



PRESIDENTIAL CANDIDATES' POSITIONS ON EDUCATION

September 2008

Issue	John McCain	Barack Obama
<p>NCLB/K-12</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Supports holding schools accountable through testing in grades 3-8 and high school; believes the law is a “good beginning,” calling for changes in testing for English language learners and students with disabilities, but not a major overhaul. ◆ Supports growth models. ◆ Makes school choice, SES (supplemental educational services) available sooner to families. SES providers would receive direct “federal certification” and can market directly to parents with Title I funds directed straight to providers. ◆ Questions 2014 proficiency deadline, but agrees there should be a goal. ◆ Believes current funding level is adequate. If elected, would likely freeze education spending. ◆ Uses 5% of Title II funding for state grants to recruit teachers who graduate in the top 25% of their class or who participate in an alternative certification programs; 60% for schools to give bonuses to teachers who teach in high need schools, or who teach math and science; or raise student achievement and enhance school-wide learning environment. Principals can also consider other criteria in addition to test scores for bonuses. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Supports holding schools accountable and NCLB’s goals, but believes that the law needs major changes including testing for English language learners and students with disabilities and improving assessments to measure higher-order skills. ◆ Improves accountability system to focus on supporting schools rather than on punishments. ◆ Supports growth models. ◆ Supports fully funding the law. ◆ Provides funds to middle schools for dropout prevention through parental involvement, mentoring, etc. ◆ Supports alternative pathways to high school graduation through competitive grants to public/private partnerships that develop evidence-based models. ◆ Provides more funds for afterschool programs including \$500 million through faith-based partnerships. ◆ Supports GEAR UP, TRIO & Upward Bound to prepare low-income students for college. ◆ Supports additional learning time/expanding summer learning opportunities. ◆ Promotes safe schools through “Positive Behavior Support.” ◆ Doubles investment in early education and educational research and development.

National School Boards Association

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<p align="center">NCLB/K-12</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Directs first 35% of Title II funds to school level for high quality professional development focusing on instructional strategies. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Doubles funding for “responsible charter schools.” ◆ Provides funds to states and school districts through Innovative Schools Fund to broaden public school choice among charters, nonprofit schools, Montessori schools, career academies and theme-focused schools. ◆ Promotes parental involvement and responsibility.
<p>Teachers / Principals</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Supports merit pay tied to student achievement (test scores); allows principals to use differential pay. ◆ Supports alternative certification to recruit talented teachers. ◆ Wants principals to have more control over spending. ◆ Also see proposals on Title II above. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Supports merit pay plan developed with teachers based on “classroom excellence” as defined by school and teachers; career ladders, extra pay for more responsibilities & teaching in high-need schools/subjects, paid planning time. ◆ Doesn’t have a position on using alternative certification to meet HQT. ◆ Proposes 40,000 “Teaching Service Scholarships” of up to \$25,000 each for college graduates (including alternative programs for career changers), in exchange for four years of teaching in a high-need school. ◆ Expands Teacher Residency Programs to recruit and retain teachers who teach in school with support by a mentor, while taking courses for a graduate degree. ◆ Improves teacher prep programs by requiring professional accreditation; encourages the use of teacher performance assessments to measure new teachers’ skills and content knowledge.
<p align="center">STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Math)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Supports more emphasis in math and science learning; more details are expected in the fall. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Recruits high quality math & science teachers; works with governors to ensure student access to strong science curriculum.

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<p align="center">STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Math)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Invests \$500 million for new virtual schools and online courses; \$250 million through competitive grants to support states' effort to expand online education programs; \$250 million to allow low-income students to receive up to \$4,000 to enroll in an online course, SAT/ACT prep course, tutoring services offered by virtual providers. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Improves science assessments to require students to analyze and use higher order thinking skills. ◆ Supports broadband access in schools. ◆ Creates a \$500 million matching fund to help schools integrate technology into classrooms. ◆ Proposes a national "Make College A Reality" initiative to increase the number of students taking AP or IB courses by 50% by 2016.
<p align="center">Vouchers</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Endorses private school vouchers, but does not support using Title I funds for vouchers. ◆ Expands DC voucher program. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Opposes using tax dollars for private school vouchers.
<p align="center">Early Childhood Education</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Supports setting basic standards for program content; emphasizes language-based instruction and reading skills. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Proposes \$10 billion per year for ages 0-5, including grants to states to improve early care and education programs; expanding early Head Start/Head Start, child and dependent care tax credit. ◆ Encourages all states to adopt voluntary universal preschool.
<p align="center">Higher Education</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Simplifies higher education tax benefits and financial aid. ◆ Improves government's support for university research by eliminating earmarks. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Offers students an annual \$4,000 refundable tax credit to help pay for college if they are willing to perform at least 100 hours of community services. ◆ Simplifies the financial aid application process.
<p align="center">Academic Standards</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Does not believe federal government should develop academic standards. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Does not believe federal government should develop academic standards.

Note: The materials presented here are based on the candidates' websites, speeches, news articles and remarks by their advisors. Details in funding levels and policies are not available in some proposals. NSBA does not endorse any candidates.