Chester Finn and Michael Petrilli see national standards as the surest route to leaving no child left behind. James Peyser says national standards will harm charter schools and hamstring reform-minded states. Robert Gordon says national standards are now a tough sell for Republicans, but provide a ready-made opportunity for Democrats.

At a time of increasing global economic competition, continued signs of backsliding in state oversight of schools, and growing impatience with No Child Left Behind (NCLB), the debate over national education standards has heated up.