

April 22, 2021

The Honorable Patty Murray
Chairwoman, Appropriations Subcommittee on
Labor, HHS, Education & Related Agencies
U.S. Senate
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Roy Blunt
Ranking Member, Appropriations Subcommittee on
Labor, HHS, Education & Related Agencies
U.S. Senate
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Rosa DeLauro
Chairwoman, Appropriations Subcommittee on
Labor, HHS, Education & Related Agencies
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Tom Cole
Ranking Member, Appropriations Subcommittee on
Labor, HHS, Education & Related Agencies
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairwoman Murray, Ranking Member Blunt, Chairwoman DeLauro, and Ranking Member Cole:

As you develop the Fiscal Year (FY) 2022 appropriations bill for the U.S. Departments of Labor, Health and Human Services, and Education, we encourage you to help every American student achieve success and be ready for college, career, and life by providing \$3.00 billion for the Supporting Effective Instruction State Grants program, Title II, Part A of the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA). This program provides states and school districts with formula funding that ensures that educators, principals, and school leaders receive the professional learning and leadership skills needed to support every student.

Research continues to show that Title II, Part A's investments in educators pays significant dividends in terms of improving educational practice and increasing student achievement. School districts use Title II-A funding to implement the Every Student Succeeds Act's (ESSA) rigorous definition of professional development that embodies the important transition from scattershot, one-off professional development workshops and sessions to collaborative, ongoing, job-embedded professional learning such as coaching, mentoring, and professional learning communities. Research supports the positive effect of the kinds of professional development defined in ESSA. For example, key studies show that coaching helps teachers improve their practice faster. A 2018 meta-analysis, which examined 60 rigorous studies of coaching, found large positive effects of coaching on teachers' instructional practices. Across 43 studies, researchers found that coaching accelerates the growth that typically occurs as one moves from novice to veteran status. Additionally, multiple researchers have documented that teachers who collaborate in professional learning communities (PLCs) to continuously improve their practice and their students' learning experiences have a measurable positive impact in schools. A 2009 study that took place in New York City documented student achievement gains across grade levels when teachers engaged in purposeful, content-focused interactions.

Title II, Part A's support for principal and school leader professional learning is also critical as research shows a strong correlation between high-quality principals and student achievement and teacher retention. A March 2021 Wallace Foundation paper stated that a "review of two decades of evidence – including six quantitative, longitudinal studies involving 22,000 principals – found that "principals have large effects on student learning, comparable even to the effects of individual teachers." A separate 2016 review of 18 studies meeting ESSA's Tiers I-III evidence standards concluded that "school leadership can be a powerful driver of improved education outcomes." This research buttresses earlier studies that concluded that principals are second only to teachers as the most important school-level determinant of

student achievement. Other research suggests that schools led by high-quality principals have lower teacher turnover rates.

While the federal government's investment in Title II-A has proven to be much needed and welcome, the COVID-19 pandemic laid bare the need for higher levels of support for our nation's educators. A significant increase to \$3.00 billion for Title II, Part A will provide schools and districts with crucial funds to address new and existing challenges induced or exacerbated by the pandemic. A larger investment in Title II-A will help accelerate student learning, curb teacher and principal shortages by recruiting new individuals into the educator workforce, provide supports to keep educators in the profession, keep class sizes low, and provide mental health and wellness support to our nation's educators as they reenter classrooms full-time.

At its core, Title II, Part A is a program that supports the growth and development of educators' instructional practice to improve their teaching and, ultimately, boost student learning. While we appreciate the \$11 million increase the program received in FY 2021, the program is still severely underfunded and demand for services provided by the program has only increased. We hope that with budget caps no longer in place you will make a bold statement of prioritizing educator support by providing \$3.00 billion for Supporting Effective Instruction State Grants in FY 2022.

Thank you for your consideration of our request, and your continued work to support educators and students.

Sincerely,

AASA, The School Superintendents Association
ACTFL
Alliance for Excellent Education
American Federation of School Administrators
American Federation of Teachers
American Psychological Association
ASCD
Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning (CASEL)
Committee for Children
Council for Exceptional Children
Council of Administrators of Special Education
EDGE Consulting Partners
GLSEN
Higher Education Consortium for Special Education (HECSE)
International Society for Technology in Education
Learning Forward

Learning Forward Oklahoma
Learning Forward Virginia
National Association for Music Education (NAfME)
National Association of Elementary School Principals
National Association of School Psychologists
National Association of Secondary School Principals
National Association of State Directors of Special Education (NASDSE)
National Board for Professional Teaching Standards
National Center for Learning Disabilities
National Council of Teachers of English
National Council of Teachers of Mathematics (NCTM)
National Education Association
National Institute for Excellence in Teaching
National Policy Board for Educational Administration
National PTA
National School Boards Association
National Science Teaching Association
New Leaders
PDK International
Public Advocacy for Kids (PAK)
SHAPE America - Society of Health and Physical Educators
Society for Public Health Education
Society of State Leaders of Health and Physical Education
Teach For America
Teach Plus
Teacher Education Division of the Council for Exceptional Children
TESOL International Association