

# No Child Left Behind



## What is “No Child Left Behind” ?

The “No child Left Behind” Act requires States to create an accountability system - tests, graduation rates, attendance, and other indicators. Schools have to meet adequate yearly progress (AYP) goals, as set by each state, by raising levels of achievement for subgroups of students such as minorities, special education, and those from low-income families, to a state-determined level.



The basic requirement of the act is for all schools receiving federal funding for public education to administer state-wide standardized tests every year, to measure the proficiency of students.

This measurement is known as Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) requires school to raise their test score turn out every year. If a school repeatedly does poorly on the state-wide tests, different measures are taken to try and improve the school.



## NO CHILD LEFT BEHIND



### Bill To Law

No Child Left Behind was originally proposed by President George W. Bush on January 3rd,

2001. After being supported by congressmen throughout both parties, NCLB became a widely bipartisan coalition by the U.S. Congress to push towards the reform on Public/Federal Education. On

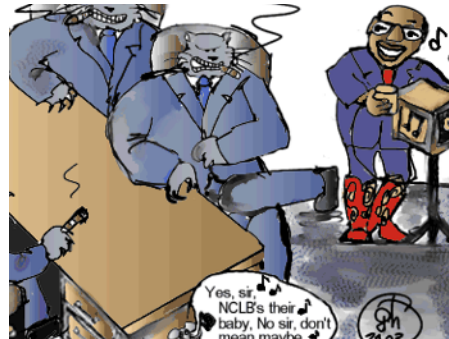
March 22nd, 2001, republican senators John Boehner and Judd Gregg, along with democrat senators Edward Kennedy and George Miller announced the support of the bill. The bill was then sent to the Education and Workforce committee for consideration then because this was a bill regarding federal revenue, it had to pass through the house before reaching the senate. On May 23rd, 2001, the house passed the bill with 384 yeas and 45 nays, followed by a 91 to 8 vote in the senate on June 14th, 2001. After a joint conference agreement in december, President Bush signed the act into law on January 8th, 2002.

### Controversy



There are a number of different claims of corrupt and misleading legislation involved with the NCLB process. Critics claim that the lobbies pushing for mass education reform in the 1990's were concerned about the workforce of the future. Many believe that companies recognized America changing from a society of manufacturing to a society of service, leading to the urge to train our children to prepare for a new age in industry and economics.

### Outside Influences



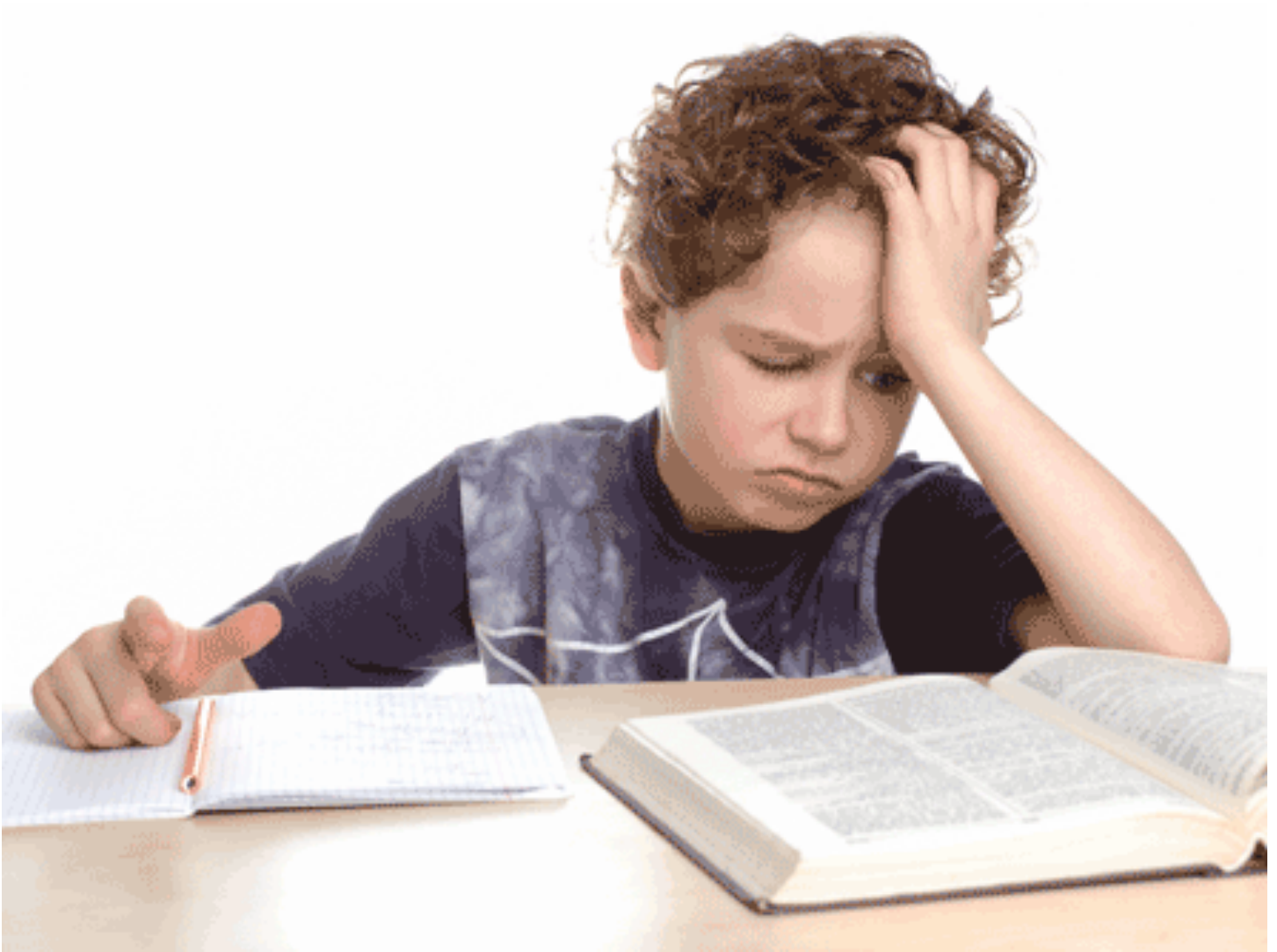
The push for education reform on the federal level was first lobbied by an interest group called Business Round Table. The interest group which formed in 1989, agreed that each state legislature needed to adopt legislation that would impose "outcome-based education," "high expectations for all children," "rewards and penalties for individual schools," "greater school-based decision making" and align staff development with these action items.

### Student Expectations



Because NCLB forces schools to meet Adequate Yearly Progress on an annual bases in order to receive federal funding, all public schools in the nation are forced to arrange their curriculum to prepare for their State's standardized test. Supporters of NCLB believe that this raised the standards for many children in America, allowing them to achieve more opportunities in education than previous generations. Critics of the act argue that it restricts creativity amongst students and educators.

# The Effects Today



## **Arguments Surrounding “No Child Left Behind”**

There are many different debates that have gone on about the No Child Left Behind Act since its introduction into law in 2002; moreover, now that the law has been in existence for almost a decade, there are a number of different movements and interest groups that criticize or offer alternatives to the act.

One of the main criticisms of the act is that it does not allow schools or teachers to explore the different realms of their curriculums while preparing students for standardized tests. Many teachers who oppose the law state that ‘Standardized Testing’ is preparing your students to face and solve all the same problems in life, as opposed to educating them on the things that can advance them as an individual in society.

**“Now we’re learning a bunch of crap that’s going to be on the ACT”**

*“While we could be reading these novels and stories and what not, the teachers would try to get us to become better critical thinkers by getting us to write essays and getting us to talk about what we read in class and how it pertains to things in life that we go through today. Now we’re learning just a bunch of crap that’s going to be on the ACT.” -Jevon Cochran/ 11th grade English Teacher*

**“Our children are not learning...”**

*“The answer, Mr. President, is that no, our children are not learning. And they are not learning because of the NCLB. That is why I advocate that the United States resolve to abolish this Act immediately” -Jamie Chen/4th grade African American Literature Teacher*

**“There is no record of improvement with vouchers...”**

*“One of the problems with No Child Left Behind is that sanctions that it imposes on schools for low test scores have no record of improvement of success as school improvement strategies. There is no record of improvement with vouchers.” -Stan Karp/ Middle School Principal*

**Reflections:**

Reflecting on the process of No Child Left Behind, it’s apparent that there are many outside interests and views that ultimately affect the process and outcome of a law. Many people view this process as corruptive, and believe that in situations like these, where a law will effect the futures of millions of American children, the act doesn’t best suit the problem at hand. However, the lobbies and interest groups that pushed for No Child Left Behind represent an aspect of America that makes us unique. The founding fathers of our country understood that not all persons on this planet shared the same views and values, so the only way to assure fairness and equality amongst citizens was to develop a system with votes and checks in balances. Although NCLB represents the views of only a small group of Americans, these interests groups were able to push these policies into legislation successfully which led to an act nationwide.

**Sources:**

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