What’s In a Name?
No Child Left Behind
and Today’s Teachable Moment:

A discussion of education reform and opportunities in the context of today’s political and cultural landscape

Program on Education Policy and Governance
October 13, 2010
## Looking Back as We Look Forward

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Today’s Issues</th>
<th>How they Began</th>
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<tr>
<td>Accountability</td>
<td>States such as Texas and North Carolina; Continued with passage of NCLB in 2001</td>
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<tr>
<td>Innovation/ Charter Schools</td>
<td>Started in mid-90’s; Expanded greatly under NCLB and continues to expand, in large part by the administration’s “Race to the Top” initiative</td>
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<td>Teacher Effectiveness</td>
<td>The Teacher Incentive Fund began in 2006 and, continued under the Obama administration, now totals $442M</td>
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## K-12 Policy Today: Major Issues

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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<th>Current Law</th>
<th>Obama Proposal</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Accountability</strong></td>
<td>• All students in all subgroups on grade level by 2014;</td>
<td>• <em>Goal</em> of students &quot;college and career-ready&quot; by 2020;</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) targets and consequences for failure for all schools</td>
<td>• Eliminate AYP – consequences for bottom 5%, rewards for top 10% of schools</td>
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<td><strong>Standards and Tests</strong></td>
<td>• Each state required to establish standards and administer annual tests in reading and math</td>
<td>• Maintain requirement for standards and annual tests in reading and math, expand to other subjects, incent common standards</td>
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<td><strong>Teachers</strong></td>
<td>• Highly Qualified Teachers;</td>
<td>• Effective Teachers evaluated in part on student achievement;</td>
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<td>• Teacher Incentive Fund</td>
<td>• Expand Teacher Incentive Fund</td>
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<td><strong>Student Options</strong></td>
<td>• Schools missing targets <em>must</em> offer free tutoring and school transfer options;</td>
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### Elements We Must Preserve

- **Attitude:** We cannot begin to reauthorize NCLB with the assumption that some students cannot learn. All students are capable of learning and every child matters.

- **Measurement:** We must continue to require annual testing, disaggregated data, and clear and objective measures of student achievement that are understandable to parents and the public. We must also continue to keep an appropriate federal/state role.

- **2014:** Abandoning the goal of proficiency by 2014 on current standards and assessments goes against the very principles of No Child Left Behind. Both keeping 2014 and raising standards are possible—they are not mutually exclusive.

- **Accountability:** There must be consequences for failure to improve student performance.

- **Empowering Parents:** We must not retreat from providing high quality, customized options for parents, including charter schools, public school choice, and free after-school tutoring. Ignoring failure is not an option.

### Elements That Should Change

- **Growth:** We must reward educators for increases in student achievement from year to year while still holding true to grade-level proficiency expectations.

- **Differentiation:** We must do a better job of allowing states to distinguish between those schools in improvement that need substantial help and those close to meeting achievement goals; e.g. dropout factories need significant intervention, but schools missing AYP in one category don’t need a complete overhaul.

- **High School and College Readiness:** We must do a better job of holding high schools accountable, accurately measuring graduation rates, and increasing rigor in high schools to ensure students are prepared for college and the workforce.

- **Teachers:** We must reward effective teachers who raise student achievement, especially in the most challenging schools, instead of focusing on inputs.

- **Special Populations:** We must do a better job of using high-quality assessments to improve instruction and measure achievement for special education and LEP students.
High Standards via Common Standards: What’s the Plan?

The Obama Administration has called for “College and Career Ready Standards” via the Common Standards Initiative. High standards are important, but how will we get from here to there?

Current Status:
- Led by NGA and CCSSO
- 35 states and DC have adopted the standards
- Standards in Math and English released in June 2010

Even with the standards finalized, there are an overwhelming number of logistics to consider:

- Setting grade level performance standards
- Creating assessments aligned to those standards
- Setting cut scores on the assessments
- Setting goals for school and student population success
- Grading schools on their progress to these goals
- Setting an ultimate goal (like 2014), or is any improvement enough?
- A system of consequences for not making progress with enforcement measures
- Professional development for four million teachers
- New textbooks and materials

We cannot afford to weaken the current system while we wait to accomplish this long list.
States Need Prodding

Left to their own devices, many states don’t subscribe to getting students on grade-level to the current standards and assessments:

40 states expected less than 75% of their students to be proficient in at least one core subject in 2008. Five states expected fewer than half of students to be on grade-level.

Virginia has requested to freeze targets for 2010 (at 79% for math and 81% for reading) until reauthorization occurs, and to determine targets for future years later.

When requesting a growth model, Utah requested to have the goal of only 75% of students on grade level.

Oklahoma repeatedly asked to increase their n-size from 30 to 100, despite being turned down year after year. The average across all states is approximately 30.
Waiting for Superman