



# NCAI BROADCAST

NEWS & UPDATES FOR INDIAN COUNTRY

## Senate Committee Passes Bipartisan ESEA Reauthorization Bill - Heads to Senate Floor!

Today, the Senate Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions (HELP) Committee unanimously passed a reauthorization of the Elementary and Secondary Education (ESEA) Act - the **Every Child Achieves Act of 2015** ("Achieves Act"). The Achieves Act was introduced last week after months-long bipartisan negotiations between Committee Chairman Lamar Alexander (R-TN) and Ranking Member Patty Murray (D-WA). The Act modernizes the ESEA which hasn't been reauthorized since 2001 as the "No Child Left Behind Act." The authorization expired in 2007 and NCAI has been advocating for reauthorization of the law with improvements to provisions affecting the education of Native students.

### The Every Child Achieves Act features several important tribal provisions:

- **Language Immersion:** A Native language grant program in the Indian Education Title (Title VII) has been added - a key victory for our membership and partners. The new program would also allow for the development of curriculum and assessments that align with state or tribal academic standards.
- **Consultation:** State Education Agencies (SEAs) and Local Education Agencies (LEAs) would be required to consult with tribes in their area in the development of their plans
- **STEP Reauthorization:** The State Tribal Education Partnership Program (STEP) would be reauthorized
- **Indian Community-Based Organizations:** Indian community-based organizations may apply for grants if LEAs and tribal organizations and consortiums do not apply for Title VII grants
- **Indian Child Determination:** Once a child is determined to be an Indian for the purposes of Title VII grants, this determination will not have to be made again in subsequent years

### Other provisions in the law that may have an impact on Native students and tribes:

- **Impact Aid Formula Update:** The bill would replace the complicated, outdated Impact Aid formula with a simple, objective calculation for program eligibility. This replacement will speed-up payments to school districts across the country.
- **Early Childhood Education:** Broader authorization for the use of title funding for early childhood education programs
- **"Highly Qualified" Teacher:** The bill eliminates the definition of a highly qualified teacher and provides states with the opportunity to define this term.
- **After-School Programs:** Reauthorization of the 21st Century Community Learning Centers program

To read a summary of the act [click here](#).