



Statement on the Senate agreement on reauthorization of ESEA

April 7, 2015

This afternoon's announcement from Senators Lamar Alexander and Patty Murray that a bipartisan agreement has been reached on a bill to reauthorize the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) is good news for students, educators and parents.

A successful reauthorization effort, now eight years overdue, will end the foolishness associated with the outdated and troublesome current ESEA law, commonly known as No Child Left Behind (NCLB).

Today's announcement is the start of a process that will take weeks, if not months, to complete. After a hearing next week in the Senate Health, Education, Labor and Pensions (HELP) committee, the bill must be approved by the full Senate and then by the House of Representatives—a body that has its own reauthorization proposal stalled in a political stalemate. Finally, once a compromise bill is approved by both legislative bodies, it would go to President Obama for his signature.

This is a first but crucial step in securing reauthorization, but more work needs to be done. I would like to thank Senator Murray and the entire Washington Congressional delegation for their leadership, as well as the many WSSDA members who reached out to leaders in Washington, DC, seeking relief from NCLB. We look forward to a day when misleading and misguided school failure notices are replaced by meaningful conversations about school improvement.

WSSDA and its national organization, the National School Boards Association (NSBA), are committed to working with Congress to make the reauthorization of ESEA a reality. Washington, as the only state to gain and then lose a U.S. Department of Education waiver, is in a unique position to show those in the other Washington the damage done to kids, staff and parents by a hopelessly outdated law.

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