



*Excellence and Equity
in Public Education
through School Board
Leadership*

Office of Advocacy

- *C.H. "Sonny" Savoie
President*
- *Anne L. Bryant
Executive Director*
- *Michael A. Resnick
Associate
Executive Director*

March 26, 2010

The Honorable George Miller
Chairman
Committee on Education and Labor
United States House of Representatives
2181 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

**Re: *National School Boards Association (NSBA) Recommendations for the
Reauthorization of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act***

Dear Chairman Miller:

The National School Boards Association (NSBA) representing over 95,000 local school board members through our state school boards associations is pleased to submit our comprehensive recommendations as the House Committee on Education and Labor prepares for the reauthorization of the *Elementary and Secondary Education Act* (ESEA).

Local school boards across the nation remain committed to the goal of improving the academic performance of all students. Yet, the implementation challenges over the past eight years demonstrate the fact that many of the provisions in the current law do not recognize the complex factors that influence student performance, especially the accountability framework that fails to accurately or fairly assess student, school or school district performance. Therefore, in seeking a nation-wide effort to raise student achievement, we have focused our recommendations on a federal role that offers educational value, is practical from the standpoint of local implementation, and conforms to the fiscal realities that will be facing school districts over the next few years.

Local school board members are optimistic that the reauthorization can be completed before the 111th Congress adjourns, and look forward to working with their members of Congress as the bill is drafted and continues through the legislative process. Our expectations are that the new law would enable schools and school districts to move away from a "one-size-fits-all" approach and replace burdensome, ineffective and costly sanctions with effective supports, incentives and an accountability framework that provides sufficient flexibility to states and local school districts to help students acquire the skills to successfully compete in the global workforce.

The opportunity to formally submit our recommendations is very much appreciated. Questions concerning specific recommendations should be directed to Reginald M. Felton, director, federal relations at 703-838-6782, or by e-mail, rfelton@nsba.org.

Sincerely,

Michael A. Resnick
Associate Executive Director

MAR: rf/kc



Recommendations for the Reauthorization of the *Elementary and Secondary Education Act*

MARCH 2010

BACKGROUND

The Congressional leadership in both the U.S. House of Representatives and the U.S. Senate are beginning the legislative process to reauthorize the *Elementary and Secondary Education Act* (ESEA), last reauthorized as the *No Child Left Behind (NCLB) Act of 2001*. Recently, the U.S. Secretary of Education, Arne Duncan, released the Administration's proposal for the reauthorization of ESEA, *Priorities in a Blueprint for Reform*. That paper outlines broad principles and in some cases offers specific remedies and recommendations. NSBA looks forward to the introduction of a proposed bill so that more specifics can be known and analyzed.

In recognition of this focus on the ESEA reauthorization, local school boards across the nation are re-energizing their grassroots efforts to voice their goals and concerns to members of Congress, the Obama administration officials and other key stakeholders.

In addition to eliminating the overemphasis on standardized tests and sanctions against schools and school districts and an ineffective accountability system, local school board members want Congress to ensure that the significant increased federal investments in public education - as a result of the *American Recovery and Reinvestment Act* (ARRA), the Race to the Top (RTTT) Fund, and the expanded School Improvement Grants (SIG) - will be supported by new legislation that will enable schools and school districts to move away from a "one-size-fits-all" approach and replace burdensome, costly sanctions with effective incentives and a framework that would permit states and local school districts to help students achieve greater academic success.

In the event that Congress does not immediately adopt major reforms in the current law rather than seek to improve current law, NSBA developed comprehensive recommendations for changes to the existing law. These specific recommendations have been incorporated into a new bill, *The School Improvements Act*, H.R. 4837, introduced by Rep. Don Young (R-AK). While the specific language of H.R. 4837 would need to be modified under the major reform bill now being anticipated, the substance of the proposed changes remains relevant for those sections of current law that would be retained.

Without reservation, local school boards continue to support the goals to ensure that our students have the skills to successfully compete in the global workforce. However, many of the provisions in the current law do not recognize the complex factors that influence student performance, especially the accountability framework that does not accurately or fairly assess student, school or school district performance.

OFFICE OF ADVOCACY

National School Boards Association ■ 1680 Duke Street ■ Alexandria, Virginia 22314-3493 ■ (703) 838-6722 ■ Fax: (703) 548-5613 ■ <http://www.nsba.org>

Local school boards believe that what has evolved in the name of accountability in the current law is a measurement framework that bases its assessment of school quality on a student's performance only on a *single assessment* on a single day; and mandates a series of overbroad sanctions not always evidenced-based or targeted to the students needing services. Equally important, such mandated sanctions have not yet proven to have significant impact on improving student or school performance. Clearly the unintended consequences of the current law are imposing implementation problems for local school boards, and the goal of the current law to significantly improve the academic performance of all students is being seriously threatened.

Given the recent actions by Congress and the Secretary of Education, local school boards are optimistic that the reauthorization will be completed before the 111th Congress adjourns. However, should Congress fail to complete the reauthorization of ESEA before the 111th Congress adjourns, local school boards urge Congress, as an alternative, to enact legislation that would provide temporary relief from the costly and burdensome sanctions against schools and school districts. With the continued delays in reauthorizing ESEA, the performance bar of the nation's public schools continues to rise – resulting in more schools being subject to the restructuring sanctions that impose costly implementation problems. Not only are the requirements unsound educationally, but also financially – at a time when school districts are severely cutting their budgets.

IMPLEMENTATION CHALLENGES OF THE CURRENT LAW

Despite its imperfections, the current law has refocused attention on the academic performance of many students (minority, disadvantaged, English language learners (ELL), and those with disabilities) not previously addressed. The current law also includes the requirement for disaggregated data on student performance.

Unfortunately, over the past eight years, local school districts have been forced to shift their efforts to high-stake test preparation, limits on curriculums and on federally-mandated sanctions not based on research, and extensive data collection and reporting that fails to accurately reflect the performance of students, schools or school districts. As a result, local school board members and other state and locally-elected officials have become increasingly aware that successful attainment of the desired national goals is very much dependent upon a significantly enhanced capacity of the state departments of education and the local school districts throughout the country that are currently constrained by declining budgets and other competing priorities.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR THE REAUTHORIZATION OF ESEA

Therefore, based on concerns expressed by local school boards across the nation, NSBA offers the following recommendations regarding key components of the law:

General Recommendations:

- *ESEA and the recently established requirements and regulations related to Race to the Top (RTTT), School Improvement Grants (SIG), and Investing in Innovation Grant (i3) must be consistent, and where inconsistencies are identified they are resolved prior to enactment.*
- *ESEA should not establish any new conditions for receipt of existing federal grants in programs that are designed for other purposes. For example, the Administration stated it wanted to condition a state's Title I funds to its adoption of state-led core standards proposed by CCSSO and NGA or require states to have their standards validated by its university system.*
- *States and local communities must have maximum flexibility in determining the appropriate interventions to address the needs of their students in accomplishing the broader goals of Congress. As an example," the Administration's proposal to limit school districts to one of four unproven options for turning around the lowest 5 percent performing schools should be replaced or at least expanded to include a fifth option for local educators to design research-based programs and promising initiatives that are locally best suited to meet the specific needs in their school.*

- *Formula-based funding to support students in poverty should not be reduced or increases limited as a trade-off for competitive grants—which are very much influenced by the quality of the grant writers rather than the needs of the local communities.*

Rationale:

While recent Congressional actions have resulted in unprecedented federal investments in public education, these investments have established many new requirements, selection criteria, and definitions that create new expectations on the part of states and local school districts.

The federal government should demonstrate its strong support for the development of state and local constructive remedies to improve teaching, learning, and performance; and tailored federal-state-local partnerships to ensure adequate public funding - rather than simply punishing and discouraging students or schools when they fall short. Secretary Duncan has adopted among his major principles for the reauthorization of ESEA to be “...Tight on goals....Loose on means.” Therefore, the federal government must act to strengthen the local voice not muffle it or constrain it.

In addition to these broader principles addressed above, local school boards have specific concerns and recommendations on how key components of the reauthorization should be addressed:

Assessments & Measures of Learning

Recommendations:

- *Ensure high-quality, valid and reliable assessments are available for all students, especially for English language learners and students with disabilities.*
- *Provide for the use of locally-developed assessments, including observational standards and portfolios, to be considered as part of a multiple assessment system that is applied to any federal accountability framework. The federal government should not develop national high-stakes tests for state and local accountability purposes or condition a state’s receipt of federal program funding to its adopting any particular assessment.*
- *Assessments should be conducted in a manner that would provide timely and meaningful data to enhance instruction.*

Rationale:

Among the major concerns expressed by local school boards regarding assessments and measures of learning is that the commitment was never realized to provide valid and reliable assessments for every student. Federal funding was made available to assist states in the development of assessments, but such funding even when accompanied by state funding was insufficient to ensure validity and reliability for an assessment appropriate for every student.

State-led Common Core Standards

Recommendations:

- *Define the role of the federal government as a supportive role to the states in the development of state academic standards that reflect the elements of a 21st century education. However, the federal government should not be involved in the actual development of those state standards.*
- *Provide technical support to states, if requested, to identify the essential skills that students should have to compete successfully in college and in the global workforce; and to develop and assess those state standards.*
- *Provide assistance to states for the purpose of supporting local school districts in implementing common standards, such as support for professional development, curriculum alignment and course materials.*

- *Establish the federal role as one of partnerships to states -- not only in terms of funding for those students with the greatest needs, but also in serving as a clearinghouse to share and promote ideas and best practices regarding actions to overcome shortfalls in student achievement.*
- *Increase incentives to states and local school districts to create constructive remedies, and provide technical support to the states to assess those state standards.*

Rationale:

Local school boards support state-led common core standards that include sufficient flexibility in operations to effectively and efficiently address the unique challenges of local communities. Additionally, local school boards believe that the federal government should not be involved in the actual development of such standards. Implementation can't simply put new standards in place and expect student achievement to rise without the capacity of schools to implement them.

In order to better understand what specific role the federal government could play related to state-led common core standards, the following clarifications are offered:

- (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 for those purposes;
- (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 for 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 international tests are not extended beyond their current use in providing comparative data through sampling, or used to require or coerce states in developing their own standards or for use in high stakes accountability.

Federal Programs to Fund Charter Schools

Recommendations:

- *Require federally funded Charter Schools to abide by the same educational accountability requirements, and federal environmental, labor, and due process laws that traditional public schools must. Any new legislation should rectify areas where this is not the case and strengthen areas where it is, but it is not clear or firmly directed.*
- *Establish local school boards as the sole authority for granting charters. They should determine accountability and the criteria that should be used in approving charter applications.*
- *Provide local school boards the authority to decertify or not renew the charter of any school that fails to meet criteria set forth in the charter or as otherwise specified by the authorizing local school boards, including but not limited to a requirement that charter schools demonstrate that they are meeting their student achievement goals.*
- *In cases where entities other than the local school district authorize the charter, require all schools receiving public funds to meet the same standards of accountability and ensure that funds for traditional local schools are not diminished or reduced by the funding mechanism for charter schools.*

- Provide ongoing studies to determine: a) whether charter schools are broadly successful; b) the specific conditions and elements that primarily lead to that success; c) the conditions that lead or detract from positive interactions and sharing of information with the traditional public schools in the communities, and d) the educational and financial impact that charters and their growth have on traditional public schools.

Rationale:

Looking to their design, state authorizing legislation or success to characterize the nation’s experience is quite disparate.

The inclusion of charter schools in the 2001 reauthorization of the *Elementary and Secondary Education Act* significantly increased their visibility. Most recently, given the heightened interest in charter schools as a consideration in the awarding of the federal Race to the Top competitive grants program, the widespread interest in them overall in the Obama Administration, and steadily increasing student enrollment, it is instructive to review their approaches, makeup and success throughout the country.

- In seven states, chartering authority rests with local school districts;
- In four states, authority lies with the local school district and a state charter board;
- In nine states, authority is in the hands of the local school district and the state education agency;
- In 11 states, the state education agency is solely responsible;
- In the District of Columbia, the state charter board solely makes decisions; and
- In nine states, authority rests with a combination of those agencies noted above, and in some with an institution of postsecondary education or a non-profit entity.

Public Charter School Authorizers, 2008-2009					
Local School District alone	State Education Agency Alone	Local School District and State Education Agency	Local School District and Independent Charter Board	Independent Charter Board	Combination (in some cases including higher education institution or not-for-profit organization)
AK, IA, KS, MD, TN, VA, WY	AR, CT, HI, MA, MS, NC, NH, NJ, RI, TX, UT	CA, DE, GA, IL, LA, NM, NV, OR, PA	AZ, CO, ID, SC	DC	FL, IN, MI, MN, MO, NY, OH, OK, WI

Source: National Alliance for Public Charter Schools, *Public Charter School Dashboard, 2009*

In 2009, the Center for Research on Education Outcomes (CREDO) conducted a study which analyzed reading and math scores from charter students in 15 states and the District of Columbia and compared them to “virtual twins” based on student demographics, English language proficiency and participation in special education or subsidized lunch programs.

Among its findings, CREDO found that in terms of overall performance only 17 percent of charters performed significantly better (at the 95 percent confidence level) than the traditional public school. However, an even larger group of charters, 37 percent, performed significantly worse than the traditional public schools. The remainder, 46 percent, did not do significantly better or worse. In other words, fully 83 percent of the charters performed the same or worse than the traditional public schools.

Examining CREDO and other credible studies, the Center for Public Education issued a report entitled “Charter Schools: Finding Out the Facts” that showed that: a) states with multiple authorizers did worse than those with fewer agencies that could authorize charters, b) lifting the state caps on charters could not

be conclusively demonstrated to improve the quality of charters overall in the state, and c) local education agencies authorize many more charters than other authorizers. The bottom line is there is not enough research about charters (or the elements that make them succeed or fail) to justify their significant expansion as a foremost strategy for raising student achievement.

Accountability Systems

Recommendations:

- *Provide for the use of multiple measures of academic achievement that will more accurately determine students' knowledge and performance that reflect the kind of well-rounded education necessary to be successful in the 21st Century economy, as opposed to judging success on their performance on a single assessment.*
- *Establish an accountability framework that differentiates among performance expectations separately for students, for schools, for school districts and for states. The current "roll up" and averaging of student performance that ultimately determines the performance of schools and school districts fail to recognize the unique roles, responsibilities and expectations for each category or the unique responsibilities of the states.*
- *Provide states and local school districts with greater overall flexibility to make educationally-sound decisions, and be free of mandates that unnecessarily or counterproductively hinder schools districts from achieving their goals.*
- *Permit across-the-board use of growth models and other measures of student achievement that more accurately and fairly reflect student and school performance.*
- *Facilitate 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.*
- *Recognize the complexity in achieving progress through differentiated consequences. Degrees of progress must be addressed in determining incentives, rewards and sanctions.*
- *Refrain from sanctions that are not research-based or those that apply an all or none remedy. As an example, the "blueprint" seeks to replace principals and teachers under the "models." Further, whether teachers or principals are replaced, simply hiring individuals with the same "skill sets" would not necessarily result any change in outcomes.*
- *Any data collection and reporting requirements used for accountability purposes must eliminate duplicate counting of students.*

Rationale:

The federal government must shift its current emphasis of accountability away from penalties and sanctions to one of increased technical support, incentives and federal investments. Accountability models need to recognize that students come from different environments, have different support bases and learn at different rates. For this reason, a federal accountability framework should recognize the importance of student academic growth, not just static scoring. Additionally, federal accountability determinations should not be based solely on high-stakes tests.

Clearly, accountability for states, school districts, schools and students must be measured differently, and the federal government should be able to provide technical assistance to the states in determining the specific measures.

Further, sanctions must be researched-based, and schools and school districts with diverse populations should be not penalized due to duplicate counting of students who belong to more than one demographic group.

High School Graduation Rates

Recommendations:

- *Provide incentives for school districts that improve their on-time graduation rates.*

- *Provide incentives for school districts that establish programs for late graduation to influence students to remain in tailored programs rather than to drop out.*

Rationale:

As part of the ESEA reauthorization it is important to also address low graduation rates, particularly among African American and Latino students. Local school boards believe that greater emphasis must be directed toward improving high school graduation rates. Recent federal regulations now provide for a uniform approach in measuring high school graduation rates that further strengthen accountability. However, current federal policy and regulations fail to recognize schools and school districts for implementing “late graduate” programs and thus discourage districts and schools from establishing innovative programs.

Recent data published by the Center for Public Education (CPE), “Better Late Than Never? Examining Late High School Graduates,” indicates that greater attention and recognition must be given to late graduates as well. The data reveals that while late graduates do not do as well in terms of college enrollment and incomes as on-time graduates, they perform significantly better than GED recipients and those who fail to complete their high school graduation requirements. Moreover, as adults they earn more, are more likely to vote, and have access to health care, etc.

The CPE study suggests that 85 percent of late graduates are employed, and less likely to fall below the poverty line. Additionally, of late graduates who had been employed any time after 1994, close to two-thirds (63 percent) held a job that offered retirement benefits.

Pre-Kindergarten/Early Childhood

Recommendations:

- *Expand access to and funding for high-quality, voluntary pre-kindergarten programs for all three and four year olds by creating a new federal grant program, such as the Early Learning Challenge Fund, that will develop, expand, and enhance the quality of voluntary preschool programs.*
- *Ensure that federally-funded preschool programs adopt developmentally appropriate early education standards that are aligned with state K-12 academic content standards.*

Rationale:

Research proves that quality early childhood education programs help improve children’s school readiness and can help close achievement gaps that exist among children even before they enter school. Research also finds that children who participate in high-quality programs demonstrate greater interest in learning, are less likely to repeat a grade or require special education classes, and are more likely to graduate from high school and attend college. For every dollar invested in prekindergarten programs, the return can be as high as \$16, making it both smart education and economic policy. States have recognized the benefits of early childhood education and as many as 38 fund preschool for three and four-year-olds. However, only about 24 percent of all four-year-olds and just 4 percent of all three year-olds nationally are actually enrolled in state-funded preschool programs.

Since 2006, NSBA and its Center for Public Education have collaborated with the Pew Charitable Trusts/Pre-K Now to engage school boards in support of high quality, voluntary pre-kindergarten education. Through partnerships with state school boards associations to promote greater access to voluntary, high-quality pre-kindergarten programs, it is the belief that such programs will propel schools’ efforts to raise student achievement and close achievement gaps.

The 2009 *Phi Delta Kappa/Gallup Poll* on attitudes toward public education shows strong support for early education – particularly in public schools. In fact, five out of ten Americans believe preschool programs should be housed in public schools, with parents even more supportive of that idea.

Teacher & Principal Effectiveness

Recommendations:

- *Provide incentives to states and districts to help recruit, retain and reward effective teachers and principals in schools that most need them, and for subjects with shortages (e.g. math, science, foreign languages, special education). Incentives should include support for locally-designed performance pay programs. Recruitment and retention incentives and funding (e.g. Title II of ESEA) should cover a portfolio of spending options for districts to reflect unique local conditions;*
- *Invest in professional development initiatives to enable educators and school leaders to effectively provide 21st century instruction skills, including the use of technology to transform learning;*
- *Fund, facilitate and disseminate quality research, best practices and innovations on effective teaching and school leadership; and,*
- *Assist in broadening the pool of new and effective teacher candidates by supporting programs that offer alternative routes to certification that can help increase the number of minority teachers, as well as mid-career professionals.*
- *Require all teacher preparation programs funded by public dollars to collaborate with states and local districts to meet their needs, including appropriate alignment of teacher preparation programs with state standards and higher level learning skills.*
- *Support efforts by states to hold such institutions accountable for the quality and preparation of their program's graduates.*
- *Expand federal support focused on effective school leadership, through partnerships with universities and promotion of research-based programs.*
- *Support new performance management systems that include, in addition to other key factors, measures of student progress and performance; and engage all major stakeholders to ensure that interventions include a wide range of supports prior to reassignment or termination.*

Rationale:

Research indicates no other school-related factor has a greater impact on student achievement than the quality and effectiveness of the student's teacher. Further, increasingly studies also point to school leadership as the second most impactful factor in improving the learning environment. Meanwhile, school districts nationwide face challenges involving both teacher and principal recruitment and retention, particularly in high-need subjects and harder-to-staff schools. The federal government should play a limited, but helpful role by assisting states and districts in meeting the challenges of recruiting, retaining and rewarding quality teachers and principals for its students.

Hiring and staffing decisions, as well as professional development programs, are the responsibility of local school districts. Success will ultimately depend on the collaborative and ongoing efforts of school and community leaders and the institutions that prepare teachers and principals. Congress should be mindful of that fact as it considers legislation that aims to strengthen teacher and principal effectiveness. NSBA believes the federal government should play a limited, but not unimportant, role by assisting states and local school districts in their teacher and principal recruitment, retention and professional development efforts through targeted incentives and fewer federal restrictions.

21st Century Teaching and Learning Environments

Recommendations:

- *Provide incentives in partnership with the states to help districts recruit and retain highly effective teachers and fill gaps in hard-to-staff schools and high-need schools, including incentives to support locally-designed performance pay programs;*
- *Provide research, best practices and information, and technical assistance that is easily accessible and geared for use by local educators and policymakers;*
- *Support efforts to develop and expand instructional practices, including such emerging approaches as Universal Design for Learning (UDL), through teacher preparation programs to enable teachers to be successful in teaching 21st century skills and inspiring our evolving student population;*
- *Support state efforts to establish 21st century standards, including identifying the skills and uses of information students will need; as well as new opportunities for early education programs, proficiency in foreign languages, world geography, math, science and technology;*
- *Support efforts to raise expectations and close the achievement gap while raising the achievement of all students through such approaches as alternate schedules and non-traditional public school structures such as distance learning and other proven methods of instruction; and,*
- *Support efforts to ensure students will be prepared to succeed in a globally-competitive society and everyday 21st century life through the development of their cognitive and analytical skills, their application of knowledge, and their attitudes toward education and lifelong learning;*
- *Provide flexibility in federal laws to enable school districts to teach students the higher-order, critical thinking skills that are important for the 21st century workplace;*
- *Invest in research and innovations and disseminate best practices, including identifying the skills and uses of knowledge that students will need to possess to succeed in the 21st century workplace, such as cognitive skills, problem solving abilities, creative and analytical thinking, teamwork and communications skills, intellectual curiosity, and a commitment to lifelong learning;*
- *Invest in making broadband Internet access available to fully meet the needs of all schools, including E-rate related services;*
- *Invest in professional development to enable teachers and school leaders to adequately teach 21st century learning, as well as to effectively use technology resources in the classroom; and,*
- *Provide incentives to help states and districts fill teacher shortages in high-need subject areas vital to our future economy, such as math and science.*

Rationale:

Our nation's global competitiveness and democracy rests squarely on a strong education system. The continued success of this system requires ongoing support and investment at all levels.

In order for students to gain the skills and knowledge they need to be successful citizens in the 21st century, school districts must be able to:

- 1) Provide a rigorous curriculum that is integrated with modern technologies and tools;
- 2) Provide an education program that includes the uses of knowledge and cognitive development at levels that meet the realities and standards of a competitive global economy and emerging everyday life; and,
- 3) Implement a strategic focus on math, science, engineering, technology and foreign languages that is necessary in a global economy that increasingly will require competency in these areas.

The federal government can play a critical role in helping shape our nation's economic future by supporting local school districts in these efforts.

Coordination and Streamlining of Comprehensive Services for Children

Recommendation:

- *Provide incentives for more effective and efficient inter-agency collaboration and coordination among those federal, state and local agencies that serve students with educational challenges arising from a disability or the circumstance of poverty, family factors, or negative factors in the community.*

Rationale:

While federal agencies continue to increase their efforts to effectively address the needs of families in poverty (e.g. housing, health, protective services, etc.) and other circumstances, there is a critical desire for increased coordination and provision of services. The federal government must re-direct and strengthen its efforts to ensure better coordination and collaboration among federal agencies that serve the needs of students in poverty. All too often, students who are shortchanged in education also are shortchanged in other aspects of their lives and can benefit from improved services in those areas that would compliment schools' ongoing efforts to raise achievement.

If need be, the Committee should seek joint jurisdiction with other committees that oversee relevant agencies to ensure that this essential component of the reauthorization can be addressed in a comprehensive manner.

For further information, contact Reginald M. Felton, director of federal relations at 703-838-6782, or by e-mail at rfelton@nsba.org.

QUICK REFERENCE

21 st century teaching and learning environments	9
Accountability systems	6
Assessments & measures of learning.....	3
Background	1
Coordination and streamlining of comprehensive services for children.....	10
Federal programs to fund charter schools	4
General recommendations	2
High school graduation rates	6
Implementation challenges of the current law.....	2
Pre-kindergarten/early childhood	7
State-led common core standards.....	3
Teacher & principal effectiveness	8