

National Education Knowledge Industry Association

Proposal for A National Initiative for Knowledge Utilization in Education

Congress has recently authorized two laws that position education research, development, dissemination, and technical assistance at the forefront of the education debate. Both the No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB) and the Education Sciences Reform Act (ESRA) make knowledge gained from education R&D the central driver of our nation's efforts to ensure all children are successful learners. Research shows that student achievement increases when teachers utilize practices based on scientifically valid research. Unfortunately, while the No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB) requires educators to use instructional practices based on scientifically valid research, such practices are *not* widely used. Given that 25,000 public schools are not making adequate yearly progress (AYP), steps must be taken now to respond to this emerging, national "capacity crisis" and meet the demand for research-based instruction.

In response, the **National Education Knowledge Industry Association (NEKIA)** on March 10, 2004, announced a national initiative to increase the use of research-based knowledge to boost student performance and close the achievement gap. **NEKIA is building Congressional support for its proposal and aims to have the "Knowledge Utilization in Education Act" introduced in March 2004.**

Key Activities of the Leadership Initiative

1. Grants to Promote Knowledge Utilization in Education. Grantees could be for-profit or nonprofit organizations, higher education institutions, or partnerships with expertise in education knowledge utilization. The grants could be used to:

- Help educators become more informed consumers of research-based knowledge utilization through professional development activities such as conferences, summer teacher academies, on-line seminars, and school workshops.
- Support the identification and dissemination of research-supported practices.
- Create incentives for states and districts to invest in knowledge utilization.
- Focus knowledge utilization efforts on high-need areas such as rural schools.

Knowledge Utilization: The Missing Link

Knowledge utilization refers to the dynamic and interactive processes involving research, development, dissemination, technical assistance and evaluation in which knowledge generated from research is applied to efforts to improve education practice. Among the activities that occur as part of this process are:

- The development and evaluation of practical, classroom applications of research;
- The use of research-based technical assistance, information, statistics, and professional development for policy makers and practitioners;
- Initiatives for linking research, policy, and practice; and,
- Developing the capacity for the use of research and its applications.

- Develop a corps of regionally based knowledge utilization coordinators that will work in schools to implement education practices supported by scientifically valid research.
 - Target efforts to educators working with subgroups that need improvement to make AYP. These subgroups include students with limited English proficiency, students from low-income families, and children with special needs.
 - Promote education entrepreneurship supported by research.
 - Create fellowship programs to encourage expert capacity in knowledge utilization.
 - Utilize web-based technology to enable teachers to access instructional practices grounded in scientifically valid research.
 - Develop research-based strategies to improve student behavior and school climate.

2. National Leadership Office for Knowledge Utilization in Education. The office, which would be established in the U.S. Department of Education, would:

- Promote policies and investments that bring to scale educational practices based on scientifically valid research.
- Produce a biennial analysis for Congress on the state of education knowledge utilization.

3. Knowledge Utilization Partnership in Education. The Partnership would advise the National Leadership Office and advance knowledge utilization in education through a network of private and public organizations. The Partnership, which would be supported by an advisory panel, would:

- Encourage private-public venture partnerships for knowledge utilization.
- Identify needs regarding federal knowledge utilization programs.
- Serve as ambassadors to the K-12 community.

4. Interagency Task Force. The task force would promote coordination among federal departments and agencies administering knowledge utilization programs.

- The task force would review federal activities in the field of education knowledge utilization and recommend ways to improve their coordination and collaboration. The Task Force would be in effect for two years, to be renewed by the Secretary.
- The task force would be chaired by the Director of the National Office and comprised of assistant secretaries in the U.S. Department of Education; the director of the Institute for Education Sciences; the director of the National Science Foundation; the director of the National Institute for Child Health and Human Development; and other members designated by the President, the Secretary, and the Director.

Funding

The initiative would be authorized for \$270 million in fiscal year 2005 (\$20 million for the National Leadership Office and its activities; and \$250 for the grant fund) and such sums for each of the fiscal years 2006 through 2008.