



Mission/Goal Statement:

Provide the highest quality education so that all of our students are empowered to lead productive and fulfilling lives as lifelong learners and responsible citizens. As the second session of the 112th Congress convenes, we urge the President and Congress to reaffirm their commitment to our nation's children by reinvesting in public education.

2012 Federal Legislative Program

Legislative Issues

Funding For Education

Elementary and Secondary Education Act (No Child Left Behind)

Early Childhood Education + Immigration Impact

School Nutrition Program + Medicaid Reimbursement

School Construction/Renovation + Technology in Schools

Workforce Preparation + Health Care + Personnel + Cybercrime

The Parent Academy + Cultural Passport + Safe Routes to Schools

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FUNDING FOR EDUCATION

Increase the federal investment in public education to fully fund the implementation of the Elementary and Secondary Education (ESEA) Act and Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA). **Oppose** any reduction in entitlement funding to school districts such as Title I appropriations for disadvantaged students, Title II for improving teacher and principal training and recruiting, or Title III for English Language Learners (ELLs). **Increase** funding for safe and drug-free school initiatives to implement and expand interventions that focus on reducing disruptive and aggressive behaviors and strengthen students' emotional and behavioral competencies. **Support** reform of formula funding disparities as identified by the General Accounting Office report of January 2002, which hinder funds from reaching the nation's poorest students.

ELEMENTARY AND SECONDARY EDUCATION ACT (NO CHILD LEFT BEHIND)

Reauthorize and modify the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (No Child Left Behind Act 2001) to:

recognize student progress in lieu of the current all-or-nothing approach and recognize degrees of progress for schools; **eliminate** sanctions associated with not meeting adequate yearly progress; **support** uniform national assessments aligned with national standards to allow for valuable comparison of student achievement among states; **ensure** fair accountability by providing flexibility for special education and English Language Learners (ELLs) and other formula adjustments and by requiring identical tests for Title I and Title III students in non-public schools; **include** other indicators for accountability such as dual enrollment industry certification and AP courses, graduation rates, and dropout attendance suspensions in determining AYP and align accountability standards with those in the School Improvement grant; **reward** and retain quality teachers by supporting measures that raise pay for teachers in fields with shortages and/or in high-need communities that create career ladder paths and assist with rising housing costs; **establish** new qualification requirements for teachers and paraprofessionals to ensure that teachers be highly skilled in content areas as well as in pedagogy; **allow** districts to use Supplemental Education Services (SES) funds to provide tutoring to eligible students as well as pay for monitoring and other implementation costs out of the required 20% set-aside and ensure that public schools not be unfairly prevented from providing remedial services to students; **require** that funding to SES private providers be contingent on outcomes on norm-referenced assessments developed and administered by the states and/or the district; and **allocate** immigrant funds under Title III based on the number of recently arrived foreign-born students.

EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION

Support increased funding for the Head Start Program and appropriate early education standards for Head Start that are aligned with state academic content standards designed to ensure school readiness. **Support** federal funding to develop, expand, and enhance quality voluntary preschool programs while ensuring the adoption of developmentally appropriate early education standards that are aligned with state K-12 academic content standards. **Support** the Early Learning Challenge Fund or similar legislation that encourages states to develop effective, innovative child care delivery models that promote high quality childhood education programs and ensure school readiness.

IMMIGRATION IMPACT

Address the impact of federal immigration policies on local school district funds by supporting the Entrant and Refugee Assistance Program under the Targeted Assistance and Immigrant Education appropriation serving foreign-born students (English Language Learners (ELLs)) and their families. **Support** the DREAM Act or similar legislation that would provide immigration relief to a select group of students who grew up in the United States, who have good moral character, and who are pursuing a college education or have enlisted in the military; and allow states to determine whether to grant in-state tuition fees to state residents regardless of immigration status.

SCHOOL NUTRITION PROGRAM

Support increased federal reimbursement rates to more accurately reflect the cost of producing a healthy school meal. **Support** a tiered system of income eligibility guidelines and reimbursement rates by taking into account the varying costs of living in communities throughout the nation. **Provide** funding for the implementation of a federally required Nutrition Education and Wellness Plan.

MEDICAID REIMBURSEMENT

Oppose any policy revisions to restrict school-based reimbursement for administration expenditures and certain transportation costs for services provided to low-income children with disabilities.

SCHOOL CONSTRUCTION/ RENOVATION

Support supplemental funding for large school districts with high levels of free and reduced-price lunch participants to implement "green" sustainable projects, including upgrading technology infrastructure replacing school buses or maintenance vehicles to improve operational efficiency and to reduce the carbon footprint, and extend the useful life of existing school buildings by eliminating adverse indoor environmental conditions that are not conducive to learning.

TECHNOLOGY IN SCHOOLS

Support increased allocations and expand eligible expenditures to include educational linkage beyond the school for the Universal Service Fund Program (E-Rate) and streamline refund procedures to provide schools and libraries with affordable access to state-of-the-art networking and telecommunications technology.

WORKFORCE PREPARATION

Enhance funding and effectiveness of public vocational training, adult education, family literacy, and career academy programs with improved coordination with partner agencies through the reauthorization of the Workforce Investment Act (WIA) legislation. **Support** the role of district-operated adult education and job training in new federal initiatives, including Green Jobs, Fast-Track-to-College programs, and the Adult Education and Economic Growth Act, or similar legislation impacting workforce education. **Oppose** any efforts to reduce funding for vocational and technical education programs authorized through the Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education Improvement Act.

HEALTH CARE

Guarantee the availability and security of employment-based health benefit plans and guarantee that employee tax exclusion for health benefits not be limited or capped.

PERSONNEL

Support increased funding to recruit, develop, and retain highly qualified teachers in fragile or low-performing schools.

CYBERCRIME

Support legislation that provides supplemental funding to assist school districts in deferring internet crime and cybercrime through awareness and promotion prevention to our students, teachers, and parents.

THE PARENT ACADEMY

Seek federal supplemental funding to support program expansion, curriculum development, and replication of The Parent Academy, a parent engagement program launched locally in 2005.

CULTURAL PASSPORT

Seek federal supplemental funding for the Miami-Dade County Public Schools' Cultural Passport program, a new educational initiative that provides all students, grades K-12, with a different cultural field experience each school year, thus ensuring a well-rounded educational experience inclusive of the arts.

SAFE ROUTES TO SCHOOL

Support the passage of the Safe Routes to School Program Reauthorization Act (S.800), or similar legislation, to expand eligibility for federal grants to high schools for infrastructure improvements to establish safe routes to schools.



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