


City of Alexandria, Virginia

MEMORANDUM

24  
12-11-07

DATE: DECEMBER 7, 2007

TO: THE HONORABLE MAYOR AND MEMBERS OF CITY COUNCIL

FROM: JAMES K. HARTMANN, CITY MANAGER 

SUBJECT: CONSIDERATION OF A RESOLUTION ON THE NO CHILD LEFT BEHIND REQUIREMENTS

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**ISSUE:** Consideration of a Resolution on the No Child Left Behind Requirements.

**RECOMMENDATION:** That City Council adopt the attached resolution and request the City Clerk to forward copies to the School Board and our Congressional delegation.

**DISCUSSION:** On October 18, 2007, the Alexandria School Board adopted the attached resolution on the No Child Left Behind (NCLB) Program (Attachment 2). The resolution calls for fundamental changes in federal NCLB legislation and also requests funding of all provisions of the Act.

At the November 27 legislative meeting, City Council requested that we docket a similar resolution for Council consideration. I recommend that Council adopt the attached resolution.

**ATTACHMENT:**

Attachment 1. Proposed Resolution

Attachment 2. School Board Resolution

Resolution

WHEREAS, the Alexandria City Council supports the No Child Left Behind Act's general goal of having all children learn to high standards, but is deeply concerned about the Act's major expansion of federal authority over state and local educational programs and the inequitable distribution of resources and measurement of progress that have evolved from the law; and

WHEREAS, the National School Boards Association has stated accurately that the "No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB) established a rigorous standard for the nation's public schools and a theoretical model to assess student, school, and school district performance, which has evolved into a measurement framework that bases its assessment of school quality on student's performance on a single assessment and mandates a series of overly broad sanctions not always targeted to the students needing services or proven to have significant impact on improving student and school performance;" and

WHEREAS, the current law does not provide high or consistent standards of learning and permits in each state a different set of tests, different standards, different targets and differently defined groups who must meet these different standards; and

WHEREAS, the federal government today focuses on overseeing 50 different testing systems and sanctioning school systems that fail to meet confusing and unfunded requirements instead of ensuring the equality of educational opportunity and quality; and

WHEREAS, the quality of a student's education still depends on the wealth of the community where the student lives, with teacher salaries in poor communities lower than in rich communities, and facilities and educational opportunities in rich communities better than in poor communities: and

WHEREAS, the Alexandria City Council supports the Alexandria School Board's high expectations and standards for all students and belief that Limited English Proficiency (LEP) students should be assessed in fair, valid, reliable and appropriate ways for their current level of English proficiency and that current NCLB policy does not recognize the challenges districts and schools facing in raising the academic achievement of LEP students; and

WHEREAS, the current NCLB law needs to be transformed; and

WHEREAS, such organizations as the National School Boards Association, the American Association of School Administrators, and various teacher organizations have expressed concerns similar to those expressed in this resolution;

Now, Therefore Be it resolved by the Alexandria City Council, that it calls upon Congress to make fundamental changes in the NCLB law that recognize the federal interest in education to be in helping states ensure equal access to a quality education; require the use of reliable measures of students performance that ensure consistency of measurement across states while safeguarding

the right of states and local educational authorities to create and administer schools and educational programs responsive to local needs; and access educational outcomes based on a system that emphasizes rewards and recognitions rather than sanctions; and be it further

Be it Further Resolved, that if Congress is unable or unwilling to transform the NCLB law to redirect the role of the federal government to address appropriate educational policy reflecting the national interest, the Alexandria City Council calls upon Congress to make changes in the law to deal with some of its shortcomings, identified by the Alexandria School Board including:

- To move immediately to perfect the testing measures required in the law for LEP student by permitting alternative assessments that are fair, valid, reliable and appropriate to the student's level of English proficiency as determined by the committee overseeing the student's education plan;
- To change the law to require offers of transfer or supplemental services only to students who fail to meet proficiency targets in schools that did not make Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) in consecutive years;
- To change the order in which sanctions are applied, with supplemental services preceding offers of transfer;
- To require the size of subgroups for calculating AYP be set more equitably across states;
- To permit the use of a "growth model" to assess individual student progress over time;
- To permit the calculation of the graduation rate to include special needs students who have fulfilled the graduation requirements as prescribed in their Individual Education Plans and have been awarded diplomas authorized by their state;
- To permit states to exercise flexibility in determining if special education teachers meet the highly qualified status at middle and high school levels based on local assessments approved by state educational authorities.

Be it Further Resolved, the Alexandria City Council will provide our legislative representatives copies of this resolution.

Adopted this \_\_\_\_ Day of \_\_\_\_\_, 2007

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William D. Euille, Mayor

ATTEST:

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Jacqueline M. Henderson, CMC City Clerk

**NCLB Resolution by the Alexandria School Board**

**Whereas**, the Alexandria School Board supports the No Child Left Behind Act's general goal of having all children learn to high standards, but is deeply concerned about the Act's major expansion of federal authority over state and local educational programs and the inequitable distribution of resources and measurement of progress that have evolved from the law; and

**Whereas**, the National School Boards Association has stated accurately that the "*No Child Left Behind Act* (NCLB) established a rigorous standard for the nation's public schools and a theoretical model to assess student, school, and school district performance, which has evolved into a measurement framework that bases its assessment of school quality on a student's performance on a single assessment and mandates a series of overly broad sanctions not always targeted to the students needing services or proven to have significant impact on improving student and school performance": and

**Whereas**, the current law does not provide high or consistent standards of learning and permits in each state a different set of tests, different standards, different targets and differently defined groups who must meet these different standards; and

**Whereas**, the federal government today focuses on the minutiae of overseeing 50 different testing systems and of punishing school systems that fail to meet confusing and unfunded requirements instead of ensuring the equality of educational opportunity and quality; and

**Whereas**, the quality of a student's education still depends on the wealth of the community where the student lives, with teacher salaries in poor communities lower than in rich, and facilities and educational opportunities in rich communities better than in poor; and

**Whereas**, the Alexandria School Board holds high expectations and standards for all students and believes that Limited English Proficiency (LEP) students should be assessed in fair, valid, reliable and appropriate ways for their current level of English proficiency and that current NCLB policy does not recognize the challenges districts and schools facing in raising the academic achievement of LEP students; and

**Whereas**, the current NCLB law is flawed and requires a transformation and not simply tinkering to correct individual provisions; and

**Whereas**, such organizations as the National School Boards Association, the American Association of School Administrators, and various teacher organizations have expressed concerns similar to those expressed in this resolution; now, therefore be it

**Resolved** by the Alexandria School Board, that it calls upon Congress to make fundamental changes in the NCLB law that recognize the federal interest in education to be in helping states ensure equal access to a quality education; require the use of reliable

measures of student performance that ensure consistency of measurement across states while safeguarding the right of states and local educational authorities to create and administer schools and educational programs responsive to local needs; and access educational outcomes based on a system that emphasizes rewards and recognitions rather than sanctions: and be it further

**Resolved**, that if Congress is unable or unwilling to transform the NCLB law to redirect the role of the federal government to address appropriate educational policy reflecting the national interest, The Alexandria School Board calls upon Congress to make changes in the law to deal with some of its most egregious shortcomings, including

To move immediately to perfect the testing measures required in the law for LEP students by permitting alternative assessments that are fair, valid, reliable and appropriate to the student's level of English proficiency as determined by the committee overseeing the student's educational plan;

To change the law to require offers of transfer or supplemental services only to students who fail to meet proficiency targets in schools that did not make Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) in consecutive years;

To change the order in which sanctions are applied, with supplemental services preceding offers of transfer;

To require the size of subgroups for calculating AYP be set more equitably across states;

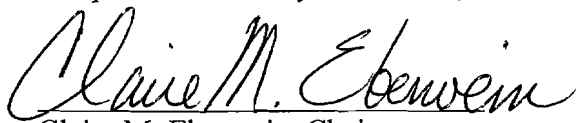
To permit the use of a "growth model" to assess individual student progress over time;

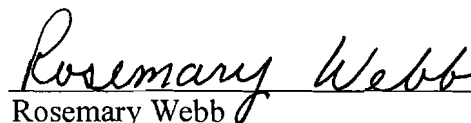
To permit the calculation of the graduation rate to include special needs students who have fulfilled the graduation requirements as prescribed in their Individual Education Plans and have been awarded diplomas authorized by their state;

To permit states to exercise flexibility in determining if special education teachers meet the highly qualified status at middle and high school levels based on local assessments approved by state educational authorities.

**Be it further resolved**, the Alexandria School Board will contact our legislative representatives and work with other school districts to lobby in support of appropriate changes in NCLB legislation.

Adopted this 18<sup>th</sup> day of October, 2007

  
Claire M. Eberwein, Chairman  
Alexandria School Board

  
Rosemary Webb  
Clerk of the School Board

## RESOLUTION NO. 2261

**WHEREAS**, the Alexandria City Council supports the No Child Left Behind Act's general goal of having all children learn to high standards, but is deeply concerned about the Act's major expansion of federal authority over state and local educational programs and the inequitable distribution of resources and measurement of progress that have evolved from the law; and

**WHEREAS**, the National School Boards Association has stated accurately that the "No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB) established a rigorous standard for the nation's public schools and a theoretical model to assess student, school, and school district performance, which has evolved into a measurement framework that bases its assessment of school quality on student's performance on a single assessment and mandates a series of overly broad sanctions not always targeted to the students needing services or proven to have significant impact on improving student and school performance;" and

**WHEREAS**, the current law does not provide high or consistent standards of learning and permits in each state a different set of tests, different standards, different targets and differently defined groups who must meet these different standards; and

**WHEREAS**, the federal government today focuses on overseeing 50 different testing systems and sanctioning school systems that fail to meet confusing and unfunded requirements instead of ensuring the equality of educational opportunity and quality; and

**WHEREAS**, the quality of a student's education still depends on the wealth of the community where the student lives, with teacher salaries in poor communities lower than in rich communities, and facilities and educational opportunities in rich communities better than in poor communities; and

**WHEREAS**, the Alexandria City Council supports the Alexandria School Board's high expectations and standards for all students and belief that Limited English Proficiency (LEP) students should be assessed in fair, valid, reliable and appropriate ways for their current level of English proficiency and that current NCLB policy does not recognize the challenges districts and schools are facing in raising the academic achievement of LEP students; and

**WHEREAS**, the current NCLB law needs to be transformed; and

**WHEREAS**, such organizations as the National School Boards Association, the American Association of School Administrators, and various teacher organizations have expressed concerns similar to those expressed in this resolution;

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED** by the Alexandria City Council, that it calls upon Congress to make fundamental changes in the NCLB law that recognize the federal interest in education to be in helping states ensure equal access to a quality education; require the use of reliable measures of students performance that ensure consistency of measurement across states while safeguarding the right of states and local educational authorities to create and administer schools and educational programs responsive to local needs; and access educational outcomes based on a system that emphasizes rewards and recognitions rather than sanctions;

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, that if Congress is unable or unwilling to transform the NCLB law to redirect the role of the federal government to address appropriate educational policy reflecting the national interest, the Alexandria City Council calls upon Congress to make changes in the law to deal with some of its shortcomings, identified by the Alexandria School Board including:

- To move immediately to perfect the testing measures required in the law for LEP student by permitting alternative assessments that are fair, valid, reliable and appropriate to the student's level of English proficiency as determined by the committee overseeing the student's education plan;
- To change the law to require offers of transfer or supplemental services only to students who fail to meet proficiency targets in schools that did not make Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) in consecutive years;
- To change the order in which sanctions are applied, with supplemental services preceding offers of transfer;
- To require the size of subgroups for calculating AYP be set more equitably across states;
- To permit the use of a "growth model" to assess individual student progress over time;
- To permit the calculation of the graduation rate to include special needs students who have fulfilled the graduation requirements as prescribed in their Individual Education Plans and have been awarded diplomas authorized by their state;
- To permit states to exercise flexibility in determining if special education teachers meet the highly qualified status at middle and high school levels based on local assessments approved by state educational authorities.

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, the Alexandria City Council will provide our legislative representatives copies of this resolution.


ADOPTED: December 11, 2007



WILLIAM D. EUILLE

MAYOR

ATTEST:



Jacqueline M. Henderson, CMC City Clerk