

California District Implements Writing Program Throughout Elementary Schools

- By [Scott Aronowitz](#)
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[Stanislaus Union School District](#) in Stanislaus, CA, reported that it implement [Vantage Learning's MY Access!](#) writing software for the 5th and 6th grades in all of its five elementary schools. The program is being funded through the federal [Enhancing Education Through Technology](#) (EETT) program.

The software analyzes more than 350 characteristics of an essay, categorized under semantics, syntax, clarity of discourse, and style and scores the work and provides feedback on it, which is designed to help users to improve focus, organization, content and development, use of language, and overall writing proficiency.

Tom Freeman, principal of the district's [Prescott Senior Elementary School](#), actually a middle school enrolling 700 students in 7th and 8th grades, learned about MY Access! some years back at a middle school partnership meeting. He said he thought the software presented an ideal opportunity for students to practice their writing skills independent of teacher supervision.

"Our teachers have 180 kids a day in their classrooms," said Freeman. "They would have the students write maybe three times a year because of the volume of essays to grade. That amount of grading somewhat deterred teachers from assigning formal writing projects. However, MY Access! has changed all of that. Currently, out of 180 students, we have 800 submissions from just our 8th grade class."