

July 7, 2015

Chairman Lamar Alexander
Ranking Member Patty Murray
Committee on Health, Education, Labor and Pensions
US Senate
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Chairman Alexander and Ranking Member Murray:

Together, the National Council of Teachers of Mathematics (NCTM) and the National Science Teachers Association (NSTA) represent 135,000 mathematics and science teachers, supervisors, administrators, college and university faculty, mathematicians, scientists, business and industry representatives, and others involved in and committed to mathematics and science education. **As the two groups most affected by the Every Child Achieves Act's (ECAA) proposals related to the teaching and learning of mathematics and science, we're writing to express our views on select components of the bill as the Senate begins consideration of the bill.**

NCTM and NSTA support ongoing and targeted support for mathematics, science and other STEM subject educators. These teachers must be able to effectively teach the next generation of scientists, engineers, and innovators and to prepare all students to be scientifically literate citizens. They need the kind of support proposed in Title II of ECAA that would provide states with resources dedicated to improving the teaching and learning of STEM subjects. Section 2005 of S 1177 would support much-needed partnerships between schools, businesses, non-profits and institutions of higher education that would serve a wide range of STEM-focused objectives, including recruitment, retention, and professional development of mathematics and science educators, expansion of learning opportunities both in and outside the classroom, and closing achievement gaps for at-risk and high-need student populations.

NCTM and NSTA also support the bill's retention of requirements for states to continue to assess student performance in mathematics and science and that states be required to adopt rigorous standards in these subjects. Assessments should assess procedural skills, conceptual understanding, problem solving, reasoning, and the ability to construct and evaluate arguments. It is a fundamental federal responsibility to ensure that knowledge and skills for all students are accurately measured and monitored and that educators can use the resulting information to improve their professional practice.

Mathematics and science are crucial to the success of students nationwide, as well as to the future of the country's economy. It is similarly crucial that federal K-12 education policy match the rhetoric around the importance of these subjects and supporting the educators who teach them.

Thank you for your work on reauthorizing the Elementary and Secondary Education Act. We look forward to working with you and your colleagues in the House to ensure that revisions to federal K-12 education policy reflect the importance of supporting mathematics and science educators.

Thank you for your consideration of these views.

Sincerely,



Diane J. Briars
President
National Council of Teachers of Mathematics



Robert M. Doucette
Executive Director
National Council of Teachers of
Mathematics



Carolyn Hayes
President
National Science Teachers Association



David Evans
Executive Director
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cc: Members of the U.S. Senate