



Public Education A National Priority

In keeping with the United States Constitution:

- ★ Authority for public education rests at the state level.
- ★ Local school boards must have final responsibility and freedom in the design and implementation of programs and assessment methods.
- ★ The principle of separation of church and state, as interpreted by the United States Supreme Court, must be maintained.

To provide all citizens with equitable opportunities to learn and to compete successfully in the global economy:

<p>The federal government should provide resources to cover the costs that states and school districts will incur from any federally-mandated program.</p>	<p>Any federal legislation not fully funded should be in the form of a recommendation, not a mandate. NCLB is not being funded as intended and promised. IDEA has never been funded at the 40% level as intended and promised. Funding for IDEA should be a mandatory item in the federal budget. The 2005 IDEA re-authorization has shifted responsibility for costs of its mandated services to non-public students from the district wherein students reside to the district wherein the school is sited, thus unfairly transferring the costs of these services to those districts that have more such non-public schools. Changes in education law have made public schools into social service agencies, shifting the cost of social service programs to school districts. Funding for these special services do not follow the students, so the costs for these expensive programs are now covered largely through local property taxes.</p>
<p>The federal government should provide support, not penalties as enacted in NCLB, to ensure that higher learning standards are met.</p>	<p>NCLB's adequate yearly progress (AYP) standard does not adequately reflect the success of a school's program. NCLB's current process for measuring achievement will result in all schools ultimately being designated as failing by requiring 100% compliance without exception. A planned consequence of this failure of public schools is transfer of financial resources to charter schools or private managers, neither of which have proven themselves to be more effective than public schools. The scope of NCLB should not be expanded until current issues with the law are resolved. One such issue is the lack of consistency in granting waivers from parts of the law.</p>
<p>The federal government should provide full financial support for—</p>	<p>Any federal initiative that would benefit public school construction, modernization, and safety in areas of high concentrations of poverty. Rapid enrollment growth resulting from federal immigration laws strains public school resources. Carl D. Perkins Vocational Educational Act, including the Applied Technology Education Amendments of 1989; Free and reduced-cost lunches and breakfasts for school children, paid directly to school districts. Preschool programs such as Head Start and Even Start Programs. Evidence indicates that for disadvantaged preschoolers, early education enhances the likelihood of their academic achievement.</p>

MCSBA OPPOSES any funding streams, such as vouchers and education tax credits, that divert funds and distract attention from public education.

MCSBA opposes UNFUNDED and UNDER-FUNDED MANDATES.

Members of Congress need to KNOW the impact of any legislation on their constituent school districts before they vote to approve it.

Money is a limited resource. - Laws that impose new financial obligations on school districts create an unfair burden on local taxpayers.

Time is an irreplaceable resource. - Laws that continuously require the reallocation of staff time burden human resources.

Unfunded and under funded mandates cause local property taxes to rise.

Members of Congress should consider potential laws in the context of all existing laws and mandates. In many instances new requirements differ only slightly from existing district programs and force unnecessary duplication of effort to comply with new regulations.

MONROE COUNTY SCHOOL BOARDS ASSOCIATION

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