

Talking Points for Legislative Chairs, March 2015

Details are in the March issue of the *Advocacy Communicator*.

- No Child Left Behind, or NCLB, is the federal law on education that a lot of people love to hate. NCLB is actually the latest version of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) which was originally passed in 1965 and was supposed to be reauthorized every five years. The latest reauthorization was scheduled to occur in 2007, but so far Congress has failed to complete the process. This year, reauthorization bills have been introduced both in the House of Representatives and the Senate. Whether they will actually be passed remains to be seen. National PTA is tracking the process and making sure that lawmakers know about PTA's concerns.
- Also at the national level, Congress is looking at full funding for IDEA, the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act. IDEA was enacted in 1975 to ensure that students with disabilities receive free, appropriate public education and the related services and support they need to achieve. When it was first passed, lawmakers said that the federal government would pay 40 percent of the additional costs for educating special needs students. However, the government has never paid more than 18.5 percent. Now bills have been introduced in both the House and Senate to increase that funding. If California were to receive full funding, it would mean another \$2 billion for our schools.
- The Fourth District PTA Advocacy Roundtable on April 24 is going to deal with standardized testing in California. A lot is changing this year and it would be good to find out exactly what is happening.
- With all the changes in state testing, some people think the high school exit exam is no longer needed. A bill has been introduced in the state legislature that would suspend the exit exam for three years and require the State Superintendent to set up an advisory panel that would recommend whether to keep the test or replace it.
- There is also an article about how to track bills that National and State PTA are supporting.

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