



Arkansas Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development

### *Update on the Reauthorization of NCLB*

Advocacy leaders at the national ASCD level and ASCD members in Arkansas are working hard to influence policy makers as they considered revisions during the reauthorization process for NCLB. A recent ASCD advocacy meeting was held in Washington D.C. with the purpose of presenting to national legislators recommended changes as various component parts of NCLB are being reviewed.

According to resources from ASCD, and other sources citing changes such as the No Child Left Behind "Compliance Insider" published by Thompson Publishing, the changes that are on the table for discussion include:

- Changing the way in which ELL students are assessed through the possible use of portfolios, native language testing or simplified English testing
- Allowing more special education students to be included in alternative assessments, off-grade level assessments or assessments as defined by the student's IEP
- Allowing Special Education and ESL students who are exiting from their programs to be kept in the sub-population pool so that their scores will count toward meeting AYP
- Using a growth model in determining AYP
- Placing a greater focus on resources targeting high school reform
- Creating a merit pay system for teachers who show growth
- Ensuring that highly qualified staff serve high need school districts
- Differentiating the consequences to schools that do not make AYP into two groups: high priority schools and low priority schools (schools that do not meet AYP targets in only one or two subgroups)

As might be expected, there is a lot of debate among legislators and the Department of Education in terms of the merit or lack of merit with these proposed changes. Some of the debate centers on whether or not the reauthorization will or should take place during this calendar year. If the reauthorization does not take place this year, the bill has an extension clause that allows the bill to remain functional for another year.

The Arkansas legislators have submitted bills that support some of the above changes. Senator Lincoln has sponsored Bill S.21-The NCLB Enhancement Act; Senator Pryor has sponsored Bill S.1913 - The Graduates Act (High School Reform bill); Senator Boozman has sponsored two bills H.R. 3075 and H.R. 3076 - a focus on ELL and Special Education. To view these bills, log onto [www.thomas.gov](http://www.thomas.gov), enter the full bill number (H.R. 3075 for example) and click on Search. To view the current position of ASCD on various changes in the law, log onto [www.ascd.org](http://www.ascd.org) and click on Action Center.

Reported by: Dr. Marsha Jones, Assistant Superintendent of the Springdale School District and Immediate Past President of Arkansas ASCD