



Parents as Teachers™

POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS FOR THE REAUTHORIZATION OF THE ELEMENTARY AND SECONDARY EDUCATION ACT

About Parents as Teachers

Parents as Teachers is an internationally recognized network of organizations and professionals that supports thousands of families in all 50 states as well as many other countries through a proven parent education model featuring in-home visits with parents and children. This evidence-based home visiting model was developed more than 25 years ago and consistently yields improvement in children's development across multiple domains, increasing their school readiness and improving parent knowledge of early childhood development and parenting practices, identifying delays and health issues, and preventing child abuse and neglect.

Policy Recommendations

Parents as Teachers commends the Department of Education for acknowledging early learning is a critical component of education reform. Research shows that children born into families living in poverty often enter kindergarten with unidentified health, social-emotional,

developmental or learning problems. For these children, a lack of school readiness leads to long-term poor academic achievement and limited opportunities.

Parents as Teachers recommends that increased investments in early childhood education, particularly with personal home visiting initiatives and professional development access for community-based early childhood providers, are included as the foundation of the ESEA reauthorization to address issues in the critical, formative years of life.

Reauthorize Parent Information Resource Centers (PIRCs).

Parents as Teachers recommends that PIRCs be reauthorized and continue to be served through a dedicated federal funding stream. Currently, the PIRC program is the sole federal program dedicated to engaging families in their children's education. Research demonstrates that family engagement improves student achievement, attendance and

behavior regardless of parents' education level, ethnicity or socioeconomic background. A number of PIRCs use funding to provide Parents as Teachers services, encouraging and equipping parents to participate in their children's development and learning from birth and to stay engaged.

Build a coherent, coordinated and integrated system from cradle to career.

Parents as Teachers recommends that the reauthorization of ESEA ensures that investments in early childhood at the state and local level are part of a comprehensive, coordinated and integrated plan for cradle-to-career systems funded and developed through federal, state and private efforts across the country and through funding streams such as child care, Head Start and early intervention programs to expand the availability of high quality early childhood programs.

Continue the inclusion of Parents as Teachers as a model program under Parental Involvement in ESEA.

Parents as Teachers recommends that the ESEA reauthorization continues current ESEA requirements that

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LEAs develop strategies for parental involvement. Specifically, LEAs are required to describe how the agency will “coordinate and integrate parental involvement strategies under this part with parental involvement strategies under other programs, such as Parents as Teachers programs.”

Authorize a set-aside of Title I funds or incentives for use of Title I funding for early childhood initiatives.

Parents as Teachers recommends that LEAs be encouraged and supported to use early childhood programs and home visiting services to prevent later disadvantage in the classroom and reduce future high school dropouts rates. For decades LEAs have had the option to allocate Title I funding to support high-quality, evidence-based early childhood services designed to ensure that eligible children receive the services they need in order to enter school ready to be successful. However, due to many misunderstandings and misperceptions, LEAs are routinely under the impression that they are not allowed to use Title I funds for 0-5 year olds. Encouragement and support could shift these impressions.

Link education reform efforts to young children.

Parents as Teachers recommends that ESEA promote appropriate investments and place a priority on services for young children in all areas of education reform and grant opportunities (and throughout all Titles of ESEA), including teacher quality and professional development efforts. Folding early learning into the reauthorization of ESEA includes adopting the Early Learning Challenge Fund which would incentivize states to develop early learning systems that aim to provide high-quality, results-oriented, early childhood programs that align both curriculum and funding streams with this objective at hand. Parents as Teachers supports funding the Early Learning Challenge Fund to provide cost-efficient, high-quality services that ensure a child’s school readiness.

Continue support for community partnerships that support early childhood initiatives.

Parents as Teachers supports prioritizing programs that partner with community organizations to promote student success, and encourages an explicit role for early childhood organizations in strategies that promote community involvement. The Administration’s Blueprint for Reform supports this notion that preparing students for success means supporting innovative models that provide the services that students need and greater opportunities to engage families in their children’s education, strengthening the role of schools as centers of communities, as well.

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