



BUSINESS CIVIL RIGHTS COALITION STATEMENT ON THE EVERY STUDENT SUCCEEDS ACT OF 2015

December 1, 2015

Over the past year, our organizations have worked together — across lines that often divide us on matters of public policy — to secure provisions in a reauthorized Elementary and Secondary Education Act that we all think are vitally important to our nation’s future. Our common goals include:

- Annual statewide assessment of all students in grades 3-8 and once again in high school, with a strictly limited exception for students with the most significant cognitive disabilities;
- Transparent, accessible reporting of data — disaggregated by race, income, disability status, and English proficiency — at the state, district, and school levels, so educators, parents, and students themselves have objective information on where they are on their journey to college and career readiness; and
- Statewide accountability systems that include achievement and graduation-rate goals for all groups of students, rate schools in large part on the academic performance of all groups of students, and require action when any group of students consistently underperforms.

Thanks to bipartisan leadership in both Chambers, the Every Student Succeeds Act reflects these principles. The bill is far from perfect, but it is a product of compromise that includes this coalition’s key priorities. We support its enactment into law.

Under the Every Student Succeeds Act, states will have more discretion than under No Child Left Behind, but they will be responsible for working within federal guardrails to design systems that assure genuine equity and excellence for all students. Members of the coalition will work hard to prevent efforts to water down expectations, avoid full transparency, diminish the importance of honest measures of the academic progress of all children in school accountability systems, or delay interventions when any group of students is struggling academically. And, we stand ready to help states and districts create new opportunities to accelerate student progress, especially among the most vulnerable groups of children, and to help ensure that the voices of parents and the civil rights and business communities are heard throughout the implementation process.