The three million members of the National Education Association, our nation’s largest professional organization, work at every level of education—from pre-school to university graduate programs. Our members also include retired educators and students preparing to become teachers. NEA has affiliates in every state and more than 14,000 communities across the United States.
Our biggest victory:

Goodbye to No Child Left Behind!

NEA president
Lily Eskelsen García
(far left) witnessed
President Obama
signing the Every
Student Succeeds
Act into law.
This was the year that educators spoke and Congress listened. Not only did we make history, we demonstrated just how powerful collective advocacy and activism can be.

We did it for the students we serve, especially those most in need. Our guiding principle was and remains: Does this law, program, or amendment make a positive difference in the education and lives of our students?

Over the course of the last year, NEA’s officers, board of directors, state affiliate leaders, members like you, and our government relations team held face-to-face meetings that included the entire Senate and over two-thirds of the House of Representatives. Educators testified before Congress, signed petitions, made telephone calls, and sent messages via email, social media, and old-fashioned snail mail. Delegates to last year’s Representative Assembly helped pass the Senate bill that became the framework for the new law. Print, broadcast, and digital media amplified our voices and helped tell our story.

That advocacy and activism produced extraordinary gains for students and educators alike—all the more remarkable for having been achieved in a contentious Congress already eyeing the 2016 general election.

Our biggest victory was reauthorizing the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA), the cornerstone of the federal presence in K-12 education. When the campaign for reauthorization started, NEA set three core goals:

- Creating an “opportunity dashboard” to help ensure equity and opportunity for all students
- Reducing standardized testing and decoupling it from high-stakes decisions
- Empowering educators by giving them a voice in federal, state, and local decision-making
In addition to fulfilling all three of our core goals, the Every Student Succeeds Act retools No Child Left Behind’s one-size-fits-all accountability system—that means no more Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP), Race to the Top, or federally-required teacher evaluations based on student test scores. The Every Student Succeeds Act also restricts the Secretary of Education’s authority to set or shape standards, assessments, and elements of—or parameters for—the next generation of accountability systems. Developed by the states, those systems will be based on multiple measures and indicators, and take full effect in the 2017-18 school year.

Another long-sought goal reached this year recognizes that educators routinely use their own money to buy classroom supplies for their students. The $250 educator tax deduction is now permanent, will be adjusted for inflation, and can be used for professional development as well as instructional materials and classroom supplies.

We made significant progress in other areas as well. While funding cuts in programs serving the students most in need have begun to be reversed, we still have a long way to go. NEA members met repeatedly with members of Congress to discuss higher education issues ranging from the need to make college more affordable to the downside of growing reliance on contingent faculty who are vastly underpaid. The Social Security offsets that penalize public servants like educators got a hearing, the first in many years. We secured a two-year delay (until 2020) in the Affordable Care Act’s 40 percent excise tax on the cost of employer-sponsored health care coverage above certain amounts, and continue to push for full repeal.

Now, we face a new, yet crucial, challenge: implementing the Every Student Succeeds Act. With that challenge comes opportunity—and responsibility. To ensure the new law fulfills its potential to become a game changer, we must stand up, speak out, and advocate for what is right at the state and local level. The battles are closer to home, since states and local districts have gained flexibility and authority—you need to work with them, prod them, hold them accountable, and make sure they get it right.

Above all, we must strive to keep the focus where it belongs: on equity and opportunity for all students, no matter what zip code they live in. It’s in your hands—now is the time to get engaged!

Lily Eskelsen García
President, National Education Association
June 1, 2016
On December 10, 2015, President Obama signed the Every Student Succeeds Act into law. “With this bill,” he said, “we reaffirm the fundamental American ideal that every child—regardless of race, income, background, the zip code where they live—deserves the chance to make out of their lives what they will.”

The President declared it a “Christmas miracle.” Indeed, it was.

For years, educators all across America had clamored for a redo of No Child Left Behind, the 2002 rewrite of ESEA that focused on testing, labeling, and punishing. Despite consensus that the law was badly broken, few believed it could be fixed in today’s politically polarized environment. The New York Times reported that the Republican leader of the Senate education committee and his Democratic counterpart agreed that the odds were 5 to 1 against reauthorizing ESEA in 2015.

Nevertheless, we succeeded. Moreover, both chambers of Congress passed the Every Student Succeeds Act by big margins: the final vote was 85-12 in the Senate and 359-64 in the House of Representatives.

That broad, bipartisan support was the product of educators’ unprecedented advocacy and activism—to give just one example, the number of emails from NEA members to Congress more than doubled this year. All told, we made nearly 400,000 contacts urging Congress to reauthorize ESEA and get it right this time.

**TIMELINE**

**JANUARY 12**
NEA President Lily Eskelsen García calls for Republicans, Democrats, the civil rights community, and educators to work together and restore ESEA’s focus on opportunity for all students

**JANUARY 13**
Senate Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions (HELP) Committee chairman Lamar Alexander and ranking member Patty Murray outline priorities for ESEA reauthorization

**JANUARY 21**
HELP Committee holds the first of three hearings on ESEA

**FEBRUARY 11**
House Education and the Workforce Committee “marks up” and passes the NEA-opposed Student Success Act (H.R. 5) in a 21-16 party-line vote

**2015 ESSA ADVOCACY**

- 284,000 emails
- 36,000 tweets
- 30,000 signatures on Get ESEA Right petition
- 25,000 telephone calls
- 3,000 face-to-face meetings
More opportunity for students

The new law has the potential to be a game changer. For the first time in ESEA’s 50-year history, students’ access to opportunities and resources will be systematically tracked through indicators of school success or student support ranging from access to advanced coursework to the availability of counselors, nurses, and librarians. Capturing that data can help push states to identify and begin closing opportunity and resource gaps to the benefit of all students.

The Every Student Succeeds Act also boosts early education in a significant way. Preschool development grants form the foundation of a permanent program to improve coordination, enhance quality, and broaden access to early education, especially for children from low-income families. Housed in the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, the program will be jointly administered with the U.S. Department of Education.

Other provisions of the new law address health care, child nutrition, and practices that can undermine student learning—among them, exclusionary discipline, a key factor in the school-to-prison pipeline. Federal funds funneled through states and school districts can be used to encourage positive behavioral supports and interventions, improve school-based mental health and counseling programs, and support full-service community schools.

Ways to reduce testing

The Every Student Succeeds Act does away with AYP, the hallmark of No Child Left Behind’s rigid and unrealistic accountability system, while continuing to require statewide reading and math tests in grades 3 through 8 and once in high school, and science tests during each grade span (elementary, middle, and high school). Yet school districts must also disseminate information about opt-out policies—where state and local policies permit, parents and guardians can have their children opt out of statewide academic assessments.
The amount of testing can actually be reduced in several ways. The new law incorporates the SMART Act, which provides funding for states to audit and streamline assessments, and eliminate those that are unnecessary or duplicative. States can limit how much time students spend taking tests each year. Up to seven states initially (and ultimately, all 50) can participate in a pilot program to replace standardized tests with locally-developed performance- or competency-based assessments. School districts can seek approval to fulfill the high school testing requirement with a nationally recognized assessment many students already take such as the SAT, ACT, or AP exams.

State-developed accountability systems based on multiple measures will take full effect starting in the 2017-18 school year. In addition to academic indicators, these systems must include at least one indicator of school success or student support like those in the “opportunity dashboard” proposed by NEA. Teams of educators and other stakeholders can tailor improvement plans to local needs, targeting underperforming student subgroups or entire schools—by law, the lowest-performing 5 percent of Title I schools, high schools with graduation rates below 67 percent, and schools with the lowest-performing student subgroups.
Educators get more respect

In stark contrast to No Child Left Behind, the Every Student Succeeds Act promotes respect for educators, the profession of education, and acknowledges that educators are the experts in teaching and learning—not bureaucrats or politicians who do not even know students’ names or faces. Multiple provisions ensure that educators’ voices will be part of decision-making at the federal, state, and local level. The new law envisions committees of practitioners (teachers, paraeducators, and specialized support professionals with recent classroom experience) working with parents and community members to improve their schools.

As NEA has long advocated, the Every Student Succeeds Act calls for professional development embedded in research based on teacher-developed standards—for example, Learning Forward’s Standards for Professional Learning. In addition, the new law retains No Child Left Behind’s definition of paraeducator qualifications and expands collective bargaining protections, applying them to the professional learning continuum for the first time.

State resources may be used to develop or strengthen teacher induction and mentoring programs. District funds may be used to enhance collaboration and teacher-led professional development aligned with students’ learning needs. Grants are offered for initiatives to increase diversity in the teaching workforce.

In short, the Every Student Succeeds Act creates new opportunities for educators to drive teaching and learning decisions, strengthen partnerships with parents and communities, and advocate for what students really need.

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**HIGHLIGHTS**

**NOVEMBER 19**

Senate/House conference committee approves framework to reauthorize ESEA by a near-unanimous vote, 39-1

**NOVEMBER 30**

Senate/House conference committee release legislative language for the bill now called the Every Student Succeeds Act

**DECEMBER 2**

House passes the Every Student Succeeds Act 359-64

**DECEMBER 9**

Senate passes the Every Student Succeeds Act 85-12

**DECEMBER 10**

President Obama signs the Every Student Succeeds Act into law
Educators must lead the way to make ESSA’s promise a reality

The Every Student Succeeds Act gives educators a seat at the decision-making table, creates opportunities for dramatic improvements in our schools, and gives us the chance to truly fulfill the original promise of ESEA. But that will happen only if it is implemented effectively, with educators playing a vocal and integral role in ensuring that state and local decisions work to benefit our students.

NEA’s national ESSA implementation team is leading and coordinating the effort to do so. Executive committee member Shelly Moore Krajacic, a National Board-certified English and drama teacher from Ellsworth, Wisconsin, heads the team, which includes state affiliate leaders and members from all across the nation.

Big decisions are being made now at the state and local level—decisions that may pose challenges, but also provide many new opportunities. We need to use our seat at the table to drive decisions, right-size the type and amount of testing, and work as partners with parents, administrators, civil rights groups, and community leaders who share our goals.

Most important of all, we need to continue to advocate for greater opportunity for all our students, especially the students most in need—the reason the federal government got involved in public education in the first place.

First set of proposed regulations raises questions and stakes

The U.S. Department of Education’s draft regulations on accountability under the new law were published in the Federal Register on May 31, 2016; comments are due by August 1, 2016.

The proposed rules expand upon requirements in such areas as long-term and interim goals; accountability indicators and their weights; participation in assessments (95 percent rule); school differentiation; and identification of schools for comprehensive and targeted improvement. In many cases, however, it appears that they may significantly limit state, local, and school flexibility beyond what is specifically mentioned in the law. That, in turn, raises concerns that the Department is exceeding its legislative authority and veering from the bipartisan compromises that paved the way to passage of the Every Student Succeeds Act.

As we went to press, NEA and state affiliate leaders were examining the proposed regulations, in preparation for submitting comments. We will continue to work with Congress and stakeholder groups that helped get the law passed to ensure that the rules faithfully follow the vision of the Every Student Succeeds Act: promoting equity and opportunity for all of America’s children.

You will play a major role as well. Educators’ voices made the difference when Congress crafted a new law to provide more opportunity for all students. To ensure it is implemented effectively, the Department and Congress need to hear your voices once again.
We have until August 1 to raise concerns about the accountability regulations and make sure the new law fulfills its potential to be a game changer. You will have opportunities at the Representative Assembly and beyond to raise your voice. Now is the time to speak up!

**Educators join others in rulemaking process**

The Department has already released its proposed accountability regulations. Other draft regulations will be forthcoming, reflecting the outcome of deliberations by the committee appointed by the Department to negotiate rulemaking in two areas: assessment and ensuring that federal dollars “supplement, not supplant” state and local dollars.

The “neg reg” committee met three times in March and April. It included two voting members nominated by NEA: Ryan Ruelas, a social studies teacher at Anaheim High School and a member of the Anaheim City School Board in California, and Lynn Goss, a paraeducator in the Menomonie school district in Wisconsin.

The committee reached consensus on a variety of issues related to assessment, but not “supplement, not supplement.” Consequently, the Department will develop proposed regulations on that issue as well.

**Congressional oversight continues**

Congressional committees are holding a series of hearings on implementing the Every Student Succeeds Act and the Department’s proposed regulations. Seven education leaders, including NEA vice president Becky Pringle, were invited to testify at the first Senate hearing in February, which explored challenges the new law will pose for states and school districts.

“This kind of monumental transition will require deep collaboration among multiple stakeholders, some of whom are not used to working together, and making sure more voices are at decision-making tables,” Pringle said. “It is only through the authentic commitment of all stakeholders to engage in the deep listening, professional respect, and collective effort that this new law will be successful for students.”

NEA president Lily Eskelsen García testified at another Senate hearing in May. “ESSA is a civil rights law, so the renewed focus on equity and closing opportunity gaps is important. ESSA is also a major course correction from the stifling federal overreach of No Child Left Behind—a critical opportunity for all stakeholders in education to participate meaningfully in making decisions at the state and district level,” she said.
Making higher ed affordable

NEA’s nationwide Degrees Not Debt campaign continues to call attention to the pressing need to reduce student debt and make college more affordable. The student debt burden of nearly $1.2 trillion surpasses both auto and credit card debt, and is now the largest form of consumer debt outside of mortgages.

In October, NEA member Jess Sanchez, a fifth-grade teacher in southern California, told the Senate Democratic Steering and Outreach Committee how it feels to be a single father with more than $90,000 in student loans it will take 25 years to repay. “I am thinking 25 years—that’s a house note. I could use that money to buy a house to make sure that I have someplace for my son to stay, a place to call his own. I thought getting that higher education degree and good job were supposed to lead me towards home ownership and the car that I would need to get back and forth to work. But it feels like now, with the debt that I have, the world has conquered me.”

Sen. Elizabeth Warren (D-MA) and NEA member Jess Sanchez

Two more NEA members met with the Senate Democratic Steering and Outreach Committee in February in conjunction with #inthered, a Twitter campaign to build support for a three-part legislative package to make higher education more affordable. Called the In the Red Act (S. 2677), the package would allow existing loans to be refinanced at the same low rate new borrowers pay, help states provide two years of free community college, and index Pell grants to inflation.

Mecheline Farhat Roldan, a criminal justice professor at Bergen Community College in New Jersey, and her husband together borrowed $170,000 to pay for their education—more than the mortgage on their house. Roldan skipped two maternity leaves so as not to lose any income,
and greeted her students online from her hospital bed just two days after giving birth. “Students are trapped with interest rates as high as 9 percent. How is anyone supposed to be able to relieve themselves of this burden?” she asked.

Chelsey Jo Herrig, outgoing chair of the NEA student program, worked 30 hours a week while attending college in Minnesota. Still, she graduated $45,000 in debt. Herrig remains committed to a career in education, but worries about the consequences of so many others taking a different path instead—the number of people entering teaching programs dropped 30 percent from 2010 to 2014, according to federal data. “I have peers that have changed careers [from education], and those are the people that we need in the classroom. They want to change the lives of students, but they can’t afford to,” Herrig said.

Diversifying the educator workforce

Tim Vedra, a fourth-grade teacher from Beloit, Wisconsin, voiced similar concerns during a roundtable discussion of the teacher shortage in November, sponsored by Reps. Mark Takano (D-CA) and Mark Pocan (D-WI). “Students are facing a revolving door of teachers in our schools as professional educators choose to retire, move to another district that is wealthier and can afford higher salaries for its employees, or leave the profession altogether for another career,” he said.

Another participant in the roundtable, Harold Acord, a high school Spanish and German teacher from Moreno Valley, California, provided a different perspective. He stressed the need to diversify the educator workforce to reflect today’s student population, support new educators, and provide professional development. “Just getting diverse candidates into our profession is not enough,” he said. “As professionals, we need to have opportunities to lead in our profession where we are able to work with newer educators and those who prepare educators in institutes of higher education.”
Maintaining child nutrition programs

NEA continued striving to build on the successes of the Healthy Hunger-Free Kids Act by ensuring reauthorization of child nutrition programs that reflect our priorities: preserving the current guidelines for healthy school meals, improving training for school food service professionals, and strengthening programs that provide meals for kids when school is out.

Rep. Bobby Scott (D-VA), ranking member of the House Education and the Workforce Committee, invited school food service workers to share their experiences with school meals programs. The Democratic members of the Committee met with four educators in May: NEA secretary-treasurer Princess Moss, NEA board member Donna West of Scottsboro, Alabama, and NEA members Shan Lighty-Green of Richmond, Virginia, and Pat Lieberman of Sayreville, New York. They stressed the importance of school meals to hungry children, healthy eating, and ensuring access to training for school food service workers.

Contingent faculty concerns

In testimony before the House Education and the Workforce Committee in March, NEA board member Jim Grimes, an adjunct broadcast instructor at Joliet Junior College and Kankakee Community College in Illinois, deplored the trend toward shifting the costs of higher education to students and their families.

“The working conditions of faculty relate directly to the learning conditions of students. Too many adjunct faculty are on welfare in their communities. I earn $1,950 for my course at Joliet and $2,600 for my course at Kankakee. If I wasn’t a retired teacher and a retired soldier, I could not afford the cost of traveling to teach at these colleges,” he said.

“Contingents now make up almost three-quarters of all faculty nationally, and half are part-time. They have become the majority of faculty in the country. And many of them are trying to survive on poverty wages with no benefits. What student would want to follow in the footsteps of faculty that is on welfare, with no benefits? I understand that this type of employment is spreading to other fields, with equally detrimental effects.”
Filling the Supreme Court vacancy

NEA also advocated for the Senate to do its job and hold hearings and a vote on President Obama’s nominee for the Supreme Court, Merrick Garland, chief judge on the D.C. Circuit Court of Appeals. A seat on the Supreme Court has been vacant since February, when Justice Antonin Scalia died and GOP leaders announced that they would not consider any nominee until after the November elections.

A dozen history, civics, and social studies educators said in a letter to Senate leaders, “If a student answered on an exam that our Presidents lose the power to appoint Supreme Court justices in the fourth year of their term, that answer would be marked ‘incorrect’—neither the text of the Constitution nor tradition justify it. In fact, since 1875, every Supreme Court nominee has received either a hearing or a vote.”

In face-to-face meetings in April, NEA’s board of directors urged senators to act on the President’s nominee. Advocacy efforts intensified with an “Educator’s Week” later the same month. In May, nine educators who signed the letter to Senate leaders came to Washington to advocate for action, attend a mock hearing conducted by Democrats on the Senate Judiciary Committee, and participate in a roundtable discussion at the White House. Nearly 20,000 educators have signed a petition urging Senate Republicans to hold hearings and an up-or-down vote on Judge Garland.

The Supreme Court has already considered—and may revisit—nearly every issue that matters to educators: the right to equal access to free public education, America’s promise of equal opportunity, school funding, private school vouchers, access to health care, fair elections, and more.
Federal funding for key programs serving the students most in need rose by nearly $2 billion in fiscal year 2016. Among the increases: $500 million more for Title I, $415 million more for the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), $570 more million for Head Start, and $326 million more for Child Care and Development Block Grants.

The $250 above-the-line educator tax deduction—that means you can take it regardless of whether you itemize your tax return—is now permanent and can be used for professional development as well as instructional materials and classroom supplies. Moreover, the deduction will be periodically adjusted to keep pace with inflation.

Two changes in the Affordable Care Act enacted this year were major victories for educators. We secured a two-year delay (until 2020) in introduction of the 40 percent excise tax on the cost of employer-sponsored health care coverage above certain amounts—generally, $10,200 for individuals and $27,500 for families—and continue to push for full repeal. In addition, the designation category for employers of 51-100 people was amended to help ensure that educators in hundreds of small school districts retain access to high-quality, affordable health care. (Without the change, plans with 51-100 employees that participate in consortia would have been forced into more expensive markets.)

The House Committee on Ways and Means, Subcommittee on Social Security, held the first hearing in years on the Government Pension Offset (GPO) and Windfall Elimination Provision (WEP). Together, the GPO and WEP deprive nearly 9 million hard-working Americans—including many educators—of Social Security benefits they have earned. NEA also prevented a potential 50 percent increase in Medicare Part B costs for educators who are already being penalized by the GPO and WEP.

The federal Qualified Zone Academy Bond (QZAB) program was renewed—recognition that too many of today’s students are housed in yesterday’s buildings with out-of-date technology and crumbling infrastructures. QZABs allow qualifying schools, often located in disadvantaged communities, to finance renovations, repairs, and investments in technology at below-market rates—sometimes, as low as zero.
LOOKING AHEAD

As this year’s Representative Assembly begins, the 114th Congress enters the final stretch. The entire House of Representatives is up for election in November, as well as one-third of the Senate. Come January, the 115th Congress will be sworn into office, along with a new President—the 45th in our nation’s history.

Regardless of the outcome of these elections, the goals of NEA’s federal legislative program will remain the same: advocating for what is best for educators and the students they serve—the future of America.
AFFORDABLE CARE ACT

**Supported by NEA**

- Middle Class Health Benefits Tax Repeal Act (H.R. 2050) by Reps. Courtney (D-CT) and Titus (D-NV): Repeal the 40 percent excise tax on the cost of employer-sponsored health coverage above certain amounts—generally $10,200 for individuals and $27,500 for family coverage—scheduled to take effect in 2018. (The Consolidated Appropriations Act of 2016 pushed back introduction of the excise tax from 2018 to 2020.)

- Forty Hours Is Full Time Act (S. 30) and Save American Workers Act (H.R. 30) by Sen. Collins (R-ME) and Rep. Young (R-IN), respectively: Amend the Internal Revenue Code to raise the threshold for “full-time employee” from 30 to 40 hours for purposes of the employer mandate to provide health care coverage.

- Protecting Affordable Coverage for Employees Act (H.R. 1624) by Reps. Guthrie (R-KY), Cardenas (D-CA), Mullin (R-OK), and Sinema (D-AZ): Amend the Affordable Care Act to allow states to determine the small group market for employers of 51 to 100 people.

**Opposed by NEA**


- SCHOOL Act (H.R. 769) by Rep. Messer (R-IN): Amend the Internal Revenue Code to exclude schools, including institutions of higher education, from the employer mandate.

**Neutral**

- All Students Count Act (S. 389/H.R. 717) by Sen. Hirono (D-HI) and Rep. Honda (D-CA): Amend ESEA to require state report cards to use the same racial groups as the decennial census of population.


- Defending State Authority Over Education Act (H.R. 755) by Rep. Roby (R-AL): Amend ESEA to prohibit influencing, incentivizing, or coercing a state to participate in a partnership with another state to develop academic standards or assessments.

**Empowering Parents and Students through Information Act (S. 528) by Sen. Casey (D-PA):** Amend ESEA to require the parents of students with the most significant cognitive disabilities to be involved in decisions about alternative academic achievement standards.

**EMPOWER Act (H.R. 2382) by Reps. Reed (R-NY) and DeLauro (D-CT):** Amend ESEA to authorize parents to have their children opt out of certain assessments.
Every Child Counts Act (S. 516) by Sen. Murphy (D-CT): Amend ESEA to allow states to establish alternate academic standards for up to one percent of the students with the most significant cognitive delays.

Local Control of Education Act (S. 73/H.R. 524) by Sen. Vitter (R-LA) and Rep. Wilson (R-SC): Amend ESEA to prohibit mandating, incentivizing, or conditioning federal support on adoption of the Common Core, other specific academic standards, or related assessments.

Local Leadership in Education Act (S. 144) by Sen. Crapo (R-ID): Amend ESEA to prohibit the federal government from encouraging states to adopt specific academic standards, curricula, programs of instruction, or related assessments.

LOCAL Level Act (S. 182) by Sen. Roberts (R-KS): Amend ESEA to prohibit the federal government from encouraging states to adopt the Common Core or other specific academic standards, curricula, programs of instruction, or related assessments.

SMART Act (S. 197/H.R. 408) by Sen. Baldwin (D-WI) and Rep. Bonamici (D-OR): Amend ESEA to require states to use assessment grants to develop, administer, and enhance assessments; align them with academic content standards; and eliminate duplicative tests.

Student Testing Improvement and Accountability Act (S. 1025/H.R. 452) by Sen. Tester (D-MT) and Reps. Gibson (R-NY) and Sinema (D-AZ): Amend ESEA to reduce the number of federally-mandated tests in reading and math from 14 to 6 to give teachers more one-on-one time with students, especially those most in need of extra time and help.

TEST Act (H.R. 3204) by Rep. Israel (D-NY): Amend ESEA to reduce testing requirements.

CAREER & TECHNICAL EDUCATION


BUILD Career and Technical Education Act (S. 1166/H.R. 2186) by Sen. Merkley (D-OR) and Rep. Schrader (D-OR): Establish a pilot grant program for exploration of career and technical education in middle and high schools.

Computer Science Career Education Act (S. 1184/H.R. 2056) by Sen. Gillibrand (D-NY) and Rep. Cardenas (D-CA): Establish a grant program to promote secondary and post-secondary computer science career education programs.

Counseling for Career Choice Act (H.R. 1079) by Rep. Langevin (D-RI): Authorize competitive grants to states for comprehensive school counseling programs that provide students with effective post-secondary education planning and career guidance.

Middle School STEP Act (S. 1609/H.R. 3346) by Sen. Kaine (D-VA) and Rep. Graham (D-FL): Provide support for development of middle school career exploration programs linked to career and technical education programs of study.

Youth Access to American Jobs Act (H.R. 2224) by Rep. Larsen (D-WA): Establish a pilot program to promote apprenticeships and other job training programs.
CHARTER SCHOOLS


CHILDREN’S HEALTH

✔ ALLERGY Act (H.R. 4691) by Rep. Cartwright (D-PA): Amend ESEA to require local educational agencies to implement policies on bullying related to allergies.


✔ Breath of Fresh Air Act (H.R. 72) by Rep. Jackson Lee (D-TX): Amend ESEA to establish a grant program for purchasing nebulizers and training school staff to use them.


☒ Improving Child Nutrition and Education Act (H.R. 5003) by Rep. Rokita (R-IN): Reauthorize and make changes in child nutrition programs that could cause students to go hungry, limit access to school meals, and add administrative burdens just as ESSA implementation begins.

✔ Mental Health in Schools Act (H.R. 1211) by Rep. Napolitano (D-CA): Amend the Public Health Service Act to expand access to comprehensive, school-based mental health programs.

✔ Promoting Health as Youth Skills in Classrooms and Life Act (S. 418) by Sen. Udall (D-NM): Amend ESEA to define health and physical education as core academic subjects.

✔ Protecting Student Athletes from Concussions Act (S. 988/H.R. 2061) by Sen. Durbin (D-IL) and Rep. DeSaulnier (D-CA): Require states to ensure that local educational agencies fulfill requirements for preventing, managing, and treating concussions incurred during K-12 sports.

✔ SAFE Play Act (S. 436/H.R. 829) by Sen. Menendez (D-NJ) and Rep. Capps (D-CA): Amend ESEA to require state educational agencies to develop plans for preventing concussions.

✔ School Asthma Management Plan Act (S. 1065) by Sen. Gillibrand (D-NY): Amend ESEA to provide grants for developing asthma management plans and purchasing asthma supplies.


✔ Student Support Act (H.R. 2375) by Rep. Barbara Lee (D-CA): Amend ESEA to award grants to help states hire additional school-based mental health and student service providers.

✔ ZZZ’s to A’s Act (H.R. 1306) by Rep. Lofgren (D-CA): Conduct a study—and make recommendations to Congress—on the relationship between school starting times and adolescent health.
COLLEGE AFFORDABILITY

✓ **Adjunct Faculty Loan Fairness Act (S. 1556) by Sen. Durbin (D-IL):** Amend the Higher Education Act to allow adjunct faculty members to qualify for public service loan forgiveness.

✓ **America’s College Promise Act (S. 1716/H.R. 2962) by Sen. Baldwin (D-WI) and Rep. Scott (D-VA):** Provide matching grants to help states provide two years of free community college.

✓ **Bank on Students Emergency Loan Refinancing Act (S. 793/H.R. 1434) by Sen. Warren (D-MA) and Rep. Courtney (D-CT):** Allow students who took out loans before July 1, 2013, to refinance and pay the same low rates as new borrowers.

✓ **College for All Act (S. 1373) by Sen. Bernie Sanders (I-VT):** Provide $47 billion per year to states to eliminate undergraduate tuition and fees at public colleges and universities, and allow borrowers to refinance their loans based on the interest rates for current students.

✓ **Discharge Student Loans in Bankruptcy Act (H.R. 499) by Rep. Delaney (D-MD):** Amend the federal bankruptcy code to allow loans or obligations to repay funds received as an educational benefit, scholarship, or stipend to be discharged in bankruptcy.

✓ **Fairness for Struggling Students Act (S. 729/H.R. 1131) by Sen. Durbin (D-IL) and Rep. McDermott (D-WA):** Revise federal bankruptcy law to allow certain educational loans to be discharged in bankruptcy.

✓ **In the Red Act (S. 2677) by Sen. Baldwin (D-WI):** Make college more affordable by reducing student debt, allowing students to refinance loans at the same low rates as new borrowers, and providing two years of free community college.

✓ **Middle Class CHANCE Act (S. 1998) by Sens. Hirono (D-HI) and Heinrich (D-NM):** Provide Pell grants year-round and index them to inflation.

✓ **Private Student Loan Bankruptcy Fairness Act (H.R. 1674) by Rep. Cohen (D-TN):** Restore fairness in student lending by dismantling the 2005 bankruptcy code changes and treating privately issued student loans like other private debt in bankruptcy.

✓ **Protect Student Borrowers Act (S. 1002) by Sen. Jack Reed (D-RI):** Require institutions of higher education participating in the William D. Ford Federal Direct Loan program to accept specified risk-sharing requirements.

✓ **Student Loan Borrowers’ Bill of Rights Act (H.R. 1352) by Rep. Wilson (D-FL):** Establish student loan borrowers’ rights to basic consumer protections, reasonable and flexible repayment options, access to earned credentials, and effective loan cancellation in exchange for public service.

✓ **Student Loan Borrower Bill of Rights (S. 840) by Sen. Durbin (D-IL):** Amend the Truth in Lending Act to require post-secondary education lenders to disclose information to borrowers at least 30 days before the first fully amortized payment on a loan is due.
**Student Loan Interest Deduction Act (H.R. 509) by Rep. Rangel (D-NY):** Amend the Internal Revenue Code to increase the maximum tax deduction for interest paid on qualified education loans to $5,000 ($10,000 for married couples filing a joint tax return).

**Student Loan Repayment Assistance Act (H.R. 1713) by Rep. Peters (D-CA):** Amend the Internal Revenue Code to exclude amounts paid by employers under student loan payment assistance programs from employees’ gross income.

**Student Loan Refinancing Act (H.R. 649) by Rep. Pocan (D-WI):** Allow students to refinance their federal student loans.

### EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION

**EARLY Act (H.R. 2528) by Rep. Susan Davis (D-CA):** Award competitive grants to states to pay a portion of the federal share of carrying out full-day pre-K programs.

**Continuum of Learning Act (S. 643) by Sen. Casey (D-PA):** Amend ESEA to coordinate school improvement and professional development activities with early childhood development and education programs.

**PRE-K Act (S. 317/H.R. 587) by Sen. Hirono (D-HI) and Rep. Pocan (D-WI):** Amend ESEA to authorize matching grants to states to enhance or improve preschool programs.

**Pre-K for USA Act (H.R. 4042) by Rep. Castro (D-TX):** Provide grants for high-quality pre-K programs.

**Prepare All Kids Act (S. 645) by Sen. Casey (D-PA):** Create an incentive fund to establish, enhance, or expand high-quality, full-day pre-K programs for children ages 3 to 5.

**Prescribe a Book Act (S. 251/H.R. 523) by Sen. Reed (D-RI) and Rep. McGovern (D-MA):** Amend ESEA to authorize matching grants for early literacy programs in which health care providers encourage parents to read aloud to their children.

**Strong Start for America’s Children Act (S. 1380/H.R. 2411) by Sen. Murray (D-WA) and Reps. Hanna (R-NY) and Scott (D-VA):** Establish a new federal-state partnership to accelerate progress already underway and help fund high-quality pre-K for children from low- and moderate-income families.

**Supporting Early Learning Act (H.R. 374) by Rep. Himes (D-CT):** Establish an Early Learning Challenge Fund to support state efforts to build and strengthen high-quality early learning systems and programs.

**Total Learning Act (H.R. 375) by Rep. Himes (D-CT):** Award competitive grants to full-service community schools or partnerships to implement innovative early learning curricula in high-need communities.

**Universal Prekindergarten and Early Childhood Education Act (H.R. 3604) by Rep. Norton (D-DC):** Authorize competitive grants to states to establish or expand full-day pre-K programs.
**EDUCATION FUNDING**

- **A PLUS Act** (S. 2310/H.R. 3421) by Sen. Daines (R-MT) and Rep. Walker (R-NC): Allow a state to submit a declaration of intent to the Secretary of Education to combine certain funds to improve the academic achievement of students.

- **Bipartisan Budget Act of 2015** (H.R. 1314): Two-year budget deal that became law in November 2015. Provides an additional $80 billion in discretionary funding in fiscal years 2016 and 2017, split evenly between defense and non-defense programs like education; extends the debt ceiling; and dramatically reduces—from $54 to $19 per month—an increase in Medicare premiums that affects roughly 1 in 3 beneficiaries, including educators.

- **Consolidated Appropriations Act of 2016/tax extenders package** (H.R. 2029): Fiscal year 2016 omnibus appropriations bill that prioritizes education programs targeted to the students most in need.

- **Fiscal Fairness Act** (H.R. 1071) by Rep. Fattah (D-PA): Amend ESEA to require per pupil expenditures in schools receiving school improvement funds to be at least 97 percent of those in other schools in the district.

- **GOP budget resolutions for fiscal year 2016** (S. Con. Res. 11/H. Con Res. 27) by Sen. Enzi (R-WY) and Rep. Tom Price (R-GA): Slash investments in our nation’s future without adding a penny in revenue from corporations or the wealthiest among us.

- **GOP budget resolution for fiscal year 2017** (H. Con. Res. 125) by Rep. Tom Price (R-GA): Slash investments in our nation’s future without adding a penny in revenue from corporations or the wealthiest among us.

- **IDEA Full Funding Act** (H.R. 551) by Reps. Van Hollen (D-MD), McKinley (R-WV), Walz (D-MN), Gibson (R-NY), Huffman (D-CA), and Reichert (R-WA): Require regular increases in IDEA spending to fulfill the federal government’s promise to pay 40 percent of the average per pupil expenditure for special education.

- **Keep Our PACT Act** (H.R. 3581) by Rep. Van Hollen (D-MD): Require full funding of ESEA Title I, Part A and IDEA.

- **Local Education Authority Returns Now Act** (H.R. 121) by Rep. Garrett (R-NJ): Provide tax credits for individual taxpayers living in states that opt out of federal K-12 education grant programs.

- **Local Taxpayer Relief Act** (S. 658) by Sen. Thune (R-SD): Reauthorize ESEA’s impact aid program, which compensates local educational agencies for the financial burden of federal activities affecting their school districts.

- **Restoration of Parental Rights and State Sovereignty Act** (H.R. 106) by Rep. Culberson (R-TX): Prohibit the Secretary of Education from setting requirements or conditions for ESEA grant programs.
EDUCATION SUPPORT PROFESSIONALS

✓ Classroom paraprofessionals (H.R. 736) by Rep. Serrano (D-NY): Help improve student achievement by authorizing $1 billion for each of fiscal years 2014 through 2018 to recruit, hire, and train 100,000 new classroom paraeducators.

✓ Improving School Nutrition Training Act (H.R. 3817) by Reps. Pocan (D-WI) and Katko (R-NY): Ensure that required training for food service professionals is conducted primarily during paid working hours and that it incorporates hands-on techniques.

✓ Recognizing Achievement in Classified School Employees Act (S. 2653/H.R. 1519) by Sen. Murray (D-WA) and Rep. Titus (D-NV): Establish an awards program for education support professionals who provide exemplary service to pre-K through post-secondary students.

ENGLISH-LANGUAGE LEARNERS

✓ Families Learning and Understanding English Together Act (H.R. 4643) by Rep. Grijalva (D-AZ): Improve the literacy and English skills of people with limited proficiency in English.


ESEA REAUTHORIZATION

✓ Every Child Achieves Act (S. 1177) by Sen. Alexander (R-TN): After being amended, improved, passed unanimously by the Senate HELP Committee, and then the full Senate, this bill was conferenced with H.R. 5. The NEA-supported conference agreement, signed into law as the Every Student Achieves Act, includes provisions of several individual bills that appear elsewhere on this list, in some cases with modifications.

✗ Student Success Act (H.R. 5) by Rep. Kline (R-MN): Shortcomings included insufficient support for the historical federal role of targeting resources to marginalized student populations to help ensure equal opportunity for all students. After being amended and improved by both the House Education and the Workforce Committee and the full House of Representatives, H.R. 5 was conferenced with S. 1177 and became law, as noted above.

FAMILY & COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

✓ DIPLOMA Act (H.R. 495) by Rep. Chu (D-CA): Authorize grants to states to encourage and engage disadvantaged youth, and strengthen their families and communities.

✓ Family Engagement in Education Act (S. 622/H.R. 1194) by Sen. Reed (D-RI) and Rep. Thompson (R-PA): Amend ESEA to allow school improvement funds to be used for family engagement plans.

✓ Full-Service Community Schools Act (S. 1787) by Sen. Brown (D-OH): Award matching grants to help elementary and secondary schools function as full-service community schools.
Promise Neighborhoods Authorization Act (S. 514/H.R. 2882) by Sen. Murphy (D-CT) and Rep. Payne (D-NJ): Award grants for supports and services that engage community partners in improving the academic achievement, health and social development, and college and career readiness of children living in distressed neighborhoods with under-performing schools.

Ready-to-Compete Act (H.R. 966) by Rep. Yarmuth (D-KY): Amend ESEA to authorize grants to public telecommunications entities to coordinate the development, production, and distribution of innovative multi-platform programming for children, parents, educators, and caregivers.

SUCCESS Act (S. 412/H.R. 1194) by Sen. Mikulski (D-MD) and Rep. Thompson (R-PA): Amend ESEA to allow school improvement funds to be used to develop and implement family engagement plans.

Supporting Community Schools Act (H.R. 718) by Rep. Honda (D-CA): Amend ESEA to authorize districts to transform struggling schools into community schools that partner with community-based entities, public and private, to address students’ needs while also serving as community centers.

HIGHER EDUCATION

Fast Track to College Act (H.R. 937) by Rep. Hinojosa (D-TX): Authorize matching grants for dual enrollment programs that allow students to earn credits simultaneously toward a high-school diploma and post-secondary degree.

IN-STATE for Dreamers Act (S. 796/H.R. 1507) by Sen. Murray (D-WA) and Rep. Polis (D-CO): Establish a grant program to supplement need-based financial aid in states that offer in-state tuition and financial aid to Dreamer students.

Proprietary Education Oversight Coordination Improvement Act (S. 396/H.R. 747) by Sen. Durbin (D-IL) and Rep. Cummings (D-MD): Establish the proprietary education oversight coordination committee.

Tyler Clementi Higher Education Anti-Harassment Act (S. 773/H.R. 1421) by Sen. Murray (D-WA) and Rep. Pocan (D-WI): Require institutions of higher education participating in Title IV programs to include a statement of policy on harassment in annual security reports.

HUMAN & CIVIL RIGHTS

Business Supply Chain Transparency on Trafficking and Slavery Act (S. 1968/H.R. 3226) by Sen. Blumenthal (D-CT) and Rep. Maloney (D-NY): Amend the Securities Exchange Act to require issuers of registered securities with annual global receipts of more than $100 million to disclose in their annual reports any measures taken to identify and address conditions of forced labor, slavery, human trafficking, and the worst forms of child labor.

Campaign Finance Reform (S.J. Res. 5/H.J. Res. 22) by Sen. Udall (D-NM) and Rep. Deutch (D-FL): Amend the U.S. Constitution to allow Congress to regulate the amount of money raised for—and spent on—federal political campaigns, and states to regulate campaign spending at their level.
Government by the People Act (H.R. 20) by Rep. Sarbanes (D-MD): Amend the Internal Revenue Code to allow a refundable tax credit for small campaign contributions, create a fund to match small contributions, and increase the power of ordinary citizens instead of Super PACs.


Stop Sanctuaries City Act (S. 1814) by Sens. Vitter (R-LA), Flake (R-AZ), and McCain (R-AZ): Require state and local law enforcement agencies to comply with all Department of Homeland Security immigration detainer requests.

Student Non-Discrimination Act (S. 439/H.R. 846) by Sen. Franken (D-MN) and Rep. Polis (D-CO): Protect students from school-based sexual orientation and gender identity discrimination, recognize bullying and harassment as discrimination, and provide remedies and incentives to prevent them.

Voter Empowerment Act (H.R. 12) by Rep. Lewis (D-GA): Open access to the ballot box by modernizing and simplifying the voting process, ensuring its integrity, and protecting the accountability of results.


Common Sense Savings Act (H.R. 4725) by Rep. Pitts (R-PA): Make $25 billion in cuts over 10 years targeted to the Children’s Health Insurance Program (CHIP) and Medicaid.

Protecting Medicare Beneficiaries Act (S. 2148) by Sen. Wyden (D-OR) and Medicare Premium Fairness Act (H.R. 3696) by Rep. Titus (D-NV), respectively: Extend to all Medicare beneficiaries the “hold harmless” provision that protects against Part B cost hikes when there is no Social Security cost-of-living adjustment (COLA), as is the case in 2016. (The Bipartisan Budget Act of 2015 reduced the potential increase in Part B premiums from $54 to $19 per month.)

American Indian Teacher Loan Forgiveness Act (H.R. 386) by Rep. Ruiz (D-CA): Provide up to $17,500 of loan forgiveness to borrowers under the Federal Family Education Loan program or the William D. Ford Federal Direct Loan program.

Building upon Unique Indian Learning and Development Act (S. 410/H.R. 1082) by Sen. Udall (D-NM) and Rep. Lujan (D-NM): Strengthen support for Native American students.

Indian education and outlying areas (H.R. 851) by Rep. Sablan (D-MP): Amend ESEA to increase the share of school improvement funds for Indian education and outlying areas.
**Native American Education Opportunity Act (S. 2711) by Sen. McCain (R-AZ):** Create private school vouchers in the form of Education Savings Accounts (ESAs).

**Native Language Immersion Student Achievement Act (S. 1419) by Sen. Tester (D-MT):** Establish a Native American language grant program to promote academic achievement among American Indian, Alaska Native, and Native Hawaiian children.

**Tribal Early Childhood, Education, and Related Services Integration Act (S. 2304) by Sen. Tester (D-MT):** Provide for tribal demonstration projects that integrate early childhood development and education, including Native American language and culture.

**SAFETY Act (S. 2468) by Sen. Tester (D-MT):** Require the Secretary of the Interior to carry out a demonstration program that gives eligible Indian tribes grants to build tribal schools.

**PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT**

**Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning Act (S. 897/H.R. 850) by Sen. Blumenthal (D-CT) and Rep. Tim Ryan (D-OH):** Amend ESEA to include teacher and principal training in practices that address students’ social and emotional needs.

**BEST Act (S. 882/H.R. 1751) by Sen. Casey (D-PA) and Rep. Honda (D-CA):** Amend ESEA to authorize grants to elevate the teaching profession, support educators, improve student achievement, and ensure equity.

**Diverse Teachers Recruitment Act (H.R. 833) by Rep. Susan Davis (D-CA):** Amend ESEA to authorize competitive matching grants to recruit, train, and retain individuals from under-represented groups as elementary and secondary school teachers.

**Great Teaching and Leading for Great Schools Act (H.R. 848) by Rep. Polis (D-CO):** Amend ESEA to enhance professional development and educators’ effectiveness.

**Helping Schools Protect Our Children Act (S. 1369/H.R. 1827) by Sen. Feinstein (D-CA) and Rep. Takano (D-CA):** Amend ESEA to allow funds to be used for training school personnel to recognize sexual abuse in children.

**Keep Teachers Teaching Act (H.R. 2321) by Rep. David Price (D-NC):** Amend ESEA to provide grants for innovative programs to retain teachers.

**National Memorial to Fallen Educators Act (S. 2061) by Sen. Moran (R-KS):** Designate an existing memorial to fallen educators a national monument. Located at the National Teachers Hall of Fame in Emporia, Kansas, this memorial honors the more than 114 educators from 36 states who have lost their lives while performing their professional duties since the year 1764.

**No Child Left Inside Act (S. 492/H.R. 882) by Sen. Reed (D-RI) and Rep. Sarbanes (D-MD):** Amend ESEA to authorize new funding for states to provide high-quality environmental instruction and professional development for teachers.


RURAL EDUCATION

Investing in Innovation for Education Act (S. 605/H.R. 847) by Sen. Bennet (D-CO) and Rep. Polis (D-CO): Amend ESEA to award competitive grants for innovative efforts to improve teaching and learning, with at least 25 percent of the funds going to rural areas.

REST Act (S. 2190) by Sen. Tester (D-MT): Amend ESEA and the Higher Education Act to provide professional development, scholarships, and loan forgiveness for rural educators.

RURAL Act (H.R. 3369) by Rep. Loebsack (D-IA): Establish an office of rural education policy within the U.S. Department of Education and modify federal law in other ways to improve rural schools.

SCHOOL MODERNIZATION


INSPIRES Act (S. 1050) by Sen. Schatz (D-HI): Amend ESEA to establish a program to modernize, renovate, and repair career and technical education facilities.

Rebuilding America's Schools Act (S. 1753/H.R. 3046) by Sen. Brown (D-OH) and Rep. Rangel (D-NY): Amend the Internal Revenue Code to modify and permanently extend Qualified Zone Academy Bonds (QZABs). (The QZAB program was renewed by the Consolidated Appropriations Act of 2016/tax extenders package passed in December 2015.)

School Building Fairness Act (S. 1505) by Sen. Schatz (D-HI): Amend ESEA to provide grants to repair, renovate, and construct elementary and secondary schools.

Technology Enabled Education Innovation Partnership Act (H.R. 566) by Rep. Honda (D-CA): Authorize grants to eligible partnerships for innovative, technology-enabled education programs.

SCHOOL SAFETY

Amend the Safe and Drug-Free Schools and Communities Act (H.R. 3331) by Rep. Danny K. Davis (D-IL): Require states to collect and report data on programs to prevent bullying and harassment.

Child Sexual Abuse Awareness and Prevention Act (S. 1665/H.R. 3067) by Sen. Gillibrand (D-NY) and Rep. Clark (D-MA): Amend ESEA to authorize local educational agencies and schools to carry out programs and activities to heighten awareness of—and prevent—sexual abuse of children.
NEA POSITIONS ON BILLS

✓ **Ending Corporal Punishment in Schools Act (H.R. 2268) Rep. Hastings (D-FL):** Require states to put an end to corporal punishment in schools.

✓ **Public School Emergency Relief Act (H.R. 2634) by Rep. Israel (D-NY):** Provide temporary emergency impact aid for local educational agencies.

✓ **Safe Schools Improvement Act (S. 311/H.R. 2902) by Sen. Casey (D-PA) and Rep. Sanchez (D-CA):** Amend ESEA to require policies to prevent and prohibit bullying, harassment, and other conduct that limits students’ participation in school programs or creates a hostile and abusive environment.

**SOCIAL SECURITY**

✓ **Equal Treatment of Public Servants Act (H.R. 711) by Rep. Kevin Brady (R-TX):** Address inequities associated with the Windfall Elimination Provision (WEP), but not the Government Pension Offset (GPO). Additional concerns include the impact on people not vested in public pension plans, people with 30 years of Social Security-covered earnings, and “overpayments” to some Social Security beneficiaries. NEA has not taken a position on this bill.


✓ **SAVE Benefits Act (S. 2251/H.R. 4012) by Sen. Warren (D-MA) and Rep. Grayson (D-FL):** Provide a one-time payment of about $580 to veterans and Social Security beneficiaries.


✓ **Social Security Fairness Act (S. 1651/H.R. 973) by Sens. Brown (D-OH) and Collins (R-ME) and Reps. Rodney Davis (R-IL) and Schiff (D-CA):** Fully repeal the Government Pension Offset (GPO) and Windfall Elimination Provision (WEP).

**STEM**

✓ **21st Century STEM for Girls and Under-Represented Minorities Act (H.R. 2773) by Rep. Beatty (D-OH):** Amend ESEA to provide grants to local educational agencies to encourage girls and under-represented minorities to enter STEM fields.

✓ **Community STEM Learning Act (H.R. 2155) by Rep. Fudge (D-OH):** Amend provisions of ESEA related to grants for science, technology, engineering, and mathematics education programs.

✓ **Computer Science Education and Jobs Act (S. 671) by Sen. Casey (D-PA):** Amend ESEA grant programs, reporting requirements, and definitions (including “core academic subject”) to include computer science.

✓ **Computer Science in STEM Act (H.R. 2057) by Rep. Cardenas (D-CA):** Amend ESEA to award grants to states for the development of comprehensive plans to strengthen computer science education in elementary and secondary schools.
NEA POSITIONS ON BILLS

✓ Educating Tomorrow’s Engineers Act (S. 1185/H.R. 823) by Sen. Gillibrand (D-NY) and Rep. Tonko (D-NY): Amend ESEA to require states to include engineering in academic standards and science assessments.

✓ GIRLS STEM Act (H.R. 2762) by Rep. McNerney (D-CA): Amend ESEA to authorize grants to encourage female students to enter STEM fields.

✓ Innovation Inspiration School Grant Program Act (S. 442) by Sen. Shaheen (D-NH): Authorize competitive matching grants to promote STEM in secondary schools and broaden access to STEM careers.

✓ Innovate America Act (S. 894/H.R. 3959) by Sen. Klobuchar (D-MN) and Rep. Cartwright (D-PA): Provide competitive grants to state educational agencies to expand the number of STEM secondary schools from about 100 to 200.

✓ STEM Education for the Global Economy Act (S. 867) by Sen. Merkley (D-OR): Improve student academic achievement in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics.

✓ STEM Gateways Act (S. 1183/H.R. 840) by Sen. Gillibrand (D-NY) and Rep. Kennedy (D-MA): Authorize competitive grants to schools to promote STEM engagement and success among women and girls, under-represented minorities, and individuals from all economic backgrounds.


✓ STEM 2 Act (S. 419/H.R. 1081) by Sen. Udall (D-NM) and Rep. Lujan (D-NM): Authorize competitive planning grants for the development of state or tribal networks to coordinate STEM education efforts.

✓ Stepping Up to STEM Education Act (H.R. 565) by Rep. Honda (D-CA): Establish an office of STEM education within the U.S. Department of Education.

STUDENT LEARNING


✓ Achievement through Technology and Innovation Reauthorization Act (H.R. 1004) by Rep. Roybal-Allard (D-CA): Amend ESEA to require states to develop academic content and achievement standards that ensure students are technologically literate by grade 8.

✓ Afterschool and Workforce Readiness Act (S. 899) by Sen. Baldwin (D-WI): Amend ESEA to focus on career readiness.

✓ Afterschool for America’s Children Act (S. 308/H.R. 1042) by Sen. Boxer (D-CA) and Rep. Kildee (D-MI): Amend the 21st Century Community Learning Centers program to provide afterschool activities aligned with academic instruction during the school day for students, and opportunities for meaningful engagement in their children’s education for families.
**NEA POSITIONS ON BILLS**

- **Amend ESEA to ensure state control over academic standards (H.R. 2803) by Rep. Zeldin (R-NY):** Allow states to withdraw from the Common Core, any other academic standards common to a significant number of states, or assessments tied to such standards.

- **All-Year Schools Support Act (S. 325) by Sen. Kirk (R-IL):** Amend ESEA to carry out a pilot program to establish or expand year-round programs at elementary and secondary schools. (NEA opposes this version of the bill because it does not include a construction clause protecting employees’ rights or an evaluation component.)

- **Broadening Opportunities through Education Act (H.R. 2371) by Rep. Edwards (D-MD):** Award grants to states that make school attendance compulsory through age 17.

- **Core Opportunity Resources for Equity and Excellence Act (S. 37/H.R. 193) by Sen. Reed (D-RI) and Rep. Fudge (D-OH):** Amend ESEA to require states to adopt student achievement standards that lead to college and career readiness, and to provide information about students’ access to core resources in annual state report cards.

- **Digital Learning Equity Act (S. 1606/H.R. 3582) by Sen. King (I-ME) and Rep. Welch (D-VT):** Support the development, implementation, and evaluation of innovative strategies and methods of increasing out-of-school access to digital learning resources.

- **Equal Access to Quality Education Act (H.R. 2149) by Rep. Chu (D-CA):** Establish a grant program to ensure that students in high-need schools have equal access to a quality education delivered by an effective, diverse workforce.

- **Equity and Excellence in American Education Act (H.R. 4013) by Rep. Honda (D-CA):** Create a system that ensures every child—regardless of race, ethnicity, social class, or state of residence—can receive a high-quality, academically rigorous education in a local public school.

- **Financial Literacy for Students Act (H.R. 346) by Rep. Cartwright (D-PA):** Amend ESEA to authorize grants to integrate financial literacy education into middle and secondary schools, and provide training in financial literacy for teachers.

- **LEARN Act (H.R. 858) by Rep. Yarmuth (D-KY):** Authorize grants for plans to improve children’s literacy from birth through grade 12.

- **National Jazz Preservation, Education, and Promulgation Act (H.R. 1682) by Rep. Conyers (D-MI):** Amend ESEA to allow expenditures for programs to promote jazz education.


- **Sandra Day O’Connor Civic Learning Act (H.R. 3008) Rep. Honda (D-CA):** Amend ESEA to award grants to promote civic learning and engagement.

Simon Wiesenthal Holocaust Education Assistance Act (H.R. 2545) by Rep. Carolyn Maloney (D-NY): Award grants to educational organizations to carry out educational programs about the Holocaust.

Strengthen and Unite Communities with Civics Education and English Development Act (H.R. 2794) by Rep. Honda (D-CA): Strengthen and unite communities through English literacy and civics education.

Student Bill of Rights (H.R. 1070) by Rep. Fattah (D-PA): Determine annually whether each state’s public school system provides all students with the educational resources they need to succeed academically and in life.

TALENT Act (S. 363/H.R. 2960) by Sen. Grassley (R-IA) and Rep. Polis (D-CO): Amend ESEA to require states to recognize and assist advanced, gifted, and talented students.

World Language Advancement Act (H.R. 3096) by Rep. David Price (D-NC): Amend ESEA to award grants to state and local educational agencies for the establishment, improvement, and expansion of world language education programs.

STUDENT SUPPORT


Helping Military Children Succeed in Schools Act (H.R. 834) by Rep. Susan Davis (D-CA): Amend ESEA to require state report cards to include the number of military-connected students and compare their performance to that of other students.

Homeless and Foster Youth Achievement Act (H.R. 3221) by Rep. Clark (D-MA): Amend the ESEA to require states to include information on the academic progress of homeless children and children in foster care in annual state report cards.

Improving Education for Foster Youth Act (H.R. 562) by Rep. Grayson (D-FL): Amend ESEA to require states to have policies ensuring that children in foster care can transfer credits when they change schools.

Keep Kids in School Act (S. 672) by Sen. Casey (D-PA): Require states and districts to create plans to reduce suspensions and expulsions.

Native Hawaiian Education Reauthorization Act (S. 464/H.R. 895) by Sen. Hirono (D-HI) and Rep. Gabbard (D-HI): Revise the duties and composition of the Native Hawaiian Education Council to enhance services and support.

NURSE Act (S. 2572) Sen. Tester (D-MT): Provide grants to increase the number of school nurses in public elementary and secondary schools.

Pregnant and Parenting Students Access to Education Act (S. 416) by Sen. Udall (D-NM): Authorize grants for programs and services to enable pregnant and parenting students to enroll, attend, and succeed in school.
NEA POSITIONS ON BILLS

✓ Put School Counselors Where They’re Needed Act (H.R. 2022) by Rep. Linda Sanchez (D-CA): Amend ESEA to increase counselors and resources in struggling secondary schools.

✓ Reducing Barriers to Learning Act (H.R. 2378) by Rep. Loebsack (D-IA): Establish an office of specialized instructional support within the U.S. Department of Education to improve services provided by school counselors, social workers, psychologists, nurses, and other professionals involved in a comprehensive program to meet students’ needs.

✓ School Social Workers Improving Student Success Act (H.R. 2988) by Rep. Moore (D-WI): Amend ESEA to establish a grant program to fund additional school social workers and retain those already employed by high-need local educational agencies.


✓ Success in the Middle Act (S. 581/H.R. 2105) by Sen. Whitehouse (D-RI) and Rep. Grijalva (D-AZ): Authorize grants for states, based on their proportion of poor children, to improve middle schools and equip students to succeed in academically rigorous high schools.

✓ Transition-to-Success Mentoring Act (H.R. 541) by Rep. Carson (D-IN): Establish a mentoring program to help at-risk students make the transition from middle to high school.

TAXES

✓ Educator Tax Relief Act (H.R. 2940) by Rep. Reichert (R-WA) and REPAY Supplies Act (H.R. 2962) Rep. Beatty (D-OH): The main goals of these bills were achieved in December 2015 when the Consolidated Appropriations Act of 2016/tax extenders package became law. The above-the-line educator tax deduction is now permanent, indexed to inflation, and can be used for professional development as well as instructional materials and classroom supplies.

✗ Federal Employee Tax Accountability Act (H.R. 1563) by Rep. Chaffetz (R-UT): Fire federal employees with a delinquent federal tax debt, do not hire applicants with this type of tax debt, and compel federal employees and applicants to release personal financial data.

✗ Home School Opportunities Make Education Sound Act (S. 100) by Sen. Vitter (R-LA): Amend the Internal Revenue Code to provide tax deductions for expenses related to home schooling.

✓ Marketplace Fairness Act (S. 698) by Sen. Enzi (R-WY): Raise billions of dollars by allowing states to require out-of-state businesses, such as those selling online or through catalogs, to collect and use tax revenue already owed under state law.

✓ Paying a Fair Share Act (S. 161/H.R. 362) by Sen. Whitehouse (D-RI) and Rep. Cicilline (D-RI): Institute the “Buffet Rule” requiring a minimum tax rate of 30 percent on individuals making more than a million dollars a year.

✗ Refundable Child Tax Credit Eligibility Verification Reform Act (H.R. 4722) by Rep. Sam Johnson (R-TX): Amend the Internal Revenue Code to make eligibility for the refundable child tax credit contingent on providing a Social Security number.
Trade Facilitation and Trade Enforcement Act (H.R. 644) by Rep. Tom Reed (R-NY): Incorporates the Permanent Internet Tax Freedom Act (PITFA), which limits states’ and localities’ ability to raise much-needed revenue for education and other essential public services. Became law in February 2016.

VOUCHERS


Educational Opportunities Act (S. 809/H.R. 1511) by Sen. Rubio (R-FL) and Rep. Rokita (R-IN): Amend the Internal Revenue Code to provide tax credits for individuals and corporations (up to $100,000) for charitable contributions to organizations whose sole purpose is providing scholarships for low-income students.


Empowering Parents to Invest in Choice Act (H.R. 1928) by Rep. McHenry (R-NC): Amend the Internal Revenue Code to expand qualified tuition programs and increase the amount that can be contributed to Coverdell education savings accounts.

Enhancing Educational Opportunities for All Students Act (S. 306/H.R. 554) by Sen. Lee (R-UT) and Rep. Messer (R-IN): Amend ESEA to allocate grant funds for children in poverty to public and state-accredited private schools.

Expanding School Choice Act (S. 72) by Sen. Vitter (R-LA): Amend ESEA to make funding “portable” — i.e., distribute funds to public and private schools based on the number of eligible students attending them instead of need-based formulas.


Transform Education in America through Choice Act (H.R. 773) by Rep. Yoho (R-FL): Allow Title I portability, vouchers for special education, repeal U.S. Department of Education competitive grant programs, and reduce the workforce of the U.S. Department of Education.

WAGES

Paycheck Fairness Act (S. 862/H.R. 1619) by Sen. Mikulski (D-MD) and Rep. DeLauro (D-CT): Create incentives for employers to follow the Equal Pay Act, empower women to negotiate for equal pay, and strengthen federal outreach and enforcement efforts.

Raise the Wage Act (S. 1150/H.R. 2150) by Sen. Murray (D-WA) and Rep. Bobby Scott (D-VA): Increase the minimum wage to $12 an hour by 2020 and index increases to median wage growth annually.