



# FACT SHEET

## EDUCATION & THE WORKFORCE COMMITTEE

### **STUDENT SUCCESS ACT: REDUCING THE FEDERAL FOOTPRINT AND RESTORING LOCAL CONTROL**

#### **THE PROBLEM:**

The federal government's involvement in elementary and secondary education is at an all-time high.

- In 2013, the federal government spent nearly \$35 billion on K-12 education – a roughly 400% increase over the past 30 years – and the Department of Education operates more than 80 programs tied to the nation's classrooms.
- A one-size-fits-all accountability system, known as 'Adequate Yearly Progress,' dictates how states and school districts gauge student learning and address underperforming schools.
- Arbitrary funding requirements, such as 'Maintenance of Effort,' instruct states and local communities how to spend taxpayer dollars.
- A 'Highly Qualified Teacher' mandate defines which teachers schools are allowed to hire based on credentials, not their ability to teach.

Despite Washington's ever increasing intrusion into K-12 classrooms, student achievement remains stagnant.

- Approximately one out of five students will drop out of high school.
- 36 percent of 8<sup>th</sup> graders are reading at grade level, and 35 percent of 8<sup>th</sup> graders are proficient in math.
- Out of 34 countries, students in the U.S. rank 20<sup>th</sup> and 27<sup>th</sup> in science and math, respectively.

Instead of working with Congress to fix a broken system, the Obama administration has taken unprecedented action to further expand the federal footprint in schools. Through the president's waiver scheme and pet programs such as Race to the Top, the Secretary of Education has placed an even more convoluted maze of mandates and rules on states and school districts, limiting their ability to effectively serve their students.

#### **THE SOLUTION:**

Effective education reform cannot come from the top down – it must be encouraged from the bottom up. Washington bureaucrats will never have the same personal understanding of the diverse needs of students as the teachers, administrators, and parents who spend time with them every day. The *Student Success Act* (H.R. 5) reduces the federal footprint and places control back in the hands of parents and the state and local education leaders who know their children best.

(More)

## H.R. 5 – STUDENT SUCCESS ACT:

- ✓ **Eliminates more than 65 ineffective, duplicative, and unnecessary programs and replaces this maze of programs** with a Local Academic Flexible Grant, providing states and school districts the flexibility they need to effectively and efficiently improve student learning.
- ✓ **Downsizes the federal education bureaucracy** by requiring the Secretary of Education to identify the number of full-time employee positions associated with consolidated programs and reduce the department’s workforce by an equal number.
- ✓ **Repeals ineffective federal requirements** governing accountability, teacher quality, and local spending that hamper innovation and hamstringing the ability of states and school districts to address the unique needs of their students.
- ✓ **Returns responsibility for improving underperforming schools to states, parents, and local leaders** by eliminating federally-prescribed school improvement and turnaround interventions.
- ✓ **Empowers parents and taxpayers with the meaningful information they need to hold their schools accountable**, helping to ensure that every dollar spent makes a direct and lasting impact for students.
- ✓ **Protects state and local autonomy over decisions in the classroom** by prohibiting the Secretary of Education from coercing states to adopt Common Core.
- ✓ **Prevents the Secretary of Education from creating additional burdens on states and school districts**, particularly in the areas of standards, assessments, and accountability plans.
- ✓ **Reforms the regulatory process** to provide the public with greater transparency and accountability over the development of new rules affecting K-12 schools.
- ✓ **Eliminates costly special interest projects** by repealing earmarks that favor specific national organizations.

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