



Council of the Great City Schools®

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December 1, 2015

The Honorable John Kline
Chairman
Education and Workforce Committee
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Lamar Alexander
Chairman
Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions Committee
U.S. Senate
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Robert Scott
Ranking Member
Education and Workforce Committee
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Patty Murray
Ranking Member
Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions Committee
U.S. Senate
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Chairman Kline, Chairman Alexander, Congressman Scott, and Senator Murray:

The Council of the Great City Schools, the coalition of the nation's largest central city school districts, writes to express support for the pending conference agreement on the Every Student Succeeds Act, albeit with reservations.

The conference agreement will override the inconsistent and arbitrary waiver regime that now dominates the implementation of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA). School districts should now benefit from the longer-term framework for ESEA that this reauthorization provides, as long as States do not overregulate the new 2015 amendments.

The Great City Schools proposed nearly fifty recommendations to the managers of the conference committee. Some were adopted in whole, some were adopted in part, and some were not adopted at all. The final conference agreement, however, includes a number of unnecessary provisions and a few troubling ones that school districts will find difficult to implement.

Nonetheless, the Council recognizes that the pending Every Student Succeeds Act represents the most practical opportunity for Congress to replace the NCLB Act, and we recommend favorable action in both House and Senate.

Sincerely,

Michael Casserly
Executive Director