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KENNEDY PRAISES REPORT ON PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT AND THE NO CHILD LEFT BEHIND ACT

Calls for Better Collaboration between Schools and Parents

Washington, D.C. -- Senator Edward M. Kennedy today commended the Appleseed Foundation on its new report on the status of parental involvement in schools. The report is the first comprehensive analysis of parental participation under the No Child Left Behind Act.

“Parents make all the difference in their children’s lives, and they’re indispensable to children’s success in school.” said Senator Kennedy. “They contribute to school culture, hold schools accountable, and make important decisions about teaching and learning.”

The No Child Left Behind Act includes key reforms to provide information to parents and increase their involvement in their children’s schools, such as mandatory parent involvement programs in Title I, evaluations of tutors, and report cards on school performance and teacher credentials. As a sponsor of the No Child Left Behind Act, Kennedy helped craft the law’s parent involvement provisions and establish the Parent Information Resource Centers program.

Since the law’s passage, Kennedy has advocated additional funding for parent involvement and urged improvements in the support and information available to parents, especially those of children with disabilities or limited English proficiency. The No Child Left Behind Act entrusts important educational decisions to parents, such as the choice of free tutors for their children.

“The quality of information that parents receive about the No Child Left Behind Act is hugely important” said Kennedy. “Parents need this support to understand what’s going on in their child’s school, but this report shows we’re falling far short of that goal. It’s time to get back on track.”

The Appleseed Foundation called for improvements in the quality of information on tutoring and public school choice, better training for principals and teachers on how to collaborate with parents and involve them in schools, and new school-based parent coordinators to link schools and communities.

“The recommendations of the Appleseed Foundation will be a valuable guide to Congress as we reauthorize the No Child Left Behind Act next year,” Kennedy said. “As we revise the law, we must get serious about effective parental involvement in every school in America.”

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