



1 SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION

2 WHEREAS, United States Secretary of Education, Margaret
3 Spellings, has announced a New Path for the federal No Child
4 Left Behind Act of 2001 by way of a set of common sense
5 principles to guide states in meeting the Act's goals; this New
6 Path equation includes the primary elements of the Act, such as
7 the annual testing and reporting of subgroup data, but also
8 includes increasing student achievement, narrowing the
9 achievement gap, and overall state education policies that
10 ensure that progress is being made; and

11 WHEREAS, The federal No Child Left Behind Act of 2001
12 recognizes that schools serving certain designated subgroups,
13 such as children who are limited English speakers and children
14 who have disabilities, require flexibility in determining
15 annual yearly progress; recent educational research indicates
16 that this type of flexibility is also needed for schools that
17 serve other vulnerable population groups, such as high school
18 drop-outs who return to school and who, due to low academic
19 achievement levels, are often confronted with multiple
20 barriers that impede their progress; and

21 WHEREAS, One of the flexible approaches that states have
22 requested is the use of growth-based accountability models,
23 which show promise as fair, reliable, and innovative methods
24 for measuring school and student improvement; growth-based
25 accountability models give schools credit for student
26 improvement over time by tracking individual student
27 achievement from year to year; and

28 WHEREAS, The United States Department of Education has
29 developed a new pilot program in order to rigorously evaluate
30 growth-based accountability models and their ability to meet
31 the goals of the federal No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 and
32 to share the results with other states; as part of this pilot

1 program, states may propose a growth-based accountability
2 model for use in determining annual yearly progress under the
3 federal No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 for alternative
4 schools and charter schools whose primary student populations
5 are high school drop-outs and members of other vulnerable
6 student population groups; and

7 WHEREAS, In order to be approved for participation in the
8 program, a model must have the following core requirements: (i)
9 ensure that all students are proficient by 2014 and set annual
10 goals to ensure that the achievement gap is closing for all
11 groups of students, (ii) set expectations for annual
12 achievement based upon meeting grade-level proficiency, not
13 based on student background or school characteristics, (iii)
14 hold schools accountable for student achievement in reading,
15 language arts, and mathematics, (iv) ensure that all students
16 in tested grades are included in the assessment and
17 accountability system, hold schools and districts accountable
18 for the performance of each student subgroup, and include all
19 schools and districts, (v) include an assessment system in each
20 of grades 3 through 8 and high school in reading and language
21 arts and mathematics, which must have been operational for more
22 than one year, that must receive approval through the federal
23 No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 peer review process for the
24 2005-2006 school year and that must produce comparable results
25 from grade to grade and from year to year, (vi) track student
26 progress as part of the state data system, and (vii) include
27 student participation rates and student achievement on a
28 separate academic indicator in the state accountability
29 system; and

30 WHEREAS, The United States Department of Education will
31 approve no more than 10 high-quality growth models in this
32 pilot program for 2005-2006, and states that wish to apply and
33 meet the core requirements must submit their proposals to the
34 Department by February 17, 2006; therefore, be it

1 RESOLVED, BY THE SENATE OF THE NINETY-FOURTH GENERAL
2 ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF ILLINOIS, THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
3 CONCURRING HEREIN, that we urge the State Board of Education to
4 apply for participation in the growth-based accountability
5 pilot program established by the U.S. Department of Education;
6 and be it further

7 RESOLVED, That we urge the United States Department of
8 Education to use more flexible criteria in determining adequate
9 yearly progress under the federal No Child Left Behind Act; and
10 be it further

11 RESOLVED, That a suitable copy of this resolution be
12 delivered to the U.S. Secretary of Education, the State Board
13 of Education, the Speaker of the United States House of
14 Representatives, the President pro tempore of the United States
15 Senate, and to each member of the Illinois Congressional
16 delegation.