



May 30, 2013

Honorable Tom Harkin, Chairman
Honorable Lamar Alexander, Ranking Member
Senate HELP Committee
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Chairman Harkin and Ranking Member Alexander:

On behalf of the American Counseling Association (ACA), the nation's largest non-profit organization representing professional counselors, please accept our attached policy principles for your consideration during the reauthorization of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA).

ACA strongly supports the main purpose of the ESEA: to afford all children an equal opportunity to receive a quality education and, in doing so, to close the achievement gap between underserved children and their more advantaged peers. ACA believes that if developmental barriers to learning are not fully addressed, including social skills, personal and emotional struggles, the best classroom instruction will not produce the desired results. We also believe that and college and career exploration is essential to provide fuel for students' academic ambition.

Professional school counselors are school leaders who support and advocate for students by using data-driven practices and specialized skills from the counseling field. They consult and collaborate with teachers, administrators and families to help all students be successful academically, vocationally and personally.

Today, there are over 100,000 highly trained professional school counselors working in America's public schools. School counselors are on the front lines helping all young people succeed, impacting their futures on a daily basis.

We look forward to working with you on the reauthorization of the ESEA, and would be pleased to serve as a resource to you on improving the educational staff in our nation's schools through the recruitment and retention of professional school counselors and qualified specialized instructional support personnel. Attached are our 2013 recommendations which take S.3578 from the 112th Congress into consideration. I urge your staff to contact Jessica Eagle in ACA's Public Policy department at (800) 347-6647, ext. 202, or jeagle@counseling.org, if they have any questions, or would like more information.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Richard Yep".

Richard Yep, CAE, FASAE
Executive Director and CEO
American Counseling Association

Attachment