



June 17, 2013

The Honorable John Kline, Chairman
House Committee on Education and the Workforce
United States House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable George Miller, Ranking Member
House Committee on Education and the Workforce
United States House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairman Kline and Ranking Member Miller:

As the nation's largest volunteer child advocacy association, the National PTA has significantly impacted improvements to the education and well-being of America's children for 115 years. Currently with millions of members and 24,000 local units in every U.S. state, the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico, the Virgin Islands and Europe, National PTA continues to be a powerful voice for all children by advocating for federal policies to improve educational equity and opportunity for all children and their families.

National PTA applauds your leadership in ongoing efforts to reauthorize and improve the Elementary and Secondary Education Act – No Child Left Behind (ESEA-NCLB). As the committee marks up the Student Success Act (H.R. 5), PTA would like to call attention to concerns in the underlying bill; specifically:

- Lack of retention for state and local maintenance of effort;
- No codification of the cap on alternate assessment on alternate achievement standards; and
- Need to strengthen universal access to high quality instruction.

Additionally, a top priority for National PTA remains the inclusion of language to support and strengthen family engagement. PTA appreciates the maintenance of the one percent district-level set-aside for parent engagement, as well as the state-based competitive family engagement program infrastructure. At the same time, PTA believes additional improvements can be made to strengthen family engagement through ESEA. Suggested improvements include:

- An increase to the Local Education Agency (LEA) funds allocated for implementation of family engagement programming under Title I, Section 1118 from one to two percent; and
- Establishment of a Family Engagement and Responsibility Fund as a State Education Agency (SEA) reservation of Title I funds.

Neither the Democratic substitute and amendments – nor the Student Success Act – represent a flawless reauthorization of ESEA/NCLB. Accordingly, we ask for your consideration of our aforementioned concerns and suggestions as you consider improvements to the underlying bill. PTA remains committed to working with you to reauthorize ESEA this year. Please contact Mollie Van Lieu at mvanlieu@pta.org or (717) 476-1283 if you have any questions or need additional clarification.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Betsy Landers".

Betsy Landers
President
National PTA