

Rescuing Forgotten Futures: A National Conversation on the education of students in foster care.

Written by Sen Chuck Grassley
Tuesday, 25 October 2011 12:40

- [Buy Cheap Dragon NaturallySpeaking 10](#)
- [Buy OEM Microsoft Office 2011 Home & Student MAC](#)
- [Discount - Photoshop CS4 All-in-One For Dummies](#)
- [Buy Cheap Rosetta Stone - Learn Spanish \(Spain\) \(Level 1, 2, 3, 4 & 5 Set\) MAC](#)
- [149.95\\$ Autodesk Inventor LT 2012 \(32-bit\) cheap oem](#)
- [Buy OEM Adobe Illustrator CS5 on Demand](#)
- [Buy Dragon NaturallySpeaking 10 \(en\)](#)
- [Download Lynda.com - Outlook 2013 Essential Training](#)
- [Buy Adobe Photoshop Top Secret \(en\)](#)
- [Buy Adobe After Effects CC MAC \(Full LifeTime License\) \(en,de,es,fr,it,ja,ko,zh\)](#)
- [Buy Cheap PCTools Spyware Doctor 5.5](#)
- [Buy Cheap Photoshop Lightroom 2 For Dummies](#)
- [Buy OEM Rosetta Stone - Learn Portuguese \(Level 1, 2 & 3 Set\)](#)

Today, as Congress begins the long anticipated overhaul of the nation's education policy known as No Child Left Behind, one vulnerable group of students – too often left out of the debate -- will roar into its center.

In an effort to focus attention on the unlocked potential of these students, the Congressional Coalition on Adoption Institute (CCAI) and Fostering Media Connections (FMC) held a “National Conversation” on foster care and education, linking policymakers in Washington, D.C., and Los Angeles with researchers in Chicago and teachers and former foster youth in Sacramento via webcast. The conversation during this unprecedented nationwide event mirrored the themes detailed in “Rescuing Forgotten Futures,” an Action Guide released by CCAI and FMC today, which outlines how everyone from citizens to policymakers can help improve educational outcomes for foster youth.

"Every foster youth deserves a high quality education with an academic mentor and the opportunity to stay in his or her school of origin. With the Senate education committee rewriting the Elementary and Secondary Education Act this week, it is important that they include provisions that ensure school stability for foster youth," said Sen. Mary Landrieu (D-LA), who joined the “National Conversation.” "I have long fought for the right of children in foster care to get the quality education every child deserves, and I will continue to advocate for them to receive the support and guidance they need to have a chance to succeed in the future."

Sen. Chuck Grassley (R-IA), who co-chairs the Senate Caucus on Foster Youth alongside Sen. Landrieu, pointed to the importance of the “National Conversation” in finding answers to the challenges students face in foster care.

Rescuing Forgotten Futures: A National Conversation on the education of students in foster care.

Written by Sen Chuck Grassley
Tuesday, 25 October 2011 12:40

“A major issue for young people in foster care is how difficult the system makes it to stay in the same school. A child might get a new foster placement that’s only a few miles away from where he’s been but have to switch schools because of school district rules. Finding a way to avoid this upheaval needs to be a policy goal at every level of government. Discussions like this one can help encourage the debate and bring about a meaningful response,” Sen. Grassley said. “School life offers valuable opportunities for kids to make healthy, lasting connections, and young people in foster care would benefit tremendously from the chance to do so, especially given the challenging and even painful uncertainty so many of them face elsewhere in their lives.”

For 26-year-old Derrick Riggins, who grew up in foster care and now works on Capitol Hill after working as a CCAI Foster Youth intern, this was especially true.

“Education is one of the most important tools we can provide for children in foster care,” Riggins said. “It is a tool that can be used to open many doors and provide a way out of the child welfare system cycle.”

Acting Assistant Secretary for Children and Families, George Sheldon, pointed to the need for strong inter-agency collaboration between education and child welfare administrations to unlock the very doors Riggins referred to.

“We recognize how critically important educational stability is for kids in foster care, whose lives are already full of disruption,” Sheldon said. “We also know that the child welfare system alone can’t guarantee their educational success. That’s why we are working closely and intensely with our partners at the Department of Education to facilitate the right connections between key state and local agencies to make sure these kids get the consistent and high quality education they deserve.”

Cheryl Smithgall, a Research Fellow with Chapin Hall at the University of Chicago, one of the nation’s top institutions in research around children’s issues, joined the “National Conversation,” and made clear that improvement in education is directly linked to educational agencies’ ability to focus attention on vulnerable students.

“To the extent that policymakers are interested in the underperformance of schools, they need

Rescuing Forgotten Futures: A National Conversation on the education of students in foster care.

Written by Sen Chuck Grassley
Tuesday, 25 October 2011 12:40

to be interested in vulnerable children,” Smithgall said. “Research shows that early developmental and educational experiences are critical to later educational success. As we contemplate child welfare and education policies and attempt to foster greater collaboration between the two systems, we need to think about how best to expose vulnerable children and their parents to high-quality developmental and educational supports as early in their lives as possible, and how to keep those supports in place when transitions occur in their lives.”

Indeed, an amendment addressing the educational needs of students in foster care is expected to be included in Senate Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions Committee’s deliberations, indicating that this sensitivity to vulnerable children will help drive the priorities of the national education debate: the potential in these young people is an undeniable American resource.

The fact is that every day that we allow the educational needs of our foster youth to go unaddressed, is another day of lost potential for our country,” said Kathleen Strottman, executive director of CCAI. “My experience with these youth makes me confident that they are our future doctors, lawyers, business entrepreneurs, and political leaders. Their voice in today’s conversation is but one example of how ready they are to lead us into the future.”

The "National Conversation" also featured Rep. Karen Bass, a former Sacramento teacher who is dedicated to improving the lives of foster youth; Jetaine Hart, a former foster youth and educational mentor for students in foster care; and Derrick Riggins, Madison Sandoval-Lunn, and Christina Miranda who are CCAI Foster Youth Interns. The event was webcast from Consumnes River College in Sacramento, home to the Enriched Scholars Program which is helping dozens of foster youth succeed in community college. Advocates hosted viewing gatherings across the country including Washington, West Virginia and Massachusetts.

###