



**NEA'S MESSAGE TO MEMBERS OF CONGRESS
ON THE REAUTHORIZATION OF ESEA
March 2011**

THE FEDERAL ROLE: *The role of the federal government in public education historically has been to serve as a catalytic and positive force for change and as a driver of equity. In partnership with states and districts, the federal government now should guarantee equal educational opportunity for all students and support school transformation.*

THE PURPOSE OF PUBLIC EDUCATION

The public education system is critical to democracy and its purpose is to:

- ✓ maximize the achievement, skills, opportunities, and potential of all students by promoting their strengths and addressing their needs
- ✓ ensure that all students are prepared to thrive in a democratic society and in a diverse and rapidly changing world as knowledgeable, creative, and engaged citizens and lifelong learners

HOW WILL WE FULFILL THE PURPOSE?

- **CHAMPION STUDENT SUCCESS: *Prepare All Students to Thrive in College, Careers, and Life***
 - ✓ Replace AYP with authentic accountability systems designed to improve learning, identify successful schools, and support struggling ones
 - ✓ Ensure students can think critically, solve problems, and attain global competence
 - ✓ Address needs of the whole student, and increase wraparound services to help them succeed
 - ✓ Use multiple, valid sources of evidence of growth in student learning and school performance over time
 - ✓ Support standards and assessments that are accessible for all students and that address the unique instructional and assessment needs of students with disabilities and English language learners
 - ✓ Encourage high-quality longitudinal data systems that improve instruction and protect student and educator privacy
 - ✓ Provide a clearinghouse for research and innovative promising practices to drive student success
 - ✓ Encourage schools to engage parents, families, and communities as partners in students' learning
- **ELEVATE THE PROFESSION: *Support Great Teachers and Education Support Professionals***
 - ✓ Help districts recruit and retain excellent teachers and education support professionals, especially in hard-to-staff schools
 - ✓ Promote high standards and rigorous preparation for entry into the teaching profession
 - ✓ Assist states in attracting top candidates to world-class teacher preparation programs
 - ✓ Foster comprehensive systems of induction, mentoring and professional development for educators
 - ✓ Ensure all schools have access to effective instructional leadership
- **FIGHT FOR SOCIAL JUSTICE: *Ensure Equitable and Safe Schools for Every Student***
 - ✓ Provide adequate, equitable and sustained funding for schools; fully fund critical programs like Title I and IDEA
 - ✓ Provide sustained and targeted support and evidence-based intervention strategies for struggling or "priority" schools to close opportunity, achievement, and skills gaps and increase graduation rates
 - ✓ Eliminate unsafe and inequitable treatment of students due to bullying, harassment, or discriminatory practices
 - ✓ Require states and districts to submit Equity and Adequacy plans to eliminate disparities in educational opportunity
 - ✓ Address unique needs of rural and frontier schools and students to ensure equal access to services and support

To view NEA's comprehensive agenda and priorities for ESEA Reauthorization, go to: www.nea.org/esea

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