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July 13, 2016

The Honorable Hal Rogers
Chairman
House Appropriations Committee
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Nita Lowey
Ranking Member
House Appropriations Committee
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairman Rogers and Ranking Member Lowey,

As the House Appropriations Committee prepares to consider the FY2017 funding bill for Labor, Health and Human Services, Education, and Related Agencies, ASCD urges you to provide robust investments in federal education programs. The bill approved last week by the Subcommittee, although it provides modest increases for a few programs, fails to adequately invest in Title I and Title II, the primary programs intended to help the students most in need in our society.

Investing in education is crucial to ensuring the future health of our economy and our country's global competitiveness. A robust federal investment in education is necessary to equip schools with the resources—personnel, facilities, and technology—to position students to acquire the skills and knowledge needed for college and career success. The bill passed by the Subcommittee includes a modest increase in Title I funds for disadvantaged students, but when the school improvement set-aside required by the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) is factored in, the Title I allocation would be less than the FY2016 allocation. With more families living in poverty and persistent resource and achievement disparities, it is crucial to make the necessary investments to help all students achieve their full potentials.

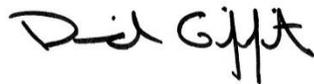
Effective teachers are one of the most influential factors in helping students succeed, and for some cash-strapped districts, federal dollars for professional development are the only funding they have to help better train their educators. The Committee-approved bill would provide \$400 million less for professional development than in FY2016. At a time when many states are already stretching their education budgets to meet the needs of their students, slashing the investment in our educators is a short-

sighted decision that jeopardizes the ability of schools to provide effective educators in their classrooms.

ESSA created a new Title IV block grant—the Student Success and Academic Enrichment Grant program—that is intended to provide every school district in the country with funding to support a well-rounded education, ensure safe and healthy school environments, and enhance technology education in schools. ESSA authorized \$1.65 billion for the grant program, a level considered sufficient to provide funding for every district. We are heartened that the Subcommittee bill provides \$1 billion for this program and hope that the full Committee will consider funding the program at the full authorization level.

ASCD urges Congress to ensure that these essential funding needs are met through the federal appropriations process. Now is not the time to back away from fully funding the programs that help the educators and students who need it most. We must provide sufficient resources to support our nation’s educators and ensure that robust federal funds are available to meet the comprehensive needs of all students. Thank you for your consideration of our views.

Cordially,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "David Griffith". The signature is written in a cursive, slightly stylized font.

David Griffith
Senior Director, Government Relations

CC: House Appropriations Committee members

