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Partnership of Major Education Associations Calls for Better Assessment Systems

WASHINGTON –Today, the Learning First Alliance, a partnership of 17 national education associations representing over ten million parents, educators and policymakers, released the following statement:

“The Learning First Alliance calls for the reauthorization of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act to promote improved assessment systems that better capture whether students are gaining the skills and knowledge they need to succeed in the 21st century. We believe reauthorization should support assessment systems that are designed to improve instruction and that:

- **Use multiple sources to show evidence of student learning.** These sources should reflect both progress towards and mastery of the skills and knowledge students need to be successful in the 21st century. In addition to test scores, measures can include writing samples, performance assessments, portfolios and capstone projects.
- **Promote a broad curriculum** that exposes students at all levels not only to reading and math but also to history, civics, science, the arts, world language, career and technical education and other important content areas.
- **Use universal design principles to ensure that all students, including English language learners and students with disabilities, are fully and appropriately included in the assessment system.**
- **Include a formative assessment component and provide feedback on all assessments in a timely manner** so educators may use results to inform instruction, guide and evaluate investments in professional development, and respond to students’ academic needs.
- **Ensure that educators have access to professional development that supports their understanding and use of data.”**

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The Learning First Alliance is a permanent partnership of 17 leading education associations with more than 10 million members dedicated to improving student learning in America's public schools. Alliance members include: the American Association of Colleges for Teacher Education, American Association of School Administrators, American Association of School Personnel Administrators, American Federation of Teachers, American School Counselor Association, Association of School Business Officials International, Council of Chief State School Officers, National Association of Elementary School Principals, National Association of Secondary School Principals, National Association of State Boards of Education, National Education Association, National Middle School Association, National School Public Relations Association, National Staff Development Council, National PTA, National School Boards Association and Phi Delta Kappa International. The Alliance maintains www.publicschoolinsights.org, a website that features what’s working in public schools and districts across the country.