

NCLB and the Transformation of Federal Education Policy, 1965-2005

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**No Child
Left Behind**
and the Transformation
of Federal Education
Policy, 1965-2005



Patrick J. McGuinn

NO CHILD LEFT BEHIND (2001)

- **Bipartisan: 381-41 in the House and 87-10 in the Senate**
- **Dramatically increased federal education role/spending**

MANDATES FOR STATES:

- **Academic standards for ALL students**
- **Yearly proficiency tests grades 3-8 & HS**
- **Make AYP; all students proficient by 2014**
- **Public report cards with disag. data**
- **Cascade of remedies for failing schools**
- **“Highly qualified” teachers**
- **Noncompliance means lose federal \$**



**I WANT NO
CHILD LEFT BEHIND!**

COMPARISON OF ESEA AND NCLB

ESEA (1965):

- **Narrowly targeted—disadvantaged students**
- **Focused on school inputs (resources)**
- **Contained few federal mandates**

NCLB (2001):

- **Addresses ALL schools and students**
- **Focused on school outputs (achievement)**
- **Remarkably prescriptive**
- **The National Schoolmarm**

U.S. Department of Education



NCLB Successes

- Better data and transparency of outcomes
- Greater public, media, pol. awareness
- Sub-group disaggregation & accountability
- Increased role and capacity of SEAs
- Focus on school turnarounds
- Expanded choice, charter growth (but...)
- Much more ed innovation/experimentation
- Data driven instruction; empirical research
- Launched teacher quality discussion

NCLB Problems

- **States' resistance, call for flexibility, \$**
- **Uneven state testing/data systems**
- **Increase/ quality of tests**
- **Gaming the system: states set own standards, tests, and proficiency def**
- **SEA intervention/capacity issues**
- **School restructuring loopholes**
- **USED limited enforcement tools**
- **Law focused on ends not means**

Key Issues for ESEA Reauthorization

- **Loosey/Tighty problem and NCLB Waivers**
- **Fed accountability and school turnarounds**
- **National standards & assessments (C Core)**
- **But standardized tests or multiple measures?**
- **AYP & “utopian” timetables; drop or extend?**
- **Teacher quality (Ed schools, tenure, merit pay)**
- **Expanded learning time; pre-school**
- **School choice: Charters, vouchers, portability**