



Key Provisions Authored by Sen. Franken Included in Bipartisan Bill to Fix “No Child Left Behind”

Senator’s Measures Would Greatly Benefit Minnesota Students & Schools; Wants to See Bill Improved When It Reaches Full Senate

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U.S. Sen. Al Franken (D-Minn.) said today that several key provisions he wrote into the Senate's bipartisan education reform bill would help to fix "No Child Left Behind" and improve education in Minnesota.

As the Senate Education Committee finishes working on the *Every Child Achieves Act of 2015*—which would reform the *Elementary and Secondary Education Act* (ESEA), or No Child Left Behind—Sen. Franken said he looks forward to working with his colleagues on both sides of the aisle to improve the bill when it reaches the full Senate and get commonsense reforms to our federal education policy signed into law.

"Making sure that this country's education policy works for all students is one of my top priorities," said Sen. Franken, a key member of the Senate Education Committee. **"We've been living under 'No Child Left Behind' for 13 years now, and while we've learned a lot about what works, we've learned even more about what doesn't work. I want a bipartisan solution to fixing our federal education policy, and I am hopeful that we can find common ground to improve the bill when it comes before the full Senate."**

Sen. Franken also highlighted his several provisions that were included in the bill.

"For the last six years, I've been to schools all over Minnesota, and I've talked to students, teachers, principals, superintendents, and parents. After those conversations, I developed some priorities that I wanted to see as part of this reform effort. I was pleased to see that my provisions—several of which are bipartisan—to help Minnesota students and schools succeed are included in the legislation."

Provisions that Sen. Franken wrote into the *Every Child Achieves Act* include:

- **Mental Health in Schools.** Sen. Franken's mental health in schools provisions enable schools to partner with community-based organizations to expand access to mental health services for students. These provisions also support training for school staff and volunteers to help them recognize the signs of behavioral health problems in students and refer them for appropriate services.
- **Principal Training and Recruitment.** This provision improves the preparation, placement, and retention of effective principals and other school leaders in high-need schools
- **Computer Adaptive Testing.** Sen. Franken's bipartisan computer adaptive testing (CAT) amendment allows states to use computer adaptive tests that include questions within, as well as above and below, grade level. Such tests give teachers and school systems the ability to more accurately measure each student's achievement level and determine student growth.
- **Accelerated Learning.** This bipartisan amendment seeks to raise student academic achievement and save students and families money through accelerated learning programs, including Advanced Placement and International Baccalaureate programs, dual enrollment programs, and early college high schools that provide postsecondary-level instruction, examinations, or sequences of courses that are widely accepted for credit at institutions of higher education.
- **STEM Education.** This bipartisan amendment includes targeted funding for STEM education and teacher professional development. This program also helps raise the stature and status of the STEM teaching profession by supporting colleges and universities in their efforts to improve math and science teacher training.
- **21st Century Learning Centers.** This bipartisan amendment renews a current program to create community learning centers that provide academic enrichment opportunities during after school hours for children, particularly students who attend high-poverty and low-performing schools.
- **School Counseling.** Sen. Franken's amendment allows school-employed counseling professionals, such as school counselors, school social workers, and school psychologists, to work together to create and expand comprehensive school counseling programs. Counseling programs emphasize prevention and early intervention, engage families, and incorporate research-based approaches to promote students' academic success.
- **Native American Language Immersion.** This bipartisan amendment creates a new program for the purpose of supporting and developing schools and programs that provide Native Language Immersion opportunities for students at pre-K through postsecondary education levels.

The *Every Child Achieves Act*, which Sen. Franken and his Senate Education Committee colleagues worked on this week, will head to Senate floor in the near future for consideration.