



## Parent Voices Education Fax

September 10, 2015

### Parents call for an ESEA with less focus on testing and charter schools - more focus on poverty and parents' priorities for our children

*Thank you, Congress, for moving on needed ESEA reforms!*

PAA is pleased that Congress has recognized and moved to address some of the damage done by the No Child Left Behind Act. We thank you for the hard work that has gone into the improved proposals now before you.

As you begin to reconcile the Senate and House ESEA bills, we ask you to ***listen to parents!*** After all, we and our children have the most at stake in the outcome of your actions.

For example, the 2015 PDK/Gallup poll showed that **more than 2/3 of American parents believe students are being *tested too much***. They rated tests as the ***least accurate measure*** of school effectiveness.

And while support for charter schools has remained steady as the charter sector has grown, **parents overwhelmingly prefer reforms that provide *more funds for traditional public schools***.

### PAA's position

PAA urges Congress to refocus on the original purpose of the federal education law – that is, as a part of the War on Poverty. **We call for a renewed ESEA that supports policies and programs that will improve educational opportunity for all children, but especially for those who may start out behind.**

This includes proposals that:

- **replace annual testing mandates with grade-span testing** along with meaningful support for more effective assessment and accountability methods,
- allow parents to **opt their children out of any standardized test**,
- **support and strengthen local public schools** rather than set them up for closure and privatization,
- promote educationally-sound, healthy, child-centered programs including **increased social services**,
- support the recruitment and retention of **experienced, professionally-trained teachers**,
- promote thoughtful use of technology that **protects children and family privacy** and **values teacher/student relationships**, and
- provide meaningful opportunities for **a strong parent role in school, district, and statewide education policy-making**.

Parents Across America is a national network of grass-roots parents of all backgrounds across the U.S. who support quality public education for every child. For more detail, please see PAA's priority position on a new ESEA.

<http://parentsacrossamerica.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/07/ESEASenatefinal6-30-15.pdf>  
[info@parentsacrossamerica.org](mailto:info@parentsacrossamerica.org) [www.parentsacrossamerica.org](http://www.parentsacrossamerica.org)