

Forum on Educational Accountability

<http://www.edaccountability.org>

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FORUM ON EDUCATIONAL ACCOUNTABILITY BACKS CIVIL RIGHTS GROUPS CALL FOR “MULTIPLE MEASURES” IN “NO CHILD LEFT BEHIND” REAUTHORIZATION; MULTIPLE INDICATORS OF ACHIEVEMENT “WILL RAISE REAL STANDARDS”

The Forum on Educational Accountability (FEA) today called on members of Congress to support “the inclusion of multiple forms of assessment and multiple indicators of student and school achievement in any reauthorization of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act.” FEA works to implement the Joint Organizational Statement on No Child Left Behind (NCLB), now signed by 140 national education, civil rights, religious, disability, parent, civic and labor groups with more than 50 million members.

Noting that proposals for multiple indicators have recently come under attack, the FEA letter said critics “misrepresent both the ideas and their breadth of support. In fact, most civil rights organizations and leaders join education, religious and other groups in supporting multiple measures of academic performance.”

FEA documented the large number of civil rights groups which signed onto the Joint Statement’s call for “moving from an overwhelming reliance on standardized tests to using multiple indicators of student achievement.” These include the NAACP, League of United Latin American Citizens, National Urban League, Asian American Legal Defense and Education Fund, ASPIRA and the National Alliance of Black School Educators. The Joint Statement also backs efforts to help states “develop assessment systems that include district and school-based measures in order to provide better, more timely information about student learning.”

The FEA letter explained, “In virtually every business field and in academic research, multiple measures are accepted as a matter of course, a minimal requirement. Business groups regularly employ multiple indicators to determine progress. Researchers use multiple forms of evidence to test their hypotheses. All these sectors recognize that relying on one kind of measure in only one or two areas is dangerous.”

“Using assessments that require students to think and apply knowledge, best done through local assessments, will raise real standards.” The FEA letter concluded, “It should not be acceptable for any child to have her education reduced to test preparation in two subjects.”

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* The letter to Congress, the Joint Statement on NCLB, a complete list of signers, and other Forum on Educational Accountability documents are available online at www.edaccountabilty.org

