



# ESEA—A TOUGH ACT TO FOLLOW

## Examining 5 decades of federal education decision making

"You have to know the past to understand the present."

Dr. Carl Sagan  
Astronomer and Nobel Prize-winning author



The **Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA)** was passed in 1965 as a part of the "War on Poverty." ESEA emphasizes equal access to education and establishes high standards and accountability. The law authorizes federally funded education programs that are administered by the states.

### 46 Years of ESEA



1965 ESEA becomes law under **President Johnson**.



1974 **President Nixon** resigns without reauthorizing ESEA.

1974 **President Ford** signs ESEA reauthorization bill as one of his first acts.

1978 **President Carter** advocates concentration of Title I funds to districts with greatest numbers of low-income students.



1978 Carter signs ESEA reauthorization just before congressional elections.



1981 **President Reagan** reauthorized ESEA for six years with an automatic extension for a seventh year requiring states to define levels of student academic achievement.

1989 **President Bush** convenes Charlottesville (VA) Education Summit bringing together state governors to discuss America's international competitiveness and public school conditions.



1994 **President Clinton** creates Improving America's School Act (ESEA reauthorization), which concentrates more federal money to school districts with higher concentrations of low-income students. ESEA law also linked standards, testing, teacher training, curriculum, and accountability.



2001 **President Bush** renames ESEA reauthorization "No Child Left Behind" and signs it into law; testing is required in reading and math in grades 3-8 and establishes adequate yearly progress guidelines.

2007 ESEA reauthorization due but no congressional action taken

2011 ESEA still unauthorized five years after its original reauthorization date.

### The federal role in education policy...

...has grown tremendously



1969 **President Johnson** creates National Assessment of Education Progress (NAEP).

1969 Using administrative powers, **President Nixon** establishes voucher demonstration project/ public school choice and Experimental Schools Program.

1975 **President Ford** signs Individuals with Disabilities Education Act.

1979 **President Carter** creates cabinet-level Department of Education.

1981 **President Reagan** signs Education Consolidation and Improvement Act, giving states more control over fund allocations.

Carter increases federal funding for education



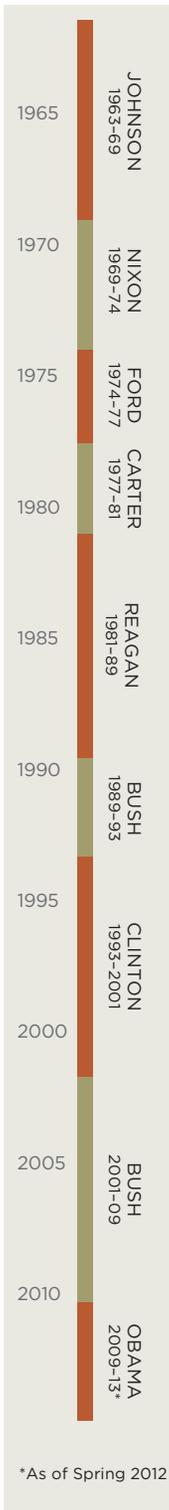
1991 U.S. Department of Education creates the National Council on Education Standards and Testing under **President Bush**.

1994 **President Clinton's** Goals 2000 initiative becomes law, establishing a framework to identify world-class academic standards, to measure student progress, and to provide the support that students may need to meet the standards.

2002 **President Bush** signs the Education Sciences Reform Act, which creates an Institute of Educational Sciences, headed by a presidentially appointed director for a six-year term.

2009 **President Obama** signs the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act; bill includes \$100 billion for education.

Majority of states agree to create Common Core State Standards.



\*As of Spring 2012

With ESEA reauthorization overdue by five years and the 2012 presidential election cycle in full swing, it's anyone's guess when the law will be reauthorized—and by whom.