



COMMISSION ON
NO CHILD LEFT BEHIND
THE ASPEN INSTITUTE
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NCLB Commission Statement on the Senate Committee Hearing on Parents and Communities in Schools

Washington, DC – Today the Commission on No Child Left Behind made the following statement in response to the Senate Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions hearing on Effective Strategies for Engaging Parents and Communities in Schools.

The Commission applauds the Committee in its effort to emphasize not only the importance of parental and community involvement in schools, but exploring concrete ways of making it happen.

In our report, *Beyond NCLB: Fulfilling the Promise to Our Nation's Children*, the Commission lays out specific, actionable recommendations to ensure that *parents* and taxpayers have access to richer data on student and school achievement, better information on availability and effectiveness of student options, such as public school choice and supplemental educational services (free tutoring), and “truth in advertising” about the level of expectations for students on state standards and tests. The Commission also recommends empowering *parents* to ensure that the law is faithfully implemented.

To address these critical issues, the Commission has made the following recommendations:

- We recommend improving the accuracy and fairness of adequate yearly progress (AYP) calculations by allowing states to include student achievement growth in such calculations.
- We recommend that current federal funding for assessment development be maintained and used to upgrade test delivery and scoring technology to yield quicker and more accurate data to districts, *parents* and schools. *Parents* need timely information on student performance in a comprehensible format to make decisions about academic progress and available options.
- We recommend that districts identify and publicize a person or office that would operate as a point of contact for *parents* and others regarding options such as free tutoring and public school choice.
- We recommend that districts provide enrollment periods several times a year for supplemental educational services to ensure that all eligible children have the opportunity to receive free tutoring.
- We recommend a national model and a common scale for comparing the relative rigor of state standards and tests to give *parents* more meaningful information on the level of expectations of students.
- We recommend that *parents* and other concerned parties have the right to hold districts, states and the U.S. DOE accountable for faithfully implementing the requirements of NCLB through enhanced enforcement options with the state and the U.S. DOE.

We urge the adoption of this comprehensive set of recommendations to ensure that students will achieve at a high academic level, and that *parents* and members of the community will be informed on the progress and the level of expectations of children in schools, districts and states. These and other recommendations by the Commission form a blueprint for improving NCLB and accelerating the progress in meeting its goal of proficiency for all students. You can access the Commission's full report by visiting www.nclbcommission.org.

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