

## Breaking Down Senator Harkin's ESEA Reauthorization Bill: The Good and The Bad

	Good	Bad
<b>Accountability</b>	No more Adequate Yearly Progress, or AYP	What now? There's no measurable yardstick in place
	District and schools must produce an annual accountability report card, including NAEP scores	We need more data, particularly some to link K-12 with postsecondary outcomes
<b>Standards and Assessments</b>	Adoption of math and reading standards that align with college-level expectations	No accountability, from the feds nor colleges, that shows these standards are up to snuff
	More flexibility with assessments – schools can use one test or multiple tests per year	States aren't required to use these assessments to measure individual student growth
<b>School Improvement</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• States identify Persistently Low-Achieving Schools with low academic achievement or growth or low graduation rates</li> <li>• States identify schools with the largest performance gaps between student subgroups as Achievement Gap Schools</li> <li>• The Blue Ribbons School program becomes more meaningful by identifying the top five percent of schools in each state</li> <li>• A new competitive grant program, called Pathways to College, to improve low-achieving high schools and middle schools</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Persistently Low-Achieving Schools choose from a menu of reforms, similar to SIG, including a vague option called "Whole School Reform" and flexibility under the "Restart" option to create a state-defined "new innovative school"</li> <li>• There are no identified strategies for supporting Achievement Gap Schools</li> <li>• Districts aren't required to reward these schools meaningfully through options like more autonomy or funding flexibility</li> <li>• Although a good idea on paper, it might get tossed out as (if?) discussions move forward</li> </ul>
<b>Teachers</b>	Competitive grants for states to adopt teacher and principal evaluations that include multiple levels of quality, student achievement data, and observations.	Teachers could be distributed based on their effectiveness only if the state chooses to do so. Otherwise, teachers would be distributed based on the existing highly-qualified definition and other inputs, not student achievement.
<b>School Finance</b>	Districts would have to show that state and local per pupil funding in Title I schools is no less than in non-Title I schools	No sizeable increase in Title I on the horizon = less targeted federal spending on schools with large concentrations of poor students
<b>Politics</b>	It's a bipartisan bill that looks similar to the Obama administration's ESEA wavier plan	The likeliness that it will move anywhere significant, much less to President Obama's desk, is slim