

Castle Kicks off No Child Left Behind Hearings with Delaware Teacher of the Year, Garrett Lydic and his students in Washington -- May 18, 2006

Hearing is beginning of No Child Left Behind reauthorization hearings in House

Washington, D.C. -- Delaware Congressman Mike Castle, Chairman of the Education Reform Subcommittee, today helped kick off the first of a series of hearings on No Child Left Behind as its reauthorization draws near. Delaware Teacher of the Year, Mr. Garrett Lydic along with fellow educators from all over the country testified on the impact of No Child Left Behind's focus on reading and math instruction, as well as what they are doing to incorporate a wide variety of subjects into their classroom curriculum. Mr. Lydic was the only educator to bring his students to demonstrate examples of innovative teaching methods he uses in his physical education classes to reiterate what his students learn in math.

"Over the course of the past several years, I have often argued that we are encountering one of the most exciting times in education because we are all engaged, as a country, on closing the achievement gap and because our educators are not shying away from the demands of No Child Left Behind. Over the course of my visits to schools, and in almost every press report, I hear about a teacher, administrator, or parent who has done something to raise the achievement level of the students in their lives. In fact, as soon as I saw Garrett Lydic in his classroom back in Laurel, Delaware, I knew that I wanted to share what I saw with my colleagues and I'm extremely pleased he could make it here today to do just that," Castle said.

"We have discovered through our experience over the last 10 years that physical education is an ideal vehicle for reinforcing the academic standards that students are learning within their classrooms," said Lydic. "During many of our physical activities, students apply the concepts they are learning in areas such as math, science, writing, reading, and social studies to achieve a goal. We have observed that our students get excited about learning math, spelling, and other academic content standards in this manner because they are performing physical activities rather than the typical classroom activities where students are seated at their desks. This also enables children to see how concepts learned in one venue are transferred to other venues and to life's challenges."

The No Child Left Behind Act, signed into law on January 8, 2002, represents the first ever bi-partisan effort to bring true accountability and flexibility to federal education programs. The law reflects four essential pillars of education reform: accountability, flexibility and local control, funding for what works, and expanded parental options. The law is a comprehensive overhaul of the federal Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA), which was enacted in 1965 and is the principal federal law affecting K-12 education. The Committee has held 10 hearings on No Child Left Behind since its inception on 2002.

Future hearing topics may include:

- Adequate Yearly Progress, the law's method of examining how well schools and districts improve academic outcomes for students;
- The impact of allowing states to determine varying minimum subgroup sizes for purposes of disaggregating student outcomes in order to determine a school's adequate yearly progress;
- A look at how growth models are currently being used by states and an examination of how they might be incorporated

into accountability systems under No Child Left Behind;

- A review of how graduation rates are being measured under No Child Left Behind;
- An overview of the role of academic assessments used to determine student proficiency in math and reading under No Child Left Behind;
- The effect of No Child Left Behind on students with disabilities and limited English proficiency students;
- Parental involvement during the No Child Left Behind era;
- The role of school choice and supplemental educational services in the implementation and reauthorization of No Child Left Behind; and
- The impact of teacher quality standards under No Child Left Behind.