



**CONSORTIUM FOR CITIZENS
WITH DISABILITIES**

February 9, 2015

The Honorable John Kline
Chairman
Education and the Workforce
Committee
2181 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Bobby Scott
Ranking Member
Education and the Workforce
Committee
2101 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairman Kline and Ranking Member Scott:

On behalf of the Consortium for Citizens with Disabilities (CCD) Technology and Telecommunications Task Force, we would like to thank you for the opportunity to offer the following recommendations as you work on the reauthorization of the *Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA)*. The Consortium for Citizens with Disabilities is a coalition of more than 100 national disability organizations working together to advocate for national public policy that ensures the self-determination, independence, empowerment, integration, and inclusion of children and adults with disabilities in all aspects of society. The Telecommunications and Technology Task Force focuses on ensuring national policy on matters of telecommunications and technology, including assistive technology, helps move society toward our ultimate goal of full inclusion of all people with a disability.

The CCD Technology and Telecommunications Task Force requests the specific changes (see attached) to the legislative language in the draft proposal set forth by Chairman Kline's, "The Student Success Act."

These requested changes will ensure that all assessments are accessible for every student, regardless of their disability. Federal law already mandates equal access, but sadly in the move to digital assessments full accessibility of the application has not been required. It is time that in this iteration of ESEA, it is clear that all students should be able to access assessments offered under any circumstance.

It is also critical for teachers to be knowledgeable in the use of universally designed curricula, accessible instructional materials and assistive technology and for these to be available in schools. Therefore, additional language is suggested to ensure that those we entrust to educate our students are provided the expertise necessary and have access to the materials and technology they need.

Thank you for your consideration of these views. If you have any questions, please feel free to contact one of the CCD Technology and Telecommunications Task Force Co-Chairs: Eric Buehlmann, eric.buehlmann@ndrn.org; Mark Richert, 4justice@concentric.net; Audrey Busch, audrey.busch@ataporg.org; Sara Rosta, sara.rosta@PPSV.com; or Michael Brogioli, mbrogioli@resna.org.

Sincerely,

Mark Richert, American Foundation for the Blind
Audrey Busch, Association for Assistive Technology Act Programs
Sara Rosta, Perkins
Michael Brogioli, Rehabilitation Engineering and Assistive Technology Society of North America
Eric Buehlmann, National Disability Rights Network



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**The Student Success Act
Legislative Language Recommendations**

Page 26, line 19

“(iv) be used for purposes for which such assessments are valid and reliable, be of adequate technical quality for each purpose required under this Act, and be consistent with relevant, nationally recognized professional and technical standards **including accessibility for students with disabilities**;

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“(II) the reasonable adaptations and accommodations for students with disabilities, **including full accessibility and ability to use assistive technology**, necessary to measure the academic achievement of such students relative to the State’s academic standards; and

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“(xiv) ~~where practicable~~, be developed using the principles of universal design for learning as defined in section 103(24) of the Higher Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 1003(24)) and **conform to nationally recognized accessibility standards**.

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“(C) professional development to assist teachers in meeting the needs of students with different learning styles, **access and technology needs**, particularly students with disabilities, English learners, and gifted and talented students;