

ESEA Reauthorization

Overview: ESEA reauthorization is nearly 8 years past due. As it stands right now, both the House and Senate have comprehensive reauthorization proposals that have passed out of committee and need full floor consideration. The Senate is slated to consider the bill on the floor the week of July 6, and the House could move their bill the week of July 6 or 13. Both the bipartisan Senate bill (Every Child Achieves Act) and the partisan House bill (Student Success Act) are a significant improvement over current law. Both bills operate under the assumption that state and local education agencies are best positioned to make policy decisions for schools, and as such return virtually all control of standards, assessment and accountability to the state and local level. Both bills take the pendulum of federal overreach and prescription—rampant in current law—and swing it back toward state and local control.

AASA has endorsed both the House and the Senate bills. The House bill includes troubling provisions: public school portability for Title I funding, very low funding caps, and elimination of maintenance of effort. The Senate bill does not include any of these troubling provisions. Both bills maintain annual assessment but eliminate 100% proficiency, adequate yearly progress, annual measurable objectives, and supplemental education services (including the Title I set aside). Both bills take a block-grant approach to Titles II (professional development) and IV (school climate/safety).

The chart on the next page provides a concise side-by-side of what each bill requires. Moving forward, the points of concerns for the bills include:

- AASA opposes the House bill's inclusion of Title I portability, elimination of maintenance of effort, and significantly low funding caps.
- AASA will oppose any amendments on both the House and Senate side to expand or insert any language related to portability or vouchers.
- AASA opposes any measure that increases the high-stakes nature of testing. This includes amendments that would mandate accountability models to identify the bottom 5%, to identify schools with a low graduation rate, to cross tabulate data by student sub group, and to relax restrictions on the Secretary's regulatory authority.
 - The bills as passed out of committee cleared the field of federal overreach and are consistent with the long-running sentiment of over reliance on high stakes testing. Both bills preserve the important accountability guardrails of data disaggregation and graduation rates. With the field clear, it is important that state and local education leaders have an opportunity to run their systems and demonstrate what they can do. While many states and districts likely will identify their bottom 5% or those with low graduation rates, this does not justify a federal mandate. Reinstatement of any of these provisions is a return to high-stakes testing and toward 'AYP 2.0'.

AASA talking points:

- AASA supports both the House Student Success Act and the Senate Every Child Achieves Act. We strongly encourage both chambers to bring their bill to the floor and to work a conferenced bill through to the President's desk before the end of 2015.
- Urge your Senators and Representative to keep the pressure on their respective chambers' education committee to move forward with ESEA reauthorization. It is time for Congress to put kids first.
- Urge your member to remember the important role and professional expertise of districts and ESAs in running school systems, advancing student achievement, and providing professional development for teachers and wrap around services for children and their families.

Statute	House Republican Bill	Alexander/Murray Bill
Title	Student Success Act	Every Child Achieves Act
Chairman	Rep. John Kline (R-MN)	Sen. Lamar Alexander (R-TN)
Ranking Member	Rep. Bobby Scott (D-VA)	Sen. Patty Murray (D-WA)
Standards	States adopt standards in math, ELA and science	States must establish challenging academic standards for all students
Assessments	Annual testing in gr 3-8 in math/ELA and once in high school; grade span testing in science (one per gr. 3-5; 6-9; 10-12)	Maintains current law (every child/year in Math/ELA in gr 3-8, once in high school; grade span for science)
	Tests can be computer adaptive	Maintains 1% cap for alternate assessments
	Tests an include out-of-grade material	May see language on a test pilot for SEA/LEA innovation
	Eliminates 1%/2% caps	Eliminates 2% test, modifies parameters for 1% test
Accountability	Eliminates AYP, Annual Measurable Objectives (AMOs)/performance targets, and SES	Eliminates AYP, Annual Measurable Objectives (AMOs)/performance targets, and SES
	Student performance disaggregated by subgroup (race, economic, English Language Learner, migrant students, and students with disabilities)	Student performance disaggregated by subgroup (race, economic, English Language Learner, migrant students, and students with disabilities)
	Student achievement data must include graduation rates, % of students tested and proficiency	Student achievement data must include graduation rates and one measure of college/career ready (ie, college placement rates). Freedom to include other indicators as well.
	Graduation rates calculated thru adjusted cohort calculation, with option for extend-year rate calculation	Graduation rates calculated thru adjusted cohort calculation, with option for extend-year rate calculation
School Improvement	Eliminates prescriptive approach to school improvement; leaves it to SEAs/LEAs to determine who is identified and how, as well as how to improve/turn around schools	Eliminates prescriptive approach to school improvement; leaves it to SEAs/LEAs to determine who is identified and how, as well as how to improve/turn around schools
Teachers/School Leaders	Eliminates HQT	Eliminates HQT
	Use of Title II dollars for class size reduction capped at 10%	Does not limit Title II use for class size, but must be to 'evidence-based' level

	Eliminates stand-alone education technology professional development program (Title II Part D)	Maintains stand-alone education technology professional development program.
	Title II dollars are allocated according to child poverty and child population (50% each)	Consolidates/eliminates programs within Title II to make the 'Teacher Development' title a block grant; fully flexible with Title IV
	Consolidates/eliminates programs within Title II to make the 'Teacher Development' title a block grant	
	No federal mandate for states to conduct teacher evaluations; states can choose to use funds to set up teacher evaluation systems if they choose	States are free to develop teacher/educator evaluation systems (not mandated);
Funding	No substantive changes to Title I formulas	No substantive changes to Title I formulas, though significant amendment expected on the floor
	Funding caps in authorizing statute represent a net cut to overall ESEA reauthorizations; level funds programs for duration of authorization	No funding caps.
	Eliminates MoE	Keeps maintenance of effort
Other/Misc.	Provides for public school portability, allowing Title I dollars to follow the individual child	NO portability or vouchers
	Reauthorizes Rural Education Achievement Program (REAP)	Reauthorizes Rural Education Achievement Program (REAP)
	Consolidates/eliminates nearly 70 programs	Consolidates large number of programs though many aspects remain as an 'allowable use' in the block granted/flexible Titles II and IV