

## Federal Law – The 2001 No Child Left Behind (NCLB) Act

Any way you slice, dice, re-name, or propagandize it, the funding of and practices promoted by NCLB failed to serve the 45 to 65 percent of American K-12 students it should have helped. It is a huge national issue costing the U.S. more than we can tally.

The sad reality is that the schools that need “fixing” are not capable of improving themselves and the children’s needs go unaddressed by local, state, and national policy makers. It is a national issue.

Only the American people can pressure our representatives to end the ongoing pretense of education reform and progress towards real educational improvement.

By our own law, NCLB should have been rewritten in 2007. Congress failed. NCLB was originally called the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) whose aim was “To *strengthen* and *improve* educational quality and educational opportunities in the Nation’s elementary and secondary schools.” That goal has been lost in the political games being played in the name of “reform.” The status quo theories of change are *standardization* and *privatization*. They have left the system weakened. We fail to make real progress.

How did your representatives vote on NCLB? After over a decade, why have they not changed the law? Do they understand how it failed? Do they know enough to make it right?

## Titles of the Original 1965 Elementary and Secondary Education Act

Title I – *Education of Children of Low Income Families* to provide financial assistance to local education agencies in support of *children from low-income families*.

Title II – *School Library Resources, Textbooks, and Other Instructional Materials* to provide for access to educational materials *for all students* in the State.

Title III – *Supplementary Educational Centers and Services*, available to the *entire community*, to provide services not currently offered but deemed vital to educational improvement.

Title IV – *Educational Research and Training; Cooperative Research Act* to provide research, training, and dissemination of information *aimed* at improving the quality of teaching.

Title V – *State Departments of Education* “to stimulate and assist in strengthening the *leadership* resources of State educational agencies.”

**Accountability** begins with questions from you and answers from your lawmakers.

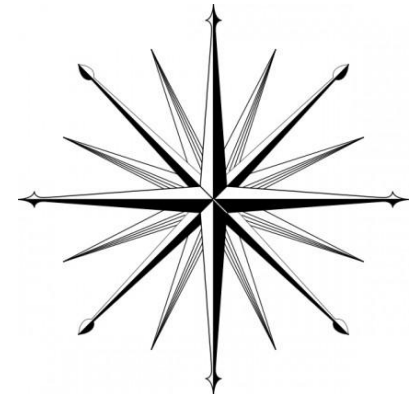
Content provided by Victoria M. Young, DVM, author of *The Crucial Voice of the People*, Past and Present: Education’s Missing Ingredient, 2nd edition. Thoughts provided through the process of reading our history and listening to the common people. Please reproduce and contact author to modify for your state. Spread the word. PDF found at <http://amissingingredient.com>

## Common Sense In Public Education Law

Be an informed voice for better education policies and practices—better schools for all.

To maintain and perfect our Union, the citizens of the United States of America must make informed decisions. Education and the truth are required. Quality education for all is a national issue.

Let common sense and our common ground be our guides. On behalf of our children, set continuous school improvement practices as the centerpiece for all education policies. It’s time for *change* to lead to *progress* as a nation.



## How Does a Person Judge What the Right Education “Reform” Is?

School reform should target the proven *elements of effective schools* meaning an improvement process that directly affects students: safe schools with classroom climates that nurture learning, school leadership fostering quality instruction, highly educated teachers expecting a level of mastery from all students and who understand the proper use of pupil assessments in monitoring progress.

Education reform is a focus on systemic reform. It should not interfere with school reform; it should promote quality and equality in learning opportunities. It should strengthen and improve the nation’s public education system – holding the system accountable to its people.

Practical wisdom is doing the right thing, the right way, for the right reason. A true reform has identified a problem and what is offered in the “reform” is a better way to solve the problem than what is currently being done.

### Ask the Lawmakers:

What problem does the law address?

What are the costs compared to the benefits?

Who benefits?

Will it “do no harm” and do what it promises?

Does it promote and support school improvement?

Is education a primary focus?

How does the law affect or impact a student’s opportunity to learn?

Is it fair to all children?

## Education Policies and Practices to Meet Our Children’s Needs

In a perfect union, a thorough system of public schools is based on a *local responsibility* to each student and their community, *state accountability* determined by its responsiveness to inequalities in results as judged by the people, and *federal oversight*, dissemination of information, funding, support and guidance based on research findings and with the best interest of the nation as its guiding principle.

The goal is to offer the highest quality learning opportunities to all children while holding all “players” in the system to the highest standards of behavior. Based on research and experience in school improvements, these **practical solutions** can easily be written into local, state, and national education policy and put into practices at all levels in the education system:

- 1) cultivate responsible and responsive **leadership**,
- 2) improve **instruction**,
- 3) offer a broad and challenging **curriculum**,
- 4) create a school **climate** supportive of teaching and learning,
- 5) develop a system of **educational support** that is **inclusive of family and community** – a **system** that sees both as assets in a **partnership to support students**.

There is no justification for failing to take action. Americans will solve America’s problems when *common sense is welcomed* into lawmaking. Do the laws make sense?

## Idaho Education Reform Laws - VOTE

**Proposition 1** Should the law limit *negotiated agreements* and end *renewable contracts*?

Talks are limited to issues of compensation excluding discussion of working conditions (class sizes). Contracts are limited to one or two years. **FYI** – “Tenure” means holding a position *based on fulfillment* of specified requirements. Does this law solve a problem, or, is it a fight with the teachers union? Does it improve the teaching profession? Why give testing companies five year contracts but limit teachers to two? Does this make sense?

**Proposition 2** Should the law provide *performance pay* based on mandated test scores, student performance, hard-to-fill positions, and leadership? It rewards teachers and administrators on a *school wide* basis as determined at the local level. **FYI** - Test scores cannot distinguish test preparation from quality education. Have pay-for-performance experiments in education ever demonstrated they consistently produce higher level learning? Why give chronically underperforming schools the power to judge themselves? Does this make sense?

**Proposition 3** Should the law *amend school district funding* by requiring computing devices and online courses for high school graduation? “Modernization and Reform” promises to “educate more students at a higher level with limited resources.” **FYI** – This limits budget choices to address our students’ needs. Should this be our priority? Does it invest in what is most important? Does it sacrifice teachers for technology? Why do already high performing schools need to be told what to do and how to spend our money? Does this make sense?