

# **IRA Legislative Update**

## **March 12, 2010**

### Overview

While the headlines are about health care, education issues that will impact classrooms are being debated in Washington, DC. Several of them will have immediate impact on IRA members and their councils. These items include funding for literacy, rewriting of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA), and the recent release of the draft Core Standards for K-12. For more information on advocacy and for updates go to the IRA website at: [www.reading.org/General/Legislative.aspx](http://www.reading.org/General/Legislative.aspx) and also consider participating in the upcoming webinars.

### Funding

The most immediate challenge is the lack of funding for schools around the United States. The federal appropriations program is moving ahead with the process of determining how much money will go to which program. Key to the literacy community is the expansion of the Striving Readers program. This is a new program using an old name. \$250 million has been directed by the Congress to be spent in classrooms for literacy professional development in the upcoming school year. An additional part of this program is the \$10 million State Literacy Teams.

### ESEA

The Elementary and Secondary Education Act - which is the name of the statute that includes No Child Left Behind (NCLB) is in the process of being rewritten this year. The IRA is submitting recommendations to the Congress on March 26th based on the feed back gathered by a survey of IRA state council leaders and members of the Legislative Action Team. In this survey several key areas have been made clear. IRA members are against legislation that emphasizes sanctions. IRA members want to see funding for students with significant literacy needs, and funding for professional development. These areas are a key part in the IRA legislative agenda. Currently, the United States Department of Education is expected to release its "blueprint" for a new ESEA on Tuesday March 16th. In this blueprint will be their overarching ideas about how a new ESEA should be structured. A link will be on the IRA website summarizing this set of recommendations. Currently, the House is holding hearings on several key ideas and the Senate is planning to hold hearings.

### Core Standards

On March 10th the National Governors Association and the Council of Chief State School Officers released their latest draft of the K-12 Core Common Standards. To review a copy of this draft or to submit comments go to [www.corestandards.org](http://www.corestandards.org) <<http://www.corestandards.org>>.

IRA issued a press release commenting on these standards and it can be found at: [http://www.reading.org/Libraries/Press/pr\\_Common\\_Core\\_Standards.sflb.ashx](http://www.reading.org/Libraries/Press/pr_Common_Core_Standards.sflb.ashx)

#### Upcoming Webinars

The IRA RTI Commission's 4th webinar: RTI and Differentiated Instruction will be held on March 23rd at 8:00 PM EASTERN. To register email to [irawash@reading.org](mailto:irawash@reading.org)<<mailto:irawash@reading.org>>.

There will be a briefing on the K-12 Core Common Standards on Tuesday March 30th at 8:00 PM EASTERN. To register send an email to: [irawash@reading.org](mailto:irawash@reading.org)<<mailto:irawash@reading.org>>

On Tuesday April 6th at 8:00 PM a webinar will be held to discuss how IRA state councils can impact the state interpretations of the Core Standards. To register send an email to: [irawash@reading.org](mailto:irawash@reading.org).

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