



RAISING THE BAR FOR SCHOOLS AND STUDENTS

THE PROBLEM:

When No Child Left Behind was signed into law, it was heralded as a game changer for education policy. Hindsight, however, is 20/20, and after a decade of enactment, we can now clearly identify the law's weaknesses.

As it turns out, the "Adequate Yearly Progress" (AYP) measurement, which requires all schools to meet targets for student proficiency or face the same federal interventions, is unrealistic and restricts states' and school districts' ability to effectively gauge student learning and tailor curriculum accordingly. Last year, almost 50 percent of the nation's public schools did not make AYP – up from 39 percent in 2010. If the law is not changed, 100 percent of schools will be labeled as failing under the law in 2014.

THE SOLUTION:

Our children deserve better. Across the country, reform-minded individuals are challenging the status quo in exciting ways, and students are benefiting from their efforts. Several states are developing their own accountability systems that more meaningfully measure student performance. The Student Success Act builds on this important progress at the state level, while ensuring all students continue to have access to a quality education.

THE STUDENT SUCCESS ACT

- ✓ Upholds high standards for student achievement by requiring states and schools to establish and meet high benchmarks for student learning. States must also continue to measure and report annual performance in reading and math for all students in grades 3-8 and once again in high school. Additionally, states and school districts must also determine metrics for student subgroups and assess English proficiency.
- ✓ Eliminates the one-size-fits-all federal accountability system and instead calls on each state to develop and implement a tailored approach that considers the challenges and opportunities facing local schools and more accurately evaluates student achievement. Each state must also implement improvement strategies to raise the bar on low-performing schools.
- ✓ Enhances transparency by continuing to require disaggregated data for low-income students, major racial and ethnic groups, students with disabilities, and English learners.
- ✓ Improves data reporting by directing states and school districts to publicly release evaluations and data on school performance and teacher effectiveness. Additionally, states and districts must continue to participate in the National Assessment of Educational Progress, which will enable comparisons of student and school data across states.