

**Educational Advisory Council Meeting**  
**Meeting: Sadler Center, College of William and Mary**  
**September 21, 2009 at 9 A.M.**

**NCLB Discussion/Concerns:**

- Participants discussed the conflict between state and federal standards, and in particular, what does AYP mean for states and localities? In other words, AYP needs to be further defined.
- Meeting the 100% benchmark for students to be proficient in reading and math appears to be unrealistic due to differences in student needs, etc.
- Concern was expressed about standardized testing in general: Does it stifle creativity and problem solving skills in students? How do we assess for those skills?
- Current NCLB has too much emphasis on multiple-choice based tests that do not assess these critical thinking, creativity, and problem solving skills. What are ways for teachers, administrators, etc. to assess besides multiple-choice tests?
- Issues of funding creating perverse incentives: Why does the Federal government cut back funding to those schools that meet a certain threshold? Shouldn't the Federal government continue funding schools meeting AYP instead of cutting it?
- Needs a makeover, i.e. current NCLB law is inadequate because it puts the federal government in charge of things like assessments and evaluations of schools' performance, which historically has been the purview of the state and local government.
- Most participants concurred that localities and states know what is best for meeting student needs, and therefore they should be able to dictate things like how to meet student competencies in skills like reading, writing, and math.
- Issues related to attracting teachers and determining core competencies were also brought up. Some participants suggested that the business community and others should help in deciding what those competencies should be.
- All participants agreed that core concepts like accountability and national standards are important especially to compete on a global level with other countries (e.g. India and China).

**NCLB Suggestions for Improvement/Reform:**

- The Federal government should set national standards for things like reading, writing, and math.
- States and localities should have flexibility when it comes to assessments of performance, how to meet national standards, etc. (i.e. AYP).

- Criteria needs to be further clarified and defined (i.e. defining benchmarks for progress, etc.)
- Two bills were mentioned H.R. 3010 sponsored by David Wu: Amend Elementary and Secondary School Act and another bill sponsored by Representative Lee Terry that aims to provide flexibility in meeting AYP.
- Next Education Advisory Council Meeting to suggest improvements to these two bills and discussion of them.

**Access to Higher Education:**

- Issues of funding for College and expanding access (e.g. Thomas Nelson Community College has an open admissions policy, but has to turn students away due to budgetary issues.)