



Who We Are

The National Parents Union (NPU) is a network of highly effective parent organizations and grassroots activists across the country that is united behind a set of common goals and principles to channel the power of parents. The National Parents Union develops a new narrative that is inclusive of families from a wide variety of perspectives that unites parents of color, low-income parents, special needs parents, single mothers and fathers, grandparents, formerly incarcerated parents and parents in recovery with traditionally represented parent voices to join a vibrant coalition that disrupts the traditional role of parent voice in policy spaces that directly impact our children.

Our Ask

K-12 Public Education legislative guidance and robust accountability measures that involve parents and family members, and seek meaningful consultation with parents about decision making processes and fiscal management:

- Ensure that public school parents whose students attend a school located within the boundaries of LEAs receiving federal funding have the right to meaningful and respected collaboration and a role in fiscal decision making processes.
- Ensure that LEAs and Schools receiving Title I and federal stimulus funds are developing a Parent and Family Engagement Policy as outlined in (ESSA BILLS-114s1177)¹
- Ensure that school districts take responsibility for and strive to correct fiscal misuse with the assurance of parent evaluations of its family engagement policies and practices, with direct and meaningful input from families.
- Ensure accountability measures for Title I, Part A Parent and Family Engagement which requires that local educational agencies (LEAs), conduct outreach to ALL parents and family members and implement programs, activities, and procedures for the involvement of parents and family members. Such programs, activities, and procedures shall be

¹ <https://www.govinfo.gov/content/pkg/BILLS-114s1177enr/pdf/BILLS-114s1177enr.pdf>



planned and implemented with meaningful consultation from parents of participating children (ESSA BILLS-114s1177)²

The Need

Parents trust and expect that education is the great equalizer and school systems of every type must be held accountable for meeting the promise of education for all students — that each student has equitable access to opportunity so that they may launch into a successful future. Unfortunately, we know that a majority of low-income students and students of color across the country do not have the same educational opportunities as their white peers.

The purpose of Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief (ESSER) funds are to boost and complement the educational needs, achievement, and outcomes of students who have the right to receive a high-quality education through the Every Student Succeeds Act Title 1. We know by yearly adequate progress rates and longer term measures of outcome these students were at an academic disadvantage prior to Covid-19. Learning loss has further exasperated expected gaps in achievement and outcomes.

Parents and families who are the most credible source of information regarding their students have not been respected during decision making stages. Raising the next generation is a shared responsibility. When families, communities and schools work together, students are more successful and the entire community benefits. For schools and districts across the U.S., family engagement needs to become a top priority and an integral part of education reform efforts.

² <https://www.govinfo.gov/content/pkg/BILLS-114s1177enr/pdf/BILLS-114s1177enr.pdf>



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Long-standing inequities remain

Current and ongoing reimagining K-12 education polls³ conducted by the National Parents Union indicate that the parents and families of students with the highest needs, academically and socioeconomically, are continuing to be ignored or left out of the K-12 decision making discussion

- Fewer than 3 and 10 schools have communicated with parents about how they plan to use federal funding to help address the challenges related to Covid-19 *May 2021
- only 22% of parents say schools have asked have asked them for input or feedback on how the additional federal funding should be used
- only 41% of parents say that their schools have told them what the plans are for this summer (50% have not and 9% unsure) *April 2021
- 55% of parents continues to want schools focused on rethinking how to educate students

Impact

According to the National Conference of State Legislatures⁴ In 2020 and 2021, Congress passed three stimulus bills that provided nearly \$190.5 billion to the Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief (ESSER) Fund. States receive funds based on the same proportion that each state receives under the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) Title-IA. States must distribute at least 90% of funds to local education agencies (LEAs) based on their proportional share of ESEA Title I-A funds. States have the option to reserve 10% of the allocation for emergency needs as determined by the state to address issues responding to the COVID-19 pandemic.

- The Coronavirus Aid, Relief and Economic Security (CARES) Act, passed on March 27, 2020, provided \$13.5 billion to the ESSER Fund.

³ <https://nationalparentsunion.org/npu-polling/>

⁴ <https://www.ncsl.org/ncsl-in-dc/standing-committees/education/cares-act-elementary-and-secondary-school-emergency-relief-fund-tracker.aspx>



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- The Coronavirus Response and Relief Supplemental Appropriations Act, 2021 (CRRSA), passed on Dec. 27, 2020, provided \$54.3 billion in supplemental ESSER funding, known as the ESSER II fund.
- The American Rescue Plan Act, passed on March 11, 2021, provided \$122.7 billion in supplemental ESSER funding, known as the ESSER III fund.
 - The SEAs are required to reserve their allocations to carry out activities: 5% to address learning loss, 1% for afterschool activities, and 1% for summer learning programs.
 - The LEAs must reserve at least 20% of the funding they receive to address learning loss.
 - Two-thirds of ESSER funds are immediately available to states, while remaining funds will be made available after states submit ESSER implementation plans.

With the large amount of funding disbursed and the high academic needs of students that have to be met, parents and families cannot be eliminated from the process of fiscal responsibility. School districts must establish their expectations and objectives for meaningful parent and family engagement. We believe that in order to be successful at offering respected, valued, and meaningful parent and family engagement policies and practices -- districts must consider how to carry out all of the following strategies to engage families effectively: professional development for school staff (and may include parents); home-based programs; information dissemination; collaboration with community organizations; and other related activities.



Robust measures and guidance should include directives that indicate accountability for all of the following:

- “(1) provide adequate outreach to ensure parents can exercise a meaningful choice of direct student services for their child’s education;
- “(2) ensure parents have adequate time and information to make a meaningful choice prior to enrolling their child in a direct student service;
- “(3) in the case of a local educational agency offering public school choice under this section, ensure sufficient availability of seats in the public schools the local educational agency will make available for public school choice options;
- “(4) prioritize services to students who are lowest-achieving;
- “(5) select providers of direct student services, which may include one or more of—
 - “(A) the local educational agency or other local educational agencies;
 - “(B) community colleges or other institutions of higher education;
 - “(C) non-public entities;
 - “(D) community-based organizations; or
 - “(E) in the case of high-quality academic tutoring, a variety of providers of such tutoring that are selected and S. 1177—19 approved by the State and appear on the State’s list of such providers required under subsection (e)(2);
- “(6) monitor the provision of direct student services; and
- “(7) publicly report the results of direct student service providers in improving relevant student outcomes in a manner that is accessible to parents.

S. 1177—17 “Sec. 1116. Parent and family engagement (d) APPLICATION⁵

⁵ <https://www.govinfo.gov/content/pkg/BILLS-114s1177enr/pdf/BILLS-114s1177enr.pdf>