

Request to Attend Professional Development Conference  
Karen K. Perkins, Ph.D.

Dear PCHS Board,

I am asking you to approve PCHS funds contributing to my attendance at the Annual Conference of the Association of Writers and Writing Programs to be held in Kansas City, MO from February 7 – 10, 2024. This conference is touted as “the annual destination for writers, teachers, students, editors, and publishers of contemporary creative writing.”

The AWP conference is more than a bookfair. It’s an opportunity for writers to share information about all aspects of writing. The breakout sessions inspire ideas for how and what to write and how to teach students. At the conference, I plan to attend many educational sessions, including, “Artificial Intelligence & Real Creativity: AI in the CW Classroom” and “Storytelling through Hermit Crab Flash: Exploring Borrowed Forms,” which teaches how to use something like a store receipt or lab report to tell a story. “Defining Environmental Fiction: Writers and Editors Discuss” is a workshop on writing about the environment. “Writing and Intellectual Disability: An Inclusive Panel” is a session that “traces links between advocacy, activism, and writing, showing that all can spring from—and foster—a common wish for connection.” Each session is unique, but all apply to the science classroom.

Background

Palisades Charter High School (PCHS) students are deficient in their writing ability. The 2022-23 California State Test results showed that only 31.01% of PCHS students are above the standard performance level in writing ability, while Granada Hills and Santa Monica High School students scored 48.73% and 55.49% on the same tests.

The report I received from the PCHS administration in January 2024 read, “Pali had the highest percentage of students not meeting standards in ELA area-level descriptors (reading, writing, listening, and speaking). The largest disparities were found in the writing and research/inquiry.” One solution to address our deficiencies is to infuse all classes with writing, as English classes alone are not sufficient.

In 2017, I attempted to have my PCHS students write an Anatomy textbook. It was too ambitious for my level of writing training: many students dropped the course, and I did an abrupt change in my curriculum three weeks into the school year. However, a parent approached me last year and said her daughter had finished the book we’d started five years earlier. The student had gone on to college and worked with an Anatomy professor. They were designing the cover for marketing. I was thrilled. I’d contributed to one student’s professional career.

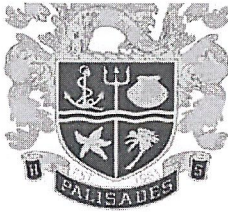
The field of Science Writing is huge and offers PCHS students a professional avenue for their science knowledge without going to medical school or a professional allied health program. Science Writing involves more than writing a lab report or crafting science fiction. Science Writing comprises multiple genres from science journalism to blogging to the publication of personal science essays.

Requiring a knowledge of science is essential for science writing. Therefore, science writing belongs in a science classroom by trained professionals. I have been writing for over thirty years and participated in as many courses and workshops. This is the first time I've asked PCHS to contribute to the cost. This conference will inspire me toward developing more creative approaches to get our students writing. It will contribute to my own professional development as well as the writing ability and creativity of PCHS students.

Thank you for your consideration.



Karen K. Perkins, Ph.D.



## Palisades Charter High School

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### CONFERENCE/TRAVEL REQUEST FORM

Employee Attendee(s) Name(s): KAREN PERKINS, Ph.D.

Department/Site: SCIENCE Date of Request: 01/23/24

Name of Conference/Activity: ASSOCIATION ANNUAL CONFERENCE

Organization/Company Holding the Conference/Activity: ASSN OF WRITERS AND WRITING PROGRAMS

Location of Conference/Activity: KANSAS CITY, MO Date(s) of Conference/Activity: 02/07/24 - 02/10/24

Purpose/Rationale (How will this conference/activity be of value to the school?):  
See attached

Cost Estimate (if one form is being submitted for multiple people, be sure to include all costs for all individuals):			
Estimated Expenditures	Pali to Pay Directly	Reimbursement Requested	Cost
Conference Registration <u>1</u> people @ \$ <u>100.00</u> per person		100.00	\$ 100.00
Certificated Substitute(s) <u>3</u> days @ <u>250.</u> per day (sal. & stat. ben.)	750.00		\$ 750.00
Travel - Mileage _____ miles @ \$ 0.585 per mile			\$ -
Travel - Airfare _____ people @ \$ <u>150-</u> per person		150.00	\$ 150.00
Travel - Ride Sharing Svs/Taxi/Shuttle _____ <small>Type total amount into "cost" cell</small>			\$ 0-
Lodging <u>3</u> nights @ \$ <u>150.00</u> per night		150.00	\$ 150.00
Meals _____ Breakfasts @ \$ 10.00 per meal _____ Lunches @ \$ 10.00 per meal _____ Dinners @ \$ 20.00 per meal			\$ 0-
Other (Parking, Tolls, Conference Materials, etc.) - please list below:			\$ 0-
<b>TOTAL APPROXIMATE COST</b>			<b>\$ 1150.00</b>
<b>AMOUNT APPROVED</b>			

I understand that my request is not granted until approved by administration and that, once approved, costs may not exceed the above estimate without prior approval from an administrator. Upon returning from an approved event, attendee must submit an itemized Request for Reimbursement and/or a Mileage Report & Reimbursement Claim form with a copy of this form, the activity agenda/program, and all original itemized receipts for any out of pocket expenses to supervisor within 3 to 5 days of return. Expenses submitted without original itemized receipts will not be reimbursed.

Requestor Signature: Karen H. Perkins, Ph.D.

Executive Director Approval: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Funding Source: \_\_\_\_\_ SACS Code: \_\_\_\_\_

Will costs be reimbursed by another organization? Yes/No If so, what organization? \_\_\_\_\_

Board of Trustee/Designee Approval: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Board Approval Date (if applicable): \_\_\_\_\_ Business Office Review \_\_\_\_\_  
(initial) (date)