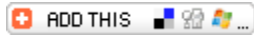




## DOE moves ahead; friction expected over NCLB

Bob Kelllogg - OneNewsNow - 8/10/2011 4:25:00 AM



Secretary of Education Arne Duncan has made good on his threat to bypass Congress and grant school districts waivers from No Child Left Behind (NCLB).



Duncan

Calling NCLB a "bad bill" that "got it backwards" when it came to goals and how to achieve them, Duncan says the waivers the Department of Education is offering will relieve states from the bill's requirements. [In a White House blog](#) on Monday, Duncan states: "... It's time to create a process for states to gain flexibility from key provisions of the law, provided that they are willing to embrace education reforms."

And that, according to education analyst Lindsey Burke of [The Heritage Foundation](#), is the catch in accepting a waiver from Duncan. "The only way in which they will be offered a waiver is if they agree to adopt reforms that the Obama administration deems acceptable -- such as national standards and tests," she tells OneNewsNow. "So this is almost a backdoor reauthorization of No Child Left Behind."

Duncan and President Obama have complained that Congress has for years delayed renewal of NCLB. Burke says that is not true.



Burke

"I think when we hear President Obama and Secretary Duncan falsely say that there haven't been any alternatives offered, [we need to understand that] there are a lot of conservative alternatives that have been put forward this year," says Burke. "So I think we'll see definitely see some friction moving forward."

Congressman John Kline (R-Minnesota), chairman of the House Committee on Education and the Workforce, earlier wrote Duncan, demanding that the education secretary explain his proposal to grant waivers. Reports are that he did not receive a clear answer.

### Duncan a 'politically driven alarmist'

Meanwhile, states are beginning to report their 2010-2011 standardized test results, and it remains to be seen whether 82 percent have made the "adequate yearly progress" that Secretary Duncan predicted. He made that prediction to encourage Congress to reauthorize NCLB before the start of school. But because the debt ceiling crisis took priority, Neal McCluskey of the [Cato Institute](#) says that is not going to happen.



"Arne Duncan looks like a politically driven alarmist, and it just confirms how much deception and uncertainty there is behind No Child Left Behind and how ultimately totally irrational No Child Left Behind is," McCluskey contends. ([Listen to audeo report](#))

He points out that the education secretary has threatened in the past to take matters into his own hands, if Congress fails to act. "The administration will essentially act like a Congress or do the job of Congress and say, 'States, if you want to get out of different parts of this law, you will have to make reforms that we tell you you need to make,'" the Cato Institute spokesman notes.

Though most states are probably not even close to the 82-percent prediction of failing the Adequate Yearly Progress, McCluskey says it is concerning how many are.



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