project's focus for the 5th grade teachers was "Using Historical Fiction in the History Classroom." For the 8th and 11th grade teachers, the theme focused on "Foreign Policy: The History of America's Changing Role in World Affairs." The project's professional development program consisted of regular full and half-day meetings during the 2006-2007 school year. The two teacher groups met separately at these meetings and both groups were combined at the one-week summer institute, which took place during the last week in June of 2007. These sessions provided teachers the opportunity to focus on history content, pedagogy, and resources. During these sessions the project provided 15 different lectures by visiting historians.

Project teachers participated in collaboratively structured lesson planning and evaluation sessions using the Lesson Study methodology. Lesson Study is a structured process in which a group of teachers identify an instruction problem, plan a lesson using primary resources, teach the lesson, evaluate and revise the lesson and share the results with other teachers. Through collaboration and an emphasis on lesson revision, the insights of several teachers are brought to bear on the issues surrounding the effective teaching of history.

The project's evaluation consists of both process and impact components. The project's process evaluation component provided performance feedback to the project staff to assist in the examination of the effectiveness of the project's implementation.

The project successfully implemented all of its components for the third straight year.

Professional Development - Objective 1 was achieved as determined by results garnered from the American History Teacher Survey: Teaching the California Content Standards, the Summer Institute Exit Survey, and focus group interviews. The findings from these data collection and analysis efforts underscore a consistent improvement by teachers in their history content knowledge and pedagogical approaches.

Student Academic Achievement – Objective 2 was achieved. Eighth and eleventh grade students in participating teachers' classrooms scored higher than students in classrooms of non-participating teachers on this year's CST history and English subtests. All gains were significantly higher ($p < .05$) except the eighth grade history subtest. Objective 3 was achieved during the first two years using non-participating student writing assessments. In 2007, students in participating teachers' classrooms scored significantly higher ($p < .05$) on the post assessment.

Introduction

The Oakland Unified School District's Teaching American History Grant (TAHG) has completed its third year of implementation. The project targeted fifth, eighth, and eleventh grade teachers of American history serving in Oakland's ethnically and linguistically diverse elementary, middle, and high schools. Teachers participated in either the 5th grade group or the combined 8th and 11th grade group and attended activities/events that were specifically designed for their grade level(s). The project provided the following activities to promote both teacher content knowledge and quality instruction in American History:

1. Ongoing half and full-day professional development days: Each group was offered nine part and full-day workshops consisting of lectures by visiting scholars, readings, and activities dealing with history content and pedagogy. The themes for this year's trainings were: Using Historical Fiction in the History Classroom (5th grade group) and Foreign Policy: The History of America's Changing Role in World Affairs (8th and 11th grade group).
2. One-week summer institute: The summer institute combined both groups and offered five full-day workshops. The workshops continued the year 3 themes and included six presentations by visiting historians.
3. Project website: The project maintains a website that includes audio-tapes of historian lectures, instructional resources that support the translation of the lectures into classroom practice, participant resources, and links to online resources. The website is at: <http://www.teachingamericanhistory.us>.
4. Resources: The project provides teachers with professional and historical texts, and other teaching materials at each of the professional development sessions.
5. In-classroom support including lesson study: The project staff provided both one-to-one classroom supports when requested and facilitated lesson study groups among grade level peers. Using the lesson study process, teachers identified an instruction problem, planned a lesson using primary resources, taught the lesson, and then evaluated and revised the lesson. Lesson plans developed through the lesson study process can be accessed at the project website.

Program Implementation

Program Context

The project collaborated with the University of California Berkeley, Department of History, the University of California History-Social Science Project, the Oakland Museum of California, and professional historians from several universities with the goal of engaging 5th, 8th, and 11th grade teachers in intensive, content rich, staff development.

The Oakland Unified School District serves over 45,000 students in approximately 140 ethnically-diverse, urban elementary, middle, and high schools. Forty teachers from 29 of these schools participated in the project during its third year. Participating teachers included 21 fifth grade teachers, 8 eighth grade teachers, and 11 eleventh grade teachers.

Program Goals

The project has the following five goals:

1. Measurable improvement in teacher knowledge and understanding of traditional American History.
2. Measurable improvement in teacher knowledge and understanding of how to use historical inquiry and historical thinking to deepen student knowledge and understanding of traditional American History.
3. Measurable improvement in teacher knowledge of how to integrate reading, writing, and history in lessons designed to improve student academic and historical literacy skills .
4. Opportunities for teachers to develop and analyze lessons that translate increased content and pedagogical knowledge into effective classroom history instruction.
5. Support the induction of new teachers, as they take on the responsibility of teaching American history.

The project has three principal objectives which were developed to measure the project's project toward meeting these five goals. A detailed analysis of each of these objectives begins on page 7.

Evaluation Methods

The project's evaluation was a cooperative undertaking by project staff, district personnel, partner agencies, and an external evaluation group. The Oakland Unified School District contracted with the Center for Evaluation and Research LLC (C.E.R.) from the project's outset to facilitate the evaluation of the Teaching American History Project. C.E.R. coordinated local evaluation efforts to furnish process and summative information to the project staff with the goal of validating successful practices and providing for evidence-based decision-making.

A local evaluation plan was implemented and consisted of an outline of general evaluation activities that were to be accomplished each year. The plan served as a general guide that directed evaluation efforts. The project evaluation team developed the following logic model that provides a graphic representation between program activities and proposed outcomes:

Table 1: Oakland Unified School District Teaching American History Project – Logic model

Target Populations	Inputs – Project Activities			Intermediate Outcomes	Summative Outcomes
	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3		
Beginning Teachers	Varies according to grade level (see next three rows)			This standard requires new teachers to gain core academic content by attending at least four workshops connected to their subject matter per year.	Same as below
5 th grade history and social studies teachers (Target 25 teachers)	Biography: In-depth Examinations of Significant Men and Women in American History	The Road to the Constitution	Enhancing Content For Critical Reading of Historical Fiction	-Changes in teacher knowledge and behavior -Continuing education units completed by participating teachers	-Increased understanding of American History by students in classrooms of project teachers as measured by performance on the California Standards test in American history
8 th grade history and social studies teachers (Target 10-12 teachers) 11 th grade history and social studies teachers (Target 10-13 teachers)	Biography: In-depth Examinations of Significant Men and Women in American History	The Constitution: Interpretation and Conflict	Foreign Policy: The History of America's Changing Role in World Affairs	-Participation of teachers in leadership activities -Additional higher quality lesson studies	-Changes in 8 th and 11 th grade students' ability to write about selected topics in American history (students demonstrate ability to engage in historical thinking)
5 th , 8 th , and 11 th Grade Teachers – All participating teachers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -School year professional development program (ongoing) -“Research Lessons” support for teachers working collaboratively -Instructional resources (general) - The Oakland Museum of California instructional resources - University of California History-Social Studies Project (UCCHSSP) summer literacy institutes in 2005 and 2006 (twenty-five teachers each summer) 			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Increased fidelity to the scope and sequence of state-mandated course of study (i.e.: 11th grade teachers cover the entire 20th century) -Increased attention paid by teachers to the district's historical thinking strands (chronology, evidence, diversity, interpretation, and historical significance) 	

Selected Instruments

Throughout the three years of the project, the evaluation utilized a variety of instruments to gather information on program processes and impacts. Data collection methods included surveys, workshop evaluation forms, observation protocols, teacher and student writing samples, one-to-one interviews, and focus groups. Evaluators, project staff, and teachers collected the data.

The following is a brief description of the instruments/data sources used by the project for evaluation purposes:

- American History Teacher Survey: Teaching the California Content Standards. A locally developed instrument comprised of several items designed to measure teacher knowledge, beliefs, and behaviors related to history instruction was developed by local evaluators. The complete three-part survey was administered in November of 2004 with a follow-up administration in winter of 2005-2006.
- Teacher focus groups: The project evaluators performed focus group interviews during the 2005, 2006, and 2007 Summer Institutes. The findings from these interviews were transcribed, analyzed, and reported.
- Workshop evaluation form/Summer Institute Exit Survey: The evaluators provided analysis of teacher workshops throughout the implementation of the project. The information shared by these reports was discussed with staff.
- Teacher Writing Samples: Teachers were asked to do reflective writing throughout the 2005-2006 year about their experiences related to the project. The project evaluators did a content analysis of all of the writing and reported findings to project staff.
- Student writing samples from the OUSD American History Assessment: The project collected writing assessments from students two times a year during each of the three school years (winter – baseline; spring – post). Teachers were asked to provide student writings from one-class for this assessment. The samples were of student writing to a history prompt that required students to read and consider a variety of primary source documents as they developed their responses. These student writings were read by at least two project staff, teachers, or evaluators. The project also collected writings from OUSD 11th grade American history students from non-project teachers' classrooms in the spring of 2005 and 2006 for comparative analysis.
- Student standardized tests: California Standards History and English Subtests (CST) were used to measure the project's impact on eighth and eleventh-grade student achievement. Evaluation activities included a

sampling of project and non-project students and between group comparisons using appropriate statistical analysis. The program evaluators also undertook an analysis of CST assessment results by cluster areas.

Evaluation Reporting

The project stakeholders met regularly with evaluators to plan and discuss evaluation findings. The evaluators also maintained a comprehensive web presence with regular updates. The website includes the evaluation plan, reports, and surveys that can be accessed at:

<http://californiaschools.net/americanhistory/index.html>

No Child Left Behind Statute

The evaluation took seriously the changes in the federal legislation particularly in regards to the utilization of more rigorous “scientifically based research” methods. In response to this the project adopted a quasi-experimental approach to analyze student academic achievement. This approach met the definition of scientifically based research, as defined in Title IX of the reauthorized Elementary and Secondary Education Act. Specifically, the evaluation met all of the following six criteria:

1. Employs systematic, empirical methods that draw on observation and experiment;
2. Involves rigorous data analyses that are adequate to test the stated questions and provide a justification for the general conclusions drawn;
3. Relies on measurements that are reliable and valid;
4. Utilizes a quasi-experimental design with appropriate controls; and
5. Activities are sufficiently detailed to be replicated.

Progress Toward Meeting Objectives

The following is the progress made by the project during the third year in meeting the objectives.

Objective 1. 90% of the teachers will demonstrate increases in professional knowledge and qualifications related to working in teaching history and social science as demonstrated by teacher changes in the American History Teacher Survey: Teaching the California Content Standards.

Objective 1 has been achieved as determined by results garnered from the American History Teacher Survey: Teaching the California Content Standards, reflective journals by teachers, classroom observations, the Summer Institute Exit Survey, and focus group interviews. The findings from these data collection and analysis efforts underscore a consistent improvement by teachers in their history content knowledge and pedagogical approaches.

American History Teacher Survey: Teaching the California Content Standards: In November of 2004, the evaluators and staff developed a survey whose goal was to measure the project's impact on teacher self-assessment of content knowledge and instructional practice. The survey consists of three sections. The first section contains general questions about teaching history/social studies. The second section of the survey is designed to elicit information about teaching and student learning as it relates to specific state content standards. The third section asks teachers to list any major history/social studies units being taught that are not part of the standards for their grade level.

A baseline survey was administered to 32 of 46 (69.6%) year one teachers during the winter of 2004-2005 and a follow up survey was administered to 29 of 56 (51.8%) year two teachers in the winter of 2005-2006. Comparative results showed that all the teachers self-reported at least some increases in their professional "knowledge of" and their "ability to" employ the types of instructional strategies they use in their classrooms and in their coverage of state content standards. Teachers, as a group, self-reported increases in their knowledge of four instructional categories including: a) history/social studies standards, b) American history and social studies content, c) appropriate primary sources, and d) curriculum and other instructional resources.

Teachers, as a group, reported increases in their ability to use 7 of 8 indicators related to quality instruction in their history/social studies classroom including: a) promote chronological/spatial thinking, b) engage in the examination of evidence, c) provide diverse and multiple perspectives, d) promote interpretation, e) assist in determining historical/geographical significance, f) technology, and g) multiple assessments, including writing projects and collaborative assessments. Teachers reported their ability level to use biographies decreased at follow-up.

Overall, the percentage of teachers who self-rated their knowledge and ability levels as good or expert increased in 11 of the 12 instructional strategies

measured by the survey. The results of the entire survey were provided by the evaluators to the project staff for program planning purposes and is available at the evaluation website at:

http://californiaschools.net/americanhistory/AttachA_Yr2StndrdsSvy.pdf

Teacher Writing Samples: Teachers were asked to do reflective writing throughout the 2005-2006 academic year. The project evaluators did a content analysis of this writing. The four main topics that teachers wrote about included reflections on the lecturers and the material that was presented, the lesson study process, student writing, and the Summer Institute. All four topics received primarily favorable comments but also garnered constructive suggestions for improvement. The general consensus revealed that the project had a beneficial impact on teacher content knowledge and instructional practice. The complete report that included all the teacher reflections is available at the evaluation website at:

http://californiaschools.net/americanhistory/AttachB_Yr2_TeacherBlueBooks.pdf

Summer Institute Exit Survey: Project staff and evaluators developed an exit survey that was administered to teachers who attended the Summer Institute. Section I of the survey asked teachers to rate the quality of 14 of 15 presentations offered during the year at the Inservices and at the Institute (a lecture by Leon Litwack was given after the survey was administered). The rating scale ranged from excellent, very good, good, fair, to poor. Table 2 contains an overview of their responses:

Table 2: Quality ratings of the 2006-2007 Inservice and Summer Institute presentations

Presenter Date of Presentation	Topic	N=	Excellent	Very Good	Good	Fair
Robin Einhorn October 12, 2006	<i>"Foreign Policy in the Early Republic"</i>	N=17	12 70.6%	4 23.5%	1 5.9%	
Bruce VanSledright October 17, 2006	<i>"Teaching With Historical Fiction - Challenges, Possibilities, and Questions"</i>	N=13	9 69.2%	1 7.7%	3 23.1%	
Clarence Walker November 14, 2006	<i>"Why Slavery?"</i>	N=13	9 69.2%	3 23.1%	1 7.7%	
David Henkin November 30, 2006	<i>"The Indian War of 1812"</i>	N=13	9 69.2%	3 23.1%	1 7.7%	
Monica Fitzgerald December 12, 2006	<i>"The Salem Witchcraft Trials"</i>	N=10	8 80.0%	1 10.0%	1 10.0%	
Charles Postel January 18, 2007	<i>"Seminar on the Spanish-American War"</i>	N=11	5 45.5%	3 27.3%	3 27.3%	
Robin Einhorn March 20, 2007	<i>"The American Revolution and Historical Fiction"</i>	N=13	7 53.8%	5 38.5%	1 7.7%	
Beshara Doumani April 19, 2007	<i>"The United States and the Middle East"</i>	N=10	5 50.0%	3 30.0%	2 20.0%	
William Wagner April 19, 2007	<i>"The Lewis and Clark Expedition and the Making of American Imperialism"</i>	N=13	5 38.5%	5 38.5%	2 15.4%	1 7.7%

Table 2: Quality ratings of the Inservice and Summer Institute presentations (continued)

John Smolenski May 22, 2007	<i>"French and Indian War: Native Americans and the Seven-Year War"</i>	N=10	8 80.0%	1 10.0%	1 10.0%	
Charles Postel June 25, 2007	<i>"The Populist Vision and the Politics of History"</i>	N=23	13 56.5%	7 30.4%	3 13.0%	
Tuyen Tran June 26, 2007	<i>"Viet Nam War Narratives: The South Vietnamese American Offense"</i>	N=23	6 26.1%	5 21.7%	8 34.8%	4 17.4%
Caroline Winterer June 27, 2007	<i>"Women in the American Revolution"</i>	N=23	18 78.3%	4 17.4%	1 4.3%	
David Kennedy June 27, 2007	<i>"A Tale of Three Cities: How the United States Won World War II"</i>	N=23	17 73.9%	4 17.4%	2 8.7%	

The results contained in Table 2 indicate that the majority of presentations were rated as excellent, very good, or good and participants were satisfied with the quality and content of the workshops. Section II of the survey asked participants to rate the quality or usefulness (in terms of use in the classroom) of the instructional content, materials, and support offered by the project. The results are contained in Table 3 below:

Table 3: Project components rated by quality or usefulness

	N=	Excellent	Very Good	Good	Fair
The QUALITY of the visiting historian lectures	N=24	16 66.7%	7 29.2%	1 4.2%	
The USEFULNESS of the content and materials provided by visiting historians	N=24	12 50.0%	8 33.3%	4 16.7%	
The QUALITY of the reading and instructional materials provided by the project staff	N=24	13 54.2%	7 29.2%	3 12.5%	1 4.2%
The USEFULNESS of the reading and instructional materials provided by the project staff	N=24	11 45.8%	5 20.8%	5 20.8%	3 12.5%
The USEFULNESS of the lesson study process in assisting you to improve your instructional program	N=24	17 70.8%	6 25.0%	1 4.2%	
The QUALITY of the staff support provided you this past year.	N=24	20 83.3%	3 12.5%	1 4.2%	

Twenty-three of 24 teachers (95.8%) rated "the quality of the visiting historian lectures" and "the quality of the staff support" as excellent or very good (tied for the highest rated item). Sixteen of 24 (66.7%) rated "the usefulness of the reading and instructional materials provided by project staff" as excellent or very good while 33.3% rated it as good or fair (the lowest rated item). Overall, the majority of respondents rated each item offered by the project as excellent or very good in terms of usefulness in their classrooms.

Sections III and IV of the survey elicited written responses to two open-ended questions. The first question asked teachers to explain how the project's activities have changed, if at all, their teaching of American History. Respondents commented that their increase in content knowledge influenced their teaching in

multiple ways. Those ways most frequently mentioned included the increased use of primary sourced documents, the collaboration of ideas among peers especially during the lesson study process, and their ability to present history from multiple perspectives.

The second question solicited any additional comments and any ideas that would make the project more useful. Comments varied, but the most common themes included the increased availability of resources, the lectures from visiting historians, student writing strategies, and commendations addressing the benefits of the 3-year project. Ideas that made the project more useful centered on fine-tuning the lesson study process, the accountability of participants, and the continuation of grant-related outcomes in the classroom. Sample responses to the open-ended questions are provided on the following page. All the written responses from the Summer Institute Exit Survey are included in Attachment A.

Sample 1: Teacher responses to open-ended survey questions administered June 28, 2007

Teacher Summer Institute Exit Survey Samples – 24 Teachers

How the project has changed their teaching of American History

- *It has given me a better understanding of American History and more tools for teaching it.*
- *The project has allowed for me to collaborate with colleagues and to gain subject knowledge - both of which have benefited my students.*
- *1) Its given me greater range and depth of knowledge so that I'm more certain about materials I use. 2) I use primary sources in my teaching. 3) I'm concerned with the writing of history and the product resulting from student work. 4) I'm more willing to work with colleagues on teaching products that are a consequence of collective effort. 5) I ask better questions about history and this enhances discussions and thinking with my students.*
- *I'm much more prepared, with different perspectives, to present a more rounded history unit in any textbook based content area.*

Additional comments and ideas on how to make the project more useful to you

- *I found the whole experience extremely engaging and useful. I sincerely hope that I might participate in the grant in the future.*
- *Great people, materials, discussions, and resources. Too bad all good things come to an end.*
- *In our present limited system of education - i.e., scripted curriculums, massive amounts of skill based learning to meet pacing guides, this kind of teaching and learning reminds me what is really important: making, meaning, being engaged, honoring thinking, project-based, and students responsible for learning.*
- *Emphasize promptness and focus of participants, provide a more classroom ready or adaptable resources, mix up groups a bit more, rather than sticking only to lesson study groups - interacting with other participants during Summer Institute was great.*
- *What would be most useful would be for the project to continue.*

Focus Groups: Complementing the surveys were focus group interviews held during the summer institute in June of 2007. Transcriptions showed that teachers consistently acknowledged the project for their improvement in history content knowledge and pedagogical approaches. Teachers also stated their appreciation of the project and hoped it would continue in the future. The following are representative examples of actual quotes taken from the teacher focus groups that address various project-related topics:

Sample 2: Focus group findings - June 2007

Focus Group Findings – 24 Teachers Participated

Overall thoughts of the project

- *“This is my first year and I got so much out of it. I can’t think of any way to make it better. I think I learned a ton. I wouldn’t change anything”*
- *“What happens if you just raise the quality of what you’re doing so high that people want to come? That’s what we have here... I think the fact that attendance here is not mandatory and the draw is the professional experience is inextricable from its value.”*

Lectures from the visiting historians

- *“I really found that having guest lecturers from UC Berkeley come and talk to us about topics in history was extremely beneficial to me. I learned a lot from that experience and its information that I’ll be using in lesson plans.”*
- *“I really enjoyed the lectures. I really liked the way they were presented and there are times I go online and listen to what was presented to the high school [group].”*

Materials from the visiting historians

- *“I really appreciate that they gave us the materials to use. It really filled in the gaps in history for me as well as my students. The history books don’t have enough. It made it really clear for me and helped make me a better teacher.”*
- *“I think its primary usage is for your understanding. It’s not something that you can translate easily to the students”*

Lesson study

- *“Its teacher centered, it’s respectful. We and other caring colleagues have the ability to decide what skills and knowledge we want to develop with the students and decide the best approach to go about it. That’s really a pure process that we don’t necessarily see in other types of professional development.”*
- *“It just gives you so much more time to make a really great lesson with many different perspectives because there are so many different types of people working on the lesson.”*
- *“I appreciate the fact that it’s both process oriented and a collaborative effort. Along the way I learned as much about my own teaching practice and the teaching practice of other teachers than I did about the student learning. It allows us to step back and look back at our own teaching approach. I appreciate the process, the collaboration, and the reflection”*

Sample 2: Focus group findings - June 2007 (continued)

Student writing

- *"Yes in response to writing they're using more documents. We're getting kids' reactions to primary sources and documents and they're writing more, which is a direct result of the causal relationship."*
- *"Social studies is so much more than recall. They expect us to be talking about analysis and to get that out of a student is much more valuable. Above the content, it can be applied to the way they see school and it's not just facts to memorize."*
- *"I also think the grant is really aligned perfectly well with the district in terms of what's required of writing... Kids are now producing a thesis, they're producing paragraphs, they know everything reinforced at every level from 3rd grade on up... so that by the time they're in 11th and 12th we're really seeing some excellent writing."*

State standards

- *"You have to be creative as far as the standards go. I think it creates a lot of interest for the kids when you find a topic that's going to be exciting for them."*
- *"Everything that we've talked about and done can all be tied to state standards. I think it's important to look at those standards every year just to keep them in focus. There is a tendency to go off topic but those standards are there to help keep you reigned in. But I do think all the lectures that we heard were all standards based."*

The future of the Teaching American History Grant

- *"Let's put it this way: Our binders - the spine of our binders say "History Grows [In Oakland]"...you can say that as of Saturday that "History Shrinks" now."*
- *"This program has focused on what teachers need. Never have we sat around looking at teachers manuals. It did away with the triteness the triviality of most teachers in-services programs. You walk in here and are exposed to the most brilliant thinkers of our day.... It has been the best experience in my 24 years of teaching."*

In aggregate, the data from the American History Teacher Survey: Teaching the California Content Standards, teacher writing samples, the Summer Institute Exit Survey, and focus group interviews provide evidence that teachers are improving their content knowledge and are adopting quality instructional practices.

Objective 2. Annually, project students who participated in a project classroom in previous years will demonstrate statistically significantly ($p < .05$) higher scores in history and social science than non-participating school-age students as measured by the California Achievement Test (CST).

This objective has been achieved in 2005, 2006, and 2007 with separate cohorts of students in classrooms of participating teachers. Given the project's emphasis on writing and critical thinking, the project staff also was interested in the difference between groups in regards to the CST Language Arts subtest scores. Project students were compared to all the other students at their grade level in the district who had available CST data. Using a test of significance, eleventh grade students in project teacher's classrooms scored significantly higher ($p < .05$) than students in classrooms of non-participating teachers on both the California Standards Test's (CST) History and Language Arts subtests. Similarly, eighth grade students in project teacher's classrooms scored significantly higher than students in non-participating classrooms on the Language Arts subtest; however, the increase on the History subtest was not statistically significant. The following table provides an overview of the student achievement data for 8th and 11th grade students.

Table 4: 2007 8th and 11th grade group CST History and Language Arts subtest scale score results - comparison non-project vs. project students

Grade Level & Subtest	Student Status	N=	Mean Scale Score	Difference Between Groups
8 th Grade History	Non-Project Students	1707	311.76	+2.69
	Project Students	418	314.45	
8 th Grade Language Arts	Non-Project Students	1717	316.11	+6.18
	Project Students	418	322.29	
11 th Grade History	Non-Project Students	1252	303.53	+25.97
	Project Students	383	329.50	
11 th Grade Language Arts	Non-Project Students	1314	296.09	+27.30
	Project Students	398	323.39	

Eighth grade students in project teachers' classrooms scored 2.69 scale score points higher, on average, and eleventh grade students scored 25.97 scale score points higher on the History Subtest than students of non-participating teachers. On the Language Arts Subtest, eighth grade students in project teachers' classrooms scored 6.18 scale score points higher and eleventh grade students scored 27.30 scale score points higher than students of non-participating teachers. The above scale score difference is reflected in the corresponding student performance levels. Table 5 on the following page provides the performance level results for project (treatment) and other district (control) 8th and 11th grade students.

Table 5: 2007 8th and 11th grade group CST History subtest performance level results

Performance Level	Eighth Grade		Eleventh Grade		
	Control	Treatment	Control	Treatment	
Far Below Basic	Count	94	420	56	317
	% within Treatment or Control	22.5%	24.6%	14.6%	25.3%
	% of Total	4.4%	19.8%	3.4%	19.4%
Below Basic	Count	97	447	84	382
	% within Treatment or Control	23.2%	26.2%	21.9%	30.5%
	% of Total	4.6%	21.0%	5.1%	23.4%
Basic	Count	126	445	122	328
	% within Treatment or Control	30.1%	26.1%	31.9%	26.2%
	% of Total	5.9%	20.9%	7.5%	20.1%
Proficient	Count	67	265	73	169
	% within Treatment or Control	16.0%	15.5%	19.1%	13.5%
	% of Total	3.2%	12.5%	4.5%	10.3%
Advanced	Count	34	130	48	56
	% within Treatment or Control	8.1%	7.6%	12.5%	4.5%
	% of Total	1.6%	6.1%	2.9%	3.4%
Total	Count	418	1707	383	1252
	% within Treatment or Control	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
	% of Total	19.7%	80.3%	23.4%	76.6%

The data in the above table shows that eighth and eleventh grade students in the classes of project teachers were more likely to score proficient or above on the 2007 CST History Subtest than students in non-project classrooms, although the likelihood was far greater with the eleventh grade students. Specifically, 24.1% of the projects eighth grade students scored proficient or advanced compared to 23.1% of the non-project eighth grade students while 31.6% of the projects eleventh grade students scored proficient or advanced compared to 18.0% of the non-project eleventh grade students.

The project was also interested in how students in project teachers' classrooms did on the 2007 CST by cluster areas – test items are clustered by areas of study. This is especially important for the 8th grade test because it assesses both world and U.S. history. Table 6 (below) provides an overview of 8th grade student performance by CST cluster areas.

Table 6: 8th grade CST history assessment cluster scores (Control N=1707; Treat N=418)

Cluster Area	Number of Items in Cluster	Mean Number of Questions Correct		Percentage Correct as a Group	
		Control	Treatment	Control	Treatment
U.S. Constitution and the Early Republic	22	9.87	9.87	44.87%	44.89%
Civil War and its Aftermath	13	5.93	5.84	45.60%	44.90%
World History and Geography Ancient Civilizations (GR6)	16	7.32	7.73	45.73%	48.31%
Late Antiquity and the Middle Ages (GR7)	14	6.30	6.52	45.00%	46.60%
Renaissance Reformation (GR7)	10	4.21	4.42	42.11%	44.19%

Students in 8th grade project teachers' classrooms scored higher than students in non-project classrooms in 4 of 5 cluster areas. The mean gains ranged from a minimal 0.02% increase on the U.S. Constitution and the Early Republic items to a significantly higher ($p < .05$) 2.58% increase on the World History and Geography Ancient Civilizations items. Non-project students scored slightly higher (45.60% to 44.90%) on the 13 Civil War and its Aftermath questions. An overview of 11th grade project students and non-project students' performance by CST cluster areas is provided in the following table:

Table 7: 11th grade CST history assessment cluster scores (Control N=1252; Treat N=383)

Cluster Area	Number of Items in Cluster	Mean Number of Questions Correct		Percentage Correct as a Group	
		Control	Treatment	Control	Treatment
Foundations of American Political and Social Thought	10	4.33	4.92	43.30%	49.22%
Industrialization and the U.S. as a World Power	13	5.41	7.29	41.61%	56.04%
United States Between the World Wars	12	5.24	6.28	43.70%	52.37%
World War II and Foreign Affairs	12	4.69	5.52	39.07%	45.97%
Post World War II Domestic Issues	13	5.53	6.24	42.50%	48.02%

The data in Table 7 shows that 11th grade students in project teachers' classrooms scored significantly higher ($p < .05$) than 11th grade students in non-project teachers' classrooms on the CST History subtest in all five cluster areas. The 11th grade students in project teacher's classrooms scored 56.04% correct on the 13 Industrialization and the U.S. as a World Power questions, which was the cluster area that registered the highest score. The mean percentage correct was 14.43% higher than the 11th grade students in non-project classrooms. The cluster area containing 12 World War II and Foreign Affairs questions received the lowest scores from both 11th grade groups.

The project also compared the attendance data between students in project teachers' classrooms (treatment) and students in non-project teachers' classrooms (control). An overview of the student attendance data is presented in the table below:

Table 8: 8th and 11th grade student attendance data

School Attendance 2006-2007	Eighth Grade		Eleventh Grade	
	Control N=422	Treatment N=1728	Control N=403	Treatment N=1354
Mean Days Enrolled	174.49	175.18	173.39	178.58
Mean Days Present	165.98	168.17	167.00	174.67
Mean Days Absent	8.51	7.01	6.39	3.91
Mean Percent of Days Attended	95.12	95.99	96.31	97.81

Table 8 shows that 8th grade and 11th grade students in project teachers' classrooms missed significantly less ($p < .05$) days than students attending non-project teachers' classrooms. On average, eighth grade project students were absent 1.50 days less than non-project eighth grade students and eleventh grade project students were absent 2.48 days less than eleventh grade non-project students. Eighth grade project students attended 95.99% of days enrolled and eleventh grade project students attended 97.81% of days enrolled, both significantly higher than students in non-project classrooms.

In summary, students in participating teacher classrooms scored as a group significantly higher on all but one of the CST history and English subtests that were administered at the end of the project's three years of implementation (2005-2007). Eighth grade students in project teacher's classrooms also scored higher on the History-Social Science subtest administered in May of 2007; however, the increase was not statistically significant. It should be noted that the differences between groups may be the result of selection bias that is, those teachers who selected to participate in the project may have been teachers who used more effective instructional approaches prior to their participation in the project.

Objective 3 - Annually, project students in 8th and 11th grade students who participated in a project classroom will demonstrate statistically significant ($p < .05$) higher scores on district writing assessments than non-participating students.

This objective was achieved as written during 2005 and 2006; however this objective was not measured using assessments from non-participating students in 2007. The district did collect writing assessments from its 8th and 11th grade students twice during 2005, 2006, and 2007. The first student writing samples (collected in the winter of 2004) were used by the district and project staff as a "trial run" with results shared with project teachers to assist them in making improvements in their instructional programs.

The project scored the second writing sample, collected in June 2005, and the four subsequent writing samples using a writing rubric developed by project and district staff. Project evaluators reviewed and scored each paper a minimum of two times using the rubric consisting of a Likert scale that ranged from 0 (low) to 4 (high). The scoring rubric measured student writing within each of the following five categories:

1. Thesis: a) addresses the prompt, b) provides a map of the argument to be made
2. Knowledge: a) use chronological/spatial thinking, b) connect knowledge to argument, c) define and clarify essential terms
3. Use of Documents: a) understand the meaning and perspective of author, b) show relationship to argument
4. Analysis: a) make plausible inferences, b) draw rational conclusions, c) identify and prioritize significance, d) address multiple perspectives

5. Organization and clarity: a) thesis, topic sentences, evidence, analysis, and conclusion

Table 9 shows the distribution of scores for the last five writing assessments: (note: the fall 2004 assessment results were not included in the assessment process).

Table 9: Three year overview of student writing assessments

Rubric Scores	Spring 2005	Winter 2006	Spring 2006	Winter 2007	Spring 2007
0 – Far Below Basic	Not measured	18 (7.2%)	6 (2.3%)	4 (2.2%)	0 (0.0%)
1 – Below Basic	20 (12.5%)	65 (26.0%)	33 (12.5%)	27 (14.6%)	13 (5.7%)
2 – Basic	95 (59.4%)	101 (40.4%)	124 (47.1%)	91 (49.2%)	38 (16.6%)
3 – Proficient	33 (20.6%)	46 (18.4%)	64 (24.3%)	46 (31.6%)	138 (60.3%)
4 – Above Proficient	12 (7.5%)	20 (8.0%)	36 (13.7%)	20 (2.2%)	40 (17.5%)
Total	160 (100%)	250 (100%)	263 (100%)	185 (100%)	229 (100%)

The above table shows a consistent movement of students toward higher results between writing samples during the school year. Results from spring 2007 demonstrated that 77.8% of all writing samples scored proficient or above, an increase of 49.7% over 2005 baseline levels and 39.8% more than 2006. Table 10 compares the assessment scores between winter 2007 and spring 2007 in the five rubric categories and the overall scores:

Table 10: Writing sample scores for 11th grade students by category

Rubric Category	Assessment	Rubric Score				
		0	1	2	3	4
Thesis: A well developed thesis	Winter 2007	2.2%	16.8%	39.5%	33.5%	8.1%
	Spring 2007	0.4%	7.4%	14.5%	59.8%	17.9%
Knowledge: Supporting a thesis with relevant and substantial outside information	Winter 2007	0.5%	9.7%	31.9%	42.2%	15.7%
	Spring 2007	0.0%	5.7%	19.2%	55.4%	19.7%
Use of Docs: Effective use of documents	Winter 2007	1.6%	13.0%	41.6%	33.0%	10.8%
	Spring 2007	0.5%	5.7%	19.2%	55.0%	19.7%
Analysis: An effective analysis	Winter 2007	1.6%	13.0%	54.1%	29.2%	2.2%
	Spring 2007	0.2%	13.5%	19.2%	40.0%	27.1%
Organization and Clarity: A well organized essay	Winter 2007	2.2%	3.2%	47.6%	39.5%	7.6%
	Spring 2007	0.3%	7.3%	17.9%	54.8%	19.7%
Overall Reviewers' Scores	Winter 2007	2.2%	14.6%	49.2%	31.9%	2.2%
	Spring 2007	0.0%	5.7%	16.6%	60.3%	17.5%

For the spring 2007 assessment, the percentage of 11th grade students who scored proficient or above increased in all five rubric categories when compared with scores from the winter 2007 assessment. Students scoring proficient or

above in the “Thesis” category increased 36.1% from 41.6% to 77.7%; the “Knowledge” category increased 17.2% from 57.9% to 75.1%; the “Use of Docs” category increased 30.9% from 43.8% to 74.7%; the “Analysis” category increased 35.7% from 31.4% to 67.1%; and the “Organization and Clarity” category increased 27.4% from 47.1% to 74.5%. Overall, the percentage of students scoring proficient or above increased 43.7% from 34.1% to 77.8% when averaged across all five categories.

In summary, students in participating teachers’ classrooms demonstrated improved writing levels in each of the three years of the project. Additionally, the project collected writing samples from non-project students during the springs of 2005 and 2006. Students in participating teachers’ classrooms scored as a group significantly higher ($p < .05$) on the district writing samples than non-project students.

Conclusions and Recommendations

The project has successfully implemented all of its components and achieved all of its objectives. Objective 1 has been achieved each of the first three years as determined by results garnered from multiple data sources including the American History Teacher Survey: Teaching the California Content Standards, reflective journals by teachers, classroom observations, the Summer Institute Exit Survey, and focus group interviews. The findings provide a picture of ongoing improvement by teachers in their history content knowledge and pedagogical approaches.

Objective 2 has been achieved in 2005, 2006, and 2007 with separate cohorts of students in classrooms of participating teachers. Project students were compared to all the other students at their grade level in the district who had available CST data. Using a test of significance, eleventh grade students in project teacher’s classrooms scored significantly higher ($p < .05$) than students in classrooms of non-participating teachers on both the California Standards Test’s (CST) History and Language Arts subtests. Similarly, eighth grade students in project teacher’s classrooms scored significantly higher than students in non-participating classrooms on the Language Arts subtest; however, the increase on the History subtest was not statistically significant.

Objective 3 has been achieved in each of the first three years of the project. In 2005 and 2006, students in participating teachers’ classrooms scored as a group significantly higher ($p < .05$) on the district writing samples than non-project students. In 2007, students in participating teachers’ classrooms demonstrated improved student writing levels.

Recommendations and Next Steps

The History Grows in Oakland TAH grant has completed its third year of implementation. During the first three years, activities offered to enrich teacher content and teaching strategies were accomplished as designed. An appropriate next step is to sustain grant activities to project teachers. The following recommendations are made:

1. Continue to incorporate student writing assessments into lesson plans;
2. Use scholars to deliver content lectures at professional development meetings;
3. Maintain History Grows in Oakland website ;
4. Continue to look for appropriate ways to integrate Language Arts and History content;
5. Administer Section I of American History Teacher Survey (self-rating of 12 instructional strategies) to teachers that completed the assessment in 2005 or 2006; and
6. Continue ongoing rigorous process and summative evaluation.