

Summary of Major Issues with the Preschool Development Grants the Every Student Succeeds Act – S. 1177

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1. The Preschool Development Grants are going to spend another \$250 million on a 46th federal preschool program in the final version of the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) and it is wrong for the following reasons:
 - The new law requires alignment to Head Start and the Child Development Block Grants that in turn require [in eleven different places in the current Head Start statute, such as Section 642B(a)(2)(B)(iii)] national preschool standards. These standards are being correlated and aligned to the K-12 Common Core by national organizations and states like California. They include very controversial, subjective psychosocial standards like gender identity, creating “Baby Common Core.” (See more details on problematic language - <http://bit.ly/1Hb0vQS>).
 - This is even more controversial than the K-12 Race to the Top and Common Core, because it is overtly teaching and assessing extremely subjective and controversial psychosocial parameters and combining that data (<http://bit.ly/2eKOEjE>) with medical and even genetic data (<http://bit.ly/2eJYNf2>, p.39) as is happening in Rhode Island. This is also every bit as illegal and unconstitutional as what is happening in K-12 and not fixed by the final law because there is no enforcement mechanism for any of these prohibitions in K-12. (See page 25 of the final legislation <http://bit.ly/2eCiXE9> for one example)
 - The language prohibiting federal interference in “early learning and development guidelines, standards, or specific assessments, including the standards or measures that States use to develop, implement, or improve such guidelines, standards, or assessments” on page 390 of the final law is useless because programs are already required to adhere to Head Start which demands federal content standards in eleven places in current law as described above.
 - In a research compilation (<http://bit.ly/1HaLi26>) containing more than two dozen studies of Head Start and state preschool programs, there is evidence of ineffectiveness, fade out of beneficial effects in the early grades, or actual academic or emotional harm. The most recent study is from Tennessee, Senator Alexander’s home state in September of this year.
 - Moving this to HHS where the disastrously ineffective and invasive Head Start program is housed is not a conservative win.
 - With \$19 trillion in debt, we and our children cannot afford to have another \$250 million spent on another ineffective, harmful, invasive preschool program.
2. The codification of national early childhood standards, assessments, and data collection, when there is new evidence (<http://bit.ly/21c4dA6>) of extremely weak federal protections of sensitive student data, will accomplish helping to impose Common Core, psychological profiling and lifelong data and career tracking on our youngest most vulnerable children.
3. The only way to fix this absolutely unnecessary, harmful, ineffective, and expensive program is to defund it in the upcoming lame duck budget discussions and the next federal budget, as well as removing the requirement for national preschool standards, especially social emotional standards, from the future Head Start reauthorization.