

Tommy G. Thompson, Co-Chairman

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COMMISSION ON
NO CHILD LEFT BEHIND
THE ASPEN INSTITUTE
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**MEDIA ADVISORY FOR:
TUESDAY, APRIL 11, 2006 @ 9:30 AM PST**

Commission to Hold First Hearing in California
Quality Teachers Equal Quality Schools:
Impact of the No Child Left Behind Act on
Teacher Quality, Recruitment, Retention, and Distribution

Washington, DC--- Today former Health and Human Services Secretary Tommy Thompson and former Georgia Governor Roy Barnes announced the first in a series of hearings on the No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB). This hearing will help inform the Commission's recommendations on how NCLB can assist in the improvement of teacher quality, recruitment, retention, and distribution. **The hearing will take place on Tuesday, April 11, 2006 at 9:30 AM PST (12:30 PM EST) and will be held at California State Polytechnic University, Pomona, California.**

The Commission on No Child Left Behind is an independent, bipartisan effort to improve the No Child Left Behind Act and ensure it is a more useful force in closing the gap in achievement that separates disadvantaged children and their peers. The Commission will uncover the successes of NCLB, as well as provisions which need to be changed or eliminated. The Commission, after a year of hearings, analysis and research, will report to Congress and the Administration in early 2007 with its recommendations.

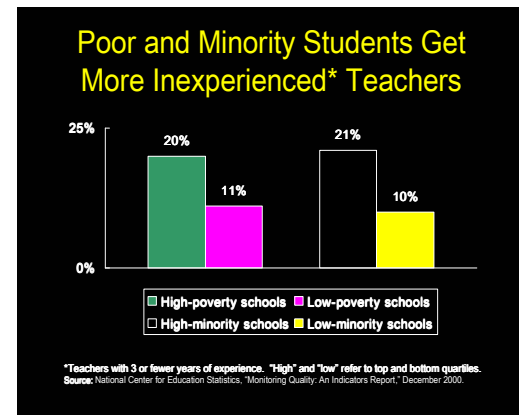
- WHAT:** Hearing on the Impact of the No Child Left Behind Act on Teacher Quality, Recruitment, Retention, and Distribution
- WHO:** Commission on No Child Left Behind
*WITNESS LIST TO BE ANNOUNCED 48 HOURS BEFORE HEARING
- WHEN:** **Tuesday, April 11, 2006 @ 9:30 AM PST (12:30 PM EST)**
- WHERE:** California State Polytechnic University,
Kellogg West Conference Center,
3801 West Temple Avenue, Pomona, California 91768

BACKGROUND:

All teachers work hard to ensure the educational success of their students. Unfortunately, there are some children that are at a disadvantage and don't have well prepared, high quality teachers. Through our first hearing, entitled "Quality Teachers Equals Quality Schools," the Commission on No Child Left Behind is seeking to learn the impact of the No Child Left Behind Act on efforts to increase teacher quality, improve the ability of school districts to retain highly qualified teachers and to deal with the reality that many disadvantaged children are taught by teachers with less experience than their peers.

Research continually tells us the one thing that parents have always known, nothing is more important than the quality of a child's teacher. Whether its our youngest children acquiring pre literacy skills or young adults in high school attempting to master Algebra and Geometry, a child's teacher, with their instructional skill, experience and command of the subjects they are teaching, significantly impacts academic success.

Unfortunately, many school districts struggle to retain qualified teachers, while they ask more and more of their existing teachers. Unfortunately, this compromises the education of many disadvantaged and minority children. Too many of our disadvantaged children are taught by teachers who, often through no fault of their own, lack the necessary knowledge, skills and experience to increase achievement.



NCLB:

NCLB added to a decades old debate on teacher quality when it passed Congress in early 2002. NCLB requires all teachers to become "highly qualified" by the end of this school year. In order for a teacher to become highly qualified, they must obtain full State certification or licensure, possess at least a bachelors degree, and demonstrate competency in the subjects they are teaching. The demonstration of subject matter competency can be accomplished through three means, passage on a test of the subject, a college major in the subject, or for veteran teachers, the completion of a State defined peer review process called HOUSSE (High Objective Uniform State Standard of Evaluation).

THE HEARING:

Through this hearing, the Commission is seeking to learn about the impact of NCLB on efforts to increase the quality of teachers for all children. What has been the impact of NCLB's highly qualified provisions? How have "value added" models which measure the impact of individual teachers on learning improved the tools available to schools and districts? What steps must be taken to ensure disadvantaged children receive instruction from highly qualified teachers at the same rate as their peers? Lastly, and most importantly, how can NCLB's teacher quality provisions be improved to ensure accountability while also providing teachers the supports and assistance they need to succeed?

DETAILS FOR SUBMISSION OF WRITTEN COMMENTS:

Any persons or organizations wishing to submit written comments for the hearing record may do so by sending such comments electronically to nclbfeedback@aspeninstitute.org, or through the U.S. Mail to: The Commission on No Child Left Behind, One Dupont Circle, Suite 700, Washington, D.C. 20036. ALL WRITTEN COMMENTS MUST BE RECEIVED BY COB APRIL 18, 2006. Written comments mailed to the Commission must be accompanied by an electronic version on computer disk. Those submitting comments must clearly identify themselves with a valid mailing address and clearly indicating any affiliations the comments represent.

Submissions will be included in the record of the hearing at the discretion of the Commission. The Commission will not alter the content of your submission, but does reserve the right to format it accordingly. Submissions must be no longer than 10 pages in length, including any attachments.

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