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September 7, 2017

Dear Congressman:

ASCD is committed to ensuring that each child has access to highly effective educators and school leaders who support a whole child approach to education. We are profoundly disappointed that the education appropriations bill you will soon be voting on adheres to President Trump's budget request to eliminate all of the \$2.1 billion in the Title II, Part A program of the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA). This total disinvestment in the one program dedicated to educator professional development demonstrates a total lack of support for educators and the students they serve, and calls into question Congress's commitment to successful implementation of ESSA.

Teachers and school leaders are the most influential in-school factors in student achievement and engagement; thus, Title II, Part A, funds have a direct influence on student engagement and achievement. Educators must have access to evidence-based programs that prepare them to ensure all students are engaged and academically challenged, provide safe and nurturing learning environments, and address students' social-emotional needs. A strong federal investment in ongoing, job-embedded professional development is crucial to ensure educator effectiveness and enable educators to meet the ever-increasing demands placed on today's schools and to maximize student learning outcomes.

States and districts use these funds not just for professional development, but also to recruit and retain effective educators. Title II, Part A, funds are the only money schools in some states have for professional development. Eliminating funding for Title II will mean the complete loss of professional development funding in these states, leaving tens of thousands of educators and school leaders without the resources they need for crucial training and development.

Congress made programmatic improvements to Title II when it passed ESSA. As a result, states have incorporated systemic changes to include leadership development in their school improvement plans, assessment and accountability systems, family

engagement programs, and school culture and climate improvements. To give these ESSA reforms the time and opportunity to work, Congress must maintain the current \$2.1 billion for Title II, Part A, in FY18.

Students have the greatest opportunity for academic success when they have access to effective teachers and school leaders. Congress must ensure that maximum resources are appropriated to prepare, recruit, retain, and support our nation's educators.

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 of Government Relations

