



Hello friend of NCTE,

We're writing you today because we received word this week that Sherman Alexie will no longer be able to join us for the Middle Level Section Luncheon. His publisher outlines the reasons in the note below. We are certainly sad that he cannot join us, but more importantly we are wishing him peace and good health.



This luncheon is designed to help attendees engage with and learn about the excitement building in NCTE's Middle Level. We sincerely hope that you'll still plan to join us there. We are fortunate that the incredible **Jewell Parker Rhodes** has agreed to be our new speaker. Ms. Parker Rhodes is the award-winning author of *Towers Falling* and the Louisiana Girls children's book trilogy. Her upcoming book, *Ghost Boys* comes out in Spring 2018. Rhodes has confirmed that she will sign books immediately following the luncheon.

If you no longer wish to attend the Middle Level Section Luncheon we would like to offer the following:

1. Move your registration to the Conference on English Education Luncheon, which occurs at the same time. **Angie Thomas**, author of *The Hate U Give*, is the keynote.
2. Get reimbursed for the cost of your luncheon ticket.

Please email Customer Service if you wish to change the status of your luncheon registration. Include the word "luncheon" in the subject line. If you would prefer to make the change via phone you can call 877-369-6283.

We are sorry to have to make this change but do hope that you will still join us for what promises to be a memorable event organized by a passionate group of section leaders. The future is bright for the Middle Level Section at NCTE and we look forward to having you be a part of its ongoing evolution.

What follows is a message to NCTE Middle Section Lunch Attendees from Little, Brown Books for Young Readers.

Greetings,

Earlier this year we were excited to make arrangements to bring author Sherman Alexie to the 2017 NCTE conference as the Middle Section Luncheon speaker as part of our celebration for the tenth anniversary of *The Absolutely True Diary of a Part-Time Indian*. Mr. Alexie appeared at the 2007

NCTE conference as a luncheon speaker when *True Diary* was first published and he felt strongly that NCTE members were a key part of the book's success.

It is with heavy hearts, however, that today we must inform attendees that Mr. Alexie will be unable to appear at the Middle Section Luncheon. As some of you may know, Mr. Alexie has needed to interrupt his appearance schedule earlier this year due to health reasons. The open letter he shared with fans explaining why he needed to do this was shared many times and can be read [HERE](#). While he resumed his appearance schedule in September, this decision turns out to have been over-ambitious and he must now return his focus to his health.

Please know that this choice was not made lightly and he is deeply regretful that he cannot join NCTE members in St. Louis this year. The impact of *The Absolutely True Diary of a Part-Time Indian* on readers has been significant, but the impact of those readers on Mr. Alexie has been no less significant. He treasures the support of educators across the country who have brought Junior's story into their classrooms and to their students.

We at Little, Brown Books for Young Readers are also deeply sorry at this turn of events, but support Mr. Alexie as he concentrates on his health and thank all of you for your enthusiasm. We look forward to seeing you at NCTE.

(The above message was emailed to luncheon registrants on October 31, 2017 at 12 p.m. EST.)