



The undersigned organizations urge Congress to reauthorize the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) in a way that remedies implementation errors that have harmed English language learners (ELLs) and the education professionals who serve them. Specifically, Congress must amend ESEA to support the development and implementation of valid and reliable assessments for ELLs so that this large and growing student population may be fully and appropriately included in Title I academic accountability systems.

There are currently between 5 and 6 million English language learners enrolled in U.S. public schools, constituting over 10% of our total student population. Over the past fifteen years, ELL student enrollment has nearly doubled, and experts predict that one-quarter of our public school population will be made up of ELLs by 2025. ELLs' academic performance levels are significantly below those of their peers in nearly every measure of academic performance.

The undersigned civil rights and advocacy organizations, teachers' unions, and state and local education officials join together in support of the following principles regarding ELL policies that should guide Congress as it renews ESEA:

- 1) Under Title I of ESEA, schools must assess all ELLs (except those new to U.S. schools) on the same schedule as other students using valid and reliable academic content assessments;
- 2) Schools, school districts, and states must be held accountable for ELL academic performance, as measured by valid and reliable assessments (including native language assessments);
- 3) ELLs require academic content assessments that are specifically designed to reduce the effects of limited English proficiency upon the evaluation of academic performance;

- 4) The U.S. Department of Education must provide effective and ongoing technical assistance to State and Local Educational Agencies in the development and implementation of valid and reliable assessments for ELLs;
- 5) State Educational Agencies are obligated under the Elementary and Secondary Education Act to develop and implement valid and reliable academic assessments designed specifically to measure ELL academic proficiency, and they must commit to meeting this obligation;
- 6) Congress must reauthorize ESEA to provide a separate funding stream to assist states in developing and implementing valid and reliable academic assessments for ELLs;
- 7) Congress must reauthorize ESEA to ensure that educators are provided with professional development specifically designed to help them serve ELL students; and
- 8) Congress must provide additional resources for Title I and Title III so that ELL students have access to the full range of services to both reach English language proficiency and improve their academic performance.

In order for U.S. public schools to remain competitive in the global marketplace, we must significantly improve academic outcomes for our large and growing ELL student population.

Signed,

American Federation of Teachers (AFT)
Center for American Progress Action Fund (CAPAF)
Citizens' Commission on Civil Rights (CCCR)
Council of Chief State School Officers (CCSSO)
Leadership Conference on Civil Rights (LCCR)
League of United Latin American Citizens (LULAC)
Los Angeles Unified School District Board of Education (LAUSD)
Mexican American Legal Defense and Educational Fund (MALDEF)
National Council of La Raza (NCLR)
National Education Association (NEA)