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UPDATE

NATIONAL WRITING PROJECT RECEIVES FEDERAL FUNDING FOR FISCAL YEAR 1996

Richard Sterling, Executive Director of the National Writing Project, has announced that after a "tremendous struggle" which enlisted the efforts of directors, co-directors and teachers throughout the nation, the NWP has been included in the Congressional Budget for the fiscal year 1996. "We feel very fortunate," said Sterling. "Many other programs were not so lucky."

As will be the case with most federal programs, congressional funding for NWP quite likely will be reduced. However, because NWP is forward-funded, the Project will receive federal dollars at least through 1997.

While the NWP received valuable help from many individuals during this campaign, according to Sterling, Senator Thad Cochran of Mississippi played a crucial role in this effort. "Without Senator Cochran," Sterling said, "our network as we know it would cease to exist." Readers can thank Cochran for his incredible support by calling his office at 202-224-5054.

PROJECT OUTREACH SITES SELECTED

In February, a twelve-person selection committee met in Berkeley, California, to select the 18 NWP sites which will participate in Project Outreach, a network of NWP sites aimed specifically at improving writing instruction in schools with large numbers of students from low-income backgrounds. Thirty-two writing projects prepared applications to join Project Outreach.

Director of Project Outreach, Elyse Eidman-Aadahl, said of these applications, "They were always inspiring, and sometimes gut-wrenching." The applications came from all parts of the country, from young as well as old sites and from sites of modest means as well as those more amply funded. Eidman-Aadahl commented that the site-based teams that prepared the applications gave testimony to their long-standing concern about equity within their

own project as well as their service areas and their own aspirations for growth. "Reading the applications, you see even more deeply why the National Writing Project is important and why it works. But you also see all the teachers we haven't begun to reach and get a sense of the tremendous contribution they can make in their classrooms and in their Writing Projects," she said.

The Selection Committee had as a goal to create a microcosm of the National Writing Project: a mix of geographic regions, types of sites, new and old sites, and sites with different funding patterns. After a long day, the committee chose the following sites for the Project Outreach network:

Alaska State Writing Consortium, Juneau, AK
Alcorn Writing Project, Lorman, MS
Borinquen Writing Project, San Juan, PR
Capital Area Writing Project, Raleigh, NC
Coastal Georgia Writing Project, Savannah, GA
D.C. Area Writing Project, Washington, DC
Kennesaw Mountain Writing Project, Kennesaw, GA
Leigh Valley Writing Project, Foglesville, PA
MSU/Writing Thinking Project, Mississippi State, MI
Northern California Writing Project, Chico, CA
Northern Nevada Writing Project, Sparks, NV
NWP of Acadia, Lafayette, LA
OSU Writing Project, Stillwater, OK
Red Cedar Writing Project, East Lansing, MI
Rio Grande Writing Project, Albuquerque, NM
Saginaw Valley NWP, Saginaw, MI
South Coast Writing Project, Santa Barbara, CA
West Virginia Writing Project, South Charlottesville, WV

In April, teacher consultants from these sites met in Berkeley to begin planning for the network's first National Summer Institute. "We're ready to work on our sites, to improve them and to share with our NWP colleagues what we learn along the way," said Pam Morgan, a teacher consultant from Maryland and one of Project Outreach's National Coordinators.