

**From:** [John Bailey <john.bailey@dutkograyling.com>](mailto:john.bailey@dutkograyling.com)  
**To:** [Barresi, Janet <jcb@sde.ok.gov>](mailto:Barresi,Janet@jcb@sde.ok.gov)  
[Barresi, Janet Asst Becky Woodie <becky.woodie@sde.ok.gov>](mailto:Barresi,JanetAsstBeckyWoodie@becky.woodie@sde.ok.gov)  
[Barresi, Janet Comm Dir Damon Gardenhire <damon.gardenhire@sde.ok.gov>](mailto:Barresi,JanetCommDirDamonGardenhire@damon.gardenhire@sde.ok.gov)  
[Barresi, Janet COS Jennifer Carter <jennifer.carter@sde.ok.gov>](mailto:Barresi,JanetCOSJenniferCarter@jennifer.carter@sde.ok.gov)  
[Bennett, Tony <tb@doe.in.gov>](mailto:Bennett,Tony@tb@doe.in.gov)  
[Bennett, Tony Asst Debbie Downing <ddowning@doe.in.gov>](mailto:Bennett,TonyAsstDebbieDowning@ddowning@doe.in.gov)  
[Bennett, Tony Asst Jennifer Outlaw <joutlaw@doe.in.gov>](mailto:Bennett,TonyAsstJenniferOutlaw@joutlaw@doe.in.gov)  
[Bennett, Tony COS Heather Neal <hneal@doe.in.gov>](mailto:Bennett,TonyCOSHeatherNeal@hneal@doe.in.gov)  
[Bowen, Stephen <stephen.bowen@maine.gov>](mailto:Bowen,Stephen@stephen.bowen@maine.gov)  
[Bowen, Stephen <stephenbowen@myfairpoint.net>](mailto:Bowen,Stephen@stephenbowen@myfairpoint.net)  
[Cerf, Chris <cdcerf@gmail.com>](mailto:Cerf,Chris@cdcerf@gmail.com)  
[Cerf, Chris Asst Helene Leona <helene.leona@doe.state.nj.us>](mailto:Cerf,ChrisAsstHeleneLeona@helene.leona@doe.state.nj.us)  
[Cerf, Chris Dep Comm Sp Asst Mamie Doyle <mamie.doyle@doe.state.nj.us>](mailto:Cerf,ChrisDepCommSpAsstMamieDoyle@mamie.doyle@doe.state.nj.us)  
[Cerf, Chris Special Asst Andrew Smarick <andrew.smarick@doe.state.nj.us>](mailto:Cerf,ChrisSpecialAsstAndrewSmarick@andrew.smarick@doe.state.nj.us)  
[Gist, Deborah <Deborah.Gist@ride.ri.gov>](mailto:Gist,Deborah@Deborah.Gist@ride.ri.gov)  
[Huffman, Kevin <Kevin.S.Huffman@tn.gov>](mailto:Huffman,Kevin@Kevin.S.Huffman@tn.gov)  
[Huffman, Kevin COS Emily Barton <emily.barton@tn.gov>](mailto:Huffman,KevinCOSEmilyBarton@emily.barton@tn.gov)  
[Pastorek, Paul <pastorekpg@gmail.com>](mailto:Pastorek,Paul@pastorekpg@gmail.com)  
[Pastorek, Paul Asst Christina Rose <christina.rose@eads-na.com>](mailto:Pastorek,PaulAsstChristinaRose@christina.rose@eads-na.com)  
[Robinson, Gerard <gtr924@aol.com>](mailto:Robinson,Gerard@gtr924@aol.com)  
[Robinson, Gerard scheduler Joseph Morgan <joseph.morgan@fldoe.org>](mailto:Robinson,GerardSchedulerJosephMorgan@joseph.morgan@fldoe.org)  
[Robinson, Gerard Scheduler Nyla Benjamin <nyla.benjamin@fldoe.org>](mailto:Robinson,GerardSchedulerNylaBenjamin@nyla.benjamin@fldoe.org)  
[Skandera, Hanna <hanna.skandera@state.nm.us>](mailto:Skandera,Hanna@hanna.skandera@state.nm.us)  
[Skandera, Hanna COS Cathie Carothers <cathie.carothers@state.nm.us>](mailto:Skandera,HannaCOSCathieCarothers@cathie.carothers@state.nm.us)  
[Skandera, Hanna Policy Leighann Lenti <leighann.lenti@state.nm.us>](mailto:Skandera,HannaPolicyLeighannLenti@leighann.lenti@state.nm.us)  
[Skanders, Hanna Scheduler Bernadette Tennyson <bernadette.tennyson@state.nm.us>](mailto:Skanders,HannaSchedulerBernadetteTennyson@bernadette.tennyson@state.nm.us)  
[Smith, Eric <drericjsmith@gmail.com>](mailto:Smith,Eric@drericjsmith@gmail.com)  
**CC:** [Bowen asst Georgette Valliere <georgette.valliere@maine.gov>](mailto:BowenAsstGeorgetteValliere@georgette.valliere@maine.gov)  
[Bowen Scheduler Sandra Moreau <sandra.moreau@maine.gov>](mailto:BowenSchedulerSandraMoreau@sandra.moreau@maine.gov)  
[Teixeira, Angela <Angela.Teixeira@ride.ri.gov>](mailto:Teixeira,Angela@Angela.Teixeira@ride.ri.gov)  
[Jamroz, Hayley <Hayley.Jamroz@ride.ri.gov>](mailto:Jamroz,Hayley@Hayley.Jamroz@ride.ri.gov)  
[Huffman asst Janice Mann <janice.mann@tn.gov>](mailto:HuffmanAsstJaniceMann@janice.mann@tn.gov)  
[Christy Hovanetz <christyh@excelined.org>](mailto:ChristyHovanetz@christyh@excelined.org) [chovanetz2@meridianstrategiesllc.com](mailto:chovanetz2@meridianstrategiesllc.com)  
[dfinn@excelined.org](mailto:dfinn@excelined.org)  
[Erin@excelined.org](mailto:Erin@excelined.org)  
[fonda@excelined.org](mailto:fonda@excelined.org)  
[MarcieBrown <mbrown@doe.in.gov>](mailto:MarcieBrown@mbrown@doe.in.gov)  
[jaryn@excelined.org](mailto:jaryn@excelined.org)  
[Joanna@afloridapromise.org](mailto:Joanna@afloridapromise.org)  
[John Bailey <john.bailey@dutkograyling.com>](mailto:JohnBailey@john.bailey@dutkograyling.com)  
[mandy@excelined.org](mailto:mandy@excelined.org)  
[MaryLaura@excelined.org](mailto:MaryLaura@excelined.org)  
[ladner55@gmail.com](mailto:ladner55@gmail.com)  
[Matthew Ladner \(Matthew@Excelined.org\) <Matthew@excelined.org>](mailto:MatthewLadner@Matthew@Excelined.org)  
[Pnoor@excelined.org](mailto:Pnoor@excelined.org)  
[Jessica.Tucker@LA.GOV](mailto:Jessica.Tucker@LA.GOV)  
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Senators Enzi and Harkin announced that they have reached an agreement on an ESEA bill which will be introduced tomorrow morning. The agreement makes three important changes to their original draft bill which we discussed last week:

**Teacher and Principal Evaluation:** Teacher and principal evaluations are no longer required, but rather an option that states can apply for as part of the competitive grant the Teacher Incentive Fund (TIF). States will also not be required to distribute teachers equitably among high-poverty and high-minority schools based on their effectiveness. Instead, the bill requires teacher distribution based on:

1. Whether they are highly qualified;
2. Whether they are inexperienced;

3. Whether they completed a teacher preparation program; and/or
4. Whether they are certified in the subjects/grades they teach.

**Growth Models:** “Adequate student growth” is no longer defined. In the original bill, adequate student growth was defined as the amount of growth required for a below on-track student to be on-track within 3 years, or for a student who is on-track or advanced, not less than 1 year or academic growth. In the substitute bill, states can determine the number of years students have to reach the “on track” level.

**Turnaround Models:** In both the “Transformation” and “Turnaround” models, a state could apply to ED to waive the requirement to fire the principals at a “Persistently Low-Achieving school”. The substitute bill will now allow ineffective teachers that were displaced at the persistently low achieving school to be forced upon other schools in the district.

Press release is below and the bill is also attached. The teacher evaluation changes have been attributed in part to a joint letter submitted by NASSP, NSBA, NEA, NAESP, and AASA (attached).

--John

### Harkin, Enzi Announce Bipartisan Support for Moving Forward with Education Reform Bill

Monday, October 17, 2011

WASHINGTON – Senators Tom Harkin (D-IA) and Mike Enzi (R-WY), the Chairman and Ranking Member of the Senate Health, Education, Labor and Pensions (HELP) Committee, today announced an agreement to move forward with bipartisan legislation to overhaul the No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB).

“This opportunity is the result of more than two years of hearings, debate, and negotiations,” said Senator Harkin. “Through this bipartisan effort, we have produced legislation that represents an important step forward for our children, our schools, and our nation. Our bill will equip students with the skills and knowledge they need for success in college and careers. It will support teaching and learning rather than labeling and sanctioning, focus federal attention on turning around low-performing schools and closing achievement gaps, improve resource equity, and give states and schools the flexibility to innovate. This compromise demonstrates that Congressional Democrats and Republicans can overcome partisan differences in the interest of progress, and I look forward to support from my Committee colleagues on both sides of the aisle as we build on this foundation.”

“I’m pleased that this bill is going through the committee process. Recently legislation reauthorizing programs related to food safety and Autism research and support both went through this process. Because of input from both sides, each bill was approved by Congress and signed by the President,” said Senator Enzi. “More than a year ago, members on both sides of the aisle agreed on the nine biggest problems with No Child Left Behind that needed to be fixed - and we set out to find solutions. As a result our bill reduces the federal footprint in our nation’s schools, it also continues the transparency that is critical to parents regarding student performance. The measure will also eliminate many duplicative and wasteful programs while providing states with more flexibility when it comes to addressing their unique education needs. This is not a perfect bill, nor does it solve every education issue. But it will make a huge, positive difference to our nation’s young people.”

The HELP Committee will begin consideration of the bill on Wednesday at 10:00 A.M. The full text of the Manger’s Amendment filed today is available here: <http://help.senate.gov/imo/media/doc/ROM118313.pdf>