

Literacy & NCTE

The official blog of the National Council of Teachers of English

Help Protect Students' Freedom of Speech and Press

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■ Advocacy, Assemblies, Writing

● Millie Davis

"We are risk takers and problem solvers, scientists and artists in pursuit of those brilliant and awe-inspiring nuggets of student success."

- Lara Hebert



NCTE has supported student journalism through a long-standing relationships with the [Journalism Education Association](#), the [Assembly for Advisers of Student Publications/ Journalism Education Association \(AASP/JEA\)](#), and the [Student Press Law Center](#).

In 1988 when the [Hazelwood v. Kuhlmeier](#) ruling by the Supreme Court put students' freedom of expression at risk in the hands of educators who could decide to censor school-sponsored student expression, including some student publications, if they thought a legitimate educational concern existed, NCTE passed the [Resolution on Students' Freedom of Speech and Press](#) joining JEA in a campaign to encourage states and local communities to adopt policies going beyond *Hazelwood* and giving much more protection student freedom of speech and press.

The Council continues to fight for students' rights, passing the [Resolution on Students' Right of Expression](#) in 2004 and the [NCTE Beliefs about the Students' Right to Write](#) in 2014:

"During this era of high-stakes testing, technology-based instruction, and increased control over students' expression due to school violence, students' right to write must be protected. Censorship of writing not only stifles student voices but denies students important opportunities to grow as both writers and thinkers. Through the often messy process of writing, students develop strategies to help them come to understand

lessons within the curriculum as well as how their language and ideas can be used to communicate, influence, reflect, explain, analyze, and create.”

Now, we'll join JEA and SPLC to again urge states to pass “anti-Hazelwood” legislation. **And we need your help.** Recent passage of such a law in North Dakota models how you might work in your states to support your students’ freedom of speech and press.

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About Millie Davis

Millie Davis is Senior Developer for Affiliates, and Director of the Intellectual Freedom Center at the National Council of Teachers of English (NCTE). In addition she works on NCTE’s communications efforts, particularly on social media. Millie's passion is working with literacy teachers across the country and beyond whose passion for their students and their students' learning is their reason for going to work each day. View all posts by Millie Davis →