



Federal Role in Education Historical Background – Highlights

Article 1, Sec.8, U.S. Constitution grants Congress power to collect taxes, to provide for the "general welfare". This clause grants the power to the Federal Government to initiate educational programs and to combine with states and school districts in exercising control.

Year	Event
1867	Department of Education established.
WWII	Federal support was expanded. Towns with military installations received extra support.
G.I. Bill	Provided for 8 million veterans to attend college.
1954	Brown v. Bd. of Education. State laws establishing separate public schools based on race were deemed unconstitutional. Resulted in busing.
1958	Sputnik launch placed new emphasis on more math and science and foreign language teaching. National Defense Education Act (NDEA) provided for teachers to study for graduate degrees.
1950s-60s	Role of Federal Government was increased with enactment of anti-poverty and civil rights laws.
1964	Title IX law passed prohibiting discrimination based on race, sex and disability.
1965	The Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) began programs including Title I of federal aid to disadvantaged. Primary and secondary schools were in this program primarily. The Act explicitly forbids establishing a national curriculum. At first this Act was authorized until 1970 but now is reauthorized each five to ten years. ESSA is now called NO CHILD LEFT BEHIND ACT OF 2001 (NCLB).
1980	Department of Education moved to Cabinet level.
1982	Twenty-five bills introduced to improve math and science programs. None passed.
1989	Pres. Bush placed public schools of choice as high priority. Assessment panel to set goals. NCLB was passed among the first bills during his administration.
Trend to present	Education "for the common good" has shifted from local control to largely state and federal control. Presently Congress has re-authorizing ESSA on its agenda. National debate is on: schools of choice, teacher quality goals and accountability, but above all, funding. Federal funds provide about ten percent of local school district funds.

Common Core Standards and Assessment – Background

In the 1970s

- A few states developed standards for basic skills usually in math and language arts
- Some states developed high school exit exams defining minimum performance for graduation
- Performance standards varied from state to state
- In states without exit exams, standards often varied from school to school within the state
- Diploma requirements varied from state to state

In the 1980s

- 1983 “Nation at Risk” claimed the US was slipping in educational achievements compared to other industrial countries
- Educational publishing companies competed for largest markets (Texas, California)
- Textbooks often defined the curriculum
- What students were expected to learn and how well they were expected to perform depended on where they lived
- National teaching organizations created voluntary subject-area content standards without performance standards

In the 1990s

- Some states wrote their own content standards and developed assessments
- 1992 Early efforts at national standards funded by federal grants to professional subject-area organizations
- State education agencies modified standards and state standards continued to vary widely

In the 2000s

- 2001 ESEA was reauthorized as “No Child Left Behind”
- Federal law required state standards, assessments, and reporting of Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP)
- States created their own assessments and set their own performance standards
- States that had not already developed assessments set low performance standards to avoid sanctions
- US Department of Education conducted peer reviews and set regulatory limits
- AYP looked like a common regulatory system, but state performance standards actually varied widely