

'My Teacher is the Best' Essay Contest for Middle School Students Launched by GiveKidsGoodSchools.com Campaign

WASHINGTON, April 17 (AScribe Newswire) -- The GiveKidsGoodSchools.com campaign, supported by nearly 40,000 Americans who have contacted their state elected officials to urge that public education be made a priority in their states, today launched an essay contest for middle school students to write about what makes a good teacher. The 'My Teacher is the Best' essay contest asks public school students in grades 6, 7 and 8 to write about their experience with a favorite teacher.

"While the public overwhelmingly supports public education and wants to improve it, we rarely turn to the students themselves to find out what they think," said Wendy D. Puriefoy, president of PEN. "The 'My Teacher is the Best' essay contest provides a way for students to share the positive impact teachers have had on their lives."

The winner of the essay contest will receive a laptop computer, as will the teacher who is the subject of the winning essay. Two runners-up will receive \$100 savings bonds. The deadline is May 31, 2003 and winners will be announced August 26, 2003. For contest rules and an entry form, visit www.GiveKidsGoodSchools.com.

The essay contest's focus on the importance of teachers is particularly important given the demands of the new federal No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB), which mandates that all teachers teaching core academic subjects be highly-qualified by the end of the 2005-06 school year.

A recent poll by PEN and Education Week found that that by a nearly 2-to-1 margin, Americans say that raising teacher quality is the greatest priority to improve education.

GiveKidsGoodSchools.com is a campaign by the Public Education Network (PEN) to enable individuals to support and demand high-quality public education for all children in America. The GiveKidsGoodSchools.com campaign gives

parents, educators and other concerned citizens the information and tools they need to demand a good teacher for every child in public school.

Public Education Network (PEN) is a national organization of local education funds (LEFs) and individuals working to improve public schools and build citizen support for quality public education in communities across the nation. PEN believes public engagement is the oft-missing ingredient in school reform, and that the level of public involvement ultimately determines the quality of education provided by public schools. Its mission, therefore, is to build public demand and mobilize resources for quality public education through a national constituency of organizations and individuals. PEN and its 80 LEF members, who work in 31 states and the District of Columbia on behalf of 10.6 million children in more than 1,220 school districts, seek to bring the community voice into the debate on quality public education in the firm belief that an active, vocal constituency will ensure every child, in every community, a quality public education.

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