ASCD Annual Conference

Education Politics and Policy

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The 113th Congress

- Democrats gained 2 seats: 55 Ds; 45 Rs
- 33% of members have served less than 3 years
- Democratic majority led by Sen. Reid (D-NV)
- Republican minority led by Sen. McConnell (R-KY)
Senate Results—What Do They Mean?

- Senate has 12 new members
- Senate Majority Leader Reid believes he has a larger mandate for Democratic positions:
  - Tax increases
  - Defense cuts; preserve entitlements
  - Education?
Senate Education Committee

- Chairman Tom Harkin (D-IA)
- Ranking Minority Member Sen. Lamar Alexander (R-TN)
The 2012 Elections--House

The 113th Congress

- Republican majority decreased by 8 seats: 234 Rs; 201 Ds
- Republicans – 234
- Democrats – 201
- Republican majority led by Rep. John Boehner (R-OH)
- Democratic minority led by Rep. Nancy Pelosi (D-CA)
House Results—What Do They Mean?

- 84 new members
- 43% of House members have served < 3 years
- Democrats won 1 million more votes than Republicans

**BUT---**

- House GOP maintains majority—Boehner believes GOP has a mandate to:
  - Cut Spending (entitlements and NDD)
  - Hold the line on tax increases—tax reform okay
  - Hold Democrats responsible for passing a budget
House Education Committee

- Chairman John Kline (R-MN)
- Ranking Minority Member George Miller (D-CA)
- New Elem & Secondary Subcommittee Chairman Todd Rokita (R-IN)
Obama and the Department of Education

Staying
Arne Duncan
Joanne Weiss, Chief of Staff
Deb Delisle, K-12

Leaving
Carmel Martin, Office of Planning & Policy
Karen Cator, Ed Tech
Peter Cunningham, Communications
Four more years of:

- Common Core
- Educator Effectiveness
- Data systems
- School turnaround
- Competitive grants
  - Race to the Top
  - Investing in Innovation
- NCLB waivers & flexibility
  - District waivers?
Administration’s 2\textsuperscript{nd} Term Education Priorities

New/expanded initiatives:

- Early childhood education
- Principal preparation and evaluation
- Teacher preparation programs
- College affordability and access
- School safety and mental health
ASCD’s 2013 Legislative Agenda

GUIDING PRINCIPLES FOR SUCCESS
As policymakers and stakeholders address these recommendations, the following guiding principles are key elements that will help ensure success for students, educators, and education systems.

Capacity for success. All school improvement strategies—particularly interventions focused on the lowest-performing schools—must inform and engage all stakeholders, support enriched curricula, enhance the school culture, provide high-quality teaching with ongoing professional learning to improve the quality of instruction, communicate with the press, and offer engaging learning opportunities that involve all students, families, and staff. Policymakers must provide sufficient time and resources for successful implementation of any capacity-building strategy, and such assistance must be mindful of and appropriate for local circumstances. In addition, districts and schools that consistently perform well, strive achievement gaps, succeed in cohort comparisons, or improve educator effectiveness should receive rewards and incentives, including flexibility in the use of federal funds.

Improving student outcomes. Like members of any highly skilled occupation, educators receive professional standards, workplace accountability, ongoing training, and leadership opportunities. Evaluations of teachers and administrators must use multiple measures and lead to professional development opportunities that build the capacity of districts and schools to improve student outcomes. At a minimum, professional development for educators requires dedicated school time and adequate resources and must include the knowledge and skills for planning and preparation, classroom management, instruction, and subject area content consistent with standards that prepare students for college and careers.

A whole child education. The demands of today’s global society require a new approach to education to fully prepare our children for college, careers, and citizenship. A whole child approach to education enhances learning by addressing each student’s social, emotional, physical, and academic needs. Educators, families, policymakers, and communities have a collective responsibility to work together to provide engaging learning opportunities that meet the needs of each student in his or her supporting environment. A comprehensive approach to learning recognizes that successful young people are knowledgeable, healthy, motivated, character-leaders, engaged in the arts, prepared for work and economic self-sufficiency, and ready for the world beyond their own borders.

Multiple measures. The true measure of students’ proficiency, educator effectiveness, and school quality must be based on more than just students’ test scores on a few standardized tests. A comprehensive picture of student achievement should track individual growth over time and could include portfolios, presentations, and summative assessments. Similarly, evaluating educators’ effectiveness must be based on a combination of elements and could include students’ performance, classroom observations, and staff feedback. Measures of school quality should also incorporate additional elements, such as school climate, accessibility of advanced courses, and graduation rates.

Support meaningful accountability systems. Any comprehensive assessment of student proficiency, school quality, or educator effectiveness must take into account student growth, use multiple measures of evaluation beyond standardized tests, and differentiate among levels of performance.

Promote comprehensive improvement strategies. Methods to improve student achievement, educator effectiveness, or school quality must be evidence-based, engage all stakeholders, including families and communities, and be grounded in a whole child approach to education. Interventions for those not meeting expectations need to be commensurate with their level of underperformance and existing needed support structures.

HELP EDUCATORS SUPPORT STUDENTS. The classroom teacher and school principal are the two most important in school factors affecting student achievement. As a result, the foremost strategy and funding priority must be adequate and effective preparation and ongoing professional development for educators to improve student outcomes.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR CONGRESS
The Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) is the cornerstone of federal K–12 education policy. Thus, the foremost priority for ASCD and its members in 2013 is for Congress to reauthorize ESEA with changes that incorporate the following recommendations. These changes will help provide the necessary stability and long-term vision for our education system to ensure that each student is healthy, safe, engaged, supported, and challenged.

A new law must be enacted this year to lift the flux of the current year, align, and support reform initiatives currently underway at the state and local levels, and guide subsequent revisions to federal programs, such as special education and career technical education.

EDUCATOR ADVOCATES
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ASCD’s 2013 Legislative Agenda

• Legislative Agenda
  – ASCD’s policy priorities for the year
  – Federally-focused but relevant to states
Recommendations

• Reauthorize ESEA Now
  – Waivers not a solution
  – Apply to ESEA and all federal education initiatives

• Support meaningful accountability systems
  – Differentiated accountability
Recommendations

• Promote comprehensive improvement strategies
  – Students, educators, schools

• Help educators support students
  – Preparation and PD should be foremost strategies
Guiding Principles

Elaborate on recommendations
Designed to be cross-cutting and apply to all recommendations.

• A Whole Child education
• Multiple measures
• Capacity for success
• Improving student outcomes
ESEA in the last Congress

**ESEA**
- Administration’s blueprint
- Senate committee passed bill
- House committee passed bill
- 35 state waivers

**Main themes**
- State discretion
- Accountability
- School turnaround improvement
- Teacher evaluations
ESEA in the last Congress

Education Committee
Agendas

Reauthorizations:
- ESEA
- IDEA
- Perkins (CTE)
- HEA
- Head Start

Waiver hearing already in Senate, likely to be addressed by House as well
Education Committee
Agendas

HEA—Access, accountability, and funding
IDEA—Alignment with ESEA
Perkins—alignment w/ CCCR standards (Common Career Technical Core)
HEAD START—Program quality & improvement (early learning challenge grants)
School safety issue—some bills moving forward in various committees
Education Funding

Education Funding—Sequestration

- 5%, across-the-board cuts to federal education programs
- Totals about $2.3 billion in cuts
- Effective March 1, 2013
- Cuts to education programs in 2013-14 school year
- Remainder of FY13—same levels
Sequestration Cuts

• Title I funding for disadvantaged students: -$769 million
• The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act: -$614 million
• Improving Teacher Quality State Grants: -$130 million
• Career and Technical Education: -$60 million
• 21st Century Community Learning Centers: -$61 million
• Teacher Incentive Fund: -$16 million

www.ascd.org/sequestration
NCLB Waivers

- 47 states have now submitted waiver applications
- 34 states and DC have received them
- Last 3: Pennsylvania, Texas, Wyoming
  - Texas not complying with college and career readiness, school improvement, or teacher eval requirements
- District waiver application submitted by 10 California districts: Los Angeles, San Francisco included
- 3 states have not applied: Montana, Nebraska, Vermont
NCLB Waivers

- Recent Senate hearing on waivers:
  - Alexander critical of waivers: “Mother May I” game
  - Harkin hopeful that waiver plans will provide some new ideas for ESEA reauthorization

- ASCD letter to Senate education committee members:
  - Waivers no substitute for ESEA reauthorization
  - New federal requirements never approved by Congress
  - Waivers temporary
  - Lack of staff and resources to implement
  - Overlaps and conflicts with other initiatives
ASCD Resources


Policy Priorities: http://www.ascd.org/Publications/Newsletters/Policy-Priorities/home.aspx
Questions?