

March XX, 2016

The Honorable Tom Cole  
Chairman  
Subcommittee on Labor, Health, and  
Human Services, and Education  
House Appropriations Committee  
H-309, U.S. Capitol  
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Rosa DeLauro  
Ranking Member  
Subcommittee on Labor, Health, and  
Human Services, and Education  
House Appropriations Committee  
1016 Longworth House Office Building  
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Chairman Cole and Ranking Member DeLauro:

As you develop the Fiscal Year (FY) 2017 appropriations bill for the U.S. Departments of Labor, Health and Human Services, and Education, we encourage you to help close opportunity and resource gaps in our nation's public schools by funding the Student Support and Academic Enrichment grant program at its authorized level of \$1.65 billion.

Last year, Congress passed a bipartisan education bill that replaced the failed policies of the No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB). The new law, the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA), returns a great deal of control to states and school districts, and it eliminates federally-mandated one-size-fits-all interventions for struggling schools. Unlike NCLB, the ESSA empowers school districts to identify and respond to the unique needs of their students and communities.

To enable school districts to provide locally-tailored programming and supportive services for students who need them most, Title IV, Part A, of ESSA authorizes flexible funding through the new Student Support and Academic Enrichment formula grant program. This new formula program will deliver federal funding to promote safe and healthy students, ensure all students have access to a well-rounded education, and equip schools with effective technology.

More specifically, the Student Support and Academic Enrichment grant program will enable states and local school districts to support a variety of services, such as school-based mental health programs, drug and violence prevention programs, and physical education programs. The grant will also support well-rounded learning opportunities, including expanded access to arts, music, civics, and foreign language courses; Advanced Placement, dual enrollment, and other rigorous and accelerated courses; and STEM courses, which may integrate arts and music to foster innovation and creative thinking.

The Student Support and Academic Enrichment grant program will certainly play a central role in giving all students the resources and opportunities they need to prepare for success in college and career. Bipartisan members of Congress recognized the value of this flexible formula funding to support and enrich students in school districts across the country when, in drafting the

ESSA, we authorized \$1.65 billion for the program in FY 2017. We respectfully ask that you appropriate no less than this amount.

Thank you for your consideration of this request. We look forward to working with you to make sure students in every community are supported and enriched to reach their maximum potential.

Sincerely,

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Suzanne Bonamici

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Carlos Curbelo

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Katherine Clark

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Elise Stefanik