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CHSE's Analysis of Waivers Raises Serious Questions About How States Will Serve Students of Color

WASHINGTON, DC – The Campaign for High School Equity today released a white paper that raises serious questions about state accountability plans under the ESEA waiver program of the U.S. Department of Education. The [white paper](#) is available on the CHSE website. It finds disturbing trends such as the use of “super subgroups” that could lead to fewer students of color receiving the supports they need to succeed in school.

In 2011, the U.S. Department of Education announced that states agreeing to certain requirements would become eligible for waivers from core accountability provisions of the No Child Left Behind federal education law. 40 states and the District of Columbia have received waivers. The waivers allow those states to use super subgroups and race- and income-based subgroups in reporting student data under federal accountability programs.

CHSE's analysis shows the waivers could weaken efforts to highlight inequities, narrow achievement gaps, and improve education for all students. The analysis also shows that fewer schools could be identified for interventions and struggling students could lose the supports and services they desperately need and deserve.

“Transparency and robust parameters are essential to equity in education,” said Rufina Hernández, executive director of CHSE. “When it comes to protecting civil rights, our communities have always looked to the federal government. For the sake of millions of students of color, we urge the Administration to work with all stakeholders in education and improve accountability.”

[QUOTE FROM Alliance for Excellent Education]

[QUOTE FROM Leadership Conference on Civil Rights Education Fund]

[QUOTE FROM League of United Latin American Citizens]

[QUOTE FROM Mexican American Legal Defense and Educational Fund]

[QUOTE FROM National Association for the Advancement of Colored People]

[QUOTE FROM National Association of Latino Elected and Appointed Officials Educational Fund]

[QUOTE FROM National Council of La Raza]

[QUOTE FROM National Indian Education Association]

[QUOTE FROM National Urban League]

[QUOTE FROM Southeast Asia Resource Action Center]

CHSE's white paper calls on the Department of Education to strengthen its requirements for states to focus on narrowing the achievement gaps between students of diverse backgrounds. CHSE believes this can be accomplished by ensuring transparency in state accountability systems, in conjunction with strong federal oversight of states' yearly academic improvement goals for students, schools and districts in reading and math. CHSE also calls on the U.S. Department of Education to ensure that the opinions and perspectives of diverse populations are included in these efforts.

Where the role of states is concerned, CHSE calls on them to disaggregate student subgroup data for accountability purposes and provide that data to the public in an accessible and informative way. CHSE also believes states must focus on student achievement and academic growth, engage diverse stakeholders in improvement efforts, and support low-performing subgroups as well as low-performing schools.

CHSE has also called on Congressional leaders to reauthorize the Elementary and Secondary Education Act in a manner that ensures every student across America has access to a high-quality education.

Read the full text of CHSE's white paper, [Maintaining a Focus on Subgroups in an Era of Elementary and Secondary Education Act Waivers](#).

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CHSE is a coalition of leading civil rights organizations representing communities of color that is focused on high school education reform. Members include the National Urban League, National Council of La Raza, National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, Leadership Conference on Civil Rights Education Fund, Mexican American Legal Defense and Educational Fund, League of United Latin American Citizens, National Association of Latino Elected and Appointed Officials Educational Fund, Alliance for Excellent Education, National Indian Education Association, and Southeast Asia Resource Action Center. CHSE is a special project of Rockefeller Philanthropy Advisors.