



Volume 7, Issue # 10

Issues Update – October 2011

I. Common Core Standards/Next Gen Science Standards

- [Project Aims to Tie Teacher Prep to Common Math Standards](#) – (10/14/11) – Education Week -A higher education group has launched an [initiative](#) to prepare new secondary math teachers to incorporate common core standards into the classroom. The Mathematics Teacher Education Partnership aims to redesign teacher preparation programs through a collaborative approach that brings together colleges, middle and high schools, and other organizations.
- [New Science Preparation Standards for Preservice Teachers Adopted](#) – (10/11/11) – NSTA Reports - At NSTA's National Congress on Science Education in Baltimore this July, the NSTA Board of Directors adopted new science teacher preparation standards to be used with the National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE) standards to accredit science teacher education programs.

II. Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA/ NCLB)

- [Amendments Tackle School Improvement and Highly Qualified Teachers](#) – (10/24/11) – Capitol Connections ASCD - During its deliberations of the Harkin-Enzi bill, the Senate Education Committee considered dozens of amendments to the legislation. Among the most notable to pass— Senator Bob Casey's (D-PA) **well-rounded education amendment**, which creates a grant program under which states can partner with nonprofits, postsecondary institutions, and other entities to increase access and achievement in the arts, civics and government, economics, environmental education, financial literacy, foreign languages, geography, health education, history, physical education, and social studies. Senator Kay Hagan's (D-NC) **turnaround principals amendment**, which requires new principals who enter turnaround schools to have a background in school improvement. And Senator Lamar Alexander's **school improvement amendment**, which allows states to develop their own turnaround models for schools in the bottom 5 percent of performance.
- [Obama Administration Concerned With Harkin-Enzi Accountability](#) – (10/21/11) – Education Week – The Obama administration is less than thrilled with the accountability provisions in the ESEA-reauthorization bill passed out of the Senate education committee in mid October. The Administration's Education Department quietly updated its blog to reflect that they would like to see stronger accountability provisions in the rewrite of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act. The administration sent a statement to reporters on Oct. 17 citing concerns with the [changes](#) to teacher evaluation in the measure.

- **[Senate Education Committee Approves NCLB Rewrite, Sends Bill to Full Senate Floor](#)**– (10/20/11) – Capitol Connections ASCD -The Senate Education Committee approved [comprehensive legislation](#) to rewrite the No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB) on Thursday after months of bipartisan negotiation and mounting pressure from educators and the Obama administration to fix troublesome aspects of the law. The bill passed on a 15–7 vote with three Republicans—Senators Mike Enzi (WY), Lamar Alexander (TN), and Mark Kirk (IL)—joining all of the committee’s Democrats in support of the measure. Committee Chairman Tom Harkin (D-IA) wants the full Senate to approve the bill before Thanksgiving. He’s also met with House Education Committee leaders and is hopeful that a bipartisan Senate bill can help spur the other chamber to action.
- **[Civil Rights, State Chiefs, Business Groups Oppose Harkin-Enzi Bill](#)**– (10/19/11) – Education Week - A broad basket of groups, including Chiefs for Change, the U.S. Chamber of Commerce, the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, the National Down Syndrome Society, Democrats for Education Reform, the Leadership Conference on Civil Rights, and The Education Trust today officially came out against a bill sponsored by U.S. Sens. Tom Harkin, D-Iowa, and Michael B. Enzi, R-Wyo. The groups are chiefly objecting to the bill's accountability provisions, which would refocus the federal role on only the lowest performing schools, leaving states to decide how and whether to intervene in the vast majority of schools. The groups are worried that could mean that particular groups of students who they say were swept under the rug before the No Child Left Behind Act would again be overlooked.
- **[STEM Heavily Featured in New ‘No Child’ Legislation](#)**–(10/14/11) – U.S. News and World Report -After months of prodding from President Obama and Secretary of Education Arne Duncan, it looks like Congress is finally getting around to reworking the Elementary and Secondary Education Act, more popularly known as No Child Left Behind, the much-maligned law that has governed K-12 education since it went into effect in early 2002.
- **[41 Applicants Lining Up for NCLB Waivers](#)**– (10/13/11) – Education Week – October 12 was the deadline for states to give the U.S. Department of Education a heads-up that they want to apply for a [waiver under the No Child Left Behind Act](#), and 37 states, the District of Columbia, and Puerto Rico say they plan to go ahead. These notices of "intent" to apply aren't binding—and would-be applicants can change their minds and decide to apply, or not to apply. But the list gives an early indication of the status of waiver interest across the country. [The waivers would offer added flexibility under the law, in exchange for](#) adopting certain education-reform conditions. The rest of the states didn't file a notice of intent, which is merely a courtesy for the department.
- **[Senate ESEA Draft Bill Would Scrap Adequate Yearly Progress](#)**– (10/11/11) – Education Week - The accountability system at the heart of the No Child Left Behind Act would be completely reinvented under a draft reauthorization [proposal](#) released by U.S. Sen. Tom Harkin, D-Iowa, the chairman of the Senate Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions Committee. The bill would also; codify the Race to Top, Investing in Innovation, and Promise Neighborhood programs, all top Obama administration reform initiatives; require states to set college- and career-readiness standards, either with other states or alone; largely keep the law's testing system in place, but eliminate the 2013-14 deadline for bringing all students to proficiency in math and reading; and require states to develop new teacher evaluation systems.

III. Educate to Innovate, Race to the Top and i3

- **[Early-Learning Race to Top Contests: 35 State Applicants](#)**– (10/20/11) – Education Week - Thirty-five states, plus the District of Columbia, are vying for a piece of the \$500 million [Race to the Top Early Learning Challenge](#), a competition meant to spawn innovative approaches for improving the skills and development of young children. The contest has drawn applications from

states with very different early-childhood education systems. Applicants will be eligible for early-learning awards worth between \$50 million and \$100 million, based on the details of the state's proposal and its population of children from disadvantaged backgrounds.

- [**Extra Credit? Malloy's Race to Top Bid Has a Surprise**](#)– (10/20/11) – ConnecticutMirror -Connecticut Governor Dannel P. Malloy is sweetening its application for a \$50 million Race to the Top grant by pledging to expand preschool programs, something not required under the competition rules. The governor committed to fund 1,000 new early childhood education slots targeted to high-need children, at a cost of \$12 million annually.
- [**States Rewrite Education Rules, with or without Race to the Top**](#)– (10/19/11) – Stateline - Some of the states rejected for Race to the Top grants are proceeding to revamp their school systems anyway — in some cases more ambitiously than states that won. One year later, officials in several of these states say they're proceeding with plans outlined in their grant applications, albeit at a slower pace than they might have hoped for.

IV. Other Federal

- [**Reframing the 'Stem Shortage' Debate**](#)–(10/20/11) – Inside Higher Ed -Is the U.S. producing too few workers in science and other technical fields? A new Georgetown University's Center on Education and the Workforce [study](#) says that question misses the point: The country needs more graduates with STEM competencies than it does actual scientists per se.
- [**The 'E' \(and 'T'\) in STEM Get a Boost With \\$1 Million Gift**](#)– (10/7/11) – Education Week - The Engineering is Elementary program will see its reach extend with a \$1 million grant from Raytheon Co. announced yesterday. The money will support increased teacher training through the establishment of professional development centers in Washington, D.C.; Phoenix, Ariz.; and Huntsville, Ala.
- [**STEM Ed. Among Cuts Sought in Draft House Budget Plan**](#)– (10/3/11) – Education Week - The \$175 million Mathematics and Science Partnerships program at the U.S. Department of Education is among the casualties in a draft budget bill released recently by the House Appropriations Committee.

V. Other State

- [**Out with Textbooks, in with Laptops for an Indiana School District**](#)–(10/18/11) – NewYork Times -Unlike the tentative, incremental steps of digital initiatives at many schools, Munster, Indiana made an all-in leap in a few months - removing all math and science textbooks in grades 5 to 12. Florida, Louisiana, Utah and West Virginia approved multimedia textbooks for the first time for 2011-12, and Indiana went so far as to scrap its textbook-approval process altogether.
- [**Educators Meet on How to Improve STEM Learning**](#)– (10/11/11) – ABC -7, KGO-TV, California - For years we've heard complaints about California students falling behind in science, math and engineering. Monday, educators, business people and philanthropic leaders met at UC Davis to figure out what to do about it.

Sources

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