



Chiefs for more of the same

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Nine former and current chief state school officers have formed a group to influence federal and state education officials on who controls education policy.

Chiefs for Change promotes a conservative agenda of change for public school reforms. But Neal McCluskey, associate director of the [Cato Institute](#)'s Center for Educational Freedom, says the coalition may actually be inappropriately named.

"Even based on the most basic understanding of the federal role in education, they want to maintain the last 50 years' status quo," he notes. "And the only other thing they want is to make sure that the last ten years' status quo -- No Child Left Behind -- that it doesn't change."

Despite the group's efforts, McCluskey believes the Republican-controlled House is determined to radically revise No Child Left Behind. But that will not likely happen this year.

"It seems unlikely that they're going to rewrite it in the next year or so, so maybe these guys will get what they want," the former education policy analyst comments. "But it's mainly because nothing was done -- not because people took affirmative steps in the direction they wanted to go."

McCluskey adds that while Chiefs for Change espouses conservative reform, an examination of the group's website seems to tell a different story -- one of maintaining the status quo.