Reauthorizing the Elementary and Secondary Education Act
(No Child Left Behind)

Hi, my name is Dr. Lakshmi Mahadevan, and I am program coordinator for the Career and Technical Special Populations Training and Resource Education Center at Texas AgriLife Extension Service. Welcome to this webcast on the Elementary and Secondary Education Act, or ESEA. Reauthorization of ESEA or the No Child Left Behind Act as it is currently called has long been a concern among the education community and policymakers, however the issue has gained momentum within the past several months. Anticipating this, the Obama administration announced its blueprint for reauthorizing the ESEA in March 2010.

The main focus of ESEA will be on college- and career-ready students. The blueprint calls on all states to adopt state-developed standards in English language arts and mathematics that build toward college- and career-readiness by the time students graduate from high school, and high-quality statewide assessments aligned with these standards. States may either choose to upgrade their existing standards; work with their 4-year public university system to ensure that a student will not need to take remedial coursework upon admission; or work with other states to create state-developed common standards that build toward college- and career-readiness.

But how are you – the teachers – impacted? In August 2010, Secretary Arne Duncan released a brochure that outlined the following features of the blueprint.

1. It recognizes the importance of teachers by proposing that evaluations be based on multiple measures, acknowledge successes, provide meaningful feedback, inform staff development and staffing decisions, offer teachers more responsibility, and compensate teachers more reasonably.

2. It aims to broaden the curriculum by building in flexibility with assessments. New assessments may include performance items such as portfolios and projects. The blueprint also will provide funding to support high-quality instruction in subjects such as art, history, and foreign languages, especially in the highest-need schools.

3. It focuses on growth. Bad performance during one year will no longer cause a school to be identified as failing. Data from several years will be reviewed to determine how a school is doing.

4. It empowers teachers and schools by encouraging states to adopt rigorous goals for student performance and rewards. It also provides incentives for accomplishing those goals and for showing progress. Districts interested in reform can compete for grants in addition to what they receive through formula funding. The plan also maintains funding for Title I and the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA).

Taking the political movement into account, there is no definite timeline on when ESEA will be reauthorized. To stay updated on the latest ESEA news, visit our website at

http://ctsp.tamu.edu/resources.php.

Educational programs of the Texas AgriLife Extension Service are open to all people without regard to race, color, sex, disability, religion, age, or national origin.
The Texas A&M University System, U.S. Department of Agriculture, and the County Commissioners Courts of Texas Cooperating.