

# *Presidents, Congress, and the Public Schools*

Presentation at the National Conference on Education

by Jack Jennings February 11, 2016

# Fifty Years of Federal Aid to Education

The book covers events from 1965 to 2015 including two national efforts to improve schools: equity-based aid and test-driven accountability.

# Fifty Years of Federal Aid to Education

Equity-based aid--extra services to millions of students, but by the 1980s Title I's modestly higher scores due to limited funding and local inequities.

# Fifty Years of Federal Aid to Education

In 1983 *The Nation at Risk*: public schools were failing. That, combined with disappointment over federal aid, led to academic standards/testing.

# Fifty Years of Federal Aid to Education

NCLB's test-driven accountability led to no significant increase in student achievement--pressuring teachers to raise test scores is a faulty strategy.

# ESSA: Accountability- Light

The bi-partisan Every Student Succeeds Act cuts unwise requirements, but still accountability blaming educators, not considering how schooling is provided.

*Presidents,  
Congress, and  
the Public  
Schools*

With the book, I had two purposes: to explain what occurred over 50 years, and to encourage new thinking.

Now to the future.

# My Future for School Improvement

Instead of negativism, focus on helping students and teachers.

Improvement based on educators' experiences and on research.



# My Future for School Improvement

Research's four essentials: quality preschool, effective teachers, a rigorous curriculum, and adequate, fair funding.  
Also education as a constitutional right.

# My Path to School Improvement

A specific way for states, school districts, and the federal government to cooperate on agreed-upon changes and increased federal general aid.

# My Path to School Improvement

My principles are: experience and research, federal/state/local cooperation, and general federal aid.

# Your Path to School Improvement

Over nearly 50 years, I learned if you are not working on your own agenda, you are carrying out someone else's.

# The Role of Educators

Billionaires, politicians, and foundation officers: accountability, charter schools.

It is time that educators stepped forward and offered their ideas.

# The Role of Educators

Be bold. Do what makes sense to you.

Have a research basis.

Think long-term, but have ideas to get started. Suggestions to new president.

# A Good Education for Every Child

“Having no destination, I am never lost.”

Ikkyu, 15<sup>th</sup> century Zen monk.

Our destination must be to provide a  
good education for every child.

Thank You!

Web site: [jackjenningsdc.com](http://jackjenningsdc.com)

Email: [jackjenningsdc@gmail.com](mailto:jackjenningsdc@gmail.com)