



Legislation Update!

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Parent Involvement Initiative for NCLB reauthorization

As Congress moves towards reauthorization of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA), reauthorized in 2001 as the No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB), PTA has crafted specific recommendations to improve the parent involvement provisions within the law. While ensuring local flexibility, PTA recommends creating a system of accountability designed to encourage parents to be active partners in their child's education.

Studies have documented that regardless of the economic, ethnic, or cultural background of the family, parent involvement in a child's education is a major factor in determining success in school. Successful parental involvement strategies vary from region to region, school to school and this flexibility needs to be supported by the law.

Though Congress cannot mandate parental engagement, PTA believes that the government can and must provide parents multiple opportunities to be active participants in their child's education. PTA's recommendations for the ESEA-NCLB reauthorization are built on four core principles:

- ★ More accountability to parents - Parents must be better informed of what is going on in their child's school and each state must hold schools accountable for implementing their parent involvement plans.
- ★ Better data through a more understandable delivery system - Information from school accountability systems should be geared towards informing parents' since parents have the primary decision making responsibility for their child's education.
- ★ Better resources to help teachers and parents - Parental Information and Resource Centers and other existing state and local resources with expertise in parent engagement and community outreach should be better utilized as part of the solution. Further, teachers need better preparation on how to engage and develop positive partnerships with parents to support active parent participation in their child's education.
- ★ Community support - Schools need to be an active, essential part of a community again. Residents, businesses, and organizations in the community must collaborate with schools in making the schools more successful, and must understand that they have a stake in children's education.