



**The Coalition for Comprehensive School Improvement**  
*Helping schools, school districts and states leave no child behind.*

**For Immediate Release**

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## **Congress Terminates All Grants for Successful School Improvement Program**

*High-poverty, low-performing schools to be most effected*

**Washington, D.C. (December 22, 2005)** – Today, federal lawmakers voted to terminate all grants to schools for the Comprehensive School Reform (CSR) program. It's estimated more than 1,000 of the nation's most needy schools will lose ongoing federal grants for school improvement efforts.

Congress first authorized the CSR program in 1998 with bi-partisan support, and because of the program's strong record of success, lawmakers included it as part of the No Child Left Behind Act in 2001. Federal funding for CSR has fluctuated between \$205 million and \$310 million since the inception of the program. Today's vote eliminates all CSR grants to schools, retaining only eight million dollars for national activities, making it one of the largest reductions to a single education program this year.

"Most schools receiving CSR funds serve the nation's neediest students in our most challenged schools," said Dr. Sally Kilgore, president of the Coalition for Comprehensive School Improvement (CCSI), an alliance of the nation's most well-known and respected school improvement programs. "Because of today's vote, many of these schools will now be unable to continue implementation of the critical improvements they began in the past year."

Despite the cut in funding, the legislation approved by lawmakers states, "CSR provides an exemplary approach to raising academic achievement" particularly for schools that are struggling to meet the rigorous standards of No Child Left Behind. CCSI hopes the administration and Congress will soon act on this sentiment and identify a way for schools to continue to fund their improvement efforts.

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CSR focuses on individual schools, rejecting a “one-size-fits-all” approach, and helps principals and teachers implement a coherent vision for educational excellence throughout an entire school – from top to bottom. A recent evaluation of CSR issued by the U.S. Department of Education found that funds are well targeted to schools with the highest poverty levels, including schools with disproportionate enrollments of low-income, minority and limited English proficient students.

Schools that qualify for federal CSR money receive grants of at least \$50,000 a year for three years and are encouraged to use these funds to access high-quality technical assistance from outside partners with coherent, research-based designs for school improvement.

### **About CCSI**

The Coalition for Comprehensive School Improvement (CCSI) is an alliance of the nation’s most well-known and respected school improvement programs. Current CCSI members include Accelerated Schools, ATLAS Communities, Expeditionary Learning Outward Bound, High Schools That Work, Middle Start, Modern Red SchoolHouse and Talent Development. CCSI’s primary mission is to assist schools, school districts and state departments of education by providing them with high-quality educational resources, technical assistance and other services. CCSI also advocates for federal, state and private funding that will enable schools and school districts to pay for proven, research-based improvement strategies and high-quality professional development for teachers and staff.

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