

PAFPC LEGISLATIVE UPDATE
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EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR
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1. The Pennsylvania Department of Education (PDE) released the 2007 Title I allocations. The PAFPC created a chart for its membership to show the school districts by congressional district and how the school districts lost or gained funds in the past four years. Statewide this information shows:

83 school districts lost funds four consecutive years

123 school districts lost funds for 3 of 4 years

126 school districts lost funds for 2 of 4 years

154 school districts lost funds for 1 of 4 years

15 school districts gained funds four consecutive years

2. The PAFPC proposed that the Congressman representing Pennsylvania, especially the Congressmen on the House Education and Labor Committee review the formula for equity as part of our positions for reauthorization of NCLB. Although no congressmen are interested in a formula fight, they are interested in the impact of the current formulas on their congressional districts.
3. Proposed changes to NCLB have been submitted by numerous organizations and we will be adding links on the legislative section of the PAFPC website for our membership to review.
4. Many organizations have proposed major changes in the NCLB legislation including: replacing the law's arbitrary proficient targets, using multiple measures aligned to state standards to determine student progress, allowing states and school districts the authority to determine appropriate assessments to assess student performance, and overhauling the testing mandates.
5. Other organizations have proposed less than major changes. A few of their proposed changes include implementation of growth models, alternate and modified assessment for special education, changes in the ELL assessment, and changes in the order of consequences for school improvement.
6. These two different approaches are time driven. It is not likely that major changes in the assessment, accountability and AYP legislation can be made by 2008. If we see any changes at all prior to 2008, they will probably be minor changes. This law, albeit with different names, has been in place since 1965 and will continue.

However, if no changes are made by 2008 (election year) changes will probably not happen until 2009 – 2010 because it will take the new President time to transition into office and appoint new staff. And no matter what party wins the Presidency, the current leadership at USDE will be history.

7. Within the past 2 weeks a new and unusual dimension has been added to the reauthorization mix. A non partisan effort backed by the Bill and Melinda Gates foundation and the Broad Foundation plan to spend 60 million dollars to increase the importance of education and NCLB in the presidential election. This Strong American Schools Campaign has a purpose of having the candidates focus on education.
8. As an organization, we believe your opinion is important and that is why our legislative section of the website will post Pennsylvania's Congressmen, Senators and Governor. If you choose to tell them how you feel, I suggest you call your local office and ask to speak to the staffer that has primary responsibility with education and NCLB. They are interested in what you have to say, and you may make a difference.