

**THE CONTEXT
OF
FEDERAL EDUCATION
ACCOUNTABILITY REFORM**

**ACCOUNTABILITY PANEL
REACHING AT PROMISE
STUDENTS ASSOCIATION
NATIONAL CONFERENCE**

February 22, 2010

*Rick Clark
National Policy and
Program Liaison
SIATech*

RWCclark@aol.com

703-960-8689

ACCOUNTABILITY PANEL RAPSA

Historical Prospective of Elementary and Secondary Education Act

- Elementary and Secondary Education Act a Great Society program
- Assistance to schools with high populations of disadvantaged students
- Over 40 year history, morphed into complex educational prescriptions for states
 - dictated by power of the purse, and state needs for federal funds for education
 - 7 – 8 percent of total education dollars
- ESEA traditionally reauthorized at 5 year intervals

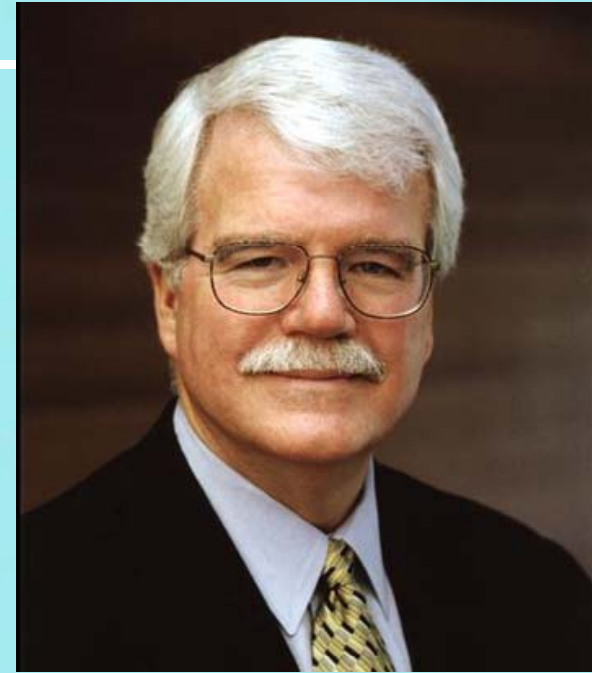


Bush administration No Child Left Behind

- From catch phase to unprecedented use of federal dollars to drive accountability
- Movement marked by goal of closing the achievement gap
- Goal previously approached through money, integration, compensatory education
- NCLB crossed line in unprecedented way into content of instruction
- Mandated standardized testing to measure progress toward grade level proficiency
- Imposed series of graduated sanctions on underperforming schools
 - viewed as overly punitive; source of opposition and controversial status

NCLB authorized in 2002, scheduled for reauthorization in 2007

- Reauthorization highly charged, not self executing
- Numerous hearings, stakeholder discussions in 2007-2008
- Chairman Miller circulated draft bill September 2008
- Coalesced opposition by major stakeholders – education associations, teachers unions, etc.
 - anticipated movement on reauthorization came to a screeching halt
- Slow down in the Senate, in part due to the declining health of HELP Committee Chairman, late Senator Ted Kennedy



Enter Obama administration: ambitious new take on reform/accountability

- Clear intent: overhaul the NCLB with own version of ESEA
- A comprehensive system of accountability again at the core
- Administration chose not to wait for reauthorization process to pursue reform
- Chose multiple fronts to drive new campaign for reform and accountability
- Vehicles were to include:
 - (1) American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA)
 - (2) Annual budget / appropriations process
 - (3) Proposed ESEA reauthorization



(V-1) ARRA education reform components – 2 key programs:

- ARRA Education Component #1: \$49 million state Stabilization Fund

- Required state assurances on improvement plans in 4 core areas of the Obama/Duncan plan:

(Core areas of commitment included:)

- A) Support of rigorous standards and assessments
- B) Improvement of teacher equity and effectiveness
- C) Use of data to improve instruction
- D) Commitment to turn around low performing schools

NOTE: See ADDENDUM for clarification of core component content

- ARRA Ed Component #2: \$4.35 billion Race to the Top Fund
[competitive grants for states]
 - “Carrot and cash” approach to goading states into creative implementation of the Administration’s 4 core reform areas
 - Largest single federal investment in school reform in U.S. history
 - Stimulating innovation, e.g., allowing data systems to link progress of individual students to specific teachers, and permitting more rapid expansion of charter schools
- Investing in Innovation (or I3) – RTTT supplemental program
 - earmarked \$650 million of RTTT funds for local school district partnerships with non profits
 - Mission of RTTT to spur action to close achievement gap, improve underperforming schools

V - 2 : FY 2011 Budget Proposal / Congressional Appropriations

(Sample Provisions)

- 1.35 billion to extend the Race to the Top for states – funding for more state applications, and opening up competition for local school districts
- \$ 500 million for extending the Innovation (I3)Fund for non profit partnerships,
- \$ 60 million applying the principles of Race to the Top to other federal programs [like DOL workforce development programs]
- \$ 350 million for state development of new generation of standards and assessments
- \$354.4 million for school turnarounds [lowest performing 5000 schools]
- \$ 80.9 million for replication of effective charter and alternative schools, and school choice

[Of special note: The [ESEA] reauthorization plan would replace “adequate yearly progress” with broader picture of school performance that looks at individual student growth and school progress.]

V- 3: Reauthorization of ESEA

- President Obama and Secretary Duncan have launched renewed campaign for reauthorization
- Major Factors Conditioning Prospects for Achieving Reauthorization – Substantive, Political, and Procedural
- Substantive Factors – Blueprint for change is fairly clear
 - 4 major component areas
 - challenge to states [including suggestions] for innovation in implementing components
- Procedural and Political factors equally or more important



Procedural Factors Effecting Reauthorization

- Timing of (a) common core state standards, and (b) grade-by-grade standards -- being led by National Governors Association and Council of Chief State School Officers
 - 38 states signed on
- Crowded schedule including Jobs Bill (priority), Workforce Investment Act Reauthorization, Annual appropriations bills, Health Care
- Mid-term election year – limited time for big issues

Political Factors Effecting Reauthorization

(Positive Factors)

- Perceived unreality of reaching proficiency by 2014
- Number of failing schools [relief a given, e.g., movement for reform of AYP]
- 40 states have submitted proposals for Race to the Top Funds

(Negative, Unreadiness Factors)

- Unprecedented success of partisanship: Republican's seeming commitment to no Democratic victories this mid-term election year
 - probable use of delaying tactics on any Democratic led bills
- * Non resolution of key issues
 - connecting teacher evaluation and pay to individual student progress
 - charter school facilitation, e.g., removal of caps, equalization of funding, authorization
- Uncertainty of long range funding for perpetuation of reforms

Case Study in state level fallout from Obama Administration reform – Washington State

- Governor proposed reforms in pursuit of Stimulus Act funds,
- State legislature proposing cuts to the basic education budget in the face of a \$2.7 billion deficit [contrary to maintenance of effort requirements]
- Obama requirement for expansion of charter schools up against three voter rejections of charter authorization law
- Teachers unions strongly opposing key reform components including (a) performance-based pay, and (b) principal and teacher evaluations based on student progress
 - viewed by union as unfair to teachers in underperforming schools
- Concern over federalization of core standards: Non advisability of taking federal money to implement new standards
 - unfair to to teachers working in underfunded or lower income districts
 - no assurance that the federal dollars will continue
- Washington legislature dominated by Democrats dependent on teacher union support, and strategically positioned in committee structure
- Senator Patti Murray key player on the Senate HELP committee

Texas State – Highly Publicized Refusal to Apply for Stimulus Funds for Education

- Texas would have to abandon own curriculum standards, other hard fought reforms in favor of national standards
- Texas' State Board recently adopted one of the nation's first college- and career-ready curriculum standards in core subjects
 - followed widespread input from Texas education and business leaders
 - a one time federal stimulus grant -- in \$ 750 million area – could cost Texas \$ 3 billion to realign its system with the single federal vision

*****Note:
in areas like

State opposition can be problematic [Bush Administration used waivers, pilot projects graduation calculation and assessment]



Soooooooo, WHO WILL WIN ??????????????????

Soooooooo, WHO WILL BE SERVED ??????????



OR



ADDENDUM

Clarification of the 4 Core Interconnected Components of the Obama Administration Reform Agenda:

1) **Reverse dumbing-down of academic standards and assessments by states, and achieve** common, internationally benchmarked K-12 standards

- Objective to prepare students for success in college, the workplace, and in participation in the global economy

- Drive for national standards being spearheaded by subgroups of the National Governors Association and Council of Chief State School Officers

- forty-eight states have now joined a nationwide partnership to develop a common set of rigorous, career-ready standards in reading and math

- states encouraged to to adopt challenging standards which prepare students for college and careers, and to adopt flexible assessments vs. current one size fits all

2) **Close data gap – build data system capacity** to track growth in student learning, inform and improve classroom instruction, and identify **effective instructional practices**

3) **Boost quality of teachers and principals in high-poverty schools and for hard-to-staff subjects; identify effective teachers and principals; and implement strategies for rewarding and retaining effective teachers and improving or replacing ineffective ones**

4) **Turn around low-performing schools** : states and districts must institute far-reaching reforms, from replacing staff and leadership to closing schools