Educators Spoke. Congress Listened.

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President’s message

I was a witness to history this holiday season. On December 10, 2015, President Obama signed the Every Student Succeeds Act into law. “With this bill,” he said, “we reaffirm the fundamental American ideal that every child – regardless of race, income, background, the zip code where they live – deserves the chance to make out of their lives what they will.”

The President declared it a “Christmas miracle.” Indeed, it was.

For more than a year, NEA spearheaded a nationwide campaign to end the era of No Child Left Behind, the 2002 rewrite of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act that focused on testing, labeling, and punishing. Despite widespread agreement the law was badly broken – I called it No Child Left Untested – few believed consensus on how to fix it could be achieved.

Congress remained locked in hyper-partisan gridlock. At the beginning of 2015, the Republican leader of the Senate education committee and a Democratic colleague agreed that the odds were 5 to 1 against ESEA reauthorization, according to the New York Times.

Despite those discouraging odds, NEA persevered and succeeded – in multiple ways. The Every Student Succeeds Act ushers in a new era in public education that puts students at the forefront. It acknowledges that educators are the experts in teaching and learning, and empowers them to make decisions in the best interest of their students. And it demonstrates just how powerful collective advocacy and activism can be.

Now, as attention shifts to implementation, our work begins in earnest. The Every Student Succeeds Act has the potential to be a game changer. To fulfill that promise, we will need to work closely with state and local policymakers, as well as other key stakeholders. We will need to continue to raise our voices. Above all, we will need to insist on keeping the focus on equity and opportunity for all students, regardless of their zip code.

Lily Eskelsen García
President, National Education Association
February 1, 2016
### Highlights

- **71 million** reached with #GetESEARight hashtag
- **9 million** reached with earned media in top 4 media outlets
- **533,000** interactions with online ads
- **433,000** views of GetESEARight.com
- **284,000** emails to Congress
- **36,000** tweets to Congress
- **30,000** signatures on Get ESEA Right petition
- **23,500** telephone calls to Congress
- **23,000** new email sign-ups
- **11,600** participants in tele-town halls
- **3,000** face-to-face meetings with members of Congress and key staff

NEA’s nationwide campaign to rewrite No Child Left Behind, the 2002 version of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA), the cornerstone of the federal presence in K-12 education, culminated on December 10, 2015. On that day, President Obama signed the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) into law, reviving the drive for equity and opportunity for all students that animated the original ESEA.

Thanks to educators’ unprecedented advocacy and activism, the reboot enjoyed broad, bipartisan support – the Senate passed the bill 85-12 and the House of Representatives 359-64. The victory was all the more remarkable for having been achieved in a contentious Congress already eyeing the 2016 general election.

Over the course of our year-long campaign to rewrite No Child Left Behind, NEA’s state affiliate leaders, officers, board members, and lobbyists held more than 3,000 face-to-face meetings that included the entire Senate and over two-thirds of the House. More than a dozen NEA members testified before congressional committees and took part in briefings. High school teacher Michael Towne put our message this way at a forum in February: “Instead of labeling and punishing schools, we need to focus on ensuring equal opportunity for all students.”

Across the nation, educators spoke out about the urgent need to get it right this time, especially for the students most in need. They rallied, signed petitions, made telephone calls, and sent messages to Congress via email, social media, and old-fashioned snail mail. Print, broadcast, and digital media amplified their voices and helped tell the story of how, against all odds, we achieved a historic victory for the students who are the future of America.

### Core goals

At the outset of the campaign to rewrite No Child Left Behind, NEA established three core goals: creating an “opportunity dashboard” to help ensure equity and opportunity for all students; reducing standardized testing and decoupling it from high-stakes decisions; and empowering educators by giving them a voice in federal, state, and local decision making. The Every Student Succeeds Act achieves all three of those goals – memorable success by any measure, even more so in today’s politically polarized environment.
We also made important gains in other areas – notably, retooling the one-size-fits-all federal imprint. The new law eliminates Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP), punitive federal labels, rigid non-research-based interventions, Race to the Top, and federally-required teacher evaluations based on student test scores. It also restricts the U.S. Secretary of Education’s authority to set or shape standards, assessments, and elements of – or parameters for – state accountability systems.

Most important over the long run, the Every Student Succeeds Act begins to restore the original focus of ESEA: fulfilling America’s promise of equal opportunity for all. As the United States Supreme Court said in its unanimous decision in Brown v. Board of Education, “Today, education is perhaps the most important function of state and local governments … it is doubtful that any child may reasonably be expected to succeed in life if he is denied the opportunity of an education. Such an opportunity, where the state has undertaken to provide it, is a right which must be made available to all on equal terms.”

**Student opportunity**

For the first time in ESEA’s 50-year history, students’ access to opportunities and resources will be systematically tracked. New state-developed accountability systems must include at least one indicator of school success or student support like those in NEA’s proposed “opportunity dashboard” – for example, access to advanced coursework, fine arts, and regular physical education; school climate and safety; discipline policies; bullying prevention; and the availability of counselors, nurses, and librarians. Capturing these data will push states to take steps to identify and begin closing opportunity and resource gaps to the benefit of all students.

The Every Student Succeeds Act also boosts early education in a significant way. Preschool development grants form the foundation of a permanent program to improve coordination, enhance quality, and broaden access to early childhood education. The program will be housed at the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services and jointly administered with the U.S. Department of Education.

Other provisions of the new law address health care, nutrition, and practices that can undermine student learning. State and local funding may be used to implement programs to reduce the use of exclusionary discipline measures, a key factor in the school-to-prison pipeline; implement positive behavioral interventions and supports; and expand access to coordinated resources for school-based counseling and mental health programs. The Every Student Succeeds Act also continues a full-service “community schools” program.
Goodbye to No Child Left Behind!

Testing

For NEA, the focal point for any final bill was a reduction in standardized testing and associated high-stakes consequences. While the Every Student Succeeds Act eliminates AYP, the hallmark of No Child Left Behind’s rigid and unrealistic accountability system, it continues to require statewide tests in reading and math in grades 3 through 8 and once in high school, and science tests during each grade span (elementary, middle, and high school). At the same time, school districts must disseminate information about opt-out policies – where state and local policies permit, parents and guardians can have their children opt out of statewide academic assessments.

The amount of testing may be reduced in several ways. The new law incorporates the SMART Act, which provides funding for states to audit and streamline assessments, and eliminate those that are unnecessary or duplicative. States can limit how much time students spend taking tests each year. Up to seven states initially (and then all 50) can participate in a pilot program to replace standardized tests with locally-developed performance- or competency-based assessments. School districts can seek approval to fulfill the high school testing requirement with a nationally recognized assessment many students already take – for example, the SAT, ACT, or AP exams.

New state-developed accountability systems, based on multiple measures, will take effect starting in the 2017-18 school year. Such systems must incorporate four indicators: (1) proficiency in reading and math assessments; (2) English-language proficiency; (3) for high schools, graduation rates and for elementary and middle schools, a state-determined academic indicator; and (4) at least one state-determined indicator of school success or student support (like those in NEA’s proposed “opportunity dashboard”). As a group, the first three indicators must carry greater weight than the fourth.
Goodbye to No Child Left Behind!

Each state must identify and set goals for improvement in two categories: (1) schools where a student subgroup consistently underperforms on the full complement of indicators and (2) the lowest-performing 5 percent of Title I schools, high schools where the graduation rate is below 67 percent, and schools with the lowest-performing student subgroups. States, school districts, and in some cases the schools themselves determine next steps. School improvement plans must employ evidence-based strategies, and stakeholders, including educators, must be part of the team that develops remedies.

Educator empowerment

In stark contrast to No Child Left Behind, the Every Student Succeeds Act promotes respect for educators, the profession of education, and acknowledges that educators are the experts in teaching and learning – not bureaucrats who do not even know students’ names or faces. Multiple provisions ensure that educators’ voices will be part of decision making at all levels – federal, state, and local. For example, the new law envisions committees of practitioners (teachers, paraeducators, and specialized support professionals with recent classroom experience) working with parents and community members to improve their schools.

As NEA has long advocated, the Every Student Succeeds Act calls for professional development embedded in research based on teacher-developed standards – for example, Learning Forward’s Standards for Professional Learning. In addition, the new law retains No Child Left Behind’s definition of paraeducator qualifications and expands collective bargaining protections, applying them to the professional learning continuum for the first time.

State resources may be used to develop or strengthen teacher induction and mentoring programs. District funds may be used to enhance collaboration and teacher-led professional development aligned with students’ learning needs. Grants are offered for initiatives to increase diversity in the teaching workforce.

In short, the Every Student Succeeds Act creates new opportunities for educators to drive teaching and learning decisions, strengthen partnerships with parents and communities, and advocate for what students really need. With those opportunities comes responsibility – to stand up, speak out, and advocate for what is right.
Key dates in 2015

January 12: NEA President Lily Eskelsen García issues statement calling for Republicans, Democrats, the civil rights community, and educators to work together and restore ESEA’s focus on opportunity for all students

January 13: Senate Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions (HELP) Committee chairman Lamar Alexander (R-TN) and ranking member Patty Murray (D-WA) outline priorities for ESEA reauthorization

January 21: HELP Committee holds the first of three hearings on ESEA

February 11: House Education and the Workforce Committee “marks up” and passes the NEA-opposed Student Success Act (H.R. 5) in a 21-16 party-line vote

February 26: House of Representatives takes up H.R. 5

February 27: House GOP leadership pulls H.R. 5 from the floor due to lack of support and unrelated controversy over funding the U.S. Department of Homeland Security

April 16: HELP Committee passes the NEA-supported Every Child Achieves Act (S. 1177) unanimously, 22-0

June 23: As progress getting the bill to the floor stalls, 10 leading education groups, including NEA, urge the Senate to make ESEA reauthorization a priority

July 8: House passes H.R. 5 by a vote of 218-213

July 16: Senate passes S. 1177 by a vote of 81-17

July 22: 10 leading education groups, including NEA, urge congressional leaders to proceed to conference as soon as possible

July 30: NEA President Lily Eskelsen García issues statement commending congressional leaders for their commitment to moving the conference process forward

November 13: Leaders of the House Education and the Workforce Committee and the Senate HELP Committee announce agreement on a framework to reauthorize ESEA

November 19: Senate/House conference committee approves framework to reauthorize ESEA by a near-unanimous vote, 39-1

November 30: Senate/House conference committee releases legislative language for the bill now called the Every Student Succeeds Act

December 2: House passes the Every Student Succeeds Act 359-64

December 9: Senate passes the Every Student Succeeds Act 85-12

December 10: President Obama signs the Every Student Succeeds Act into law
Educators rallying in Los Angeles, California, on Feb. 15, 2015.

Educators rallying in Los Angeles, California, on Feb. 15, 2015.
Affiliate leaders advance our goals

Meetings with key senators
The leaders of NEA’s state affiliates played an important role in shaping the Every Student Succeeds Act. Over the course of the last year, many met face-to-face with key senators and their staffs in Washington, DC, as well as back home. Details are provided below.

Connecticut Education Association: Sheila Cohen, president, met with Sens. Richard Blumenthal and Chris Murphy

Idaho Education Association: Penni Cyr, president, met with Sen. Mike Crapo

Indiana Education Association: Teresa Meredith, president, met with Sen. Joe Donnelly

Maryland State Education Association: Betty Weller, president, met with Sens. Ben Cardin and Barbara Mikulski

Massachusetts Education Association: Barbara Madeloni, president, met with Sen. Elizabeth Warren

Missouri Education Association: Charles Smith, president, met with Sen. Claire McCaskill


NEA Rhode Island: Lawrence Purtill, president, met with Sens. Sheldon Whitehouse and Jack Reed

Nebraska State Education Association: Brian Mikkelsen, political field operations director, met with Sen. Deb Fischer

New Jersey Education Association: Wendell Steinhauer, president, met with Sen. Cory Booker

Virginia Education Association: Meg Gruber, president, met with Sens. Tim Kaine and Mark Warner

Washington Education Association: Kim Mead, president, met with Sen. Patty Murray

West Virginia Education Association: Dale Lee, president, met with Sens. Joe Manchin and Shelley Moore Capito

Wisconsin Education Association Council: Betsy Kippers, president, met with Sen. Tammy Baldwin
Postcard program

Over 2,600 educators sent postcards urging their senators to get ESEA right. The postcards were distributed by state affiliates and NEA leaders at large gatherings of members, then collected and hand-delivered to senators’ back-home offices by state affiliates and the National Council on Urban Education Associations (NCUEA).

### Number of postcards

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Back-home outreach to senators during ESEA campaign

**NEA-Alaska:** roundtable with Sen. Lisa Murkowski

**Colorado Education Association:** talked to Sen. Michael Bennet’s education staffer

**Connecticut Education Association:** met with Sen. Chris Murphy

**Education Minnesota:** met with Sen. Al Franken and top staff of Sen. Amy Klobuchar

**Idaho Education Association:** met with Sens. Mike Crapo and James Risch

**Illinois Education Association:** met with Sen. Mark Kirk

**Iowa State Education Association:** roundtable with Sen. Charles Grassley

**Kentucky Education Association:** met with Sen. Rand Paul’s staff

**Maryland State Education Association:** met with Sen. Barbara Mikulski
NEA board members met with their senators and sent more than 200 tweets urging them to get ESEA right during Superweek in May.

Massachusetts Education Association: met with Sen. Elizabeth Warren
Michigan Education Association: roundtable with Sen. Debbie Stabenow
Missouri NEA: roundtable with Sen. Claire McCaskill
NEA Rhode Island: roundtable with Sen. Sheldon Whitehouse
North Dakota Education Association: 12 members met with Sen. Heidi Heitkamp
Ohio Education Association: roundtable with Sen. Sherrod Brown
South Carolina Education Association: met with Sen. Lindsey Graham
Tennessee Education Association: 12 members had roundtable with Sen. Lamar Alexander
Utah Education Association: met with Sen. Mike Lee’s state director
Vermont-NEA: roundtable with Sen. Bernie Sanders
Virginia Education Association: roundtable with Sen. Mark Warner
Washington Education Association: 10 members had 45-minute roundtable with Sen. Patty Murray

ESEA Wave of Action, April 2015
Across the nation, educators picked up their pens, held meetings and rallies, made telephone calls, and sent emails and tweets. This heightened activism helped convey the message that ESEA reauthorization is a priority and educators’ voices are part of the process. Some examples follow.

California Teachers Association: Distributed business cards urging members to call, email, or send text messages to Congress on April 11, the 50th anniversary of the date President Lyndon Johnson signed ESEA into law – an idea later picked up by the Omaha Education Association in Nebraska, following its promotion by NCUEA.

Colorado Education Association: Hosted a rally where more than 250 educators demanded less testing to free up time for teaching and learning.

Idaho Education Association: More than 120 educators signed petitions during the delegate assembly urging Sens. Jim Risch and Mike Crapo to support the opportunity “dashboard.”
Kentucky Education Association: Louisville members took the “time to teach, time to learn” pledge and urged their senators to get ESEA right.

Louisiana Association of Educators: Held a town hall meeting in Natchitoches attended by school board members, principals, teachers, and parents; hot topics included testing.

Maine Education Association: Legislators, educators, and parents attended a forum on testing in Augusta where topics included the botched rollout of the Smarter Balanced Assessment Consortium’s test, lack of Internet capacity, having children opt out of testing, and special needs students with no hope of getting diplomas.

Missouri Education Association: On April 11 in St. Louis, 30 educators gathered for a teach-in on testing and ESEA reauthorization; in Hazelwood, 165 educators attended a local school board meeting that featured personal accounts of the overuse and misuse of standardized testing, which they are trying to address through collective bargaining.

NEA New Mexico: Months of effective organizing by the Las Cruces Education Association led to the election of supportive school board members.

New Jersey Education Association: Members took action via social media, phone calls, and emails.

Oklahoma Education Association: Hosted forums on high-stakes testing with the PTA and conducted a “common-sense testing” tour covered by many media outlets, including newspapers, in Lawton, McAlester, Yukon, Midwest City, and Enid.

Oregon Education Association: Began a series of forums, offered as webinars to maximize participation, to get members’ feedback on a new assessment system that focuses on student learning instead of over-emphasizing standardized tests.

Tennessee Education Association: 75 people visited an ESEA information booth; Andrew Kimball shared a song he wrote about excessive testing, “More than a Score;” and 36 members completed the Time to Teach campaign, including 12 local leaders who pledged to conduct their own campaigns.

Vermont-NEA: On April 8 in Burlington, 35 members celebrated their National Board certification, followed by remarks about the misuse and overuse of high-stakes testing that culminated in a call to action.

Virginia Education Association: On April 11 in Richmond, members of the newly elected board of the students’ association pledged to conduct teach-ins on their home campuses, enroll students in the ESEA text update program, and visit getESEARight.com to engage in digital advocacy.
Educators rallying in Los Angeles, California, on Feb. 15, 2015. “Everybody in the country is watching this struggle,” said CTA president Joshua Pechthalf. “It’s a fight about the nature of public education. What is public education going to look like?”

Washington Education Association: Over 300 members lined up in Olympia, the state capitol, to oppose linking student test scores to teacher evaluations; WEA president Kim Mead was featured in a Seattle Times op-ed highlighting the dangers of over-testing students.

Wisconsin Education Association Council: After NEA Executive Board member George Sheridan delivered inspiring words about how educators’ activism has reshaped the debate surrounding ESEA, 150 Milwaukee Teachers Education Association leaders participated in a Twitter storm directed at Sen. Tammy Baldwin. Several people re-tweeted and magnified their message: Get ESEA reauthorization right!

ESEA Week of Action, February 16–20

Arizona Education Association: Distributed ESEA materials to more than 100 members; Tucson leaders urged building representatives to contact Rep. Raúl Grijalva, a leading member of the House Education and Workforce Committee, and express their stance on ESEA.

Colorado Education Association: At a Feb. 17 Time to Teach event in Denver, members were encouraged to contact members of Congress and participate in a Twitter storm.

Maryland State Education Association: In Frederick, an ad hoc committee was formed to develop campaigns on ESEA reauthorization and testing at the local, state, and federal levels. Montgomery County curriculum teacher leaders discussed ESEA reauthorization and its relationship to local testing and budget issues at their monthly meeting.

Education Minnesota: On Feb. 12 in Eden Prairie, leaders and members met with Rep. Erik Paulson’s education staffer and discussed standardized tests, the high stakes associated with them, and other factors such as how poverty affects student learning.

Mississippi Association of Educators: At a community conversation on Feb. 21 in Port Gibson, parents and educators learned about NEA’s priorities for ESEA reauthorization and were asked to call members of Congress and weigh in.

Missouri Education Association: High school students devoted part of the opening session of a future educators conference to calling members of Congress and driving home NEA’s time-to-teach, time-to-learn, opportunities-for-all-students message on reauthorizing ESEA.

Nebraska State Education Association: Omaha local issued a call to action, encouraging members to contact their senators and representatives about the urgent need to fix ESEA.
NEA-New Hampshire: At a regional council meeting on Feb. 17, local leaders watched a documentary called “Standardized," dove into a discussion about testing, and committed to taking action.

New Jersey Education Association: Leaders took action via social media, telephone calls, emails, and postcards to members of Congress.

North Carolina Association of Educators: Linked ESEA reauthorization to equity campaign that included a rally attended by members.

Ohio Education Association: Member Courtney Johnson, a parent and teacher in Columbus, spoke to the need to end unnecessary testing during a March 4 conference call hosted by Sen. Sherrod Brown. “We know our kids need to know more, but we are being forced to follow policy demands that only result in us teaching them less,” she said.

Texas State Teachers Association: Leaders representing Amarillo, Lubbock, and Abilene attended a presentation on NEA’s messaging and “asks” for ESEA reauthorization. All members were asked to urge their representatives in Congress to rewrite ESEA in a way that frees up time for teaching and learning.

Virginia Education Association: In Richmond, 61 members used their laptops to go online and sign the Get ESEA Right petition; 27 people who attended an organizing coffee were asked to make calls to Congress and sign the petition. In Chesterfield, information about ESEA reauthorization was posted on Facebook.

Washington Education Association: Nearly 150 educators, parents, students, and community leaders attended a Feb. 16 rally in Olympia, organized by the Washington Badass Teachers Association and supported by the WEA Board; participants voiced opposition to high-stakes testing and support for the opt-out movement.

West Virginia Education Association: Urged its congressional delegation to take action on ESEA via articles in local affiliates’ newsletters, phone calls, and emails.

10-minute meetings

Nearly 900 members participated in 10-minute in-person meetings held by the Maryland State Education Association, Ohio Education Association, Michigan Education Association, NEA-New Hampshire, and other NEA affiliates. The results of such meetings included engaging over 2,700 members in digital organizing.
State affiliate leaders, NEA officers, NEA board members, and lobbyists held more than 3,000 face-to-face meetings with members of Congress and key staff in 2015, including all 100 senators or their representatives. In addition, more than a dozen NEA members delivered testimony or participated in ESEA-related briefings on Capitol Hill.

**Rachelle Moore**, a National Board-certified first-grade teacher and mentor in the teacher residency program in Seattle, Washington – unique in that it is driven by teacher voices – testified at the Senate HELP Committee’s hearing on ESEA on Jan. 27. She stressed the need “to ensure all students have equal educational opportunities” and “provide the resources necessary to support and retain teachers, such as investing in residency models and mentoring programs.”

When **Jennie Beltramini**, a fifth-grade teacher and math coach in Anacortes, Washington, met with key staff on the HELP Committee on Feb. 11 to discuss assessments, she thought it odd that none of the other participants were educators. “Everyone had the same message: We need to keep annual testing, no matter what,” she said. “I was glad that I went last because I could say while that sounds good, this is how it actually plays out in a classroom, in a school.”

**Michael Towne**, a high school physics and engineering teacher in Mead Valley, California, participated in a Feb. 11 forum hosted by Rep. Bobby Scott, the senior Democrat on the House Education and the Workforce Committee. “I deeply believe that instead of labeling and punishing schools, we need to focus on ensuring equal opportunity for all students – the reason ESEA was passed in the first place,” said Towne. “As part of ensuring equal opportunity, we need to address the under-representation of racial and ethnic minority students in STEM-related fields like physics and engineering, the subjects I teach.”

**David Hope**, a firefighting and EMT instructor in St. Louis, Missouri, testified at a career and technical education briefing for members of Congress and staff on Feb. 26. “Career and technical education can help close learning gaps,” he said. “Right now, many students aren’t prepared to start college when they graduate from high school. On top of that, overall high school graduation rates are dropping. Programs like ours have a 90 percent graduation rate. We’re doing something right.”
Affiliate leaders advance our goals

Allyson Chick, a National Board-certified elementary school teacher in Memphis, Tennessee, and state teacher of the year in 2012, was part of a panel of six educators who participated in a Senate briefing in March. The fourth to speak, she led the group in classroom exercises and said, “As teachers, we have to be trailblazers. If we want change, we have to be the change. I want to be in charge of my professional growth and learning.”

Sharon Gallagher-Fishbaugh, a National Board-certified teacher and president of the Utah Education Association, said at the same Senate briefing in March: “Here’s the good thing that came out of NCLB – we were able to disaggregate data to see which issues were affecting which groups of students. But instead of using testing data to improve instruction, we now use it to evaluate schools and teachers. We spend more time worrying how to fire teachers, and we don’t spend enough time figuring out how to support teachers in difficult circumstances.”

Six local leaders participated in briefings and meetings in connection with a HELP Committee hearing on testing:

- **Rosalind Friday**, third grade teacher in Trenton, New Jersey
- **Lisa Hamlett**, teacher’s aide in Willingboro, New Jersey
- **Apyr Jackson**, president, Osceola County Education Association, Florida
- **Jim Livingston**, president, Prince William County Education Association, Virginia
- **Doug Prouty**, president, Montgomery County Education Association, Maryland
- **Barbara Walton-Faria**, middle school science teacher and 2009 Rhode Island teacher of the year
Digital media played a key role in the campaign. Legislative alerts were disseminated via multiple avenues: the Education Insider, a weekly e-newsletter for NEA’s 620,000 cyber-lobbyists; the Action Network platform; neatoday.org, the website of our flagship publication; and edvotes.org, our website for activists. NEA also encouraged members to weigh in with online ads, social media, and tele-town halls.

The effort got results: nearly 284,000 emails, 36,000 tweets, and 23,500 telephone calls urged members of Congress to get ESEA reauthorization right.

**Emails from educators to Congress**

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Digital media fuel member advocacy
## Emails from educators to Congress by state

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### Twitter

#### Most tweeted-at senators

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<td>Pat Toomey (R-PA)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Barbara Boxer (D-CA)</td>
<td>1,269</td>
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<td>Mark Kirk (R-IL)</td>
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<td>Elizabeth Warren (D-MA)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Cory Booker (D-NJ)</td>
<td>864</td>
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### Facebook

Call your Senator 1-866-331-7233 tell them to measure more than just test scores, VOTE YES on Opportunity Dashboard

**WHICH SCORE SPARKS LEARNING?**

A standardized test or the Star Spangled Banner?

[www.getesearight.com](http://www.getesearight.com)
Online ads

In addition to lifting up members’ voices and encouraging activism, the campaign built support for ESEA reauthorization among members of Congress, their staffs, and the general public. Online ads produced a total of 533,000 interactions (any kind of click within an ad), leading in turn to 433,000 views of GetESEARight.com and 23,000 new e-mail sign-ups. NEA’s hashtag #GetESEARight was used nearly 30,000 times — a reach of 71 million or 5 percent of all ESEA mentions on Twitter during 2015.

Our video about the opportunity dashboard, promoted from July 8 through July 10, generated 265,000 impressions and was viewed more than 120,000 times.

Our thank you to Congress for moving forward with ESEA reauthorization, promoted from July 9 through July 12, generated 93,000 impressions, more than 6,200 clicks, and had a click-through rate of nearly 7 percent.
News that the Senate had passed the bipartisan Every Child Achieves Act (S. 1177) by a huge margin, promoted on Facebook on July 15 and July 16, generated 235,000 impressions, more than 23,000 clicks, and had a click-through rate of nearly 10 percent.

Our ad announcing the end of No Child Left Behind, promoted from Dec. 9 through Dec. 24, helped educate members about NEA's role in making it happen. The Facebook click-through rate of 1.66 percent far exceeded the industry standard of 0.2 percent for non-profit campaigns. In just two weeks, we generated nearly 3,000 new email sign-ups.
Digital media fuel member advocacy

Stories on NEAtoday.org

Dec. 9: With passage of Every Student Succeeds Act, life after NCLB begins

Nov. 10: Ending NCLB: Educators urge lawmakers to finish the job

July 16: U.S. Senate passes Every Child Achieves Act, end of NCLB era draws closer

June 24: Senate set to debate NCLB after show of force by national education leaders

June 17: Congress delays debating No Child Left Behind, again

May 26: Educators and parents demand less testing … and lawmakers listen

April 23: ‘Our children are being tampered with:’ a teacher speaks out on emotional effects of high-stakes testing

April 9: On 50th anniversary of ESEA, how do we fulfill the law’s original promise?

April 8: Accountability after NCLB: Let’s measure more important things than test scores

March 12: Parents and educators to lawmakers: Testing is not learning!

March 9: ‘Teach to the test’ robbing newcomer students of precious language-learning time

March 4: Five issues that will decide if the era of NCLB is really over

Feb. 6: What is Congress working on that will impact classrooms across the country?

Tele-town halls

NEA president Lily Eskelsen García hosted two tele-town halls – in March and in June – with a total of 11,600 educators across the nation. She provided updates to the participants and encouraged them not to let up until we have a new ESEA that reflects educators’ priorities! Washington Education Association president Kim Mead and Colorado Education Association president Kerrie Dallman participated in the June call to highlight efforts of their members back home to connect with members of Congress.
Stories on EdVotes.org

Dec. 10: Educators at White House event witness historic turning point for students

Dec. 9: Educators welcome bill to create greater opportunity for every student to succeed

Dec. 3: U.S. House approves Every Student Succeeds Act to create greater opportunities for all students

Dec. 1: ESEA update: House vote expected this week!

Nov. 17: Educators’ social media campaign urges federal lawmakers to #GetESEARight!

Nov. 10: Tell lawmakers: How have high-stakes tests affected your students?

Nov. 5: Congress: Get ESEA done – for America’s students

Oct. 6: Educators sound off: It’s time Congress gave our students a new, better ESEA

Aug. 14: Educators use congressional recess to discuss students’ needs with federal lawmakers

July 17: U.S. Senate has voted to overhaul No Child Left Behind. Now what?

July 16: BREAKING! Senate votes to overhaul ESEA (No Child Left Behind)

July 12: Get ESEA right: U.S. Senate considers better assessments for measuring student growth

July 15: Education activists: Keep up the pressure to get ESEA right for kids

July 2: Take action now: Help the U.S. Senate get ESEA right for students

April 4: WA state educator advocates for English-language learners in ESEA reauthorization

April 4: Educators advocate to provide opportunity for all students as ESEA turns 50

March 27: When it comes to ESEA, educators should lead their profession

March 13: This time around, Congress needs to listen to educators on ESEA
Digital media fuel member advocacy

March 1: New book scrutinizes national obsession with ‘The Test’

Feb. 27: Missouri teacher advocates for less testing, more funding in ESEA reauthorization

Feb. 20: Educators share how No Child Left Behind has affected their classroom

Feb. 12: Assessments need reassessment in ESEA reauthorization

Feb. 6: California science teacher testifies about the importance of equity in ESEA

Jan. 27: Washington educator testifies on ESEA reauthorization

Jan. 23: No annual testing in ESEA reauthorization, urges NEA president

Jan. 8: Message to Congress: Don’t forget about standardized testing
NEA makes news

NEA’s leaders and members were front and center in the public debate over rewriting No Child Left Behind. Using proven tactics and strategies – exclusive interviews with top media outlets like the Washington Post, background and on-the-record briefings with policy experts, press calls, photo opportunities, and more – we shaped the narrative and ushered in a new era in public education. Among the highlights:

• On the eve of the final vote, with the help of state affiliates, we conducted a background briefing for nearly 30 state-based education reporters featuring NEA president Eskelsen García and policy experts.

• Immediately before the final vote, we secured interviews for NEA president Lily Eskelsen García with 13 top media outlets: the New York Times, the Washington Post, USA Today, the Los Angeles Times, U.S. News & World Report, Cox television, NPR’s Here and Now, the Atlanta Journal-Constitution, Politico, Education Week, the Austin-American Statesman, the Houston Chronicle, and the Texas Tribune.

• On the day of the final vote, we organized and executed a satellite tour with NEA president Lily Eskelsen García that produced 13 television and 5 radio interviews with stations that together reach 5.5 million Americans.

“Kids who graduated last year lived under No Child Left Untested their entire school careers from the time they were in kindergarten. [The Every Student Succeeds Act] will be a game changer for kids who deserve something better.”

– NEA president Lily Eskelsen García, Atlanta Journal-Constitution, Dec. 9

Senate approves overhaul of No Child Left Behind Law

Dec. 9 – Lily Eskelsen García, president of the National Education Association, the country’s largest teachers’ union with about three million members, said that the easing of No Child Left Behind’s most onerous measures could help schools keep teachers on the job.

“One of the reasons they have been leaving the classroom is that they are so disillusioned by test and punish,” Ms. García said. With the new flexibility that the law gives to states and local school districts, Ms. García said, policy makers and administrators have the chance to “take a look at making this a respected profession where teachers are allowed to make decisions that they know are in the best interest of students.”
Senate overwhelmingly passes new national education legislation

Dec. 9 — Lily Eskelsen García — president of the National Education Association, the nation’s largest union — called the bill’s passage an “end to our national nightmare and beginning of something so much better for kids.”

Senate retires No Child Left Behind, adopts Every Student Succeeds. Obama will sign tomorrow

Dec. 9 — “No bill is perfect, but this is so much better than what educators have had to live under for the last 14 years,” said National Education Association president Lily Eskelsen García, in a phone call with reporters Monday. “Kids who graduated last year lived under No Child Left Untested their entire school careers from the time they were in kindergarten. Now, it will be a game changer for kids who deserve something better.”

The No Child Left Behind replacement could disrupt California’s school rating plans

Dec. 9 — “I’m having Christmas, I’m having the Fourth of July, I’m having a happy Hanukkah, I’m having raindrops on roses,” said Lily Eskelsen Garcia, president of the National Education Assn. union. “It’s all about multiple measures — it’s not Congress saying hit this test score and someone gets punished. That there’s a way in this law for schools to identify students that aren’t doing well, that’s not a bad thing.”

New federal education law gives more control to states

Dec. 9 — Lily Eskelsen García, president of America’s largest labor union, the National Education Association: “The reason we are celebrating is because the national dark cloud that had hung over all of our 50 states for 14 long painful years of tests and punish mandates and not much else, that will be blown away, that will be gone.”
Congress approves rewrite of K-12 education law

Dec. 9 – Lily Eskelsen García, president of the National Education Association, said teachers are celebrating the end of the “no child left untested” law. “This ends the federal dark cloud of test-and-punish mandates,” she said.

Key media outlets

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
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<tr>
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<td>Wall Street Journal</td>
<td>2,378,827 daily</td>
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<td>New York Times</td>
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<td>MSNBC</td>
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<td>Politico</td>
<td>35,169 daily</td>
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<td>The Hill</td>
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<tr>
<td>National Journal</td>
<td>15,272 weekly</td>
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*Unique digital visitors for the month of January 2015
NEA press releases

Dec. 10: Educators welcome new education law to create greater opportunity for every student

Dec. 9: U.S. Senate ushers in new era in public education with historic vote

Dec. 2: NEA welcomes historic step to usher in new era in public education

Nov. 30: NEA president supports the Every Student Succeeds Act

Nov. 19: NEA president encouraged by bipartisan and bicameral approach to fix broken law

Nov. 13: NEA president welcomes Congressional plans to take next step in ESEA reauthorization

July 30: NEA president Lily Eskelsen García welcomes steps to finalize education bill

July 16: NEA president reacts to historic ESEA vote

July 15: NEA president reacts to Senate opportunity dashboard vote

June 23: Ten national education advocacy groups call on Senate to put kids first

April 21: Educators: students need opportunity, not just tests

April 16: NEA president on Senate HELP ESEA bill

April 10: Educators mark 50th anniversary of ESEA

April 7: NEA president comments on Senate action on rewrite of ESEA

Feb. 27: Educators urge U.S. House to continue to work on federal education law rewrite

Feb. 16: Educators ramp up nationwide campaign and launch “Get it Right” ad blitz

Feb. 5: Science teacher Mr. Towne: All students can achieve at high levels with appropriate support

Jan. 27: 1st grade teacher Rachelle Moore: All students need equal educational opportunities

Jan. 21: Educators: students need time to learn and foster creativity

Jan. 12: NEA calls for more equal opportunity in No Child Left Behind reauthorization
Select op-eds and editorials

Leaving No Child behind, advocates celebrate Obama’s signing of Every Student Succeeds Act by Lily Eskelsen García and Cornell William Brooks, president of the NAACP, Atlanta Journal-Constitution, Dec. 10

No Child Left Behind: Reforms would add state, local control, The (Everett) Herald, April 15

Too much high-stakes testing hurts kids, Pioneer Press, March 25

Does No Child Left Behind’s testing regime work? U.S. News & World Report, March 25

Still Waiting in Selma by Hank Sanders and Faya Rose Toure, New York Times, March 16

No Child Left Behind has failed by Lily Eskelsen García and Otha Thornton, Washington Post, Feb. 13; South Coast Today: National View, Feb. 22; Knoxville News-Sentinel, Feb. 21; and the Bangor Daily News, Feb. 18

NEA-generated news stories

In new education bill, Christmas comes early for unions, Politico, Dec. 9

Teachers, students join Obama as he signs ESSA, Politico, Dec. 9

Congress approves rewrite of K-12 education law, USA Today, Dec. 9

Senate approves overhaul of No Child Left Behind Law, New York Times, Dec. 9

Senate overwhelmingly passes new national education legislation, Washington Post, Dec. 9

No Child Left Behind replacement could disrupt California’s school rating plans, Los Angeles Times, Dec. 9

Senate approves overhauled education law, Houston Chronicle, Dec. 9

Senate retires No Child Left Behind and adopts Every Student Succeeds, Atlanta Journal-Constitution, Dec. 9

Congress poised to pass rewrite of No Child Left Behind, Texas Tribune, Dec. 9

ESEA rewrite passes Senate, heads to president’s desk, Education Week, Dec. 9

Senate scraps No Child Left Behind; education battle moves to states, Politico, Dec. 9

New act may replace No Child Left Behind, Statesman Journal, Dec. 9
NEA makes news

NEA-generated news stories (continued)

U.S. Senate poised to OK education law that replaces unpopular NCLB, The Reporter, Dec. 9

New federal education law eliminates high stakes testing, Vermont Digger, Dec. 9

Senado aprueba reforma educativa, La Opinion, Dec. 9

Senate vote overhauls No Child Left Behind, Yahoo News, Dec. 9

Senate approves sweeping legislation on public schools, Arizona Republic, Dec. 9

Senate vote overhauls No Child Left Behind, Christian Science Monitor, Dec. 9

Senate passes overhaul of No Child Left Behind, Kansas City Star, Dec. 9

Educators celebrate passage of ESSA, Gazette Standard, Dec. 9

Negotiators come to agreement on revising No Child Left Behind law, New York Times, Nov. 19

Big education groups to Congress: Finish ESEA reauthorization, Education Week, Nov. 2

To get support for education bill, senators conjure lost art: compromise, Washington Post, July 28

If Congress finally overhauls NCLB, are states ready? Governing, July 28

The battle over education and civil rights, The Progressive, July 28

Groups approve of Senate’s No Child Left Behind rewrite, Associations Now, July 27

Jeff Bryant: A battle for the future of public education in Jefferson County, Colorado, Diane Ravitch’s Blog, July 22

How the big new education law could cut testing time, NPR, July 22

Education groups to leaders in Congress: Get ESEA rewrite over finish line, Education Week, July 22

Education groups urge Congress to finish job on No Child Left Behind, Washington Post, July 22

Congress might end No Child Left Behind, but your kids will still take standardized tests, Vox.com, July 22

What Democrats lost in bipartisan No Child Left Behind rewrite, and what they won, Think Progress, July 18

Why big civil rights groups think standardized testing is good for kids, Vox.com, July 17
NEA-generated news stories (continued)

Senate replaces Bush’s No Child Left Behind law with Every Child Achieves Act, Atlanta Blackstar, July 17

Next for No Child bill: A tough conference negotiation, CQ Roll Call, July 17

U.S. House, Senate set to replace No Child Left Behind, Keur.org, July 17

GOP candidates join testing opt-out movement, Politico, July 16

Senate approves a bill to revamp No Child Left Behind, New York Times, July 16

Why Republicans and teachers unions are teaming up against Obama, Vox.com, July 16

No Child Left Behind divides old allies, National Journal, July 16

Senate passes No Child Left Behind rewrite, would shrink federal role, Washington Post, July 16

Senate votes overwhelmingly for bipartisan No Child Left Behind rewrite, Huffington Post, July 16

U.S. Senate votes to leave many education reforms to the states, CT Mirror, July 16

Sen. Alexander adds No Child Left Behind rewrite to education credentials, USA Today and The Tennessean, July 16

Senate passes education bill that shifts power to states, Politico, July 16

Civil rights groups slam Senate education bill for reducing federal oversight, Washington Examiner, July 16

AYP gets the boot in Every Child Achieves Act, The Journal, July 16

Winners and losers in the Senate’s fix to No Child Left Behind, Washington Examiner, July 16

Senate expected to pass long-sought rewrite of No Child Left Behind, Wall Street Journal, July 15

What really needs to change with No Child Left Behind law, Deseret News, July 10

Even as Congress moves to strip his power, Arne Duncan holds his ground, Washington Post, July 8

Lawmakers move to limit government’s role in education, New York Times, July 8

Senate Democrats scramble to avoid a split on education bill, National Journal, July 7

Taking high-stakes testing to task, Orlando Sentinel, July 7
NEA makes news

**NEA-generated news stories (continued)**

Congress aims to ease testing in education policy revamp, *Wall Street-Journal*, July 6

Senate poised to take up education bill, *USA Today*, July 6

The education law everyone wants to fix, *Newsweek*, July 3

Education groups to Congress: Please get rid of No Child Left Behind, already, *Washington Post*, June 23

Major education groups to Senate: Make ESEA rewrite an immediate priority, *Education Week*, June 23

Bipartisan bill revises No Child Left Behind Act in Senate committee, *The Examiner*, April 18

Senate panel approves bipartisan K-12 bill, *USA Today*, April 17

Bipartisan No Child Left Behind rewrite clears Senate education committee, *U.S. News & World Report*, April 17

Senate committee votes to kill No Child Left Behind, but the high stakes testing era isn’t over, *The Nation*, April 16

No Child Left Behind might actually get replaced, *Daily Caller News Foundation*, April 16

Ed advocates chime in hot and cold on No Child Left Behind rewrite, *The Journal*, April 14


NEA: No Child Left Behind rewrite doesn’t level the playing field, *Washington Post*, April 10

As Congress debates No Child Left Behind: Who should decide which schools are failing kids? *Washington Post*, April 10

Senate’s effort to rewrite NCLB sparks cautious optimism, *Washington Post*, April 8

Nation’s largest teachers union launches ad campaign as Congress debates No Child Left Behind, *Washington Post*, April 6

NEA president praises Helena’s public education system during visit, *Independent Record*, March 27

Common Core student testing a battleground issue, *Scripps National Wire*, March 23

Sen. Sherrod Brown pushes measure to reduce testing in schools, *Medina County Gazette*, March 5

Ohio Sen. Sherrod Brown hopes to pare, streamline tests, *Morning Journal*, March 5
NEA-generated news stories (continued)

Brown seeking to reduce testing, Warren Tribune, March 5
Brown introduces bill to reduce testing, Lima News, March 4
Ohio, U.S. lawmakers coalesce to curtail school testing, Akron Beacon via Newseum, March 4
Taking the joy out of learning – and learning, Capital Times, March 3
The testing debate just got weirder, National Journal, March 2
Testing law foes invite input from Nebraskans, Omaha World Herald, March 1
Despite hiccups, House nearing finish line in NCLB rewrite debate, Education Week, Feb. 26
Teachers’ unions push Congress on NCLB rewrite, Education Week, Feb. 24
As House prepares to vote on NCLB, advocates push for preschool funding, U.S. News & World Report, Feb. 23
Truth and Consequences, Huffington Post, Feb. 23
Tough slog ahead in Congress for NCLB rewrite, Seattle Times, Feb. 20
Secretary of Education says No Child Left Behind has failed, Miami Times, Feb. 13
Could local tests be the way forward in an NCLB rewrite? Education Week, Feb. 9
Teacher Rachelle Moore weighs in as Senate panel starts rewrite of federal education law, People’s World, Feb. 6
Teachers-union chief pans No Child Act, Arkansas Democrat-Gazette, Feb. 3
Washington teacher, researcher testify on education law, Associated Press, Jan. 27
Senate education panel unlikely to require teacher evaluations in NCLB overhaul, Education Week, Jan. 27
NEA to Arne Duncan: New NCLB should track student access to early education, funding, Education Week, Jan. 26
NCLB may end, but the industry it spawned is here to stay, BuzzFeed, Jan. 23
Administration doubling down on K-12 priorities, Education Week, Jan. 12
Education groups, leaders weigh in on Duncan’s speech, Washington Post, Jan. 12
The surprising alliance of teachers unions and conservative education reformers, Washington Examiner, Jan. 7
NEA makes news

Select television interviews*

NEA president talks about No Child Left Behind, C-SPAN, Washington Journal, Dec. 18

Senate passes No Child Left Behind rewrite, Consider This, Al Jazeera, Dec. 9

Senate to vote on No Child Left Behind overhaul, WBAA-TV, Dec. 8

Senate expected to pass No Child Left Behind overhaul, Cox, Dec. 8

Standardized testing and education policy, C-SPAN, Nov. 2

Big picture with Thom Hartmann, Best of the Rest of the News, April 15

Montana this morning, KRTV-TV/KXLH-TV (CBS affiliate), March 27

NEA president in Queen City, KBGF-TV (NBC affiliate), March 27

Wake up Montana, KTMF-TV (ABC affiliate), March 26

We need a dashboard of indicators, not a single test, Capital Times, MSNBC, March 2

Rewriting No Child Left Behind, Melissa Harris-Perry Show, MSNBC, March 1

We have seen too much test and punish, Bill Press Show, Jan. 28

U.S. education and standardized testing, Washington Journal, C-SPAN, Jan. 20

Select radio interviews*

NEA president Lily Eskelsen García on a big day in education, WGN, Dec. 9

Senate to vote on No Child Left Behind overhaul, NPR, Here and Now, Dec. 8

U.S. Senate votes on replacement for No Child Left Behind, Public News Service, Dec. 8

Senate poised to reauthorize No Child Left Behind, KCRW, To the Point, Dec. 2

Every Child Achieves Act, KUER-FM (NPR affiliate), July 17

Utah hosts nation’s teachers of the year, UPR, July 13

Morning News with Dave Lee, WCCO-AM, April 17

Sen. Patty Murray: No Child Left Behind might get left behind, KPLU-FM (NPR affiliate), April 17

No Child Left Behind and education reform, Minnesota Public Radio, April 17

50th anniversary of ESEA, Morning Briefing, POTUS Radio/SiriusXM (channel 127), April 9

NEA president blasts standardized testing in San Antonio, WOAI-AM, Feb. 2

*With NEA president Lily Eskelsen García unless otherwise indicated
To strengthen relationships and build support for our priorities in the final reauthorization bill, NEA president Lily Eskelsen-García, vice president Becky Pringle, and secretary-treasurer Princess Moss held many face-to-face meetings and one-on-one telephone conversations with key congressional and administration officials. Among them:

- President Barack Obama
- Sen. Lamar Alexander (R-TN), chairman, HELP Committee
- Sen. Patty Murray (D-WA), ranking member, HELP Committee
- Sen. Chris Coons (D-DE)
- Sen. Jeff Merkley (D-OR)
- Sen. Chris Murphy (D-CT)
- Sen. Elizabeth Warren (D-MA)
- Rep. Nancy Pelosi (D-CA), minority leader
- Rep. Steny Hoyer (D-MD), minority whip
- Rep. Bobby Scott (D-VA), ranking member, Education and the Workforce Committee
- Rep. G.K. Butterfield (D-NC), chairman, Congressional Black Caucus
- Rep. Marcia Fudge (D-OH)

NEA leaders and staff work closely with national civil rights groups that share our commitment to equal educational opportunity for all students. NEA leaders have had many meetings with their counterparts in such organizations, including:

- Cornell Williams Brooks, president and CEO, National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP)
- Melanie Campbell-Hill, president and CEO, National Coalition on Black Civic Participation (NCBCP)
- Gregory Cendana, executive director, Asian Pacific American Labor Alliance (APALA)
- Quyen Dinh, executive director, Southeast Asia Resource Action Center (SEARAC)
- Wade Henderson, president and CEO, Leadership Conference on Human and Civil Rights (LCCR)
Leaving No Child behind, advocates celebrate Obama’s signing of Every Student Succeeds Act

“The problem is, a single test score is like a blinking ‘check engine’ light on the dashboard. It can tell us something’s wrong but not how to fix it. As parents and educators, we want to know which middle school students are succeeding in science, technology, engineering and math tracks that will land them in advanced high school courses, and ultimately get them into a university. These things can be measured. That’s why both the NEA and the NAACP have long opposed culturally and linguistically biased high-stakes testing. ESSA will require the use of multiple measures of student success in elementary, middle, and high school – not just test scores.” – Lily Eskelsen García and Cornell William Brooks, Dec. 10, 2015

Fix public education, end high-stakes tests, pass ESEA

“We don’t send our kids to school to become skilled test takers. We pay our taxes and send our kids to public schools because we need future corporate CEOs, cardiologists and aerodynamic engineers, university presidents and school principals, urban planners and architects. Our sons and daughters can’t reach these heights when accountability in our education system hinges on standardized test scores, not cultivating intellectual opportunity – the real measure of education. Standardized tests can tell us
only so much. Educators know that annual multi-dimensional assessments that tell us whether a child is falling behind, whether she or he needs intervention and support the school can’t provide, or if a youngster is on track to graduate are the tools they need – not a single number.” – Rev. Dr. William J. Barber II, July 14, 2015

DC civil rights organizations fail to represent education civil rights agenda

“[O]f all the topics that could be addressed as No Child Left Behind (NCLB) is considered for reauthorization, why defend a policy that has proven ineffective in advancing the educational interest of children of color and disadvantaged children generally? Schools serving poor children and children of color remain under-funded and have been labeled “failing” while little has been done at the local, state or federal level to effectively intervene and provide support. In the face of clear evidence that children of color are more likely to be subjected to over-testing and a narrowing of curriculum in the name of test preparation, it is perplexing that D.C. based civil rights groups are promoting annual tests.” – Judith Browne Dianis, John H. Jackson, and Pedro Noguera, June 2, 2015

Require states to remedy disparities

The Leadership Conference on Human and Civil Rights (LCCR) and 32 other organizations joined NEA in urging senators to support an amendment to the Every Child Achieves Act (S. 1177) that would strengthen reporting requirements to help close resource and opportunity among students in different zip codes. “It is critical that states intervene to remedy disparities in access to resources between school districts,” they wrote in a July 2 open letter to congressional leaders. The amendment had bipartisan support, but fell short of the 60 votes required for passage under Senate rules. The issue could be revisited by the conference committee that crafts the final bill.
Focus on equity in next ESEA
The Alliance to Reclaim Our Schools (AROS), composed of more than 100 grassroots community and labor groups representing more than 7 million Americans, sent congressional leaders an open letter containing four recommendations for the next ESEA:

- $1 billion for 5,000 sustainable community schools
- A moratorium on federal funding for new or expanding charter schools
- Full funding for Title I to adequately support all students living in poverty, and targeting of those funds to the neediest schools
- $500 million to schools to help end the school-to-prison pipeline

Companies profit from pro-testing policies
The four companies that dominate the U.S. standardized testing market — Pearson Education, ETS (Educational Testing Service), Houghton Mifflin Harcourt, and McGraw-Hill — spent more than $20 million lobbying for pro-testing policies from 2009 to 2014, according to a report from the nonprofit Center for Media and Democracy (CMD). “These companies have left no stone unturned in their efforts to create, expand, and exploit No Child Left Behind and the growing U.S. school testing market,” said Jonas Persson, a CMD writer focused on education policy.

No more test-focused reforms
More than 2,000 educational researchers across the nation signed an open letter to Congress and the administration developed by the National Education Policy Center (NEPC). “As Congress revises and reauthorizes the Elementary and Secondary Education Act, we strongly urge departing from test-focused reforms that not only have been discredited for high stakes-decisions, but also have shown to widen, not close, gaps and inequities,” they wrote. “The current reauthorization provides an historic opportunity to leverage federal resources to address the deeper and more systemic problems with strategies that research has compellingly demonstrated to be far more effective in improving the educational opportunities and success of all students, particularly those in highest need.”
To help members advocate for implementing the Every Student Succeeds Act the right way, we created a special page on our flagship website: nea.org/essabegins. It includes information on the latest developments, one-pagers on specific issues, talking points, and more. Check back often as new information will be added regularly!
About this report

Our success in shaping the Every Student Succeeds Act would not have been possible without the support of NEA’s officers, executive committee and board of directors; the presidents and executive directors of our state affiliates; and the executive committee of the National Council of Urban Education Associations (NCUEA). This report reflects the contributions of the entire ESEA team. It was written and edited by Barbara Moldauer, compiled by Katrina Blomdahl, and designed by Eunju Chang.

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