

Collins Writing Program Implementation Profile

Williamsport Area High School
Williamsport, PA

“The Collins Writing Program was a key component of our school’s improvement initiative and has made a huge difference in our test results.” —Michael Reed, Principal

Background

Williamsport Area High School (WAHS) is a comprehensive public high school serving approximately 1,600 students in Williamsport, PA. In 2010, 59% of WHS students were proficient on the Pennsylvania System of School Assessment (PSSA) Reading test, 49.1% on the Math test, and 73.8% on the Writing test.

The Collins Writing Program was used as a key component in WHS’s participation in the Pennsylvania Qualified School Improvement Grant. From 2011 to 2013, WHS showed the highest growth and moved into the top 2 of 100 schools receiving the grant.

Training

In winter 2011, the school’s leadership team began implementing a broad instructional initiative to integrate the Collins Writing Program across the curriculum. Several school leaders received training in the program’s components and began offering professional development to representatives in various departments across the school.

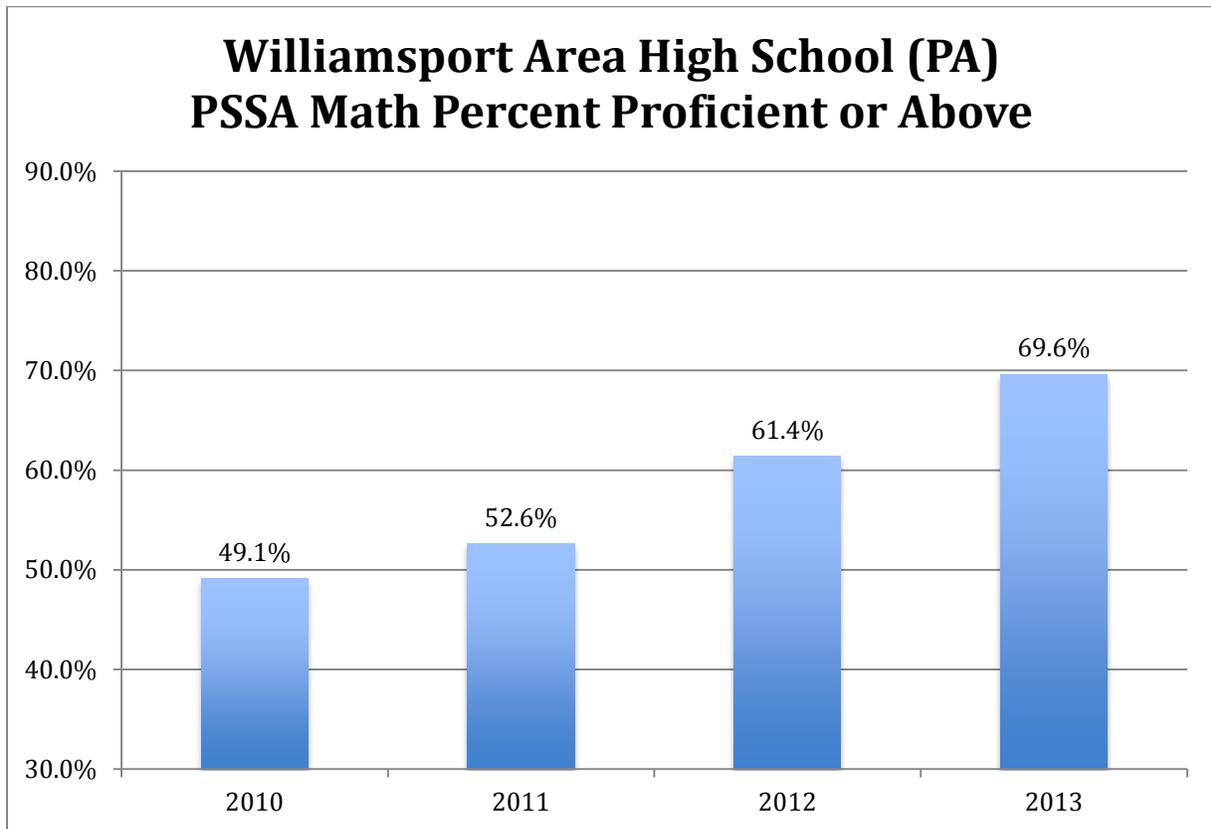
In addition to the Collins Writing Program, WAHS also implemented a responsive coaching model, fostering teacher leadership. As a result, the school community built the capacity for teachers to share their work.

Instructional leaders worked with representative teachers to develop a plan to integrate writing components, particularly Type One and Type Two, multiple times each week across departments. Administrators reviewed samples of prompts and student writing and departmental groups shared experiences. According to Principal Michael Reed, “As a result of increased student engagement, there has also been a drop in behavioral issues.”

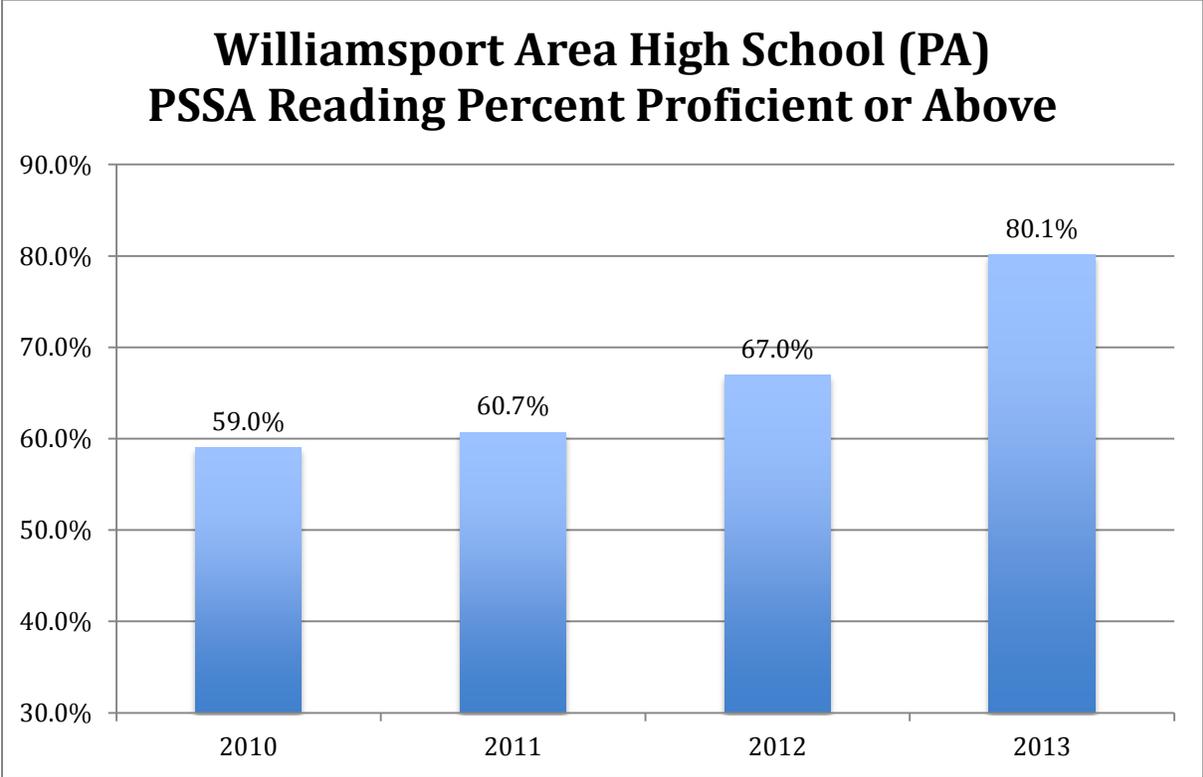
Full program implementation began in the 2011–2012 school year with a school-wide expectation that all teachers implement Types One and Two Writing. Throughout the year, collegial interaction and feedback from instructional leaders promoted both program implementation and the school community’s capacity to interact in different ways. Said Reed, “There has been a significant cultural shift that has occurred with teachers no longer working in isolation.”

Data and Results

Using the PSSA test, overall math proficiency has increased from 49.1% in 2010 to 69.6% in 2013. There has been significant growth in the subgroups as well, with the socioeconomically disadvantaged increasing from 32.5% to 57.1%, multiracial from 0.0% to 81.8%, and IEP from 8.1% to 26.9%.



On the Reading test, overall proficiency increased from 59.0% in 2010 to 80.1% in 2013. Growth in the subgroups also increased during the period, with the socioeconomically disadvantaged increasing from 42.0% to 72.9%, multiracial from 28.6% to 95.5%, and IEP from 10.8% to 31.4%.



Data from the PSSA Writing test indicates that from 2010 to 2012, overall proficiency increased from 73.7% to 82.2%. During that same period, the socioeconomically disadvantaged subgroup proficiency increased from 58.8% to 73.6%. (Writing data for 2013 was not available at the time of the review.)

