



A Complete Education



U. S. D E P A R T M E N T O F E D U C A T I O N



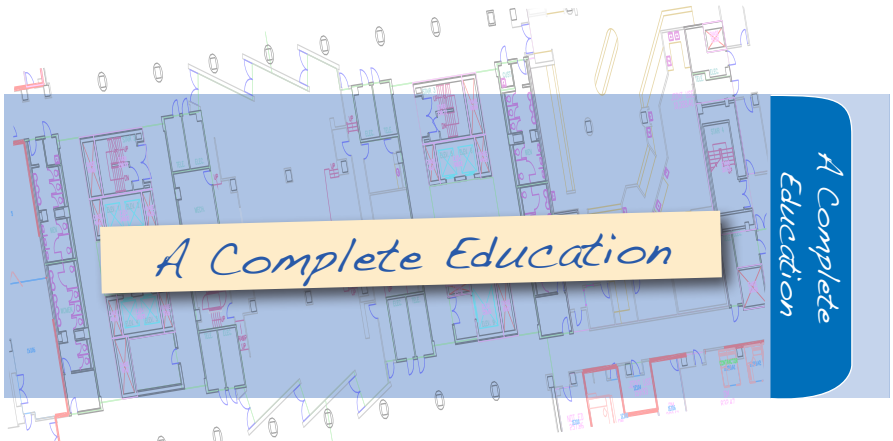


PRESIDENT BARACK OBAMA

Every child in America deserves a world-class education.

Today, more than ever, a world-class education is a prerequisite for success. America was once the best educated nation in the world. A generation ago, we led all nations in college completion, but today, 10 countries have passed us. It is not that their students are smarter than ours. It is that these countries are being smarter about how to educate their students. And the countries that out-educate us today will out-compete us tomorrow.

We must do better. Together, we must achieve a new goal, that by 2020, the United States will once again lead the world in college completion. We must raise the expectations for our students, for our schools, and for ourselves—this must be a national priority. We must ensure that every student graduates from high school well prepared for college and a career.



Reauthorizing the Elementary and Secondary Education Act

To help achieve President Obama’s stated goal of ensuring that all students will be able to contribute as citizens in the U.S. democracy and to thrive in a global economy, the administration has designed a blueprint for a reenvisioned federal role in education through the reauthorization of the *Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA)*. The new ESEA will support states, districts, school leaders, and teachers in implementing a more complete education—from literacy to mathematics, science, and technology, and to history, civics, foreign languages, the arts, financial literacy, and other subjects—through improved professional development and evidence-based instructional models and supports.

A Complete Education

As the administration asks states to raise their standards to prepare their students for college and the workplace, it will also be asking more from students, families, teachers, principals, and every level of the education system. To make higher standards meaningful, the administration must ensure that states, districts, schools, and teachers have the resources and assistance they need to help students reach these standards, such as instructional

supports, high-quality professional development, and teaching and learning materials aligned with those standards. This means a new investment in improving teaching and learning in all content areas—literacy, science, technology, engineering, mathematics, history, civics, foreign languages, the arts, financial literacy, environmental education, and other subjects—and in providing accelerated learning opportunities to more students to make postsecondary success more attainable.

Literacy

The reauthorization proposal will provide competitive grants that support the transition to higher standards by assisting states in strengthening their literacy programs and by substantially supporting high-need districts in implementing high-quality literacy instruction. States will be required to develop comprehensive, evidence-based, pre-K–12 literacy plans and to align federal, state, and local funds to provide high-quality literacy instruction. States may carry out strategies to improve literacy instruction statewide, such as supporting districts in identifying effective instructional materials and improving teachers’ knowledge and skills in effective literacy instruction for all students, including English Learners and students with disabilities.

Priority will be given to states that have adopted common, state-developed, college- and career-ready standards. Priority may also be given to states that use technology to address student learning challenges, which may include the principles of universal design for learning.

States will provide competitive subgrants to high-need districts to support comprehensive literacy programs in the grades and

schools with the greatest local need. Programs must provide effective professional development for teachers and school leaders; high-quality state- or locally determined curricula, instructional materials, and assessments; interventions that ensure that all students are served appropriately; and language- and text-rich classroom environments that engage and motivate students. Literacy programs may also include activities related to family literacy, improving library services, and other efforts to improve literacy.

Priority will be given to districts that propose to align other local, state, and federal resources with their plan to improve literacy instruction; propose to implement programs that have the strongest available evidence; propose to implement activities in the schools with the greatest need; or have a plan for sustaining the strategy.

Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM)

The proposal will provide competitive grants to support the transition to higher standards by assisting states in strengthening their STEM programs and by providing substantial support to high-need districts in implementing high-quality instruction in at least mathematics or science; grants may also include support for technology or engineering. States will be required to develop comprehensive, evidence-based plans and to align federal, state, and local funds to provide high-quality STEM instruction. States may carry out strategies to improve STEM instruction statewide, such as joining statewide Race to the Top partnerships, supporting districts in identifying effective instructional materials, and improving

teachers' knowledge and skills in effective STEM instruction for all students, including English Learners and students with disabilities.

Priority will be given to states that have adopted common, state-developed, college- and career-ready standards. Priority may also be given to states that: use technology to address student learning challenges, which may include the principles of universal design for learning; cooperate with outside partners with STEM expertise; or propose to prepare more students, including students from underrepresented groups, for advanced study and careers in STEM.

States will award competitive subgrants to high-need districts to support comprehensive STEM instruction in the grades and schools with the greatest local need. Programs must provide effective professional development for teachers and school leaders; high-quality state- or locally determined curricula, instructional materials, and assessments; and interventions that ensure that all students are served appropriately. Subgrantees may use program funds to integrate evidence-based, effective mathematics or science programs into the teaching of other core academic subjects and for technology-based strategies to improve STEM education.

Priority will be given to districts that propose to align other local, state, and federal resources with their plan to improve instruction in STEM subjects; propose to implement programs that have the strongest available evidence; propose to implement activities in the schools with the greatest need; or have a plan for sustaining the strategy.

I want to underscore that our proposal to reauthorize ESEA goes much further than existing law in supporting a well-balanced curriculum.

—U.S. Secretary of Education Arne Duncan

Ensuring a Well-Rounded Education

To help more students in high-need schools receive a well-rounded education, the proposal will provide competitive grants to states, high-need districts, and nonprofit partners to strengthen the teaching and learning of arts, foreign languages, history and civics, financial literacy, environmental education, and other subjects.

Grants may support either the development of new, promising instructional practices or the expansion of instructional practices for which there is evidence of improving student performance in one or more of these subjects. Such practices, which should be aimed at improving instruction for all students, including English Learners and students with disabilities, may include high-quality professional development, better assessments, high-quality state- or locally determined curricula aligned with state standards, or innovative uses of technology.

Priority will be given to applicants proposing to integrate teaching and learning across academic subjects; use technology to address student learning challenges; and, at the high school level, work with colleges or universities to ensure that course work is truly aligned with those institutions' expectations.

College Pathways and Accelerated Learning

The proposal will provide competitive grants to states, districts, and nonprofit partners to increase access to accelerated learning opportunities for students. At the high school level, these opportunities will include college-level work. At the elementary and middle school levels, these opportunities will include access to gifted and talented education programs.

Grantees will carry out activities that help students prepare for, or that directly provide, college-level work (including early-college or dual-enrollment programs, Advanced Placement [AP] programs, and International Baccalaureate programs), other accelerated learning programs, and gifted and talented programs in elementary or middle schools. Applicants may propose additional activities, such as allowing credit based on successful demonstration of competency via examination or other valid means, or providing counseling, mentoring, or programs to develop study skills. Priority will be given to applicants that propose to serve high schools with low graduation rates and that partner with state higher education offices and institutions of higher education in a program that allows higher education credits to be portable beyond the individual partner institution or institutions. Our proposal will continue to provide support to states to improve access to AP tests for low-income students.



Activities to Strengthen a Complete Education

Under the proposal, the secretary will set aside funds to carry out additional activities to improve teaching and learning in academic subjects, such as grants for creating high-quality educational digital content; grants to states for developing and improving their capacity to use technology to improve instruction; or grants to nonprofits for developing and implementing innovative and effective strategies to improve the teaching and learning of specific subjects.

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