

# **Forum on Educational Accountability**

***www.edaccountability.org***

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## **MOVEMENT TO OVERHAUL “NO CHILD LEFT BEHIND” ACCELERATES; 128 NATIONAL EDUCATION, CIVIL RIGHTS, RELIGIOUS, DISABILITY, LABOR & CIVIC GROUPS REPRESENTING MORE THAN 50 MILLION MEMBERS URGE REPLACING FAILED TEST-SCORE SANCTIONS WITH SYSTEMATIC REFORMS**

As U.S. Senate and House committees consider revisions to the federal “No Child Left Behind” (NCLB) law, 128 national education, civil rights, religious, civic, labor and disability groups have now signed on to a Joint Organizational Statement on NCLB, which states “the law’s emphasis needs to shift from applying sanctions for failing to raise test scores to holding states and localities accountable for making the systemic changes that improve student achievement.”

Together, the signing organizations represent a non-overlapping membership of more than 50 million Americans

The number of organizational signers has expanded by more than two dozen since the beginning of this year and more than quadrupled since the statement was launched in late 2004. The rapid growth reflects growing pressure for Congress to make significant changes in NCLB.

Recent signers include the AFL-CIO, American Civil Liberties Union, American Federation of Teachers, Council of Administrators of Special Education, Organization of Chinese Americans, National Association of Secondary School Principals, and Public Education Network.

The Joint Statement outlines 14 recommended changes to NCLB including:

- Replace over-reliance on standardized tests with the use of multiple achievement measures in order to provide a more comprehensive picture of student and school performance.
- Supplant arbitrary proficiency targets with ambitious achievement targets based on rates of success actually achieved by the most effective public schools.

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- Authorize interventions that enable schools to make changes that result in improved student achievement instead of sanctions that do not have a consistent record of success.
- Enhance the knowledge and skills teachers, administrators and families need to support high student achievement and improve state and district capacity to assist them.
- Increase NCLB funding to cover a substantial percentage of the costs that states and districts will incur to carry out these recommendations.

Working together as the Forum on Education Accountability (FEA), many of the Joint Statement signers have submitted detailed NCLB overhaul proposals to the Congressional committees reviewing the law. Earlier this year, FEA released “Redefining Accountability,” recommending two dozen “fundamental reforms” in NCLB’s provisions for professional development, family involvement and accountability. In mid-June a panel of academic experts commissioned by FEA will release detailed recommendations for overhauling the assessment provisions of NCLB.

The “Joint Organizational Statement,” a current list of its signers, the FEA report “Redefining Accountability” and other materials are online at <http://www.edaccountability.org>