

CCSSO ESEA Reauthorization Principles

The Elementary and Secondary Education Act must be reauthorized in this Congress to create stronger, clearer, more uniform federal policy that will support state efforts to improve academic achievement for all students. Much has been learned since 2002, when Congress enacted the No Child Left Behind Act, about what works in improving results for students and the leadership states provide to make this happen. Through a reauthorized ESEA, states seek to create an effective federal-state partnership that is grounded in high expectations, evidence, and flexibility.

To reflect the current landscape of policy, practice, and evidence and to accelerate results for all students, CCSSO has proposed the following changes to the two core ESEA programs – Title I and Title II.

Key Recommendations for Strengthening Title I

Adopt College- and Career-Ready Standards and Raise Expectations for All Students

ESEA should recognize the leadership that states have shown in adopting academic standards aligned with higher education, career and technical education standards, and the needs of employers in the state.

Set High Expectations through Performance Targets and Robust Accountability Systems

Congress should ensure that ESEA supports state-driven performance targets designed to improve student success, close achievement gaps, and reduce dropout rates. States should commit to implementing accountability systems and interventions aligned to ambitious state-set academic performance targets.

Focus on the Lowest Performing Schools

For too long, federal education policy has failed to generate substantial improvements in the nation's lowest-performing schools. To respond to this, Congress should ensure that state accountability systems identify, at a minimum, the lowest-achieving 5% of schools that receive Title I funds in the state and require comprehensive supports and interventions to address the unique characteristics of these schools. States should also identify an additional 10% of schools with the largest achievement gaps in the state and provide targeted interventions designed to help these schools eliminate achievement gaps.

Improve Assessments and Accommodations for English Language Learners and Students with Disabilities

Under a reauthorized ESEA, grants should be available for states to improve assessments and assessment accommodations available for English language learners and students with disabilities and to offer professional development to improve the implementation of these accommodations through instructional practice.



Strengthen Transparency and Reporting

ESEA should ensure that states, school districts, and schools continue to report information on a school's academic performance, academic growth, and academic achievement gaps based on annual reading, mathematics, and science assessments, as well as high school graduation rates. All of this information should be disaggregated by race and ethnicity, socio-economic status, disability status, English proficiency, gender, and migrant status.

Building Capacity for State Reform Efforts

ESEA must support state reform efforts by ensuring that state educational agencies have sufficient funding to administer required reform activities.

Key Recommendations for Strengthening Title II, Improving Teacher Quality Grants

Support State Leadership in Driving Educator Effectiveness

States are moving forward to implement comprehensive reforms that address teacher and principal preparation, licensure, evaluation, professional development, and career growth. Congress should support states as they work to improve educator effectiveness and support systems.

Expand State Capacity in Educator Workforce Development

States are responsible for ensuring that all students receive quality instruction but are afforded few resources under Title II to address the most critical element of school improvement – teachers and leaders. Congress should ensure that a reauthorized Title II supports state efforts to improve classroom instruction and school leadership.

For further discussion of CCSSO's ESEA Task Force and its work to advance ESEA reauthorization in the 113th Congress, please contact Peter Zamora, Director of Federal Relations, at PeterZ@CCSSO.org.

