ESEA History

50 Years in Service to Children
How it began...

The Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) was passed as a part of President Lyndon B. Johnson's "War on Poverty" and has been the most far-reaching federal legislation affecting education ever passed by Congress. In its original conception, Title I under the ESEA, was designed by President Lyndon B. Johnson to close the skill gap in reading, writing and mathematics between children from low-income households who attend urban or rural school systems and children from the middle-class who attend suburban school systems.
According to the **United States Department of Education** (USDOE), students from low-income households are “three times as likely to be low achievers if they attend high-poverty schools as compared to low-poverty schools.”

Within this context, Title I was conceived in order to compensate for the considerable educational deprivations associated with child poverty. In the past 50 years, Title I has changed considerably.
Title I under the ESEA, was designed by President Lyndon B. Johnson to close the skill gap in reading, writing and mathematics between children from low-income households who attend urban or rural school systems and children from the middle-class who attend suburban school systems. This federal law came about during President Johnson’s “War on Poverty” agenda. Sections included:

- Title I—Financial Assistance To Local Educational Agencies For The Education Of Children Of Low-Income Families
- Title II—School Library Resources, Textbooks, and other Instructional Materials
- Title III—Supplementary Educational Centers and Services
- Title IV—Educational Research And Training
- Title V—Grants To Strengthen State Departments Of Education
- Title VI—General Provisions
Johnson Administration

Amendments

1966
• Added Title VI - Aid to Handicapped Children (1965 title VI becomes Title VII)

1967
• Added Title VII - Bilingual Education Programs (1966 title VII becomes Title VIII)
Congress passed the Education Consolidation and Improvement Act (ECIA) in 1981 to reduce federal regulations of Title I. This reflected the administration’s stance that resource control should be in the hands of states and local jurisdictions rather than at a federal level.
Despite the change outlined by the ECIA and the new designation of Title I as **Chapter I**, little was done to implement it and traditional Title I practices, like the use of pull-outs, continued.
Hawkins-Stafford Elementary & Secondary School Improvement Act 1988

Reagan Administration...

• The Hawkins-Stafford Elementary and Secondary School Improvement Act, re-focused **Title I on cultivating school improvement** and excellent programs. The additions called for **coordination between Chapter I and classroom instruction**, it raised the achievement standards for low-income students by emphasizing advanced skills instead of basic ones and increased parental involvement.
It had two new provisions: 1) program improvement and 2) school wide projects. Program improvements were modifications that would occur when students who received funding were not improving. The school wide allowed a larger number of high need schools to implement school wide programming.
Improving America’s Schools Act 1994

Clinton Administration

- The 1994 Improving America’s Schools Act (IASA), significantly revised the original ESEA. This reform made three major changes to Title I. It added math and reading/language arts standards to be used to assess student progress and provide accountability. It reduced the threshold for schools to implement schoolwide programs from 75% poverty to 50% & gave schools a longer reign to use federal funding from multiple programs to dispense funds at a school wide level.
• IASA also gave more local control overall so that federal officials and states could waive federal requirements that interfered with school improvements.
Education Flexibility Partnership Act of 1999

Clinton Administration

- **Education Flexibility** Partnership Act of 1999 (Ed-Flex statute), as amended, the Secretary of Education delegated to States the authority to waive certain requirements of Federal education programs that may impede local efforts to reform and improve education.
• This “Ed-Flex” authority is designed to help (LEAs) and schools to carry out educational reforms and raise the achievement levels of all children by providing increased flexibility in the implementation of Federal education programs in exchange for enhanced accountability for the performance of students.
No Child Left Behind Act of 2001

George W. Bush Administration

• The most recent and significant alteration to the original Title I legislation was made by its reauthorization under No Child Left Behind (NCLB). In this reauthorization, NCLB required increased accountability from its schools both from the teachers and from the students.
• **Yearly standardized tests** were mandated in order to measure how schools were performing against the achievement bars set by Title I. Schools were also responsible for publishing **annual report cards** that detailed their student achievement data and demographics.
• Title II of No Child Left Behind, **Preparing, Training, and Recruiting High Quality Teachers** and Principals, changed to focus specifically on improving the quality of teachers and principals in publicly funded schools and created the term highly qualified teacher (HQT) aimed to have a highly-qualified teacher in every classroom in the United States by 2005. It also gives states greater freedom on spending as it relates to teacher qualify, in the hopes that schools will be able to retain their highly-qualified teachers.
Flex Waiver Implementation

Obama Administration

In an effort to support local and state education reform across America, the White House provided an opportunity for states to get relief from provisions of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act—or No Child Left Behind (NCLB)—in exchange for serious state-led efforts to close achievement gaps, promote rigorous accountability, and ensure that all students are on track to graduate college- and career-ready.
States can request flexibility from specific NCLB requirements, but only if they are transitioning students, teachers, and schools to a system aligned with college- and career-ready standards for all students, developing differentiated accountability systems, and undertaking reforms to support effective classroom instruction and school leadership.
2015

ESEA Reauthorization?