

*Diverse Learners*



U. S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION





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**PRESIDENT BARACK OBAMA**

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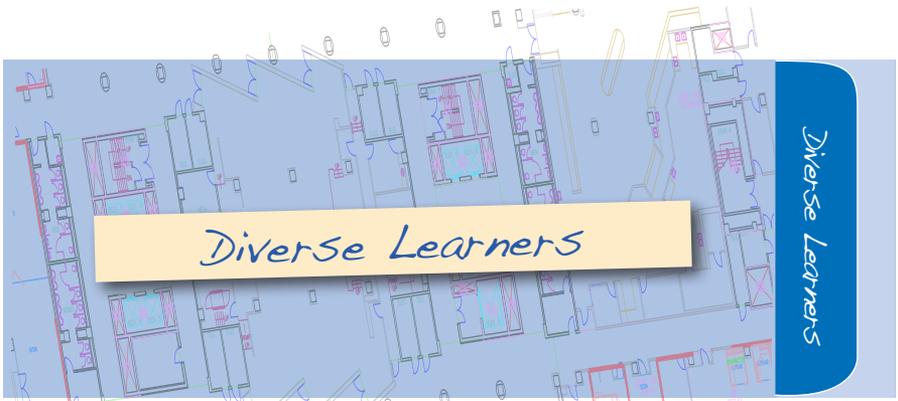
Every child in America deserves a world-class education.

Today, more than ever, a world-class education is a prerequisite for success. America was once the best educated nation in the world. A generation ago, we led all nations in college completion, but today, 10 countries have passed us. It is not that their students are smarter than ours. It is that these countries are being smarter about how to educate their students. And the countries that out-educate us today will out-compete us tomorrow.

We must do better. Together, we must achieve a new goal, that by 2020, the United States will once again lead the world in college completion. We must raise the expectations for our students, for our schools, and for ourselves—this must be a national priority. We must ensure that every student graduates from high school well prepared for college and a career.

A handwritten signature in black ink, which appears to be "Barack Obama". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial "B" and a distinct "O".





## *Reauthorizing the Elementary and Secondary Education Act*

To help achieve President Obama's stated goal of including all of America's students in leading the world in education, the administration has designed a blueprint for a reenvisioned federal role in education through the reauthorization of the *Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA)*. The new *ESEA* will ensure equity and opportunity for all students by calling for

- ▶ **Rigorous and fair accountability for all levels of school performance;**
- ▶ **Meeting the needs of diverse learners; and**
- ▶ **Greater equity in providing students a fair chance to succeed.**

America's schools are responsible for meeting the educational needs of an increasingly diverse student population, and *ESEA* programs must provide a wide range of resources and support to ensure that all students have the opportunity to succeed in college and in a career. *ESEA* includes programs that help schools meet the special educational needs of children working to learn the English language, students with disabilities, Native American students, homeless students, the children of migrant workers, and neglected or delinquent students. In addition, the federal government has a responsibility to provide assistance to certain high-need regions and areas, including rural districts and districts that are affected by federal property and activities.

In each of these areas, the administration's *ESEA* reauthorization proposal will continue and strengthen the federal commitment to serving all students, and it will improve each program to ensure that funds are used more effectively to meet the needs of the students they serve.

## *Education for Students With Disabilities*

While the primary funding for programs specifically focused on supporting students with disabilities is through the *Individuals with Disabilities Education Act*, the *ESEA* reauthorization proposal will increase support for the inclusion and improved outcomes of students with disabilities. The proposal will help ensure that teachers and leaders are better prepared to meet the needs of diverse learners, that assessments more accurately and appropriately measure the performance of students with disabilities, and that more districts and schools implement high-quality, state- and locally determined curricula and instructional supports that incorporate the principles of universal design for learning to meet all students' needs.

## *Education for English Learners*

The administration's proposal will continue to provide significant formula grants to help states and school districts implement high-quality language instruction programs to improve the education of English Learners. Grantees may provide dual-language programs, transitional bilingual education, sheltered English immersion, newcomer programs for late-entrant English Learners, or other language instruction programs. Grantees may also provide effective professional development for all teachers of English Learners, including teachers of academic content areas, that is responsive to demonstrated needs identified by evaluations. To ensure that formula grant assistance in these areas supports the conditions

needed to foster English Learners' success, the proposed reauthorization will require states to:

- ▶ **Establish new criteria to ensure consistent statewide identification of students as English Learners, and to determine eligibility, placement, and duration of programs and services based on the state's valid and reliable English language proficiency assessment; and**
- ▶ **Implement a system to evaluate the effectiveness of language instruction programs, and to provide information on the achievement of subgroups of English Learners so as to drive better decisions by school districts for program improvement and to support districts in selecting effective programs.**

Districts that are not improving the performance of English Learners will lose flexibility around the use of funds under this program and must work with the state to implement more effective strategies.

The reauthorization proposal will also provide new competitive grants to states, districts, and nonprofit partners to support the development of innovative programs, build the knowledge base about promising practices, and scale up effective practices to improve instruction for English Learners. These grants will include funding for graduate fellowships to support research and leadership in developing effective practices to improve English Learner outcomes, as well as state or district partnerships with colleges and universities for developing effective teachers.

In addition, under the College- and Career-Ready Students program, a \$14.5 billion request for the reauthorized Title I, Part A, currently Title I Grants to Local Educational Agencies, states will be required to adopt and implement statewide grade-by-grade English language proficiency standards that are linked to the state's college- and career-ready academic content standards.

## *Education for Migrant Students*

The proposal will continue and strengthen formula grants to states, districts, and other providers to meet the educational needs of migrant students. To ensure that funds are most effectively targeted to the areas in which migrant students live, the administration will update the current funding formula to incorporate more accurate and timely data. The administration will also strengthen and facilitate interstate efforts to support the educational transition of migrant students into local schools and communities.

## *Education for Homeless Children and Youths*

The reauthorization proposal will continue and strengthen formula grants to help states and districts put in place systems and services to meet the educational needs of homeless students. First, the administration will better target funds to serve homeless students by allocating funds on the basis of counts of homeless students rather than of shares of Title I allocations. Second, the administration will remove barriers to effective services for homeless children. And third, the administration will clarify provisions of the current statute where ambiguity resulted in delays in services for homeless children and youths. The proposal will also increase transparency by requiring grantees to report on the academic outcomes for students served by the program.

*As the President points out, the story of the civil rights movement was written in our schools because "there is no stronger weapon against, and no better path to opportunity, than an education that can unlock a child's God-given potential." Few civil rights are as central to the cause of human freedom as equal educational opportunity. Freedom is ... the ability to think on your own and to pursue your own path as far as your gifts can take you—and only education can give you that freedom, can open those doors. If you cannot read, you are not truly free.*

—U.S. Secretary of Education Arne Duncan

## *Education for Neglected and Delinquent Children and Youths*

The proposal will continue and strengthen formula grants to states to improve educational services for students in state-operated institutions and community day programs for neglected or delinquent children and youths. To better direct funds to support students in locally operated institutions, the proposal will ask districts to reserve funds received under the College- and Career-Ready Students program to support programs conducted by locally operated institutions.

## *Education for Indian, Native Hawaiian, and Alaska Native Students*

The proposal for *ESEA* reauthorization will continue strong support—through formula and competitive grants to states; districts; Indian tribes; Indian institutions of higher education; Indian, Native Hawaiian, and Alaska Native educational and community-based organizations; and nonprofit organizations, agencies, and institutions—to help meet the unique needs of Indian students, Native Hawaiian students, and Alaska Native students.

Grantees under the Indian education program will have greater flexibility to use funds to carry out programs that meet the needs of Indian students, including Native language immersion and Native language restoration programs, and develop tribal-specific standards and assessments. The proposal will improve access to funds for Indian tribes under other *ESEA* programs, and recognize and strengthen the role of tribal education departments in coordinating and implementing services and programs for Indian students within their jurisdiction. To ensure that programs reflect the academic, language, and cultural needs of Indian students, the administration will continue to require the participation of the parents of Indian children in the design of programs. To support effective programs, we will expand eligibility to school districts and public charter schools under the Native Hawaiian and Alaska Native programs.

## *Education for Rural Students*

The proposal will continue formula grants to rural districts to address the specific needs of students in rural areas through the Small, Rural School Achievement (SRSA) and the Rural and Low-Income School (RLIS) programs. In order to improve targeting of funds, the administration will update the method used to identify districts as “rural.” To allow additional districts



needed flexibility, the proposal will also expand the current REAP-Flex (Rural Education Achievement Program-Flex) authority to districts that are eligible to receive funds under RLIS. This authority allows eligible small districts to use other federal education funds flexibly. In addition, the administration will better align the accountability requirements of the College- and Career-Ready Students program with the rural education program so that this program supports school improvement efforts in persistently low-performing districts.

To help rural districts apply for competitive grants and determine effective strategies for improving student academic achievement, the secretary may reserve funds for national activities, such as technical assistance and research on innovative programs, that are designed to help rural districts overcome common capacity constraints.

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For more information, go to [www.ed.gov](http://www.ed.gov) or call 1-800-USA-LEARN.

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