

PROGRAM DEVELOPMENT WORKSHEET

NO CHILD LEFT BEHIND ACT OF 2001

Program Category:	Education, Laws Public Policy Issues/Advocacy
Region Specific?	No
Date Developed:	October 2004
Title:	No Child Left Behind Act of 2001
Description:	<p>The No Child Left Behind (NCLB) Act of 2001 is a controversial law. No one disagrees with the intent of the law but many criticize its implementation. The bill reauthorizes the Elementary Secondary Education Act (ESEA) which governs the main federal programs assisting elementary and secondary schools. AAUW was successful in getting several initiatives into the NCLB Act including the Women's Educational Equity Act (WEEA) reauthorization which helps schools eradicate sex discrimination, Dropout Prevention, Sexual Harassment Prevention, Funding to encourage girls to pursue post-secondary education and careers in the areas of math, science, engineering, and technology, and Hate Crime Prevention.</p> <p>The components of NCLB include elements such as increased teacher and school accountability, higher standards of achievement for student progress, supplemental service funds for low-income students, and public school choice for students who attend underperforming schools. However, there is a large difference between program goals and implementation of those goals. Critics say that the law does not provide adequate funding, puts too much focus on a narrow curriculum and too little focus on social causes of poor performance (poverty, neglect and various social disadvantages), arbitrarily suggests transferring students to "better" schools, etc.</p> <p>There is a wealth of information about NCLB on the web. The government website explains the law, provides a powerpoint presentation that can be downloaded, has a 44 page parents guide (2003) and a Toolkit for Teachers both available to download or get copies on request. For an opposing point of view visit the website nochildleft.com. It lists criticisms including the ones given above and gives many links to articles that further discuss criticisms of the NCLB act. The Pennsylvania Department of Education website pde.state.pa.us/ does a good job of highlighting key issues that would improve the implementation of NCLB in PA. It also provides the state's position paper, a 13 page document. The AAUW Association website aauw.org explains AAUW's role in this legislation and provides the AAUW's position paper on this topic.</p>
Suggested Speaker(s):	Teachers from public schools, private schools and charter schools, School Administrators, School Board Members, Politicians, Parents including those with children with disabilities or learning difficulties; Seek a good distribution of pro and con advocates and consider using a moderator and a structured Q&A format
Resources:	Federal website – ed.gov/nclb/landing.jhtml NCLB Criticisms website – nochildleft.com PA Department of Education website – pde.state.pa.us/ Association website – aauw.org (Issue Advocacy, AAUW Issues, Education, NCLB Act)
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