



## The Education Trust

Closing the gaps in opportunity and achievement, pre-k through college.

Dear Members of the U.S. Senate:

Today's Senate vote on the *Every Child Achieves Act* (ECAA) marks a long-overdue milestone in the effort to update the nation's main K-12 education law, and we applaud Chairman Alexander and Ranking Member Murray for their bipartisan leadership.

There's a lot to like in this bill, but it falls *far short when it comes to ensuring action on behalf of students who are struggling academically*. This is a glaring omission that must be addressed in Conference if this bill—which is, at its core, about supporting underserved students—is to be signed into law.

The ECAA includes important building blocks for raising achievement among all students and closing the gaps that separate low-income students, students of color, English learners, and students with disabilities from their peers, including:

- state standards aligned with the demands of college and career;
- annual statewide assessments to provide objective, comparable data on how all students are performing;
- rich public reporting on student outcomes and opportunities to learn, including per-pupil expenditures, access to rigorous coursework, and measures of school climate, including chronic absenteeism and exclusionary discipline; and,
- attention to, and a commitment to addressing inequities in access to ineffective, out-of-field, and inexperienced teachers.

But even with all of this, without meaningful accountability the bill will do more to publicize gaps in achievement and opportunity for low-income students and students of color than it will to fix them.

Thankfully, the vote on Amendment 2241 shows there is strong—and bipartisan—support for improved accountability. This, combined with support from House Democrats and the Administration in its Statement of Administration Priorities, makes the task ahead in Conference clear.

We look forward to working with lawmakers and our partners in the business, civil rights, and disability communities to press for this important change that will make this next version of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act, like its predecessors, a strong federal commitment to all of the nation's children. Without this critical change, we will oppose this bill being signed into law.

Sincerely,

Kati Haycock  
President