

## Reauthorization Update

- ✓ **What Changes will the Reauthorization Bring**
- ✓ **Potential Timelines for Reauthorization**

- **What Changes Will the Reauthorization Bring?** – There are three key areas that we can look to in order to get an idea of what to expect when the reauthorization does occur.
  - ARRA
  - *A Blueprint for Reform*
  - 2011 Budget Appropriation
- **American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA)** – The American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) of 2009 provided a historic infusion of \$100 billion for education. Several of the programs created under the ARRA will undoubtedly remain intact in the reauthorization.

In particular, three key ARRA programs will remain a key focus over this next year and potentially be included in the reauthorization.

1. **Race to the Top State Application** – The federal Race to the Top grant is a competitive reform program enacted as part of the ARRA. To qualify, states must have no legal barriers to linking student growth and achievement data to teachers and principals for the purposes of evaluation. The Race to the Top program was a big winner in the 2011 appropriations.
2. **Investing In Innovation i3 Program** – The Investing in Innovation i3 is another program originally part of the ARRA legislation. In the past, the competition was only open to school districts and groups of school districts, not states.

To qualify, applicants must address one of the four key areas that are driving President Obama's education reform agenda: **building common standards and assessments, using data to improve student achievement, supporting effective teachers and principals, and turning around consistently low-performing schools.**

3. **Title I School Improvement Grant (SIG)** – The School Improvement Grants (SIG) were first authorized under the ARRA, strengthening a requirement for states to identify low performing schools. These schools are then categorized in Tiers I, II, and III.

Schools in Tiers I and II who apply for these school improvement funds are required to implement one of four specific models in their school. Schools in Tier III who apply for these school improvement funds do not have to implement one of the four models.

- ***A Blueprint for Reform*** – In March 2010, President Obama released *A Blueprint for Reform* regarding the reauthorization of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act. This document can be found at [www2.ed.gov/policy/elsec/leg/blueprint/index.html](http://www2.ed.gov/policy/elsec/leg/blueprint/index.html) on the USDE website.

If we look at the legislation passed in the ARRA, we can get a good idea of the scope of changes that will be a part of the reauthorized federal law. Listed below are some of the highlights:

#### What Stays:

- A Strong Focus on Standards – The new proposal continues to focus on the “common core standards initiative” to establish more uniform academic standards in reading and math to prepare students for college or a career.
- Annual Testing – The new proposal keeps the requirement for annual testing in reading and math in grades 3 through 8 and once in high school.
- Reporting Requirements – The new proposal keeps the requirement for disaggregating and reporting on student data for populations such as racial minorities, English-language learners, and students in special education.

#### What Changes:

- The Title I program would receive a new name and be called “College and Career Ready Students”.
  - The proposal eliminates the NCLB’s 2014 deadline for bringing all students to academic proficiency and replaces it with a goal of ensuring that all students are ready for college or a career by 2020.
  - It replaces the focus on teacher quality with teacher and principal effectiveness. States and districts would be required to publish, at least every two years, a performance level report card on teacher and principal effectiveness.
  - The ESEA reauthorization plan replaces Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) with a more comprehensive review of student performance that looks at student growth and school progress.
  - The new proposal places a focus on the nation’s lowest 5% of schools by requiring them to take drastic steps to improve.
- **2011 Federal Budget** – On April 15, 2011, President Obama signed the budget agreement which provides federal funding for the 2011-2012 school year. The final bill cut approximately \$38 billion in federal funding. Many education programs were eliminated and several others received a cut in funding.

There were a few programs that received additional funding. These programs include:

- Race to the Top
- Head Start
- Investing in Innovation (i3)
- Promise Neighborhoods

Looking at the outcome of the 2011 federal appropriations gives us a glimpse as to where the priorities exist for funding. One point worth mentioning is the change in focus on secondary education. With the name change for Title I and the strong emphasis on SIG (i.e., Tier I, II, III), there is a concentrated effort to focus on preparing high school students for life after graduation.

- **Potential Timelines for a Reauthorization?** – Every five to seven years, all of the federal programs included in the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) are reauthorized. This process provides Congress and others an opportunity to make changes to the federal programs. The last reauthorization, known as *No Child Left Behind* (NCLB), was signed by President Bush on January 8, 2002.

The reauthorization was supposed to have occurred in the spring of 2008; however, was delayed because of the presidential election. It was then further delayed due to the enactment of the *American Recovery and Reinvestment Act* (ARRA) in February 2009.

When President Obama released *A Blueprint for Reform*, it seemed like the catalyst needed to make the reauthorization happen; however, nothing concrete transpired.

Currently, there appears to be three possibilities as to when the next ESEA Reauthorization might occur.

1. There are analysts who believe that it may be possible for Congress to meet the president's goal which is a comprehensive, bipartisan reauthorization by the start of the 2011-2012 school year. Although possible, this scenario seems unlikely. Neither the House's nor the Senate's education committee has released a comprehensive reauthorization bill, although, lawmakers are said to be working on targeted legislation dealing with important pieces of the ESEA. Each week that passes by without a draft reauthorization proposal lessens the likelihood of a fall 2011 reauthorization.
2. Reportedly, the House Education and the Workforce Committee has said they would like to break the ESEA-reauthorization bill into several smaller bills. There are reports that the House is working on a series of bills to begin reauthorizing the ESEA. The first bill has already been released and will focus on eliminating a number of smaller education programs that lawmakers say aren't effective. Most of these programs were those eliminated in the 2011 budget. The second bill is said to pertain to flexibility in allowing districts more leeway to transfer federal funds from one program to another. Reportedly, another bill in the series that is being drafted is an Assessment Bill. It may be easier to pass a series of smaller bills than one big comprehensive reauthorization bill.
3. Still others predict that if the reauthorization doesn't occur this year, it could then be delayed until 2013, after the presidential election. If we don't see a reauthorization by late fall 2011, the focus will shift to the 2012 presidential elections and it would be difficult to focus on a bill to reauthorize ESEA.