

On December 10<sup>th</sup>, President Obama signed into law the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA), which replaces No Child Left Behind as our country's main education law. This new law also authorizes a first-of-its-kind Comprehensive Literacy Center for parents and educators to better support children who are at-risk for challenges with reading, writing and language processing due to dyslexia or other disabilities.

## Focus of the Comprehensive Literacy Center

This Center focuses on identifying, developing and delivering information to educators and parents to better meet the needs of students who may struggle with reading, writing, language processing, comprehension or executive functioning due to a disability like dyslexia.

## Why It's Important

The creation of the Center comes at a critical juncture as the achievement gap between students with and without disabilities continues to exist.

Reading is a fundamental skill that is often hard to acquire and master for children with learning disabilities, such as dyslexia, but early recognition of learning challenges combined with timely, effective evidence-based services are critical to support student success.

The Center—due to the efforts of Senator Bill Cassidy (R-LA) and with the support of Senators Lamar Alexander (R-TN) and Patty Murray (D-WA)—will help fill a void in our educational system by providing educators and parents with the tools and resources they need to support students who have—or may have—learning and attention issues.



## How It Will Help

As the first-of-its-kind, the Comprehensive Literacy Center will perform five functions to support students who are struggling to learn literacy skills due to a disability:

- 1) Develop/Identify tools to detect challenges early.
- 2) Identify evidence-based literacy instruction, strategies, accommodations and assistive technology.
- 3) Provide information to support families.
- 4) Develop/Identify professional development for teachers on early indicators and instructional strategies.
- 5) Disseminate resources within existing federal networks.

*"For many children, learning to read can be challenging. However, kids can learn when educators and parents work together to address early warning signs and use evidence-based strategies.*

*This Center takes a pro-active approach to bridging decade's worth of research with the educator and parent communities who can benefit most from its findings."*

James H. Wendorf  
NCLD Executive Director

## When Will It Take Affect?

In December 2015, Congress passed a budget allocating \$1.5 million to the Comprehensive Literacy Center. It is expected that the Center will begin operating in 2017. NCLD worked closely to advocate for this Center, but it would not have been created without the vocal support of the parent community.