

N Director's Newsletter

NEA is working to provide great public schools

February 2016

nea NATIONAL EDUCATION ASSOCIATION
Great Public Schools for Every Child

Getting ready for ESSA

Implementation opportunities already starting to emerge

■ Friedrichs decision thrown into doubt—

The death of Supreme Court Justice Antonin Scalia has cast doubt on one of the most important labor cases to go before the Supreme Court in the 21st century. NEA has been preparing for the possibility of the loss of agency fee since last year when the Supreme Court took the Friedrichs v. CTA case. NEA's General Counsel Alice O'Brien told NEA leaders prior to news of Scalia's death, "As union leaders, the only reasonable assumption is to prepare for the worst." She added, "You have to think about a world where we are rebuilding the promise of what public sector bargaining looks like." Oral arguments in the Friedrichs case took place in January. NEA made a strong case that agency fee—which originated with the 1977 Abood case—should continue. But the court appeared to be moving to a place where a 5-4 decision striking down Abood was likely. Without Scalia, a 4-4 decision now seems more likely. A 4-4 decision by the Supreme Court would mean that the decision of the lower court is upheld, leaving agency fee in place for now.

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Articles are written by Tim Parker and Doug Hill based on information gathered at the February NEA board meeting



Above, NEA president Lily Eskelsen Garcia holds one of 10 pens that was used by President Barack Obama to sign the Every Student Succeeds Act on Dec. 10. At right, Garcia (left) and others applaud as the president signs the law that replaces No Child Left Behind.

Now the work really begins.

With the December passage of the Every Student Succeeds Act and the newfound freedom from the restrictive constraints of No Child Left Behind, NEA members around the country are preparing for implementation.

Donna Harris-Aikens, NEA's director of Education Policy and Practice, knows the work won't be easy, but says it could be fun.

"From the federal, state, and local levels, we will try to make sure we're getting the resources into classrooms for kids that are what they need," Harris-Aikens said. "This is a prime opportunity to make sure the changes we've been seeking can and will be implemented."

The new law provides myriad opportunities for educators' voices to be heard and their input considered. That's what Harris-Aikens, the Education Policy and Practice Department, and the national implementation team hope to capture.

"The NEA's role during implementation is to develop baseline materials that can be utilized and/or tweaked as needed (across the country)," Harris-Aikens said. "To be as effective as possible we hope to co-create an implementation plan."

See ESSA, page 6

INFORMATION about ESSA is available on the website: www.nea.org/essabegins



NEA tackles institutional racism

Retired professor helps board live up to association's history

Institutional racism took center stage at the NEA board meeting on Feb. 13, thanks to retired history professor Lenworth Gunther.

Gunther, who now works as a motivational speaker, led the NEA board through an intense discussion about institutional racism in American schools.

"There is no reason in the world why the NEA and its 3 million members cannot be at the forefront of institutional change, of curriculum change, and all kinds of political change," Gunther said. "We have to get to a point where we stop listening to politicians criticizing each other and say very simply, 'What are you going to do for kids? What are you going to do for education? And what are you going to do for the community?'"

In July, the Representative Assembly unanimously passed NBI B, calling for the NEA to take actions that spotlight systemic patterns of inequity that affect American's students.



GUNTHER

Gunther reviewed America's sordid history with racism and said there is nothing new about where the country is today. "If we want to talk about institutional racism and how it affects black children, let us look at each one of our own histories, and let us understand that these 'isms' are pervasive, and they are historical, and they are not dying, and they have affected every single one of us in this country."

NEA's Black Observance at the February meeting traditionally highlights Black History Month. But this year, the 175 members of the NEA board went further. In addition to Gunther's speech, they engaged in small-group dialogue about the impacts of institutional racism in the schools where they work.

Rudolph Burruss, a director from Pennsylvania, shared a story from this year at his school where two white students posted a picture on social media that included racist words. The students eventually apologized, he said, but they were not punished. Instead the school responded with a "students only" forum led by an administrator.

As a black staff member, Burruss said that students of color often seek him out at the school and ask his advice. This theme was echoed by other ethnic minority members of the NEA board.

Kizzy Nicholas, another Pennsylvania director, said, "I get to be the mentor teacher to any African American kid who is in trouble. A lot of times these kids are looking for someone who has experienced the same thing that they have."

Gunther said, "Just because you are black doesn't mean that you understand black issues. Color is not culture ... It's not about whether you're black and you have to be the spokesperson. It comes from the heart."

Gunther moderated the board discussion. "If we don't talk to each other, how are we going to talk to students?" he asked.

Gunther also credited NEA with starting the discussion. "Lift Every Voice and Sing" was written by a junior high school teacher in the 1920s and became the Black American National Anthem. The celebration of black history in February can be traced back to a group of black female teachers in Washington, D.C. in the 1830s who didn't believe that their students understood their own history, he said.

Discussing 19th century America, Gunther said textbooks also never featured women or Native Americans, not to mention blacks. "One of the most horrific acts of institutional racism is when you open up a textbook and don't see yourself," he said.

Discrimination has happened to all types of groups throughout history, Gunther said. Detailing the history of the KKK, he noted that the group's focus wasn't only anti-black when it formed in 1915. The group opposed white Republicans and immigration as well.

Gunther connected other forms of racism, including discrimination of Jewish people, and people who were from Southern Europe, and even Catholics. "That means that practically everyone in this room would have been lynched," he said.

"When we start talking about institutional 'isms' look in the mirror and realize that every individual in this room at some point in their history, at some point in their life, was excluded by law," Gunther said.

In the 1920s, the Ivy Leagues put quotas on Jewish admissions because too many Jewish students were succeeding in getting admitted to the institutions. Today, a similar type of discrimination is happening to Asians in California. Asian students are scoring very high on their SATs, and secret memorandums have revealed that there are quotas on their admission.

Gunther credited students at Howard University with first organizing against institutional racism. They did it with the help of teachers, including Carter G. Woodson. They eventually established Negro History Week, which has eventually resulted in Black History Month.

Gunther praised NEA for taking on institutional racism and encouraged the organization to go further.

"What's better than seeing a young kid, a young African American, a young Latino, a young Asian, a young white, who is holding onto the hand of an educator in your building," he said. "It doesn't have to be a classroom teacher because we're all educators in your building."

"When we see that student hold onto that hand of that person," he said, "at the end of the day, they don't want to let go ... And somebody who just got out of that school may look at that student and say, 'That student has a psychological problem.' No, that student found a home."

"You see, they may be in a house, but they found a home with you. Because a house is a building, but a home is a personalization of a house, so a school can be a personalization of a house," Gunther said. "We used to call it a school house, but now we call them homes because our teachers and our educators know that when a student decides that they don't want to let your hand go it's not because they have a psychological problem, it's because they found safety and security and love in your hands."

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When we start talking about institutional 'isms' look in the mirror and realize that every individual in this room at some point in their history, at some point in their life, was excluded by law.

—Lenworth Gunther
retired history professor

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Ohio teacher wins NEA Foundation award

The NEA Foundation selected Ohio teacher Debra McDonald as the recipient of the \$25,000 top prize at the Salute to Excellence in Education Gala Feb. 12 in Washington, D.C.

McDonald was one of five finalists for the award. The other finalists — Dirk Andrews (Wyoming), Mohsen Ghaffari (Utah), Heather LaBarbara (Kentucky), and Pam Wells (South Dakota) — all received \$10,000 with the Horace Mann Awards for Teaching Excellence.

The gala is an annual celebration of the men and women who work in America's public schools and of the unique bonds that educators and students share. Forty-two educators from across the country traded their classrooms for a night on stage, where they were honored by more than

850 national education leaders and supporters in Washington, D.C.

The event was hosted by Esai Morales, the award-winning actor who has appeared in the biopic "La Bamba," the HBO series "The Brink," and can currently be seen on CBS' "Criminal Minds."

The event also featured performances by Furia Flamenca and classical guitarist Torcuato Zamora, student performances by English Language Learners who participated in an NEA Foundation-funded, high school theater program in Annandale, Virginia, and performances by the Young People's Chorus of New York City

The Hispanic Scholarship Fund also accepted the First National Bank of Omaha Award for Outstanding Service to Public Education.

Constitution & Bylaws

NEA's Representative Assembly will vote on at least 15 proposed changes to the NEA constitution, bylaws, and standing rules this summer in Washington, D.C. The board took positions on all but four of the items.

Constitutional Amendment 1 would add the requirement that nearly every NEA committee include at least one certified support service provider. The board OPPOSES this amendment.

Constitutional Amendment 2 would add a two-year term for a student director on the NEA board. Currently, there are three student directors on the NEA board, and all three serve one-year terms. The board SUPPORTS this amendment.

Bylaw Amendment 1 would require approval of active member dues each year by a majority vote at the Representative Assembly. The board OPPOSES this amendment.

Bylaw Amendment 2 would prohibit secret ballot elections during Representative Assembly deliberation of new business. The board OPPOSES this amendment.

Bylaw Amendment 3 would add a definition of "certified support service provider" to NEA's documents. This definition would include psy-

chologists, therapists, counselors, and special educators. The board OPPOSES this amendment.

Standing Rule Amendment 1 would limit each delegate speaking on a motion to two minutes. The board SUPPORTS this amendment.

Standing Rule Amendment 2 would limit to one minute the amount of unused speaking time a delegate may yield to another delegate. The board OPPOSES this amendment.

Standing Rule Amendment 3 would amend the speaking order process to take one speaker for, one speaker against, and one request for information. The board took NO POSITION on this amendment.

Standing Rule Amendment 4 would strike language that was added last year to make debatable motions to suspend the rules. The board SUPPORTS this amendment.

Standing Rule Amendment 5 would allow publication of a contact person's email address for proposed Representative Assembly actions, with express written consent from the contact person. The board SUPPORTS this amendment.

Standing Rule Amendment 6 would change the deadline for submission of new business items to no later than 5 p.m. on the first day of the Representative Assembly. The board OPPOSES this amendment.

Because of time constraints at the meeting, the board did not discuss Standing Rule Amendments 7-10. The board expects to discuss and potentially take positions on these items at its next meeting at the end of April.

Standing Rule Amendment 7 would require that all new business items contain a title of not more than 10 words.

Standing Rule Amendment 8 would require that new business items be written as action items. Current rules require that new business items be "specific in nature and terminal in application."

Standing Rule Amendment 9 would limit the total cost of adopted new business items to 35 percent of the budgeted contingency fund. NEA's bylaws require that the contingency fund be no less than \$1 million and no more than one percent of the budget. The amount spent at recent RA's is as follows: 2010, \$571,270; 2011, \$90,754; 2012, \$98,824; 2013, \$196,849; 2014, \$821,797; and 2015, \$1.4 million.

Standing Rule Amendment 10 would expand the definition of "campaign materials" to include items promoting passage or defeat of constitutional or bylaw amendment. Currently, the definition only includes materials used to promote the candidacy of individuals running for NEA office.

White House to honor 10 ESPs in May

President Barack Obama will honor 10 of America's top Education Support Professionals at the White House on May 11 as part of the Champions of Change program.

"For the first time ever we are going to have a national spotlight on our ESP members," said Debby Chandler, the president of the National Council of ESPs within NEA.

Although ESPs do not yet have an official Congressionally approved ESP of the Year program, the move by Obama to have a ceremony in the Rose Garden just a few days after the Teacher of the Year award is a good first step.

Chandler said that ESPs will continue to pursue legislation in Congress that would create an annual National ESP of the Year award, she said.

The 10 ESP awardees will be selected from names provided by the National Coalition of Classified Education Support Employee Unions. The honorees will be contacted privately in April after the president makes his selection, and the winners will not be known until the announcement on May 11.

For the national Teacher of the Year award,



the four finalists have already been announced. They include Nathan Gibbs-Bowling, a social studies teacher at Lincoln High School in Tacoma, Wash.; Jahana Hayes, a history teacher at John F. Kennedy High School in Waterbury, Conn.; Daniel Jocz, a social studies teacher at Downtown Magnets High School in Los Ange-

les; and Shawn Sheehan, a specialized education algebra teacher at Norman High School in Norman, Okla. All but Jocz are NEA members. However, because of a recent decision by the United Teachers of Los Angeles, starting Sept. 1, Jocz and all teachers in their organization will become NEA members.

NEA news briefs

Alexander, Murray to share top NEA award

The NEA selected Sens. Lamar Alexander (R-Tenn.) and Patty Murray (D-Wash.) as the co-recipients of this year's Friend of Education Award.

The joint efforts of the two senators contributed to the passage of the Every Student Succeeds Act and the end of No Child Left Behind.

Murray won the award in 2013, but is receiving it a second time as a co-recipient because of the tremendous impact that both she and Alexander had in passing ESSA.

Barbara Gray of the Tennessee Education Association nominated Alexander, and Kim Mead, president of the Washington Education Association, nominated Murray.

Past winners have included presidents Lyndon Johnson, Jimmy Carter and Bill Clinton, former Supreme Court Justice Thurgood Marshall, and Economist Paul Krugman, as well as Hillary Clinton and Malala Yousafzai.

NEA dues go up \$2 for both teachers, ESPs

The NEA board approved a dues increase for the 2016-2017 fiscal year. For active teachers, NEA dues will go from \$185 to \$187, and for ESPs the dues will move from \$111.50 to \$113.50. Retired and student dues will remain the same. The average salary paid to both teach-

ers and ESPs is used to calculate dues based on a formula in the NEA bylaws. The numbers are provided by the Department of Labor.

NEA promises to address concerns about Houston

The NEA board passed a motion to investigate appropriate ways to demonstrate support for the LGBTQ community in Houston. The NEA Representative Assembly will take place in Houston in 2019, but recent actions by the city have angered members of the LGBTQ community.

The Houston City Council voted in May 2014 to create a nondiscrimination protection for many classes including sexual orientation and gender identity. The voters of Houston then rejected the item in November 2015. It failed 61 percent to 39 percent.

The NEA will pursue measures to ensure that NEA's LGBTQ members feel welcome and safe in Houston. The NEA will also look to recognize the 50th anniversary of the Stonewall Inn riots during the event, and actively lobby Congress to pass an Equality Act.

Membership numbers increase by 1/2 percent

Princess Moss, secretary-treasurer reported that NEA membership increased by about half a percent, or roughly 18,000 members this year. The increase is the first since 2009. Over the past seven years, NEA lost 247,000 certified members and 31,000 ESP members.

Moss and the board discussed budget impli-

cations for the upcoming year in executive session.

Stocks highlights efforts to improve schools

NEA Executive Director John Stocks provided an update on the Center for Great Public Schools' "NEA Guide to Educator-Led School Improvement and the GPS Framework."

This guide provides a step-by-step plan for educators in local school districts to better own their school's School Improvement Plan. (Link: <http://bit.ly/1SnNuaG>)

Stocks also discussed the "Expanding the School Transformation Model." NEA staff has been collecting stories of affiliate members and leaders who have been working to engage families, communities, and students to transform schools. Videos from Kentucky and Texas are being prepared. NEA is also drafting and designing written materials that members can share with local school boards and partner organizations to rally support for Community Schools. All of this information will be posted on a newly developed portion of the NEA website.

Stocks also referenced the collaboration among locals, school districts, administrators, and educators. A November webinar facilitated by Dr. Patrick Dolan of the Consortium for Educational Change, titled "Elevating Teachers' Voices within Education's Situs of Power!" is available via Adobe Connect (Link: <http://bit.ly/1PKa8nO>).

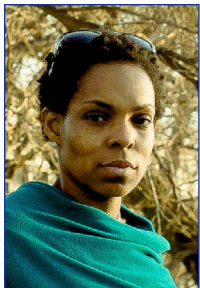
Taking action to save community schools

The news of the 34-day hunger strike in August by parents in Chicago isn't in the headlines anymore, but that doesn't mean the issues that lead to the strike have been solved.

That was the message delivered to the NEA board of directors by Anna Jones, one of the hunger strikers, when she spoke to the board on Feb. 12 in Washington, D.C.

"Whenever I think about going on a hunger strike for an education it breaks my heart, so excuse me," Jones said. "I would never expect the words 'thank you' to express my appreciation."

A single mother of four who wants desperately for her children to break the cycle of poverty, Jones didn't eat for more than a month and lost 22 pounds. Along with the Coalition to Revitalize Dyett High School, Jones attempted to stop Chicago from closing the last open enrollment high school in her area.



JONES

"I'm insulted that because I'm a woman of color and not rich that I had to jeopardize my health and quality time with my children to change this," Jones said.

NEA president Lily Eskelsen Garcia said the privatization movement is going after poor schools around the country. "We know whose children are the targets of this insidious movement," she said. "They don't want to let the community have control of their schools."

"Anna, you honor us," Garcia said. "But you remind us who we work for, and who our powerful partners are. They are the people who love the same kids that we do. You just put them to bed at night."

Jones, who is 36 years old, joined 11 other activists on a 34-day hunger strike. On day 18 of the strike, the Chicago Public Schools announced that Dyett would reopen, but with a focus on the arts, rather than on green technology, as the hunger strikers had demanded.

"I hated to end the strike because I didn't want the mayor or the aldermen to feel like we were giving up. But we had to end it because we knew that the mayor would leave us out there to die," Jones said. "Even during the hunger strike, he was cutting ribbons on Lincoln Park schools while our kids don't have books or papers. Now we're not competing with those schools up north. We are happy for those children, but we want the same thing for our children."

2/17 WALK-INS

The schools all our children deserve!

'Walk Ins' to take place this week

The Alliance to Reclaim Our Schools is sponsoring "Walk Ins" across America on or around Feb. 17.

The national movement, which includes parents, educators, and students from around the country, started in the Midwest with "Walk Ins" in St. Paul, Minn., and Milwaukee, Wis. They have also spread to Chicago and become linked to the community schools group that went on a hunger strike in August to protest the loss of open enrollment at Dyett High School.

To hold a "Walk In," parents, teachers and students gather 30-45 minutes before their duty-day starts. They picket, have donuts, coffee, etc. And then they walk into their schools together.

According to the Alliance's website, "Given the never ending attacks on public education that many of our cities endure, this provides a positive action that that says that these are our schools and our communities. It also builds solidarity amongst our members as they will feel the power of collective action without risking arrest or retaliation."

Different cities develop their own movements. In Milwaukee and Chicago, the "Walk Ins" have centered around the takeover of community schools and the proliferation of charter schools. In St. Paul, the message was about taking the "high road" and getting the community involved in local schools. San Diego has held "Walk Ins" to protest high-stakes testing, and Seattle has had "Walk Ins" to fight for more funding.

The Association reports that "Walk Ins" are planned in more than 30 cities so far. For more information, contact the Association at Ldingerson@gmail.com.



Obey the Cat; start reading right off the Bat

It's that time of year.

A time to cheer!

A time to yell hip, hip, hooray for reading.

A time to dive into good books fully speeding.

Can you guess what time of year it is?

That's right, it's time for "March is Reading Month" and for the 19th year the National Education Association is the sponsor. This month-long celebration of everything books and print articles occurs annually to coincide with the March 2 birthday of Theodor Geisel – aka Dr. Seuss – a man who brought a joy of reading to many generations of children.

This year the NEA has a full week of stops planned as part of its Cat-a-van Tour. NEA leadership will make appearances at schools in the following areas thanks to the ongoing sponsorship of Southwest Airlines:

- February 26 – Dallas
- February 29 – Nashville
- March 1 – Phoenix
- March 2 – San Diego
- March 3 – Denver
- March 4 – Atlanta

The goal, as it has been since the outset, is to promote reading to and by youngsters. The National Center for Education Statistics (a division of the U.S. Department of Education) research shows that young children who are read to at least three times per week show improved literacy; that includes everything from letter and number recognition to the ability to write his/her name and begin reading (or pretending to read) basic text.

For tips, resources, and how to be among the anticipated 45 million participants in the NEA's Read Across America please visit www.nea.org/readacross.

So don't just sit there.

Shout it out in the air!

"Let's grab a book; take a good look."

And celebrate the NEA's March is Reading Month.



ESSA: Implementation

Continued from Page 1

At the February meeting, the NEA board of directors authorized the allocation of up to \$5 million from the NEA's Ballot Measure/Legislative Crisis Fund to be used for ESSA implementation.

When asked what educators should expect to see regarding implementation Harris-Aikens said, "They should receive a personal invite or be seeing their state department of education and/or local superintendent reaching out to stakeholders and educators to build implementation plans. ... Some states have put these out already and some have not."

From a national level, Harris-Aikens said NEA's ESSA Implementation Task Force met for the first time Feb. 14-15 in Washington, D.C.

"Our national team includes leaders, members, and staff. It is really a great mix of teachers and Education Support Professionals," she said. "We're trying not to leave anyone out and get all voices in the room. The goal of the national team is to be able to create something so general that it can be used by anyone. State and local plans can and will be tweaked to meet the particular challenges they face."

Harris-Aikens also noted that Oregon is already speeding along in areas like alternative assessments, and its leadership will be relied on heavily as part of the national implementation team.

"We will be working closely with them and leaning on them to learn what has worked and allow them to share this out to the rest of our membership," she said. "If we can all identify collectively who is doing what and share it across affiliates we can all be more efficient in this process. We must lean on each other with our collective experiences and knowledge."

Judy Harris, an NEA Director and middle school Language Arts teacher in Central Point, Oregon, has been involved with this push in her state from the beginning and is also a member of the NEA's National Implementation Task Force.

"Lots of times someone else is doing the design of things and they don't know how it rolls out in our classrooms nor do they understand what our kids face," Judy Harris said. "We need an instrument that can help diagnose what's going on with a kid. We need assessments that can do what we need them to do."

Harris said she has been a part of the process of creating an alternative assessment model in her state since the beginning and has worked side-by-side with fellow educators, the state's Department of Education, the governor's office, Oregon members, local superintendents, and the state's Chief Academic Officer.

"To be able to go from the start of these discussions to coming here in October and lobbying on the Hill for ESEA and now to go into this concrete phase is amazing," she noted. "How

New education era dawns

You will have to forgive NEA Director of Government Relations Mary Kusler for having a broad smile on her face as she welcomed the NEA board of directors to its legislative briefing Feb. 11.

It was, as Kusler noted, the first time in over 14 years that directors were not going to be sent off to Capitol Hill to discuss No Child Left Behind, with its copious negative components, with members of Congress and their staff.

NEA President Lily Eskelsen Garcia mentioned Kusler's beaming smile during her president's report that kicked off the board's February meeting a day later, cracking "it took about nine months to give birth to the Every Student Succeeds Act. I think Mary and her team deserve a maternity leave."

Yes, the landscape of education in America looks far different than it did a year ago with the passage of ESSA. The changing topography was due to the work by the Senate Health, Education, Labor and Pensions committee chair Lamar Alexander (R-TN) and ranking minority committee member Patty Murray (D-WA) who brokered the bipartisan and bicameral passage that passed by a 359-64 House vote Dec. 2, and an 85-12 Senate vote Dec. 9. President Barack Obama signed the bill into law Dec. 10.

"With this bill," President Obama said at its signing, "we reaffirm the fundamental American ideal that every child—regardless of race, income, background, the zip code where they live—deserves the chance to make out of their lives what they will."

In addition to Alexander and Murray, a driving force behind the passage was ad-

vocacy by NEA members nationwide. In its comprehensive report on the passage of ESSA ("Educators Spoke. Congress Listened."), NEA statistics show that 248,000 emails, 36,000 Tweets, and 23,500 phone calls were made to Congress. There were also over 3,000 face-to-face meetings with members of Congress or their staff. A dozen NEA members either delivered testimony or provided information during Elementary and Secondary Education Act-related briefings on Capitol Hill.

The work, however, is just beginning

"Now, as attention shifts to implementation, our work begins in earnest," Eskelsen Garcia noted in her President's message as part of the NEA report. "The Every Student Succeeds Act has the potential to be a game changer. To fulfill that promise, we will need to work closely with state and local policymakers, as well as other key stakeholders. We will need to continue to raise our voices."

Implementation is certainly the next big lift NEA members and staff have before them but, as NEA Education Policy and Practice Director Donna Harris-Aikens observed, the feeling is significantly different from past policy shifts.

"Our leaders and members are thinking about this as an opportunity, as opposed to what can or could be done to us," said Harris-Aikens, whose department has been instrumental in providing resources to national, state and local implementation teams. "It is more exciting than I thought it would ever be."

Perhaps that's why there are so many smiles.

many educators can say they've been in on the ground floor all the way through roll out? Being there from germination to fruition is magical. Just incredible!"

As NEA President Lily Eskelsen Garcia wrote in her Jan. 11 "Lily's Blackboard" blog: "We know that there are innovative performance assessment systems out there that were just waiting for the necessary flexibility to flourish. We know that there are educators and principals who have tapped into the best ways to engage students with integrated curriculum, and they were just waiting for the necessary flexibility to make it work in their schools. As educators, we know we are lucky because we have the privilege of inspiring our students' curiosity, imagination, and desire to learn, and the opportunity to provide them with the caring, committed, and qualified educators they deserve."

Harris-Aikens said, "We began thinking seriously about implementation in November when

we thought we had more than a 50/50 chance on a bill to get signed. When the decision was made in Congress to get it signed by the end of the year we had to ramp up our timeline a bit. We managed to get our website up rather quickly thanks to the Communication Center team. Just about every resource we've developed is now available online.

"Everything from sample school board resolutions, to backgrounders, to funding charts, to charts that show the programs from NCLB compared to ESSA. We provide a good crosswalk to see what is and what isn't in the mix."

If that's not enough, there is also a handy link on that same page to the Top 10 decisions states, schools, and staff need to act on to get started with implementation.

Judy Harris said, "I'm looking forward to showing this country that educators know what's best and can lead our professional practices."