changes would you implement to improve the teaching/learning process?

**KL:** I would focus all resources directly on improvements in student learning. This would require more accurate ways of assessing student learning including peer observation, observation by outside experts, and portfolio assessment. This would also require cutting out a great deal of “school stuff” that is not directly supportive of student learning. In addition, I would do everything possible to elevate the role of teachers and enable our culture to see the value they bring to students. These would include salary increases where needed, public relations programs, professional development, and teaching assistants. Students aren’t widgets, and schools aren’t profit centers. Students are the makers of the future, and schools are where they become who they will be when they make that future. Student learning is the fuel of the future and stretches its limits.

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**The Student Poets**

have it all figured out—how dreams shatter, love goes awry, and even daybreak brings a little sadness.

In their poems the beaches are sunny with gently lapping waves, and mountains rise like giants in the fluffy clouds.

But whatever the scenery, they know the poet’s consolation is only partial, lasting no longer than the blink of an eye.

They know that a long thought needs a long line, while a short one needs only a word.

They understand the fine points of enjambment and how rhyme is for beginners, infernal if not internal.

Their work flows from their pens in a miracle of completeness. *It just came to me,* they say, *late last night.*

I envy them that fluency, that ease with the ways of the heart, that grasp of life’s daily disasters.

I have a lot to learn from them, I, who can hardly write a line without a lifetime of anguish.

—Ken Autrey

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Now residing in Alabama, Ken Autrey (autreyken@gmail.com) taught for many years at Francis Marion University in South Carolina. His work has appeared in *Chattahoochee Review, English Journal, Poetry Northwest, Southern Poetry Review, Texas Review,* and other journals. He has published three chapbooks: *Pilgrim* (Main Street Rag), *Rope Lesson* (Longleaf Press), and *The Wake of the Year* (Solomon and George).