



GREAT PUBLIC SCHOOLS FOR EVERY CHILD

ESEA: It's Time for a Change!

NEA's Positive Agenda for the ESEA Reauthorization

All children have a basic right to a great public school.

As the world changes, public schools are changing. It's time for policies at all levels of government to change—to prepare all students for the future with 21st century skills, create enthusiasm for learning and engage all students in their classrooms, close achievement gaps and raise achievement for all students, and provide all educators with the resources and tools they need to get the job done.

The status quo—including the No Child Left Behind Act—is inadequate to meet the needs of students in the changing world.

After careful review, we've identified the needs and current problems, and propose positive solutions. NEA stands as the leading advocate for quality public education and as an agent of change for children and public education.

Our goals for our nation's children and public education are America's goals:

- ✓ All children must have access to quality programs and services that meet the full range of their needs so they come to school every day ready and able to learn.
- ✓ High expectations and standards with a rigorous and comprehensive curriculum for all students.
- ✓ Quality conditions for teaching and lifelong learning in every school, with a qualified, caring, diverse, and stable workforce for all children.
- ✓ Shared responsibility for appropriate school accountability by all stakeholders, with parents, families and communities actively involved and engaged in our schools.
- ✓ Adequate, equitable and sustainable funding for our children's present and future success.

Our priorities for ESEA reauthorization—to improve student achievement, close the achievement gaps, and provide every child with a quality teacher—are America's priorities:

- ✓ The flawed Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) model that is overly focused on labeling and punishments will be replaced with comprehensive accountability measuring student learning through multiple measures and growth models. States will have flexibility to design results-oriented accountability systems with appropriate, valid, and reliable assessments that reward success and support educators to improve student learning.
- ✓ The class size reduction program that existed prior to NCLB will be restored, leading to an optimum class size of 15 students to help students learn.
- ✓ Revisions to the "highly qualified teacher" definition combined with new federal policies and resources—including grants for professional development for all educators, stipends for mentor teachers, and incentives to attract and retain teachers in hard-to-staff schools—will provide every classroom and school with high quality educators.
- ✓ Innovative, new incentives for employers, and reinforced programs like the ESEA's Parent Information and Resource Centers, will provide parents the assistance and time to become actively engaged in their children's school lives and expand and strengthen the bonds between communities and their schools.
- ✓ Congress' commitment to improving student achievement must be matched by its commitment to fully fund ESEA so that states, districts, and schools have sufficient funding to satisfy federal mandates. In addition, states and schools need additional resources for programs that help close achievement gaps and improve the health and well-being of children outside their classrooms.