



News Release

For Immediate Release
June 23, 2015

Contact:
Miguel A. Gonzalez
202-822-7823
mgonzalez@nea.org

Ten national education advocacy groups call on Senate to put kids first *Students cannot afford to start another school year with failed federal education law*

WASHINGTON—Ten national education groups, representing educators, principals, school boards, superintendents, chief state school officers, parents and PTAs, and school business officials, will come together Tuesday to urge the U.S. Senate to bring the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) reauthorization bill to the floor for a vote.

The Senate reauthorization bill, known as the Every Child Achieves Act, passed unanimously and in a bipartisan fashion in the Senate Health, Education, Labor and Pensions Committee on April 16. No date has been set for debate and vote by the full Senate. ESEA has been expired since 2007. The ten education groups are in full agreement that the Senate needs to finish the job and bring the bill to the floor as soon as possible.

In alphabetical order, representatives from the ten national organizations released the following statements:

AASA, The School Superintendents Association

“The nation’s K-6th graders have spent every day of their K-12 experience under an outdated and broken ESEA. Our students want and deserve more. AASA is pleased to join some of the leading public education organizations today in this effort toward reauthorization in order to strengthen public schools. The nation’s school superintendents look forward to working with our elected officials in their efforts toward a new education bill. This remains a top legislative priority for school district leaders. Our collective voices could mean the difference between reauthorization or more time under a broken law and waivers.”

- Daniel A. Domenech, executive director, AASA, The School Superintendents Association



American Federation of Teachers

“The Senate bill, passed unanimously by the HELP committee, is a much-needed reset in federal education policy and creates the oxygen that schools need to actually teach children, not teach to tests. What we have now—a fixation on high-stakes testing thanks to No Child Left Behind and exacerbated by Race to the Top—isn’t working for kids, parents, communities or teachers. Look at the facts: According to the National Assessment of Educational Progress, gains slowed—as did progress in closing the achievement gap—during the RTTT/NCLB era, as compared to the 1970s, 1980s and 1990s when tests were fewer and investments in equity were greater. The Senate bill protects the law’s original intent: to target services to districts and schools serving high concentrations of children living in poverty. It dials back the stakes linked to tests and ensures some baseline accountability and transparency so no child, particularly disadvantaged children, are left behind or invisible. It’s time for the Senate to schedule a floor vote and take action soon to secure the reset our kids, parents and teachers are counting on.”

- Randi Weingarten, president of the American Federation of Teachers

Association of School Business Officials International

“The reauthorization of ESEA has been long overdue. Every day that Congress delays reauthorizing ESEA is another day that students are shortchanged. ASBO International joins the K–12 educational community in support of a modernized ESEA that provides all students—regardless of income, gender, race, or ability—the quality education they deserve.”

- John Musso, CAE, RSBA, executive director, Association of School Business Officials International

Council of Chief State School Officers

“We have seen promising progress in the Senate to reauthorize ESEA this year. We cannot lose this momentum. Our kids, our classrooms and our states cannot wait another year and continue under this expired, outdated federal law. On behalf of Chief State School Officers, I urge Congress to put kids first and send the Every Child Achieves Act to the Senate floor for a vote.”

- Chris Minnich, executive director of the Council of Chief State School Officers

National Association of Elementary School Principals

“It is no longer acceptable for schools, educators – including teachers and principals, to wait for Congressional leaders to fulfill their responsibility to America's students. On behalf of the nation's elementary and middle level principals who serve over 33 million children from prekindergarten to the eighth grade, NAESP calls on Congress to put the Every Child Achieves Act on the Senate Floor and make America's students a priority. Principals, together with state and district leaders, teachers and parents implore Congress to finish the bipartisan work as the nation's public schools and the children depend on this action to meet the learning needs of students.”

- Gail Connelly, executive director, NAESP

National Association of State Boards of Education

“The work of improving our schools takes time, which means states need predictability as they make their plans. One of the biggest benefits from a bipartisan ESEA reauthorization vote will be the confidence it will give states to move forward.”

- Kristen Amundson, executive director, National Association of State Boards of Education

National Association of Secondary School Principals

“We are one year past the aspirational goal of universal proficiency—a goal created at a time when Congress had little understanding of what such a goal means or what it would take to get there. Since then, we have managed a patchwork of provisions from Race To the Top, School Improvement Grants, and state waivers. And each day, principals look into the faces of students and lament that this is the best that Congress will do for them. For the sake of our students, we need the Senate to maintain the momentum and bring the ESEA bill to the floor.”

- G.A. Buie, president of the National Association of Secondary School Principals

National Education Association

“Now is the time for the Senate to put kids first. It’s unacceptable for Congress to leave for yet another recess without taking action on the bipartisan version of ESEA passed by the Senate education committee. No student should start another school year living under the current failed education policy known as No Child Left Behind. We need the Senate to take up the Every Child Achieves Act now.”

- Lily Eskelsen García, president, National Education Association

National PTA

“Families have waited for more than eight years for the reauthorization of the ESEA/NCLB. National PTA believes bipartisan legislative action is essential to provide support and critical resources to states and districts to strengthen family engagement, increase student achievement and accelerate school improvement efforts. National PTA urges the Senate to take swift action to move the Every Child Achieves Act to the floor and address needed changes to the ESEA/NCLB to improve education for all students and ensure every child has the opportunity to reach his or her full potential.”

- Nathan R. Monell, CAE, executive director of National PTA

National School Boards Association

“Our nation’s school boards stand together with leaders from key education groups and call upon Congress to avoid further delay and bring the Every Child Achieves Act to the Senate floor for a vote. Today’s collective call to action by leading education groups puts the interests of our nation’s 50 million public schoolchildren first, as the bill itself reflects the public will - community ownership of public schools and strong local governance.”

- Thomas J. Gentzel, executive director, National School Boards Association