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**EDUCATION & LABOR COMMITTEE**

**Congressman George Miller, Chairman**

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Wednesday, April 14, 2010  
Press Office, 202-226-0853

**Chairman Miller Statement at Committee Hearing On “How Data Can be Used to Inform Educational Outcomes”**

WASHINGTON, D.C. – *Below are the prepared remarks of U.S. Rep. George Miller (D-CA), chairman of the House Education and Labor Committee, for a committee hearing on “How Data Can be Used to Inform Educational Outcomes”.*

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Good morning.

Today we’ll explore how effective data systems can help improve education outcomes.

This is a part of a series of hearings this committee is holding as we work in a bipartisan way to reauthorize the Elementary and Secondary Education Act.

My colleagues have demonstrated their dedication to this bipartisan reauthorization process and all bring valuable expertise to the table.

Mr. Holt and Mrs. McCarthy in particular have been leaders in the data arena for several years. Notably, together they have previously introduced legislation to improve data use in schools across the nation.

Data is absolutely critical to education reform.

Just like any complex organization relies on multiple indicators to measure their success, schools need data to make informed and educated decisions about what is working and what isn’t.

But in many schools and districts, data is not used in the most meaningful way to make decisions, or even at all.

It is unacceptable that education is the only major enterprise in this country that, on the whole, doesn’t use data as to make decisions.

Teachers, parents, school administrators and states need access to real time data to know exactly how students are faring in school.

We took a big step forward to address this need in the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act when we required states to comply with four assurances in order to be eligible for the historic investments in education.

These assurances helped move the ball a little farther down the field for schools by asking states to adopt college and career ready standards tied to better assessments, turn around the lowest perform schools, ensure teacher talent is distributed fairly and establish data systems to use data to improve schools.

We asked for these commitments from states, especially on the data front, for two reasons.

One, we can no longer accept an education system that is willing to settle for less than the best for our students.

The millions of students in classrooms today are the future innovators and engineers.

If we are going to regain our footing as a global competitor in the world, we have to demand the best for our schools, our teachers and our schools.

And two, we know an effective longitudinal data system with a focus on the safety and privacy of our students works to help schools succeed.

Schools need student level information in order to better educate every child – both for their own benefit and for our future as a nation.

In the Western Heights school district in Oklahoma, for example, school officials used a data system to help determine which students were the lowest performing.

They realized their mobile students, those who moved from school to school, were achieving at the lowest levels and dropping out at the highest.

After implementing a data system, the dropout rate in the district fell by 11 points in two years.

If districts implement early warning indicator systems in middle schools, they could identify the students most likely to drop out of high school and reach those students before they get off track.

If a principal uses data to help identify teachers' strengths in the classroom, the principal could work to replicate their achievements on a school wide level.

If researchers were able to investigate state-level data, they could share the practices that are working best to help students succeed.

Without data, schools are operating in the dark. Simply put, data systems work.

That's why there has to be a tremendous focus on data in the next iteration of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act, so the new law can be a real catalyst for positive change in our schools.

Since we announced we were working to rewrite ESEA, we've heard from thousands of stakeholders. Their input has been incredibly helpful.

We all agree that the status quo is failing our children and won't lead our children to the future.

It's time we put the needs of our students and teachers at the top of our priorities.

We can't let our students suffer the failures of a system that doesn't support them. We have an obligation to the children of this country to get it right the first time.

This is why data is so absolutely critical.

It's time we give teachers the tools they need to make data-based, informed decisions in the classrooms.

Critics of the use of data are operating under an antiquated school of thought. We have to take our schools to the future.

When data is properly presented and when people are given skills to use it and know the purpose behind it, data can be the most valuable tool for school success.

I'd like to thank our witnesses for being here today. I look forward to hearing your testimony.

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