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Contact: Nick Manetto 202.312.7499/nicholas.manetto@faegrebd.com

Senate ESEA Bill Contains Multiple Provisions to Support High-Potential & High-Achieving Students

NAGC Applauds Restoration of Javits Gifted Students Act

WASHINGTON (April 15, 2015) – The [National Association for Gifted Children](http://www.nagc.org), the nation’s leading advocate for high-achieving and high-potential students, applauded the inclusion of gifted and talented students within the *Every Child Achieves Act of 2015*, a Senate bill to update the Elementary and Secondary Education Act.

The bipartisan bill, considered today by the Senate Health, Education, Labor and Pensions (HELP) Committee, includes several provisions focused on spotlighting the annual achievement – or lack thereof – made by advanced students. It also includes provisions to use teacher training funds to help prepare educators to identify and subsequently serve these learners, and to continue research that helps develop best classroom practices with advanced students.

“NAGC commends Chairman Alexander, Ranking Member Murray and the other members of the HELP Committee for including these necessary provisions, particularly those that provide for increased transparency and public accountability so education leaders and the public can see how well our schools are – or are not – developing and supporting our highest-ability students,” NAGC President Tracy L. Cross, Executive Director of the [Center for Gifted Education](http://www.cge.edu) at William & Mary, said.

“For too long, federal education policies have neglected the needs of our high-achieving learners and those who could become high achievers with the appropriate supports. The provisions in this bill will begin to reverse this neglect and, hopefully, can lay a foundation upon which we can build a comprehensive talent development system,” Cross said.

The provisions addressing gifted and high-potential students will:

- Disaggregate student performance data at each achievement level on annual state report cards and include data reported to the Office of Civil Rights on the numbers of minority students receiving gifted education services.
- Explicitly authorize disclosure within annual plans by Title I local school districts to report how they will use funds to identify and served gifted students, and authorizes states to describe how they will use funds to assist school districts in identifying gifted students in their state plans.
- Require states to include within their Title II professional development plans how they will improve the skills of teachers, principals and other personnel so they are able to identify gifted and talented students.
- Explicitly state that federal teacher training funds are to be used to address the learning needs of gifted and talented students and permits funds to be used to train educators to identify gifted

students, including those students demonstrating high-ability but not yet formally identified for such services.

The provisions in the bill closely resemble those included in the bipartisan TALENT Act bill introduced earlier this year by Senators Chuck Grassley (R-Iowa), Barbara Mikulski (D-MD), Bob Casey (D-PA), Sheldon Whitehouse (D-RI), and John Boozman (R-AR).

In addition, an amendment offered today by Senator Mikulski and cosponsored by Senator Whitehouse to retain the [Javits Gifted and Talented Students Education Act](#) in ESEA was adopted in Committee. The Javits program focuses on applied research to develop best practices to identify and serve high-potential students in populations that traditionally have been underrepresented in gifted education, particularly minority, economically disadvantaged, limited-English proficient, and disabled students.

“The committee bill is a significant leap forward in terms of federal policies to support the development of our high-potential and high-achieving students. Lawmakers are now recognizing that we can no longer afford to ignore these students who are critical to our future success as a nation. NAGC looks forward to the next steps in ensuring that this commitment to educational excellence for high-ability students in every population becomes law.” Cross said.