

# BUSINESS COALITION FOR STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT

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## ***No Child Left Behind* Reauthorization Key Talking Points**

**The U.S. business community believes that improving the performance of the K-12 education system in the United States is necessary to provide a strong foundation for both U.S. competitiveness and for individuals to succeed in our rapidly changing world.**

- As the largest customer of America's education system, the U.S. business community understands firsthand the importance of ensuring that students are equipped with the necessary competencies to excel in the 21<sup>st</sup> century and beyond.
- However, the United States is facing a talent gap. The percentage of 12<sup>th</sup>-graders scoring at or above proficient on the National Assessment of Educational Progress science test *declined* over the past decade, from 24 percent in 1996 to 20 percent in 2005. (Source: National Assessment of Education Progress, 1996-2005)
- Among fifteen year olds in 2003, 23 out of 40 competitor countries outscored the United States on math literacy, and 24 countries outscored the United States on problem solving. (Source: Program of International Student Assessment, 2003)

**The *No Child Left Behind Act* is one of the critical tools needed to transform U.S. education so that all students graduate academically prepared for college, citizenship and the 21<sup>st</sup> century workplace.**

- The United States loses \$2.3 billion a year in lost productivity from high school graduates requiring remediation in reading and math in college and the workplace. (Source: Alliance for Excellent Education, 2006)
- More than 80 percent of employers say they experience difficulties hiring qualified workers; only half are satisfied with the skills of their current employees. (Source: National Association of Manufacturers, 2005)

**The Business Coalition for Student Achievement – representing business leaders from every sector of the economy – supports strengthening and sustaining the *No Child Left Behind Act* and calls for its reauthorization this year.**

- When the *No Child Left Behind Act* was first introduced in 2001, the U.S. business community was actively involved in advocating and promoting the law's initial passage.
- The Coalition remains committed to the fundamental features of this historic education law that are designed to raise student achievement and close achievement gaps and calls on Congress to strengthen and improve *No Child Left Behind Act* provisions and funding by:
  - Focusing on college and workplace readiness;
  - Emphasizing science, technology, engineering and math;
  - Enhancing data-driven decision making;
  
  - Increasing teacher and principal effectiveness;
  - Strengthening and refining accountability; and
  - Investing in school improvement and encouraging innovation.

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