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How Children Get Left Behind

Why Every Student Deserves a Seat in an Intellectually Challenging Classroom

Urbana, IL, March 4, 2009 - Not all schooling is equal. In too many schools, too many students suffer an education of drill and memorization but are deprived of high-level thinking activities, of intellectual discussions, of opportunities to synthesize information and respond creatively—elements that form the basis of education for other students in other schools.

On **Friday, March 6, 2009**, from **1:15 to 2:15 p.m. EST**, the National Council of Teachers of English, representing 50,000 members worldwide, will release the second in a series of reports, *The Genteel Unteaching of America's Poor* (<http://www.ncte.org/library/NCTEFiles/Press/Beers.pdf>). At the same time, to promote writing for everyone, NCTE also will announce the **National Day on Writing** (<http://www.ncte.org/action/dayonwriting>), the **National Gallery of Writing**, and the inception of the annual **National High School and College Writing Awards** in partnership with The Norman Mailer Writers Colony (<http://www.nmwcolony.org/mailemAwards/nationalWriting/>).

Attend this event at **The Celebration of Teaching & Learning**, at the **Hilton New York** (Lincoln Suite, 4th floor), 1335 Avenue of the Americas, New York, NY 10019. Please RSVP to Millie Davis to receive press credentials.

Norris Church Mailer, writer, educator, and member of the executive board of the Norman Mailer Writers Colony; **Lawrence Schiller**, photojournalist, best-selling author, producer, and executive director of the Norman Mailer Writers Colony; **Andrew Chang**, marketing director, Google Docs, Google, Inc.; and NCTE's West Coast Office Director **Dale Allender** will join report author **Kylene Beers**, NCTE President and Senior Reading Advisor to Secondary Schools, Reading and Writing Project, Teachers College, to discuss how important it is that *all* students experience a rich, intellectually rigorous curriculum filled with all sorts of writing.

Beers notes, "While writing, more than any other intellectual endeavor, sharpens our thinking, in too many schools, especially schools overwhelmed by poverty, writing is not about thinking but about copying; not about creating but about editing; not about persuading or telling or sharing or clarifying but about completing fill-in-the-blank activities or circling verbs in blue and nouns in red or counting the number of sentences in a paragraph to make sure the requisite three (or four or five) are there."

To draw attention to the remarkable variety of writing most engage in today and to help make writers from all walks of life aware of their craft, NCTE is working to establish **October 20, 2009**, as the **National Day on Writing**. To celebrate composition in all its forms, we are inviting diverse participants—students, teachers, parents, grandparents, service and industrial workers, managers, business owners, legislators, retirees, and many more—to submit a piece of writing to the **National Gallery of Writing**.

"By capturing a portrait of how writing happens today—who writes and for what purposes," NCTE Executive Director Kent Williamson notes, "teachers can better prepare the next generation for success across the full range of 21st century literacies. Our hope is that everyone who participates in this initiative will better understand writing as a valuable lifelong practice rather than as something that is done only in school or only by a select group of people."

The National Council of Teachers of English, with 50,000 individual and institutional members worldwide, is dedicated to improving the teaching and learning of English and the language arts at all levels of education. For more information, please visit <http://www.ncte.org>.

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