



RESOLUTIONS

of the National School Boards Association

The following is the complete and official text of the resolutions enacted by the 2011 Delegate Assembly of the National School Boards Association which met in San Francisco, California on **April 8, 2011**. The resolutions, which determine NSBA policy, originate from numerous school board sources throughout the United States, its territories, and possessions. Resolutions are submitted to the Delegate Assembly for consideration by the Policies and Resolutions Committee. Final debate and enactment are effected by the Delegate Assembly which consists of local school board members from the various states and the U.S. Virgin Islands.

1. Allocation of Federal Funding to School Districts

NSBA supports federal legislative and regulatory efforts to ensure that the allocation of federal funding for school districts is directly utilized for school-based services, with strict protections to ensure that statutory caps on funding reserved for state administrative purposes are adhered to thoroughly. NSBA urges Congress to ensure that oversight is provided that addresses the goals for program administration and does not extend or expand state authority in the distribution or sub-allocation process so that funding is allocated to school districts in the manner that Congress intended.

2. Federal Impact Aid

NSBA urges Congress authorize and fully fund Impact Aid to local districts to help support the education of all students whose parents or legal guardians reside and/or work on federal tax-exempt property or within local school districts that include federal tax exempt property.

Further, NSBA urges Congress to review the threshold for eligibility in those circumstances where the parent or legal guardian has been called to active duty outside the geographical boundaries of a school district that does not meet the 400 students or 3% enrollment requirement for Impact Aid. The review would explore the possibility of expanding eligibility requirements for Impact Aid by displacing funds from districts that are currently eligible.

3. Targeted Investments in Public Education

As the federal budget is realigned to meet deficit reduction goals, NSBA urges targeted investments in public education that will leverage increased economic growth and productivity that will strengthen American competitiveness in the global economy and ultimately help reduce the national debt. NSBA urges Congress and the Executive Branch to appropriate and administer accelerating investments in public education that support local efforts to continue raising student achievement. Further, NSBA continues to urge Congress to appropriate full funding for Title I and the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) mandates.

4. Tax-Exempt Financing

NSBA supports the utilization of tax-exempt bonds for school construction and other capital improvement projects and opposes any efforts to limit the issuance and tax exempt status and advance refunding of such bonds through changes in the federal tax code.

5. Vouchers/Tuition Tax Credits

NSBA urges Congress to oppose any efforts to subsidize tuition or expenses at elementary or secondary private, religious, or home schools with public tax dollars. Specifically, NSBA opposes vouchers, tax credits, and tax subsidies for use at non-public K-12 schools.

6. Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA)

NSBA urges Congress to reauthorize the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA). NSBA believes the intent and stated objectives of the current law are laudable; however, the act generally fails to acknowledge or build upon the work in many states to implement effective accountability systems that often are as good as or better than the current system. Further, many key provisions of the current law are unworkable, too costly, and inconsistent with effective state efforts to raise student achievement.

Given the priority placed on education by President Obama and the 111th Congress to improve the nation's public schools and our nation's global competitiveness, NSBA urges Congress to pass legislation that:

- (a) inspires expectations in student achievement that are high and attainable and will be reinforced by accountability systems that constructively support those outcomes;
- (b) provides states and school districts with greater overall flexibility to make educationally sound decisions, including the development and adoption of standards, and be free of mandates that unnecessarily or counterproductively hinder school districts from achieving their goals;
- (c) supports appropriate, high-quality, valid and reliable assessments for all students, including for English Language Learners (ELL) and students with disabilities as determined by their Individualized Education Program (IEP) team;
- (d) uses multiple measures of academic achievement that will more accurately determine students' knowledge and performance and that reflect the well-rounded education necessary to be successful in the 21st century economy, as opposed to judging success on their performance in a single assessment;
- (e) permits the use of growth models and other measures of student achievement that more accurately reflect student and school performance;
- (f) facilitates strategic interventions that are designed at the local or state level and are targeted to students and schools most in need, rather than impose ineffective and costly sanctions;
- (g) fully funds the law, along with other federal assistance programs that are critical to achieving the law's goals;
- (h) ensures that states and local school districts are not hindered in their authority and flexibility to implement research-based approaches and interventions to turn around the lowest achieving schools;

- (i) recognizes the significant impact of formula-driven federal funding to urban, rural and suburban school districts in providing greater equity to schools with high enrollment of students in poverty; and opposes any shifts toward increased competitive grants that would reduce or limit future increases in formula driven educational programs;
- (j) ensures that states and local school districts are not hindered in their authority and flexibility to design and implement initiatives to attract, develop, retain and reward teachers and principals in determining how best to meet the needs of their students to achieve the goal of being college and career ready by the 2020;
- (k) supports evidence-based strategies and an accountability framework to address the unique needs of schools and school districts with high mobility;
- (l) provides states and school districts support and flexibility to establish programs to enhance teacher/principal quality and effectiveness that focuses on preparation, recruitment, retention, and evaluation; and,
- (m) grants flexibility to school districts to establish preschool programs for all three and four year olds through a separate funding stream, that develops, expands, coordinates and enhances the quality and availability of preschool programs.

Further, NSBA urges Congress to pass legislation that would suspend sanctions against schools and local school districts until such time as the reauthorization is completed.

7. Teacher and Principal Effectiveness

NSBA urges Congress to provide funding for research and implementation that supports a broad range of locally developed strategies to improve teacher and principal effectiveness to increase student achievement through:

- (a) evidence-based preparation and professional development;
- (b) evidence-based evaluation systems that include student performance;
- (c) alternative certification programs; and,
- (d) state and school district flexibility regarding credentials for small and rural schools and specialized programs such as Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM).

8. 21st Century Skills

NSBA urges Congress to support programs and research that focus on problem-solving, creativity, critical thinking, and other high-level 21st century skills that are important for success in a global workplace. As such, Congress should support school district capacity to provide the technology and tools necessary to foster innovative learning practices and instructional methods that bridge school and real-world experiences, provide for greater individualization of education, and prepare students for college and/or career.

In addition, Congress should provide funding and other incentives to states and localities to design and implement rigorous science, technology, engineering, and math (STEM) curriculum and encourage geographical and cultural awareness.

9. E-Rate

NSBA urges Congress and the Federal Communications Commission to strengthen the E-Rate program to ensure efficient operation of the program, improve the quality and speed of connectivity in our nation's schools, and address the technology gaps that remain. Essential steps include increasing availability of E-rate discounts, maintaining the current eligibility of schools and libraries, and implementing a permanent exemption or other long-term solutions to the Anti-Deficiency Act.

10. Standards and Testing

NSBA urges Congress and the President to take the following legislative and executive branch action with regard to standards and testing:

- (a) support state and local efforts to provide students with an education that is appropriately focused on the skills and uses of knowledge needed for success in the global and technological world of the 21st century by funding multiple education entities, including regional education entities, to develop model standards for voluntary adoption;
- (b) support 1) funding for research; 2) financial assistance to states or groups of states, when requested, to assist them in developing and implementing standards around the skills and uses of knowledge that students will need in the 21st century; and 3) direct financial assistance to states or groups of states, when requested to assist them in developing and implementing content standards;
- (c) oppose efforts to make the aforementioned activities mandatory on states or local school districts or as a condition for the receipt of other federal aid;
- (d) oppose efforts to involve the federal government directly or indirectly (e.g. through an entity over which it can exercise control) to develop mandatory or model national content standards or to mandate the development of common content standards among groups of states; and,
- (e) ensure that the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) and other national assessments as well as international tests do not exceed their current use to provide comparative data through sampling; and oppose requiring or coercing the use of these assessments by states in developing their own standards or for high stakes accountability purposes.

11. Childhood Nutrition and Food Products

NSBA urges Congress and the U.S. Department of Agriculture to recognize local school district authority and the variance among school district circumstances when enacting legislation or promulgating regulations to address improving childhood nutrition.

NSBA urges Congress to ensure that adequate funding is provided to support improving the nutritional quality of foods and beverages sold at schools and urges the Administration to involve local school boards in designing regulation and policy for implementation so that it does not impose additional costs on school districts.

In addition, NSBA urges the Department of Agriculture and other federal and state agencies responsible for food safety to improve and coordinate inspection, notification, and other protocols to ensure the nutritional value and safety of foods served in school lunch and breakfast programs.

12. Medicaid and Administrative Claims

NSBA urges the Centers for Medicaid and Medicare Services to put school- based health care programs on the same footing as any other health care programs to support the critical role played by schools in providing timely services and assistance to all eligible children.

Furthermore, NSBA urges Congress, courts, and administrative agencies to support policies that enable and provide timely federal reimbursement to schools for Medicaid-eligible services provided to students, regardless of whether such students are classified as disabled under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) and have an Individualized Education Program (IEP). Specifically, Title XIX should be amended to conform with the language of IDEA to clearly establish the statutory basis for Medicaid services in schools. NSBA also supports federal Medicaid reimbursement to schools for administrative and transportation services provided in support of states' Medicaid plans.

13. Quality Healthcare for Children

Quality healthcare for children has a positive effect on student achievement. Therefore, NSBA urges Congress and the Administration to ensure that the "Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act" grants full access and coverage of affordable health insurance to all eligible children.

14. Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA)

NSBA urges Congress to amend the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act to:

- (a) limit responsibilities for child find and evaluation of students with disabilities to those students who reside within the boundaries of the local school district rather than requiring school districts to provide such services for all children who attend private schools within the boundaries of the school district;
- (b) prohibit any court, administrative body or other entity from requiring a school board or state within the United States to provide for a child's education, residential cost or the cost of any other services provided outside the United States;
- (c) prohibit tuition reimbursement for students with disabilities unilaterally placed by their parents in private schools; and,
- (d) place the burden of proof in challenges to a student's Individualized Education Program (IEP) upon the party bringing the challenge.

15. Early Learning

NSBA urges Congress to grant flexibility to school districts to establish preschool programs for all three and four year olds through a separate funding stream, that develops, coordinates, and enhances the quality and availability of preschool programs.

16. Student Mobility

NSBA urges Congress to take the following actions:

- (a) authorize a national longitudinal study of the social, economic and academic issues that confront transient, mobile, and migrant students, utilizing research based strategies to improve services to these children;

- (b) direct state departments of education to track and report mobile student populations and also coordinate and interface existing data systems to acknowledge the existing federally-funded migrant student data system and other data systems that have been developed;
- (c) create a pilot program to provide financial assistance for school districts with a high mobility student population; and,
- (d) direct state departments of education to track and report standardized test results for the mobile student population.

17. Educational Opportunity

NSBA urges Congress to amend the Illegal Immigration Reform and Immigrant Responsibility Act of 1996 to authorize the cancellation of removal, and the adjustment of status, of undocumented immigrant students who are long-term United States residents.

Further, NSBA supports state legislation that allows for in-state tuition and other incentives for students to pursue higher education for all residents that graduate from American high schools, including undocumented immigrant students.

18. Migrant Education Program

NSBA urges Congress to amend the Migrant Education Program (MEP) to make funding available to school districts for children of migrant workers to help them fulfill their legal obligations and give migrant children the opportunity to reach their full potential.

19. Eliminating the Government Pension Offset Windfall Elimination Provisions of the Social Security Act

NSBA urges Congress to eliminate the Government Pension Offset and the Windfall Elimination Provision of the Social Security Act as they negatively impact school district employees and their spouses, who previously worked in the private sector. Additionally, these provisions of the Social Security Act should be addressed because they work to discourage private sector employees from pursuing subsequent teaching careers and other school district positions.

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