

BUSINESS COALITION FOR STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT

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Business Leaders Comment on Obama Administration Announcement on Changes to No Child Left Behind Policy

Bloomington, IL – Craig Barrett, former Board Chairman of the Intel Corporation; William Green, Chairman and former CEO of Accenture; and, Ed Rust, Chairman and CEO of State Farm; in their joint capacity as co-chairmen of the Business Coalition for Student Achievement, released the following statement in response to the Obama Administration's announcement on changes to No Child Left Behind policy:

"High standards are vital to ensuring students are ready for the jobs of the future. The Administration's policy supports college- and career-ready standards for all students, a critical move that will help to ensure our students are able to maintain the nation's competitive edge in the global economy. Nearly every state has adopted these higher standards. The Administration's flexibility policy will help states to fully implement these higher standards, and encourage more students to achieve at higher levels.

Importantly, today's proposal also addresses the need to improve the quality of instruction for the nation's students. The Administration's flexibility policy calls for a more effective system of strengthening and assessing the performance of teachers and principals. States must implement comprehensive evaluation systems that incorporate student achievement, which will help to ensure that students receive a world-class education.

However, standards and quality instruction are not enough. Rigorous accountability is needed to ensure that schools provide children the support they deserve, and the education our economy requires. While the Administration's flexibility policy requires rigorous reform of the lowest performing 5 percent of schools, equally rigorous reform must take place in all low performing schools to ensure that the nation's businesses are able to hire a qualified and effective workforce.

In an attempt to provide states with needed flexibility, it is critically important that the Administration not inadvertently enable states to turn their back on the needs of students in a majority of our nation's lowest performing schools. **All** low performing schools must be held accountable for results. Otherwise, thousands of schools and millions of students that deserve more from the education system could be overlooked.

Federal education policy should firmly assert that all low performing schools should be subject to accountability and improvement requirements. As states apply for waivers, it is critical that they be held

to the same high standard that we need to set for all the nation's children. States must use this opportunity to strengthen the effectiveness of the education system, not to water down accountability.

The economy of tomorrow depends on the preparation our students receive in school today. Therefore, the Business Coalition for Student Achievement urges the Administration to ensure that the implementation of the Administration's flexibility policy increases student outcomes and meets the needs of all students in order to prepare the future workforce this nation needs.

Craig Barrett

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William D. Green

Chairman, Accenture
Co-Chair, BCSA

Edward B. Rust Jr.

Chairman & CEO, State Farm
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The Business Coalition for Student Achievement (BCSA) is committed to supporting policies that improve the performance of the K-12 education system in the United States. The Coalition is co-chaired by Craig Barrett, Intel; William D. Green, Accenture; and Edward B. Rust Jr., State Farm.