



Whiteboard
Advisors

*Education Insider: Tracking Measures,
Gainful Employment, Student Data
Privacy, and the Common Core*

March 2014

Why Education Insider?

We harness the wisdom of well-connected influentials to provide insights and predict policy outcomes for stakeholders in the education debate.

The Value

Whiteboard Advisors is a policy-oriented consulting practice. We provide proprietary research and strategic support to investors, philanthropic donors, government leaders, and entrepreneurs who seek unparalleled understanding of the education policy and business environments.

Education Insider helps those who need quality information to make high-stakes decisions about the direction of federal policy. Education Insider combines the wisdom of informed crowds with expert analysis to offer unparalleled information, analysis, and forecasting on a range of federal education policy issues and likely outcomes.

Education Insider conducts an anonymous survey of a **small group of key education influentials** (policymakers, thought leaders, and association heads) to get their thoughts and commentary about the context of the current debate and possible outcomes. This helps surface the underlying dynamics that can affect the trajectory of policies, positively or negatively, and go deeper than the conventional wisdom and rhetoric.

Why Education Insider?



The Process

Education Insider is a monthly report that cuts through the noise and provides real-time insights on national education policy trends, debates, and issues—from the handful of decision makers that are really driving the process. We combine a survey of key education influencers with our own analysis to provide a unique perspective on the current state of debate.

Who Are The Insiders?

Influential leaders who are shaping federal education reform, including individuals who have or are currently serving as key policy and political “insiders,” such as:

- Current and former White House and U.S. Department of Education leaders;
- Current and former Congressional staff;
- State education leaders, including state school chiefs and former governors; and
- Leaders of major education organizations, think tanks and other key influentials.

Executive Summary

- **87%** of Insiders think that the Higher Education Act will not be reauthorized until at least January 2015.
- **43%** of Insiders give Gov. Cuomo a D or F grade for his recent handling of the Common Core blow up in New York State.
- **52%** of Insiders think that at least 20 states will pass legislation that addresses the issue of student data privacy but does not have an adverse impact on schools' ability to use student data. Only 8% think the federal government will do the same.
- Throughout state capitols and the national media, student data is emerging as a hot button issue. 73% of Insiders think there are companies operating in the education sector in ways that violate federal data privacy laws. 83% of Insiders think that student data privacy is a serious or very serious political issue.
- Insiders see state legislation on privacy as more likely than consequential federal legislation and are split on the impact of state legislation on schools or vendors.
- Insiders are split on whether Common Core is on stronger political ground if it survives this year's legislative sessions in states. Only 28% of Insiders think that teachers union complaints against Common Core are legitimate, but at the same time, 46% believe that union concern about poor implementation and insufficient funding is the greatest threat to the Common Core.
- Insiders continue to see long odds for passage of major education legislation before this Congress adjourns.

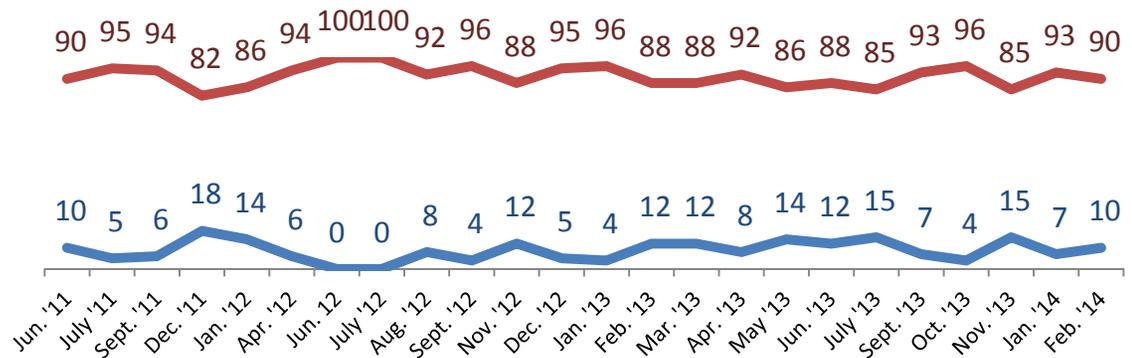
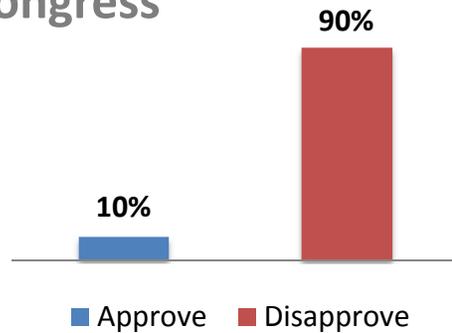
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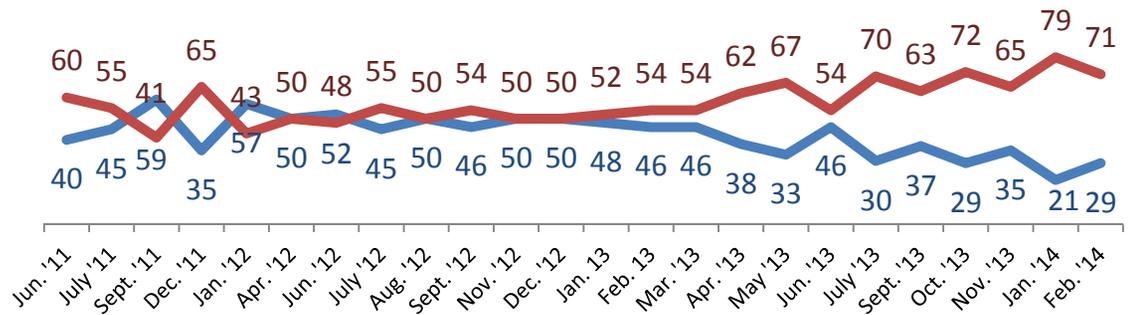
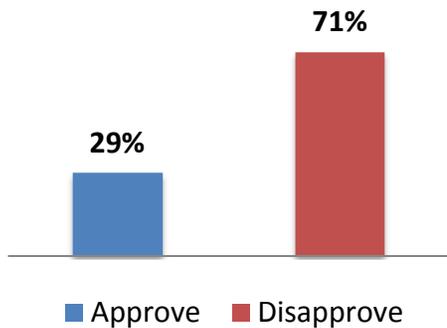
Congressional and Administration Approval Ratings Stay Relatively Steady

Job Approval on Education

Congress



Administration

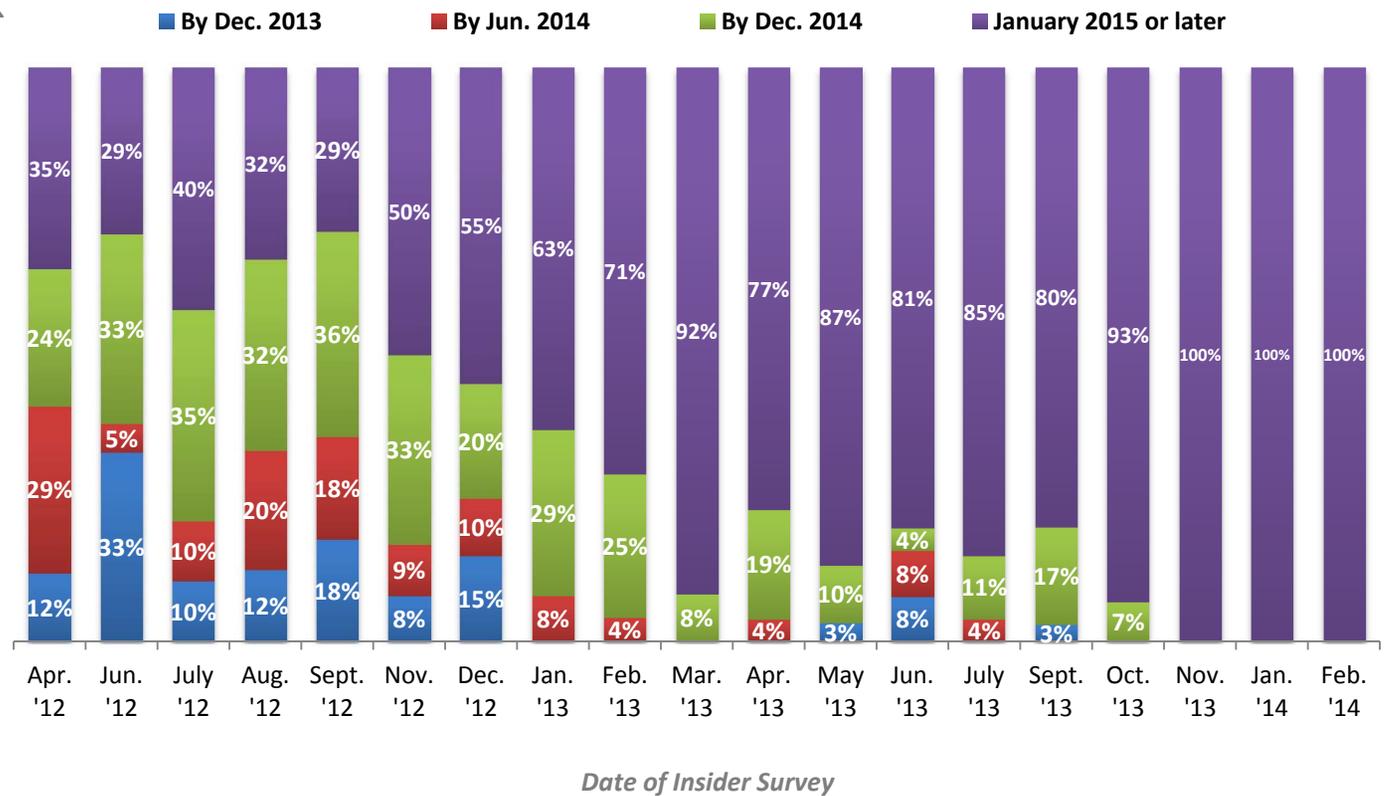


Question: Do you approve or disapprove of the way Congress/the Administration is handling education?

Timing of ESEA Reauthorization

100% of Insiders continue to think that ESEA will not be reauthorized until January 2015 or later.

Timing of ESEA Reauthorization



Question: About when do you believe a final ESEA bill will be signed into law?

Insider Insight: ESEA Reauthorization Timing

Why?

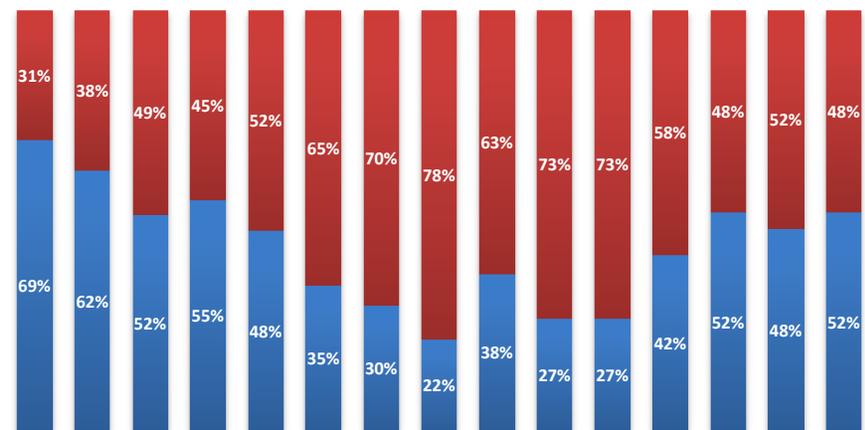
- “Can you make never an option?”
- “House seems set to pass some education legislation as part of Cantor’s push but it will probably die in the Senate and there still seems to be little appetite to get something comprehensive done in the time remaining.”
- **“Congress is just not in the mood to compromise.”**
- **“There is no time left in this Congress to conference a sane bill that respects the federal government’s role in education (House-passed bill) and the delusions of grandeur that is the Senate bill.”**
- “Does anyone think we will actually have a new bill this Congress?”
- “When a GOP president is elected. So sometime after January 2021.”
- “Harry Reid has destroyed the Senate, Harkin staff don’t know how to negotiate, and no one wants to legislate this year.”

Common Core Assessments – Right Track or Wrong Track?

Are the assessment consortia on the right track or wrong track?

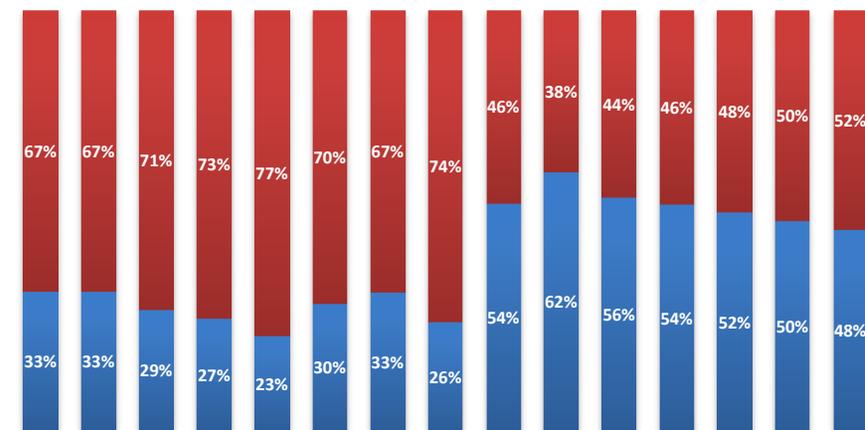
PARCC

■ Right Track ■ Wrong Track



SBAC

■ Right Track ■ Wrong Track



Question: Are the assessment consortia on the right track or wrong track?

Insider Insight: Right Track / Wrong Track

Why do you believe PARCC and SBAC are on the right or wrong track?

Right Track:

- **“Field test is next month. Tangible product.”**
- “This is starting to feel like an existential question. However in all seriousness, while the assessments might be on the ‘right’ track, the real question is how well curriculum and instruction are aligning to those assessments. I don’t think we have a good sense of that (though Morgan Polikoff’s paper helps on that score).”
- **“[Right track], but competition is mounting fast.”**
- **They are now eliciting teacher input.”**

Insider Insight: Right Track / Wrong Track

Why do you believe PARCC and SBAC are on the right or wrong track?

Wrong track:

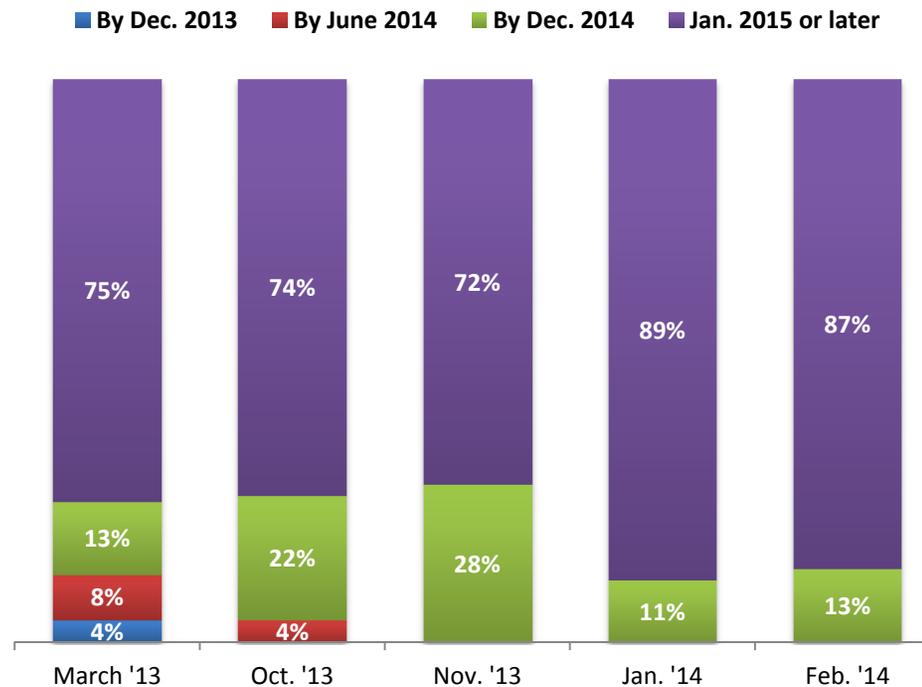
- “Losing the messaging battle.”
- “PARCC is operating in a bubble and needs to engage policymakers more than they think they’re currently involving, in the work.”
- “The rollout of these assessments is going to make the rollout of the standards look textbook perfect. Political problems and technical problems are going to create a real mess.”
- “Didn’t take enough leadership for what at least in hindsight was going to be a very difficult transition.”
- “The two consortia simply aren’t listening to their states. CCSS testing has a tin ear these days.”
- “Very few states will use these assessments over the long haul. What a waste of time, money, and energy.”
- “Both are unaccountable hot messes.”

Higher Education Act

Insiders' opinions on HEA Reauthorization timing remain largely unchanged.

At present 87% think it won't happen until January 2015 at the earliest.

Timing of HEA Reauthorization



Question: By about when do you believe a final Higher Education Act (HEA) bill will be signed into law?

Insider Insight: Gainful Employment Regulations

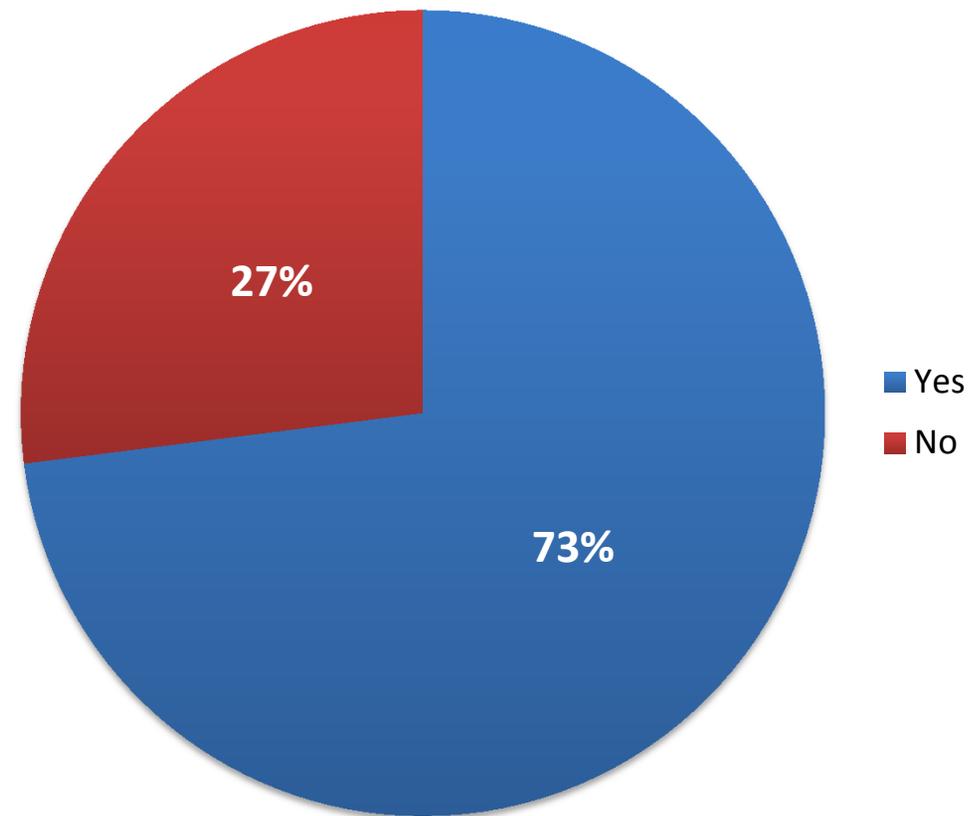
What do you think the proposed gainful employment regulations will look like, now that consensus hasn't been reached?

- “I believe the Administration will make the smallest amount of changes necessary to the original to address the court ruling.”
- “Whatever they look like, they’ll make it harder for low-income and minority individuals to access higher education or find gainful employment.”
- **“I think the two tests (debt-to-income ratio and cohort default rate) will remain intact. It will be interesting to see if the advocacy ramps up for exceptions in the next couple of weeks.”**
- “Tougher than status quo but limited bite in the long run. With Sperling and Shireman less involved the for-profit critics have lost some key allies but there is still little sympathy for the for-profits within the administration.”
- **“They will be loosened but not significantly.”**
- “Pretty much just like they do now, then we will see what the courts say.”
- **“Worse than before and probably immune from lawsuit now that the Democrats have packed the DC Circuit. They can only win when they change the rules.”**

Companies and Education Privacy Laws

A significant majority of Insiders think that there are companies operating in the education sector—and working with states and school districts—that are in violation of FERPA, COPPA, and other data privacy laws.

Education companies currently in violation of FERPA, COPPA, and related laws?



Question: Do you think there are currently companies operating in the education sector and working with states and school districts that are in violation of FERPA, COPPA, and related laws?

Insider Insight: Companies and Education Privacy Laws

Comments

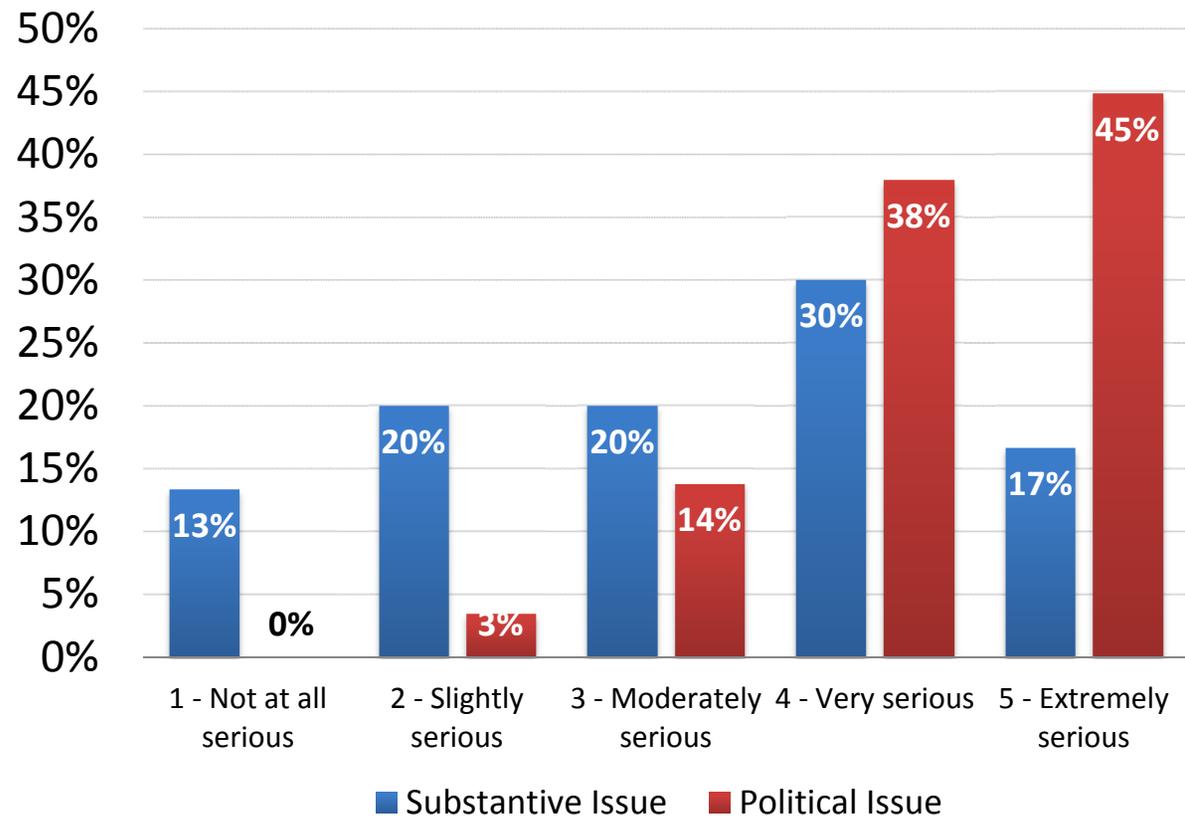
- “Unlikely but one never knows.”
- **“Absolutely, it’s the wild west out there and the ability of these companies to gather and use this data far outpaces the capacity in the public sector to manage and address these issues. Right now it’s mostly benign stuff—marketing mostly. But parents are right to be concerned and now is the time to get this figured out because the potential here to help students is enormous but only with proper protections on individual data.”**
- “Of course, and anyone who thinks otherwise is just wrong.”

Insiders See Student Data Privacy as a Serious Substantive and Political Issue

83% of Insiders think that data privacy is either a “very serious” or “extremely serious” political issue.

However, in terms of being a substantive issue, only 47% select those descriptors.

On a scale of 1 to 5, how serious is the issue of student data privacy as a...?



Question: On a scale of 1 to 5, how serious is the issue of student data privacy as a...?

Insider Insight: Student Data Privacy as Substantive/Political Issue

Comments

- “On the substantive side: I believe strongly that student data privacy should be protected but that the technological means to do so exist and are improving every day. I believe the issue is being used political and cynically as a red herring to stop progress (better understanding of effective teachers, holding schools and institutions accountable for how well they are educating students). But, it is easy to scare people about data privacy.”
- “Substantively, the various laws protect student privacy pretty thoroughly—but many will be making political hay with it.”
- **“The conspiracy theorists all seem to have Twitter accounts.”**
- “Common Core and privacy have become conflated, and that makes privacy a political lightning rod moving forward.”

Insider Insight: Student Data Privacy as Substantive/Political Issue (continued)

Comments

- “The protection of student data is self-evidently critical as a substantive issue. As a political issue is very important because misperceptions on both sides about what is and is not a legitimate concern regarding data security is a significant road block to progress on a number of fronts.”
- **“There are real issues about privacy in the society at large (Target, Apple). There are substantive fixes that need to be made to schools’ privacy efforts. Lay all that on today’s helicopter parents and you have a recipe for an enormous fight.”**
- “Substantive: protecting privacy on a large scale is very hard—see the Target and other breaches. And schools have access to arguably far more sensitive information than credit data. This deeply concerns parents. Political: it won’t take many data breaches to blow up all confidence in student data collection and systems—which would have a domino effect.”

Insider Insight: Student Data Privacy as Substantive/Political Issue (continued)

Comments

- “It’s being misused to stir up trouble [and] to mix with the NSA fears.”
- “The substantive issues are real, but they can be addressed. The problem is that they’re not right now and so the politics are getting hot. You also have big companies fighting this out, some that want to keep things mostly the way they are and some that are fine with tighter restrictions on data use. Events like the frivolous lawsuit in NY on inBloom are distracting attention from the big money lobbying fight happening around this issue in the states. Watch California—if the big Silicon Valley companies can’t address this in their own backyard it will get out of hand fast.”
- “Privacy is one of those issues that people don’t want to give up to someone else.”

Insider Insight: Student Data Privacy as Substantive/Political Issue (continued)

Comments

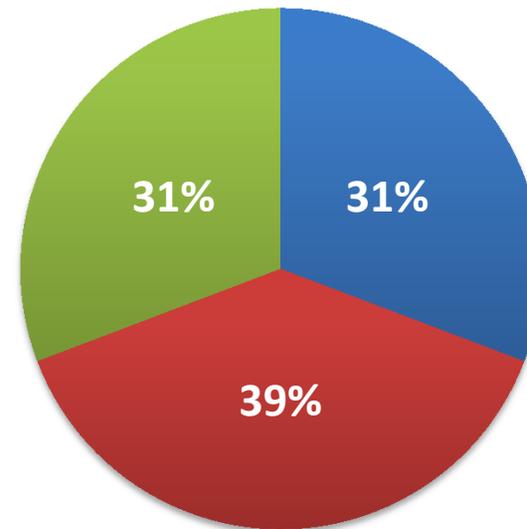
- “Anyone who thinks the federal government or what is being done through [statewide longitudinal data systems] are somehow immune to data breaches just aren’t paying attention to what is happening. This [is] rabid appetite for more personal student information, all in paternalism draped in ‘transparency.’ [It] is a classic example of government that has lost its humility and no longer serves us.”
- **“Student data privacy is in the same place health care data was 15 years ago. Rapidly emerging technology meets growing public concerns. Unfortunately there is little public awareness of how data can be used to advance personalized learning. Plus there is some aggressive fear-mongering to frustrate implementation of the Common Core State Standards.”**
- “This is the #1 sleeper issue in education policy today—it is the underside of the rush to use data to solve every problem ailing American education.”

States and Data Privacy – Impact on Companies/Non-Profit Providers

Insiders are split on what they think most states (defined as “at least 20”) will do in the next 1-2 years.

39% think that states will pass legislation that has an adverse impact on companies and non-profits, but 31% think there will be no adverse impact. Another 39% think they will not pass legislation that impacts these entities one way or another.

What will most states (at least 20) do in the next 1-2 years?



- Pass legislation that addresses the issue but doesn't have an adverse impact on companies and non-profit providers
- Pass legislation that has an adverse impact on companies and non-profit providers
- Not pass legislation that impacts companies/non-profits one way or another

Question: Regarding student data privacy, what do you think most states (at least 20) will do in the next 1-2 years?

Insider Insight: States and Data Privacy – Impact on Companies/ Non-Profit Providers

Comments

- “My answer is the same for the next four questions: I don’t know, but I don’t think the issues are well enough understood to prevent the adverse consequences these questions contemplate.”
- **“A current bill in one state is so restrictive it would not allow the Education Department to share data with the Foster Care system . . . let alone a private provider.”**
- “It is the unintended consequences that one has to look out for. Florida legislation on biometric data that throws a wrench into Coursera’s verification system. CA legislation that only applies to schools and not to children’s apps.”
- **“Additional privacy protections or laws against companies like inBloom will prevent companies and non-profits from creating individualized tools and programs that will benefit students, and may not even pose any sort of risk to privacy.”**
- “I think these are all wrong. They will likely pass legislation but it’s not clear what the issue is that is a problem so it will likely be window dressing and not solve any real ‘problem.’”
- “Herding cats.”

Insider Insight: States and Data Privacy – Impact on Companies/ Non-Profit Providers (continued)

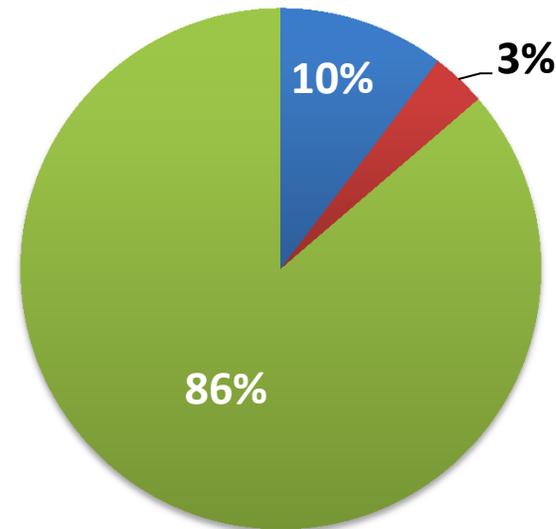
Comments

- “You have to hope cooler heads prevail.”
- “Hard to say either way. States and the federal government have gone on this mission largely out of the public’s attention so what will likely happen is, unfortunately, a massive data breach will occur that awakens the public to what has happened without their knowing, and ashamed lawmakers will do what they always do, which is pass legislation that tries to put the genie back in the bottle to appear tough on privacy.”
- “There will be a lot of sound and fury, but I am not sure how many states will actually act legislatively. One possible outcome is creating education chief privacy officers which can be a useful action. A much more harmful state or district action is enacting parental ‘opt-out’ measures meaning teachers may be confronted with classes where half their students cannot receive fully personalized education because the use of their data is restricted.”
- **“This is a complex but emotional issue so I don’t think you can overestimate the ability of state policy makers to screw it up.”**
- “It will be meaningless, after-the-fact gesture politics.”

The Federal Government and Data Privacy – Impact on Companies/ Non-Profit Providers

However, when it comes to student data privacy legislation at the federal level, only 10% think that the federal government will pass legislation that has an adverse impact on companies and non-profits.

What will the federal government do in the next 1-2 years?



- Pass legislation that addresses the issue but doesn't have an adverse impact on companies and non-profit providers
- Pass legislation that has an adverse impact on companies and non-profit providers
- Not pass legislation that impacts companies/non-profits one way or another

Question: Regarding student data privacy, what do you think the federal government will do in the next 1-2 years?

Insider Insight: The Federal Government and Student Data Privacy – Impact on Companies/ Non-Profit Providers

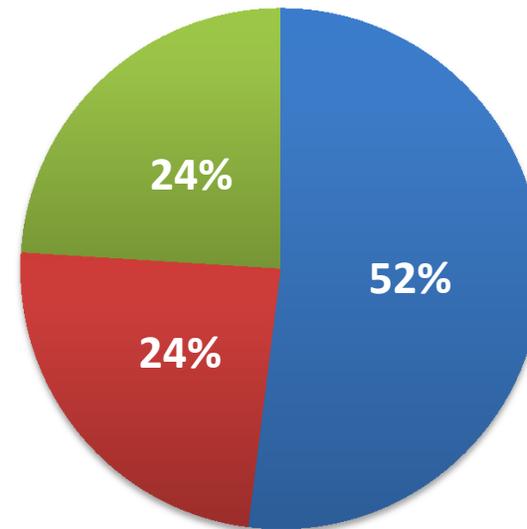
Comments

- **“Unless there is a massive breach/inappropriate use that gets big press, I don’t think Congress will be able to get it together and pass anything (which might not be a bad thing).”**
- “I do not think Congress can agree even on this.”
- “Probably nothing, but that could change if the Senate flips to Republicans.”
- “Congress doesn’t pass education laws.”
- “I’m not sure anyone can really articulate some new problem. And Congress can’t shoot straight so they are unlikely to do anything serious.”
- “No compromise in sight but there is some agreement of the minds.”
- “Over the next two years? The federal government will likely keep doing what has been doing through unnoticed riders that have the billing of ‘transparency’ but that provide private research organizations or other agencies increased access to private information. This won’t stop until a serious breach occurs or the American people wise up about what is happening.”
- **“This issue is too emotionally-laden not to be a great target for some in Congress not to be leading the charge to ‘protect’ students.”**
- “[It’s a] big issue but Congress is not capable of passing any bill on any topic at any time during an election year.”

States and Data Privacy – Impact on Schools’ Ability to Use Student Data

When asked again about potential state laws, only 24% think that states will pass legislation that has an adverse impact on schools’ ability to use student data.

What will most states (at least 20) do in the next 1-2 years?



- Pass legislation that addresses the issue but doesn't have an adverse impact on schools' ability to use student data
- Pass legislation that has an adverse impact on schools' ability to use student data
- Not pass legislation that impacts education one way or another

Question: Regarding student data privacy, what do you think most states (at least 20) will do in the next 1-2 years?

Insider Insight: States and Data Privacy – Impact on Schools’ Ability to Use Student Data

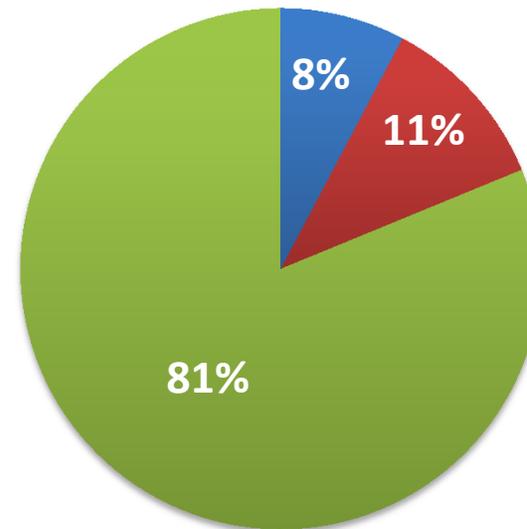
Comments

- “I tend to think legislative restrictions will be placed on the state use/access to student data, rather than schools.”
- “My wild hope here is that advocates will get out in front on this issue.”
- **“Those interested in the appropriate use of student data have to get in front of this rapidly growing issue; otherwise we will be constantly reacting. The vision has not been presented well to either policymakers or the public about how new technology can produce data that truly benefits students. Parents take their children to doctors and want every data point used; they need to want the same opportunity for the teachers working with their children.”**

The Federal Government and Data Privacy – Impact on Schools’ Ability to Use Student Data

As with their other vote on the federal government, only a small number (11%) of Insiders think that the federal government will pass legislation that has an adverse impact on schools’ ability to use student data. Most think that the federal government simply won’t pass legislation related to this.

What will the federal government do in the next 1-2 years?

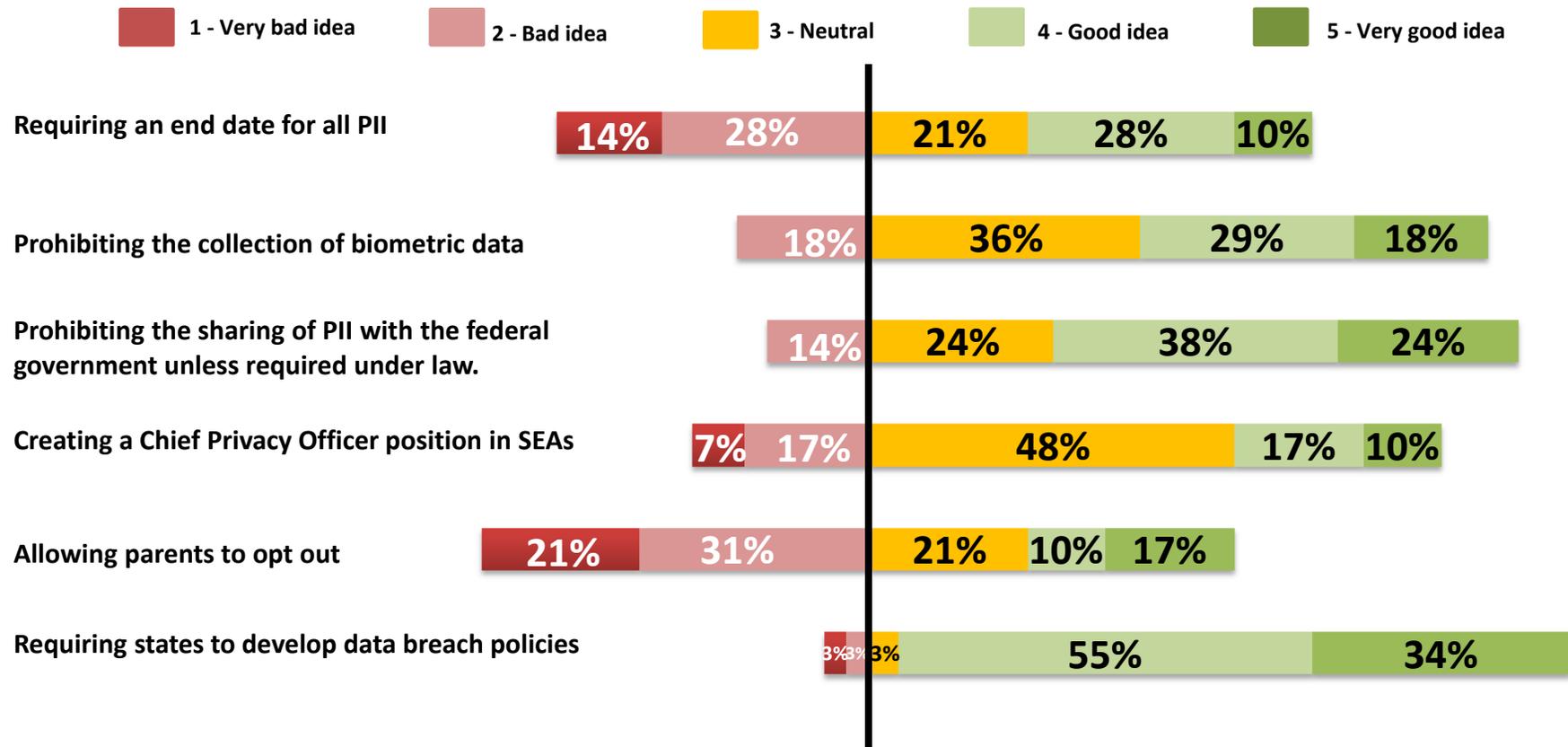


- Pass legislation that addresses the issue but doesn't have an adverse impact on schools' ability to use student data
- Pass legislation that has an adverse impact on schools' ability to use student data
- Not pass legislation that impacts education one way or another

Question: Regarding student data privacy, what do you think the federal government will do in the next 1-2 years?

Insiders Assess State Responses/Solutions to Data Privacy Concerns

Ratings for state responses/solutions to data privacy concerns



Question: For the following state responses/solutions to student data privacy concerns, please rate on a scale of 1 to 5:

Insiders' Votes for State Solutions to Data Privacy Concerns

Top Ranked Actions:

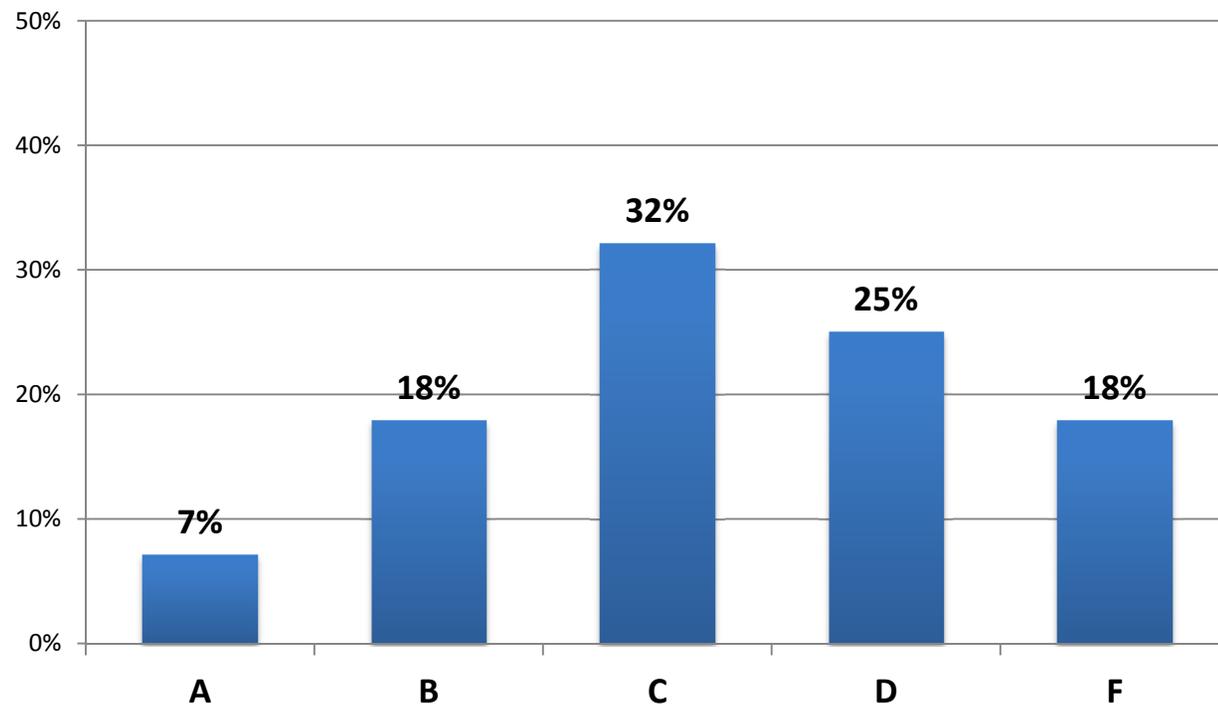
- 89% think that requiring the state department of education to develop data breach policies is a good or very good idea.
- 62% (86% with neutral) think that prohibiting the sharing of PII with the federal government unless required by law is a good or very good idea.
- 27% (75% with neutral) believe SEAs should create a Chief Privacy Officer.
- 47% (83% with neutral) believe there should be prohibition on the collection of biometric data.
- 38% (59% with neutral) believe there should be a requirement to have an end date for PII.
- 27% (48% with neutral) think parents should be able to opt out of data collections.

Insiders on Governor Cuomo and the Common Core

Governor Cuomo received mostly failing grades from Insiders on his handling of Common Core.

Just 25% of Insiders think that Governor Cuomo deserves an A or a B.

Grades for Governor Cuomo's handling of the recent Common Core blow up in NY



Question: Please grade Gov. Cuomo's handling of the recent Common Core blow up in New York.

Insider Insight: Governor Cuomo and the Common Core

Comments

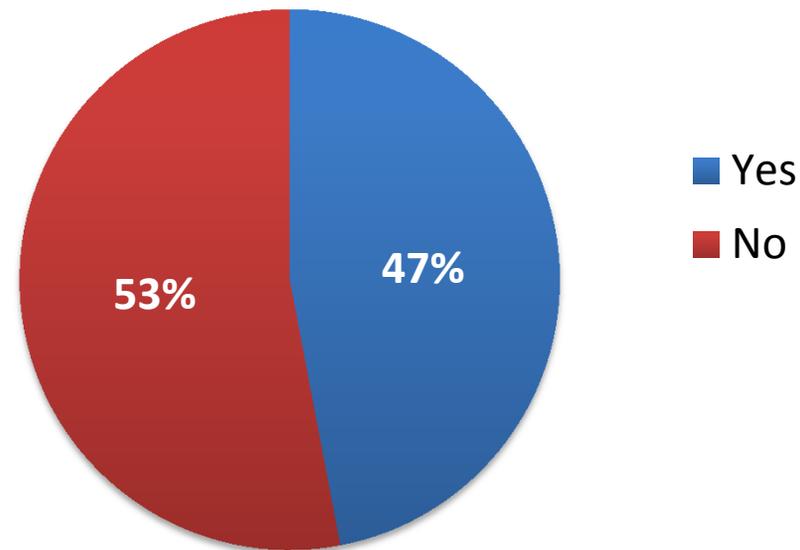
- “He took the strongest stand I think I’ve seen an elected official take.”
- “Everyone in New York gets an F.”
- **“Mark February 2014 in your history books as the date the Common Core died due to NY’s botched implementation and messaging and the unions backing off their support.”**
- **“Gave fuel to the fire started by the ‘implementation’ critics without helping get the public behind smarter, better standards.”**
- “Extending the timeline made sense politically and to prevent the entire effort from blowing up, but it could just lead to more confusion in the coming years and a serious retreat on accountability for educators.”
- **“He’s emerging as a leader on this issue. He needs to do a better job supporting John King, who he sort of hung out to dry in order to balance the politics. That’s why I didn’t give him an A. But he put the brakes on a big push by the teachers union to make New York their proof point on stopping Common Core.”**
- “He won. The Board of Regents sought to reverse his policy. He wielded the bully pulpit. Cuomo won. Clear and simple.”

Insiders Divided on the Fate of the Common Core after This Year's Legislative Session

Insiders are nearly split on the Common Core's fate if it survives this year in state legislatures.

Insiders point to future challenges with implementation, CCSS assessment result shocks, and other issues that could further derail the reform.

If the Common Core survives state legislative sessions this year, is it on strong political ground going forward?



Question: In your view, if the Common Core survives this states' legislative sessions this year, is it on strong political ground going forward?

Insider Insight: The Fate of the Common Core

Comments

- **“Implementation has widely been so poor (and so ignored!) that parents are deeply suspicious in many places. Unless we see positive movement soon on that front—and better buy-in from parents and teachers—Common Core is going to be limping weakly.”**
- **“Momentum is strong and growing in the other direction.”**
- **“I think we have at least one more year of completely conflating the Common Core with everything else people have ever disliked about any education policy.”**
- **“Still needs to survive shock of lower test scores, technology problems with new assessments, and unions’ realization that Common Core could be their path to killing off test-based accountability.”**
- **“Time will heal all paranoia. Common Core just needs to run out the clock.”**
- **“States are at different places when it comes to Common Core implementation—many have longer timelines so I don’t think just getting through this session will cut it for everyone.”**

Insider Insight: The Fate of the Common Core (continued)

Comments

- “Once it is in states and the tests are implemented (PARCC, SBAC, ACT/Aspire, etc.), it will be very dumb and bad politics to yank the state back to the old and different standards. Kids and teachers will lose and schools and teachers will be pissed off.”
- “This is the key year, the assessments will be a disaster and there will be action about that, but if the standards can hold up for a bit longer they will start to become embedded in a way it won’t be easy to undo. Behind the scenes most R governors don’t want this to go down either—the opposition is really driven by the fringes—so there is a hope that it can beat the clock.”
- **“The fallout is only just beginning. There are numerous points in the coming years where states will have to make fiscal decisions that bring to attention the decisions that were made in 2009.”**

Insider Insight: The Fate of the Common Core (continued)

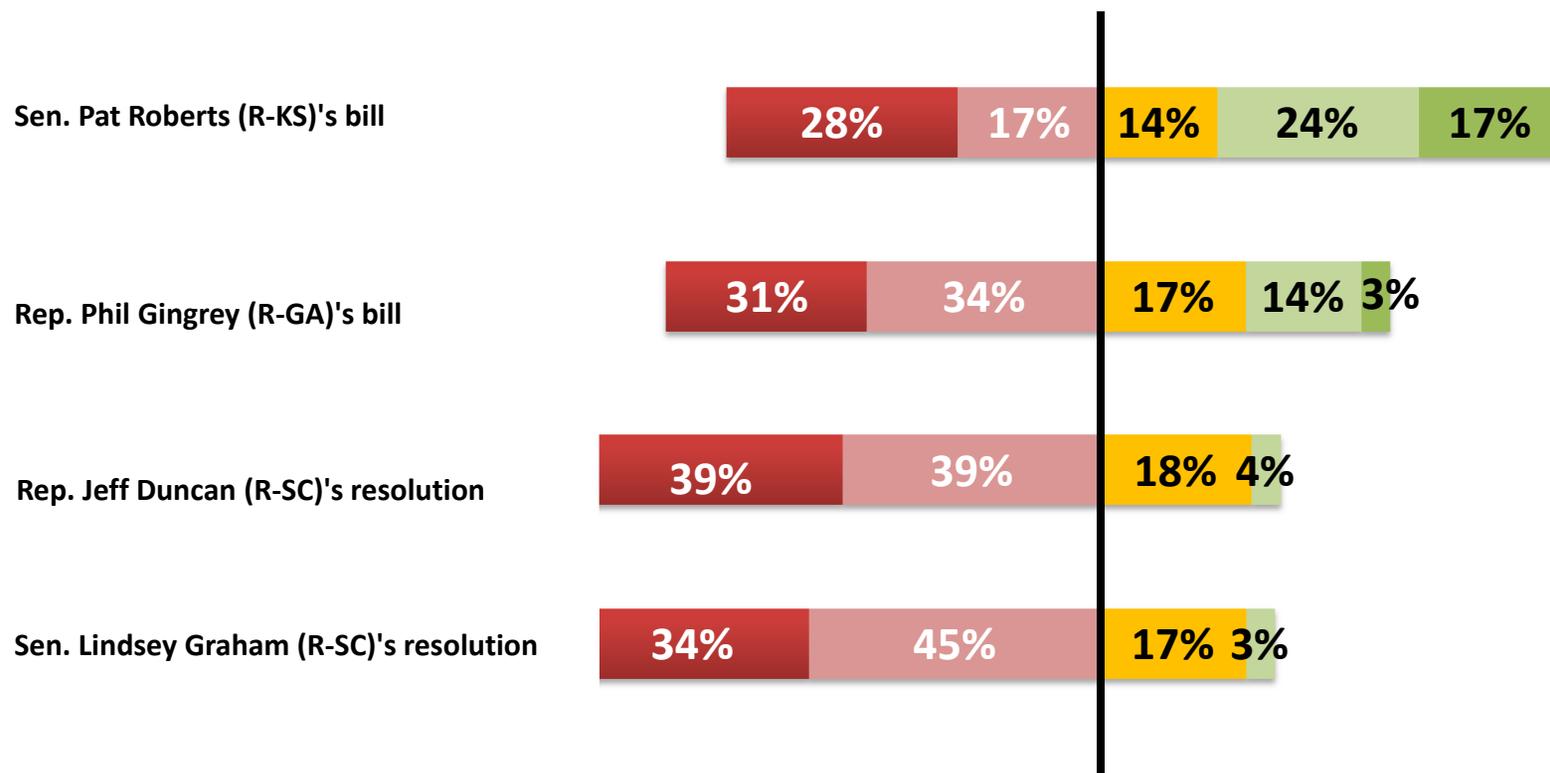
Comments

- “[Yes.] But that’s a huge if. It is getting tougher and tougher to find governors willing to stick their necks out for Common Core.”
- “It’ll be perpetually an issue because of the way it’s been handled.”
- **“Each year of implementation makes it harder to retreat.”**
- “Strong ground until lousy test scores come in.”
- “We’ve still got to get through the first year the data come out.”
- “Common Core may live for years on paper, but it will never make much of an impact on the ground because it will never be thoroughly implemented.”
- “Wait until the first test results come in. The whiplash will be severe.”

Insiders Weigh in on Resolutions and Bills in Congress – Level of Impact on Common Core

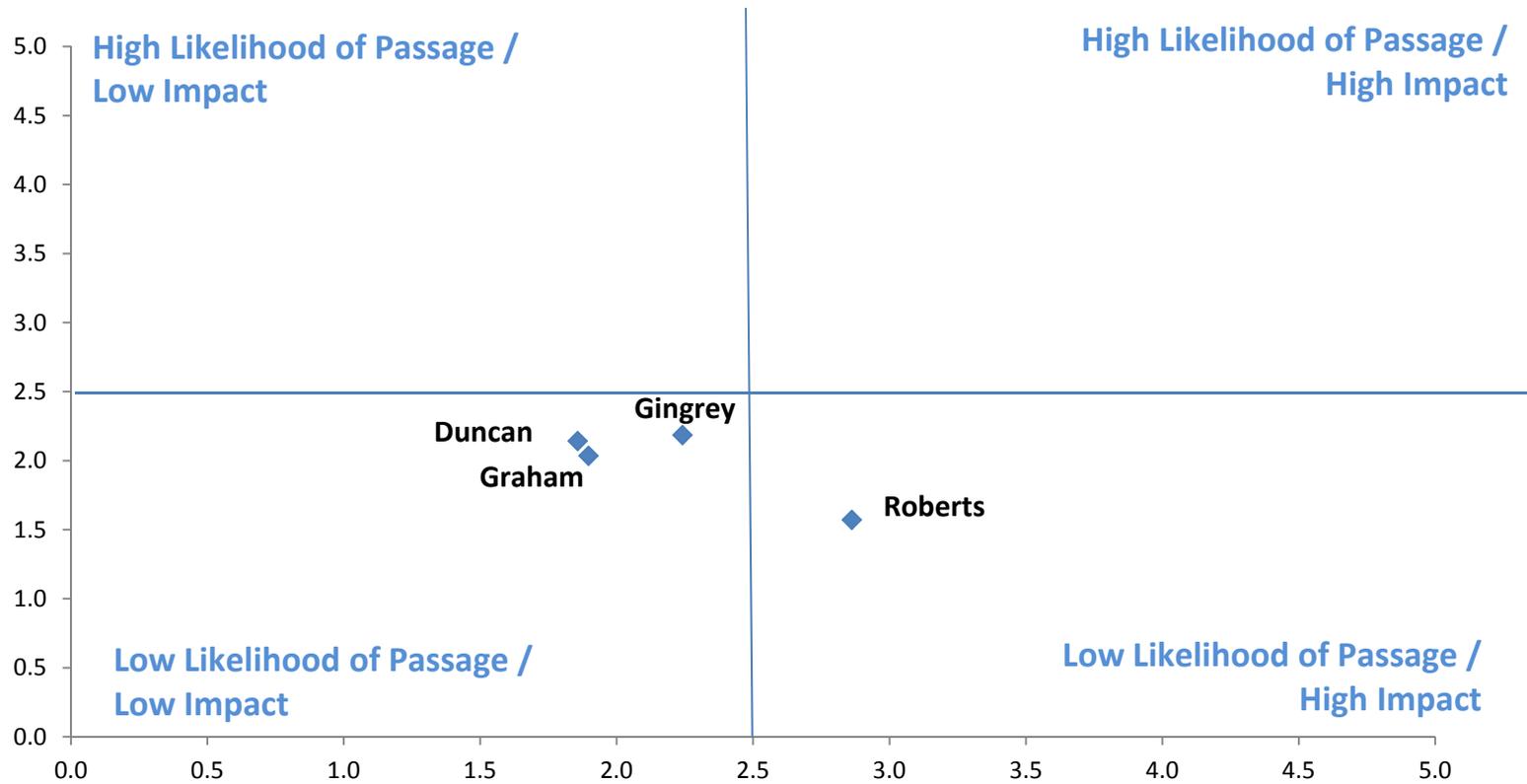
Ratings for state responses/solutions to data privacy concerns

1 - Extremely low impact 2 - Low impact 3 - Moderate impact 4 - High impact 5 - Extremely high impact



Question: For the following Common Core bills in Congress, please rate their level of impact on implementation on the Common Core:

Insiders Weigh in on Resolutions and Bills in Congress – Level of Impact on Common Core



Question: For the following Common Core bills in Congress, please rate their level of impact on implementation on the Common Core:

Congressional Resolutions/Bills – Additional Information

- Sen. Lindsey Graham (R-SC)'s resolution affirms that education belongs in the hands of parents, local education officials, and states; the federal government should not “coerce” states into adopting common standards; and no future application process for federal grants should confer preference on states who adopt the Common Core.
- Rep. Jeff Duncan (R-SC)'s resolution is a companion to the Senate resolution above.
- Rep. Phil Gingrey (R-GA)'s bill, the "Educational Freedom Act," would ensure that the federal government is prohibited from directly or indirectly mandating state and local academic standards and curricula.
- Sen. Pat Roberts (R-KS)'s bill, the Learning Opportunities Created At the Local (LOCAL) Level Act, prohibits the federal government from coercing states to adopt education standards like Common Core and prohibits states and schools from using any federal funds for CCSS or testing materials aligned to the Common Core or any other academic standards common to a significant number of states.

Insider Insight: Congressional Resolutions/Bills

Comments

- **“Mostly show. The Roberts bill if enacted could be real trouble.”**
- “Only impact at federal level would come from an appropriations rider. This is a state battle.”
- **“Roberts can’t have it both ways - you can’t say it is federal overreach to mandate the adoption of standards and then mandate the prohibition of states and schools using funds for standards of their own choosing.”**
- “It may get ugly, but the train has left the station.”
- “Import may be as much symbolic as substantive.”
- “Gesture politics, that’s it.”
- “There will be a sense of Congress about Common Core.”

Insider Insight: Congressional Resolutions/Bills (continued)

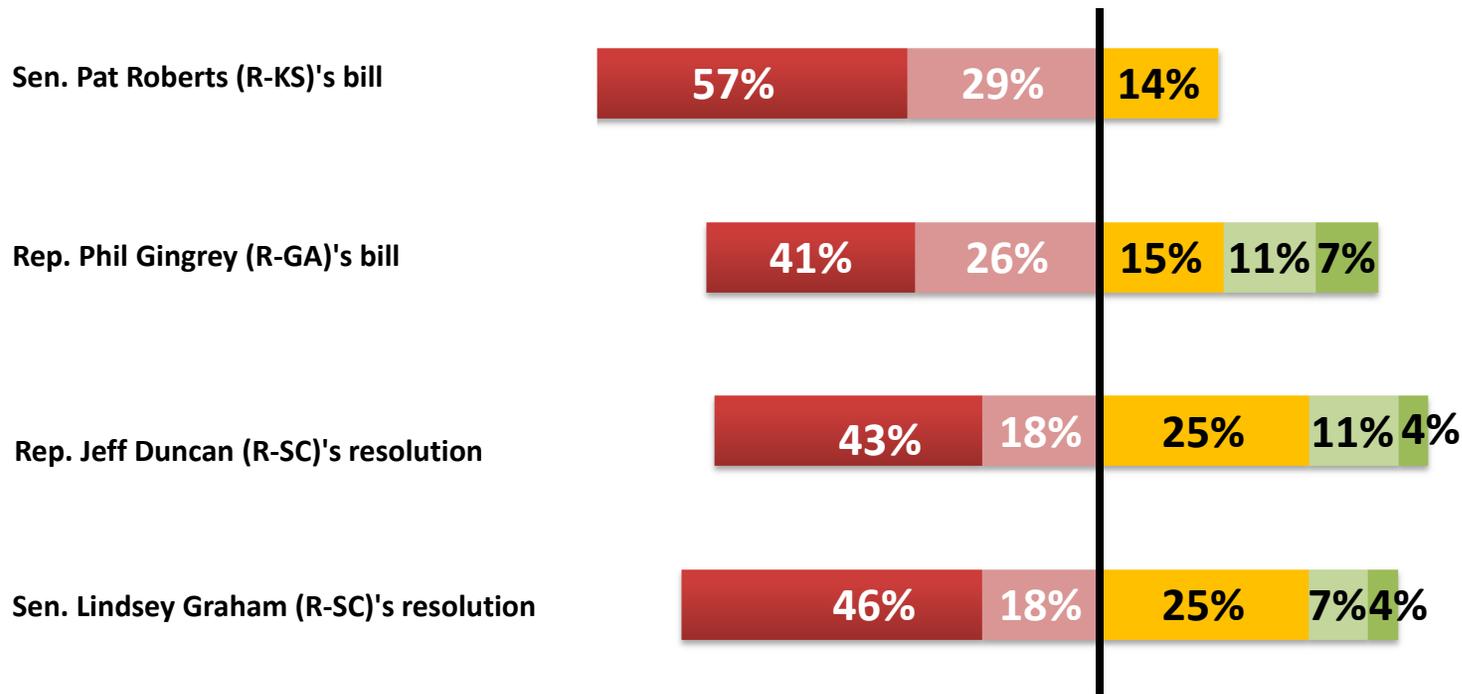
Comments

- “The Administration should see that its best play is to stand aside on the Graham resolution, let it pass without opposing it, let everyone give their statements, and be done. Democrats should all vote for it. Then it’s done and done without consequences for the Common Core other than some bad headlines. Unfortunately, this administration is unable to do anything that is not political or say anything gracious about their political opponents so that doesn’t seem very likely. And the Common Core advocates and their army of PR flacks can’t stand bad press and are remarkably tin-eared about the politics so they seem likely to fight this because it says mean things about the Core.”
- “Although I think the state pressures from which these bills were introduced are real, this is all kowtowing to tea party groups in their states. Reasonable Republicans who have concerns about Common Core know these are just dumb state political bills that shouldn’t drive federal education policy.”

Insiders on Congressional Resolutions and Bills Targeting the Common Core – Likelihood of Passage

Ratings for state responses/solutions to data privacy concerns

1 - Extremely low likelihood of passage 2 - Low likelihood of passage 3 - Moderate likelihood of passage 4 - High likelihood of passage 5 - Extremely high likelihood of passage



Question: For the following Common Core bills in Congress, please rate their likelihood of passage:

Insider Insight: Congressional Resolutions/Bills

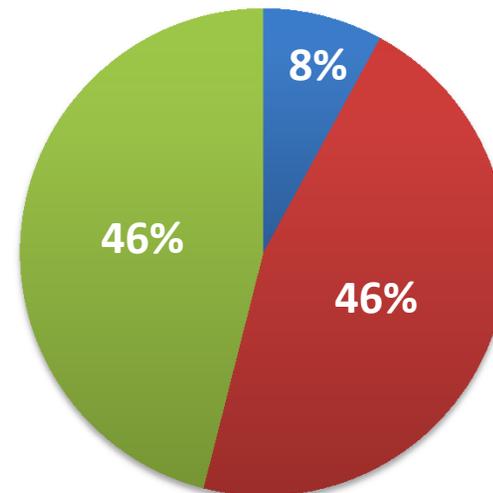
Comments

- “I don’t think Congress can pass anything.”
- “Nothing like this will pass in the Senate, and the House versions would likely only pass the House as part of larger education legislation. That larger bill would be dead on arrival in the Senate.”
- “I am counting on the President’s veto pen to stop passage of anything as severe as the Roberts bill.”
- “These bills don’t have to pass to be impactful. They’re reflective of, and influential on, the sentiment that’s killing the Common Core.”
- “Only Gingrey’s will become law because it is already law.”

Insiders Divided on the Greatest Threat to the Common Core

Surprisingly, Insiders were evenly divided on what is the greatest threat to Common Core.

Which is the greatest threat to the Common Core?



- Conservative sentiment about Federal overreach in encouraging the adoption of standards
- Union concern about poor implementation of the standards and insufficient funding for the resources, training, and support needed for implementation
- Other

Question: Which is the greatest threat to the Common Core?

Insider Insight: The Greatest Threat to the Common Core

Comments

- “Two threats: 1) PARENT concern about poor implementation. The unions could get some real traction in their arguments because parents are seeing poor implementation with their own eyes in many places. 2) Linking Common Core to teacher evaluation: this is where the policy folks really messed up. Common Core is now completely associated with teacher evaluation in a way that has turned out to be very unproductive (particularly in light of poor implementation). Keeping these two DIFFERENT goals separate might help to preserve the Common Core.”
- “Both are roughly equally problematic and I would add avoidance of serious accountability to the ‘union concerns’...”
- **“The unholy alliance between the two [threats].”**
- “It’s the weird coming together of the left and the right.”
- “BOTH—the Tea Party pulling on the Common Core from the right and the unions pulling it from the left has a real possibility of unraveling the fabric of the new standards and assessments.”
- “Once the unions start telling Democrats to stop, they will listen. Congressional Democrats are mindless drones.”

Insider Insight: The Greatest Threat to the Common Core (continued)

Comments

- “This is how the unions killed NCLB. Claim to support the reform but say it is underfunded. Call for pauses without saying delay. Don’t be specific about implementation metrics. And then back off slowly over time saying the reform is great, it is just underfunded. What’s amazing is how the foundation community [and] the Administration allowed this to happen.”
- “Suburban hysteria. (See New York.)”
- “Union concern -- but about the use of the data from the tests, which will be harder, in eval systems.”
- “Both are threats but the pivot of the unions here to opposition - which in retrospect looks very predictable, they get to say for the 10000th time that they were for some reform only to see it be done wrong so now they can’t be for it any more (see standards, charter schools, teacher evaluation, tenure reform, getting pedophiles out of schools, performance pay, turning around failing schools) is the big problem. Now right and left are feeling growing pressure on this and the old education politics of opposition at the extremes are back.”

Insider Insight: The Greatest Threat to the Common Core (continued)

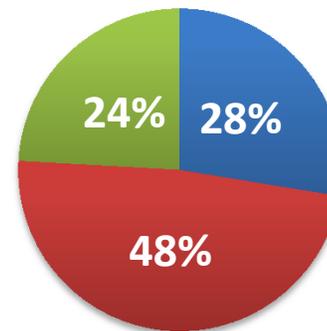
Comments

- **“Misunderstanding about the Common Core, which has created ignorance and misinformation which are two of the worst things when citizens are swayed by it.”**
- “I would say both. Only the Democratic ed reformer crowd and their do-good ways and so-called Republicans who’ve been sleeping the past five years are now defending this approach.”
- **“Unions can raise concerns; conservatives in state legislatures can pass laws.”**
- “The left-right pincer. But I really think the greatest threat is non-implementation, not repudiation.”
- **“Actual poor implementation. School and district leaders are doing like they did with NCLB and blaming everything teachers and parents don’t like on Common Core.”**
- “BOTH! Further, the unions are opposed for reasons other than the ones they say and you cite!”
- “Both. The combined power of both the unions and conservatives is what together is the big threat to Common Core.”

Insiders on Unions' Efforts Against the Common Core

48% of Insiders think that the recent efforts on behalf of unions to call for pauses to the Common Core are a way to run out the clock and erode support.

Unions in NY, MD, and PA are all calling for pauses on the Common Core due to poor implementation of the standards and insufficient funding for the resources, training, and support needed for implementation. Is this:



- Legitimate
- A way to run out the clock and erode support (similar to what they did with NCLB)
- Something else

Question: Unions in New York, Maryland, and Pennsylvania are all calling for pauses on the Common Core due to poor implementation of the standards and insufficient funding for the resources, training, and support needed for implementation. Is this:

Insider Insight: Unions' Efforts Against the Common Core

Comments

- “All politics is local and when parents see bad implementation it gives the union’s concerns significant credibility. Not having a transition period (New York) was asking for trouble and parents certainly feel that and see it with their kids in the classroom. Fighting that will now be particularly hard in NY because parents are deeply suspect. Conversely, while Maryland has concerns, some school districts in Maryland (for example, Montgomery County) have done a fairly good job of gradually rolling out Common Core, and while there has been some pushback from some parents, this pushback has largely been substantive -- about the content of some of the standards themselves, and not a large scale "doubting" of the system. The difference, I think, is that when most of the teachers are on board and have been trained and given the opportunity for a phased roll-in, parents sense this and get on board too. The lack of regard for parents, and implementation at THE CLASSROOM LEVEL, has been a massive blunder for the Common Core roll out.”
- “It’s both legitimate and a strategy, but the strategy is less about common core itself than it is about testing and teacher evaluations.”
- “BOTH—There is truth to it, but it’s also a way to run out the clock on the current Administration.”

Insider Insight: Unions' Efforts Against the Common Core (continued)

Comments

- “A way to run out the clock so that CC can survive.”
- “Predictable. Randi Weingarten would rather keep her job and influence within labor than do something good for students or good for the country and lose it in the process. Despite all the speeches, all the efforts to reinvent herself as a public intellectual like Shanker she’s proven unable to deliver on anything of consequence. The NEA is a more genuinely democratic organization, which is why they can’t control what’s happening now and have to respond to members. That’s why Weingarten has more responsibility here, she could have emerged as a courageous counterweight to all this and someone willing to take the hits to get this done, but she more interested in the politics. When CCSSO went on the record criticizing her that was the signal the collusion had come undone.”
- “Implementation in MD is going very well—definitely a ‘run out the clock’ move there.”
- “They don’t like teacher evaluations that ultimately lead to greater expectations from teacher performance and so this is a way to postpone their use.”

Insider Insight: Unions' Efforts Against the Common Core (continued)

Comments

- “Look, reality always trumps motivation. The warnings about hits to state budgets, maintenance of the standards and assessments, cut scores shielded from politics were all ignored but ultimately are coming into play now.”
- “If unions aren’t complaining about something someone in power did they break out in hives.”
- “It’s also political, of course.”
- “This is legitimate if there is agreement on what is the proper sequencing for phasing in teacher evaluation.”
- “The pauses seem to have more to do with teacher evaluations attached to CC results than to the standards themselves (or even their implementation in other ways).”
- “A way to derail teacher eval systems--not primarily about the Common Core.”
- “Combination of factors, most of which are unrelated to the standards themselves.”
- “They and their educrat friends want no pressure to do anything beyond what they want to do and no accountability for getting results. Period.”

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