

NWP Receives Increase in Federal Funding



In mid-February, Congress and President Bush approved an omnibus spending package for fiscal year 2003. The National Writing Project will receive an appropriation of just under \$17 million, an almost \$3 million increase over the previous year's funding level. This marks the seventh straight year NWP has received an increase in its federal appropriation. One congressional aide told project directors that NWP was recommended for funding not only because of the good work our sites do, but also because we're good at telling our story.

"This is just wonderful news," says NWP Executive Director Richard Sterling. "This increase will allow us to deepen and expand the work we're doing at both the local and national levels, to provide more opportunities for teachers to improve their practice in the teaching of writing in communities across the country. This support could not have occurred without the strong message sent by writing project teachers everywhere."

As he has in the past, Sen. Thad Cochran (R-MS) provided crucial support for NWP throughout the appropriations process. Rep. George Miller (D-CA), Sen. Arlen Specter (R-PA),

Rep. Ralph Regula (R-OH), and Rep. Roger Wicker (R-MS) all provided pivotal backing as well. Project directors have yet to announce how they will use the increased funding. Increasing the capacity of local sites will no doubt be of the highest priority.

As part of the project's ongoing effort to educate Congress about writing project activities in communities across the country, between 150 and 200 writing project teachers and directors are expected to attend this year's NWP Spring Meeting, April 3-4 in Washington, D.C. It's anticipated that several prominent legislators will appear at our kickoff meeting on Capitol Hill on April 3. Following this session, site directors and teacher-consultants will visit the offices of senators and members of congress to explain the work they are doing through their local sites to improve the teaching of writing.

If you have questions regarding the federal funding of NWP, please contact Andy Bradshaw at abradshaw@writingproject.org.