

Teach Plus Chicago Fellows Advocate for Accountability, Equity on Capitol Hill

In April, Teach Plus Teaching Policy Fellows Micah Miner and George Mueller traveled to Washington, DC to advocate for the reauthorization of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA). In June, Teach Plus Teaching Policy Fellow Corey Morrison also traveled to Washington, DC to speak in Teach Plus' Congressional briefing "What Do Teachers Think About ESEA?"

Mueller and Miner attended a meeting of the Leadership Conference on Civil and Human Rights where they spoke with CEO Wade Henderson and Patty Murray, the senior Democrat on the Senate Health, Education, Labor & Pensions (H.E.L.P). committee and co-sponsor of the new ESEA legislation. They met Senator Mark Kirk (R-IL) and staffers from Senator Dick Durbin's (D-IL) and IL Representative Danny Davis' offices (D-IL). Lastly they met with staff for Representative Bobby Scott's (D-VA), the highest ranking Democrat on the Education committee.

Mueller and Miner spoke to issues with funding and equity, assessments, and accountability. They advocated for increased accountability, annual assessments, meaningful data from subgroups, funding, and a stronger role for the Secretary of Education in keeping states accountable to help the most struggling groups or sub-groups in the state.

Corey Morrison spoke passionately about his classroom, his students and the need for accountability. Morrison stated, "We cannot afford to take a step backward and once again mask the inequalities of schools by systemically denying minority and poor students access to rigorous course work. Moreover, States and districts should be required to collect data that clearly reflects indicators of growth while publishing which schools are excelling and why. Holding states responsibility for supporting and sharing innovative ideas to address underachievement and gaps is the primary role of ESEA."

Pictured: Fellow George Mueller shaking hands with Senator Kirk in Washington, DC.



Policymakers are not as directly connected to the classroom and Mueller said “[it was] an overall rewarding experience that allowed me to get my voice heard on a timely issue, explain my experiences to inform policy makers of what I see on a daily basis.” In an interesting turn of events, Corey Morrison was also leading some of his 8th grade students on a field trip to DC and had the opportunity to bring some of his students to his briefing. At the briefing, Morrison’s students had the opportunity to watch their teacher speak about a law that directly affects their future and policy makers got to see and connect with the students who are affected by the policies.



Pictured: Fellow Corey Morrison (far Left) with his students and teacher colleague from Lindblom Math and Science Academy, Teach Plus Chicago Executive Director Josh Kaufmann (second from right) and Brian Looser, Senior Policy Advisor for Senator Kirk (far Right) in Washington, DC.