NWP
NATIONAL WRITING PROJECT

COLLEGE, CAREER, AND COMMUNITY WRITERS PROGRAM

Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching

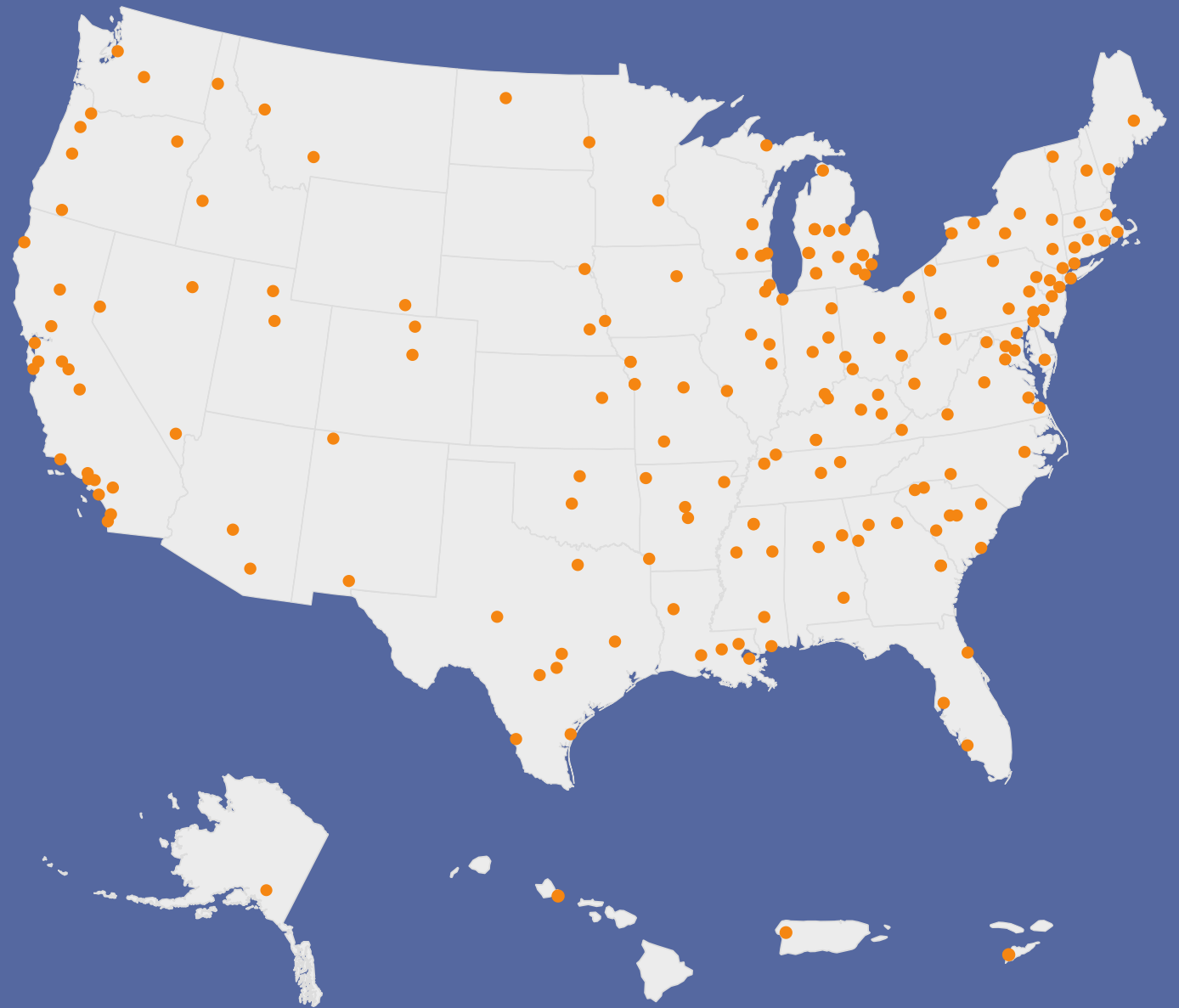Summit on Improvement in Education

April 4, 2018

National Writing Project

180 Sites

2,000 New
Teacher-
Leaders/Year

84,000 Teacher-
Leaders/40 Years

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A nationally distributed improvement infrastructure

THE TEACHER AS RESEARCHER

I began to be a teacher-researcher accidentally, when I started keeping a journal early in my teaching career. So much went on during a school day and it all happened so fast. I knew that writing about what was happening to me somehow gave me control over my experience and that by studying what I had written I could begin to understand what was happening. There were so many people brushing past me, people that I needed to understand if I was going to teach them. Writing down what I saw and reading back over it later helped me learn to teach, but I did not think of what I was doing as research.

In fact, I shared a general teacher prejudice against educational research. Teachers do not have much time to read research journals and when they do, they are too tired to plow through jargon, charts, and statistics to find information that would improve their teaching. They are also prejudiced against research that seems to assume that their particular classroom and its active, changing inhabitants do not exist. They read results from matched sets of control and experimental groups and shrug, aware of the multitude of variables operating in any classroom,

caused because much of it was done either by short-term visitors to the classroom or researchers who never actually appeared at all. Instead an intermediary, usually a teacher, handed out forms for the students to fill in. Somewhere else these forms were checked, compiled, and statistically manipulated in a computer. The conclusions rarely filtered back to the subjects or intermediaries.

Teachers are familiar with statistical data—grades, health and absentee records, test scores—but these are reminders to most teachers not of the usefulness of numerical data but of its inadequacies. Teachers of writing are especially uncertain about scores on tests which purport to measure writing skills but do not require students to write.

Among writing researchers there are an increasing number who acknowledge the importance of case studies done in context and do not rely simply on compiling numerical data. The studies of researchers such as Janet Emig, Donald Graves, and Nancy Sommers have a sound of reality that makes them both readable and helpful to teachers. But even this role of the researcher—present in the classroom, observing and recording information in

The Story of C3WP

College, Career and Community Writers Program Goals

- Improve teachers' practice in the teaching of academic writing, with a focus on argument;

- Improve students' academic writing achievement; and

- Increase the number of teacher-leaders prepared to facilitate professional learning focused on argument.

Adaptive scaling & implementation integrity

Common elements, local design & implementation

45 hours professional development per teacher per year

80% of 7-10th Grade English Language Arts teachers

Focus on argument writing, common curricular and formative assessment tools

C3WP in diverse rural communities
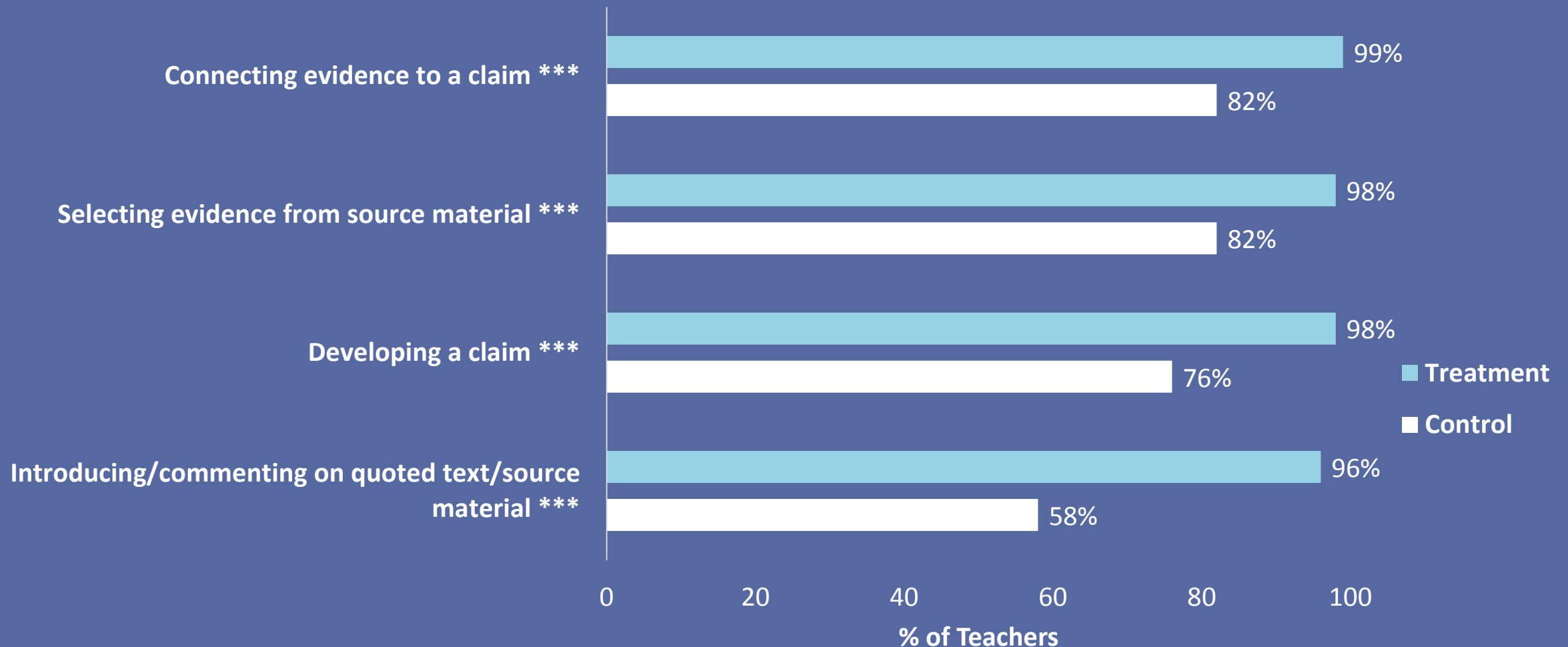
10 states

22 rural districts

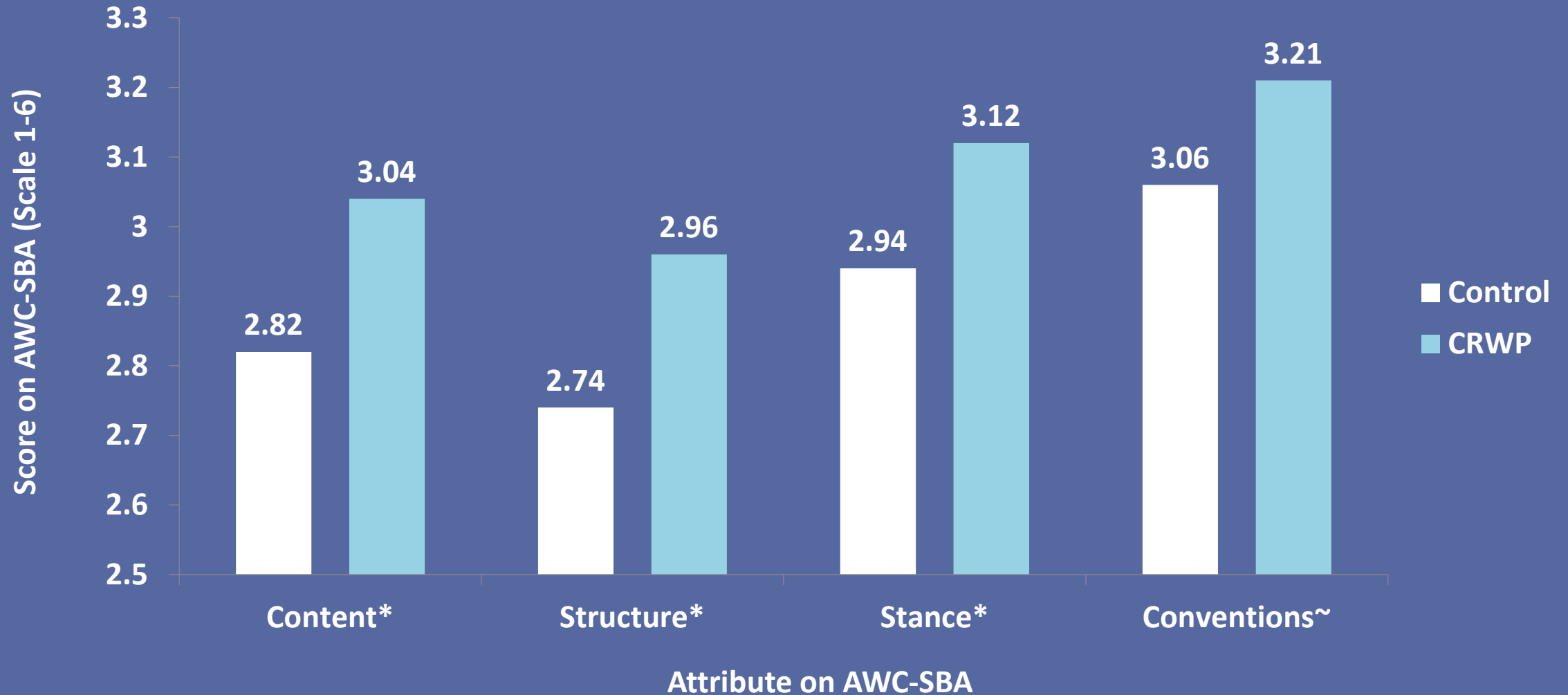**12** local Writing Project sites

200 teachers

12,500 students

C3WP teachers were more likely to emphasize key argument writing skills.

Connecting evidence to a claim *** — Treatment: 99%, Control: 82%

Selecting evidence from source material *** — Treatment: 98%, Control: 82%

Developing a claim *** — Treatment: 98%, Control: 76%

Introducing/commenting on quoted text/source material *** — Treatment: 96%, Control: 58%

■ Treatment
■ Control

% of Teachers

*p < .05; **p < .01; ***p < .001

Students in C3WP districts outperformed students in control districts on three attributes of writing.

Chart showing Score on AWC-SBA (Scale 1-6) by Attribute on AWC-SBA, comparing Control and CRWP:

- Content*: Control 2.82, CRWP 3.04
- Structure*: Control 2.74, CRWP 2.96
- Stance*: Control 2.94, CRWP 3.12
- Conventions~: Control 3.06, CRWP 3.21

~p< .10; *p < .05; **p < .01; ***p < .001

ANCHOR PRACTICE AND IMPROVEMENT IN DISCIPLINED INQUIRY

ACCELERATE IMPROVEMENT THROUGH NETWORKED COMMUNITIES

Confronting Challenges Through Disciplined Inquiry

1. *Limited focus on source-based argument in professional development*
2. *Little systematic analysis of students' writing*
3. *Classroom enactment of writing practices taking place at the margins*

Innovation Problem

Tool for Use in Collaborative Inquiry: National, Site-District, Classroom

College-Ready Writers Program | Using Sources Tool

Analysis of Student Writing

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1. Does the writing present a claim? *

○ The writing presents a claim that is nuanced, debatable and defensible.

○ The writing presents a claim that is debatable and defensible.

○ The writing presents a summary statement about source material, but that statement is not debatable.

○ The writing does not present a claim.

2. Does the writing distinguish between the student's own ideas and the source material, including the use of clearly indicated

Adaptive Implementation Problem

Accelerating Improvement Through NWP Network, As of Spring 2018
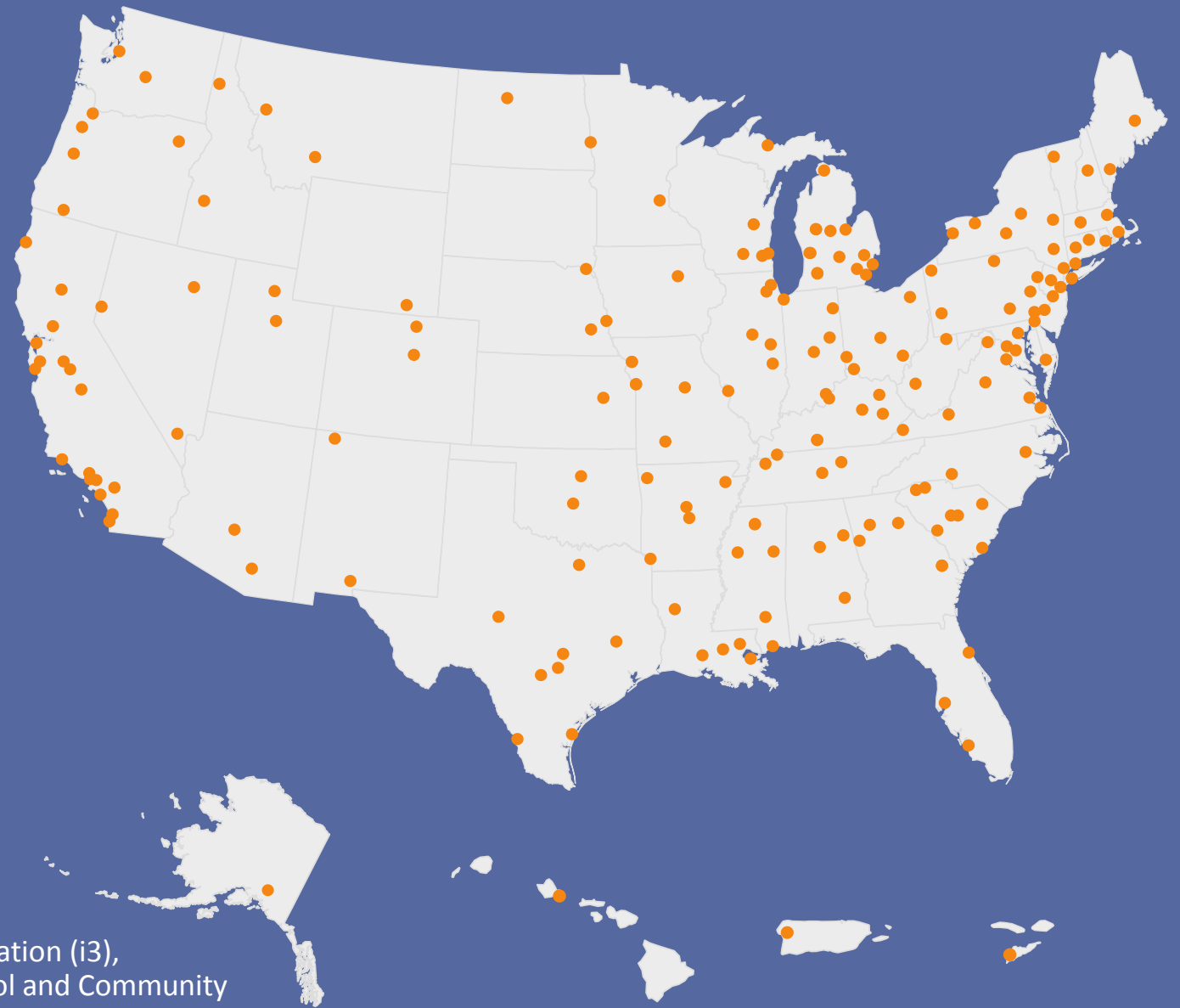
High-Need Schools

178

In 44 states

Writing Project Sites

96

Presenters

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