

Hon. Tom Cole
Chairman
Subcommittee on Labor HHS
Education Appropriations
Washington, DC 20515

Hon. Rosa DeLauro
Ranking Member
Subcommittee on Labor HHS
Education Appropriations
Washington, DC 20515

March 17, 2016

Dear Chairman Cole and Ranking Member DeLauro:

The undersigned organizations write to request that the Subcommittee provide robust funding for the Student Support and Academic Enrichment Grants (SSAEG), found in Title IV, Part A of the bipartisan Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA).

The SSAEG program, authorized at \$1.65 billion for FY17, is the result of Congress' decision to consolidate more than 20 existing programs, most of which were competitive, into a single formula-funded flexible block grant program that allows districts to choose where best to spend their SSAEG dollar in order to help all students develop the skills essential for learning readiness and academic success. These programs include: safe and healthy students activities, such as providing mental health services to students; increasing student access to STEM, computer science and accelerated learning courses, physical education, art, music, foreign languages and college and career counseling; funds for an effective school library program; and providing students with access to technology and digital materials and educators with technology professional development opportunities.

We make this request because we believe that the President's FY17 budget request is grossly inadequate. Specifically, the President's budget proposes to fund this program at \$500 million, which is less than one-third the authorized funding level to which Congress and the President agreed less than 3 months ago. This would have devastating consequences in all schools districts. For example, Lawton Public Schools in Oklahoma, which would receive \$474,000 in FY17 if Title IVA receives full funding, would only receive \$10,000 should the President's budget proposal become law. Similarly, the New Haven School District in Connecticut faces the prospect of losing \$809,000 from its Title IVA allocation if this program receives only \$500 million in FY17 appropriations. We respectfully request that Congress provide a funding level that more closely aligns with the goals and spirit of the law.

Beyond the financial challenges of such a low funding level, the amount proposed in the President's budget for SSAEG will not allow states and districts to make meaningful investments in a range of programs that, when combined, improve conditions for learning and help students receive a well-rounded education. It would force school districts to choose between high-quality programs that positively impact students in different ways – trading off school counseling services for Advanced Placement programs, for instance, thereby jeopardizing the greater flexibility for districts and schools that Congress intended.

Furthermore, we object to the President's proposal that would turn this program into a competitive grant program, circumventing Congress' plain intent in ESSA. A competitive program would significantly disadvantage smaller, more rural school districts as they often

lack the capacity to apply for funding and, even if they do apply, face the prospect of receiving no money at all. Sufficiently funding this program eliminates any need for prescriptive language about targeting and increases local control and choice over investments made in education programs. Lastly, underfunding this program in its first year of authorization severely hinders the program from being implemented effectively and sets the program up for steep cuts and lower appropriations in future years.

On behalf of the millions of students, parents and educators that we collectively represent, we urge you to appropriate as close to full funding as possible for the Student Support and Academic Enrichment Grants.

Sincerely,

National and Regional Organizations

Afterschool Alliance
Alliance for Excellence Education
American Academy of Pediatrics
American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages
American Councils for International Education
American Counseling Association
American Dance Therapy Association
American Heart Association
American Library Association
American Music Therapy Association
American Occupational Therapy Association
American Psychological Association
American School Counselor Association
American School Health Association
American Translators Association
ASCD
Association for Computer Professionals/Northwest
Campaign for the Civic Mission of Schools
Character.org
Coalition for Community Schools
Consortium for School Networking
Collaborative for Academic, Social and Emotional Learning (CASEL)
College Board
Committee for Children
Council for Economic Education
Council for Exceptional Children
Education Through Music
Futures Without Violence
Girls Inc.
Girl Scouts of the USA
Health Corps

Healthy Schools Campaign
Institute for Education Leadership
International Association for College Admission Counseling
International Society for Technology in Education
Jazz at Lincoln Center
The Joyful Child Foundation
League of American Orchestras
Lions Clubs International
MENTOR: The National Mentoring Partnership
NAMM Foundation
National Association for College Admission Counseling
National Association for Music Education
National Council for the Social Studies
National Association of Elementary School Principals
National Association of Secondary School Principals
National Association of School Psychologists
National Association of Social Workers
National Association of State Boards of Education
National Association of State Directors of Special Education
National Coalition for History
National Council of State Supervisors for Languages
National Council of Teachers of Mathematics
National PTA
National Science Teachers Association
National Superintendents Roundtable
Organization of American Kodály Educators
Partnership for 21st Century Learning
Percussive Arts Society
Phi Mu Alpha Sinfonia Fraternity of America
Potomac and Chesapeake Association for College Admission Counseling
Rocky Mountain Association for College Admission Counseling
Safe Routes to School National Partnership
School Social Work Association of America
Sexuality Information and Education Council of the U.S.
SHAPE America
Society of Women Engineers
Southern Association for College Admission Counseling
Southern Conference on Language Teaching
Southwest Conference on Language Teaching
State Education Technology Directors Association
STEM Education Coalition
US Soccer Federation
VH1 Save the Music Foundation
Western Association for College Admission Counseling
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State Organizations

Alabama

Alabama Association of School Psychologists
Alabama World Language Association

Alaska

Alaska School Counselors Association

Arizona

Arizona School Counselor Association

Arkansas

Girls Inc. of Fort Smith

California

California Association of School Counselors
California Association of School Psychologists
California Educational Technology Professionals Association
California Language Teachers Association
CUE
Girls Inc. of Alameda County
Girls Inc. of Carpinteria
Girls Inc. of Greater Los Angeles
Girls Inc. of Northern Sacramento Valley
Girls Inc. of Orange County
Girls Inc. of West Contra Costa County

Colorado

Colorado Conference of Foreign Language Teachers
Colorado School Counselor Association
Girls Inc. of Metro Denver

Connecticut

Connecticut Council of Language Teachers
Connecticut Educators Computer Association
Connecticut School Counselor Association

Delaware

Delaware Association of School Psychologists
Delaware School Counselor Association

District of Columbia

Girls Inc. of DC

Florida

Florida School Counselor Association
Girls Inc. of Bay County
Girls Inc. of Jacksonville
Girls Inc. of Pinellas

Georgia

Georgia K12 CTO Council
Georgia School Counselor Association
Girls Inc. of Columbus and Phenix-Russell

Hawaii

Hawai'i Association Language Teachers
Hawaii School Counselor Association

Idaho

Idaho School Counselor Association
Idaho School Psychologist Association

Illinois

Illinois Association for College Admission Counseling
Illinois Computing Educators
Illinois Education Technology Leaders
Illinois School Counseling Association
Illinois School Psychologist Association

Indiana

Girls Inc. of Greater Indianapolis
Girls Inc. of Jackson County
Girls Inc. of Shelbyville and Shelby County
Girls Inc. of Wayne County

Indiana Association of School Psychologists
Indiana Chief Technology Officer Council
Indiana Connected Educators
Indiana Foreign Language Teachers' Association
Indiana School Counselor Association

Iowa

Girls Inc. of Sioux City

Kansas

Kansas Association of School Psychologists

Kentucky

Kentucky Association for Psychologists in the Schools

Louisiana

Louisiana Chief Technology Officers' Association
Louisiana Computer Using Educators Association

Maine

Foreign Language Association of Maine

Maryland

Maryland School Psychologists' Association

Massachusetts

Girls Inc. of Holyoke
Girls Inc. of Greater Lowell
Massachusetts Educational Technology Administrators Association
Massachusetts School Counselor Association

Michigan

Michigan Association for College Admission Counseling
Michigan Association for Media in Education
Michigan School Counselor Association

Minnesota

Minnesota Association for College Admission Counseling
Minnesota Council on the Teaching of Languages and Cultures
Minnesota School Counselor Association
Minnesota School Psychologists Association

Missouri

Missouri Association for College Admission Counseling
Missouri Association of School Psychologists
Missouri School Counselor Association

Nebraska

Nebraska School Psychologist Association

Nevada

Nevada School Counselor Association

New Hampshire

Girls Inc. of New Hampshire
New Hampshire Association of School Psychologists
New Hampshire Association of World Language Teachers
New Hampshire School Counselor Association

New Jersey

Foreign Language Educators of New Jersey
New Jersey Association for College Admissions Counseling
New Jersey School Counselor Association, Inc.

New Mexico

New Mexico Organization of Language Educators
New Mexico Society for Technology in Education

New York

Girls Inc. of Long Island
Girls Inc. of New York City
Girls Inc. of Westchester
Girls Inc./YWCA of Syracuse
New York State Association for Computers and Technologies in Education

New York State Association of Foreign Language Teachers
New York State School Counselor Association

North Carolina

Foreign Language Association of North Carolina
North Carolina School Counselor Association

North Dakota

North Dakota Association of School Psychologists

Ohio

Ohio School Counselor Association

Oklahoma

Oklahoma School Counseling Association

Oregon

Girls Inc. of the Pacific Northwest

Pennsylvania

Girls Inc. of Philadelphia and Southern New Jersey
Pennsylvania Association for College Admission Counseling
Pennsylvania School Counselor Association
Pennsylvania State Modern Language Association

Puerto Rico

Puerto Rico School Psychology Association

Rhode Island

Rhode Island Foreign Language Association
Rhode Island Teachers of English Language Learners

South Carolina

Palmetto State School Counselor Association

South Dakota

South Dakota Association of School Psychologists
South Dakota School Counselor Association

Tennessee

Girls Inc. of Chattanooga
Girls Inc. of Kingsport
Girls Inc./YWCA of Nashville and Middle Tennessee
Tennessee Education Technology Association

Texas

Girls Inc. of Tarrant County
Texas Association for College Admission Counseling
Texas Computer Education Association

Virginia

Foreign Language Association of Virginia
Virginia Academy of School Psychologists
Virginia School Counselor Association
Virginia Society for Technology in Education
VSTE CoSN Council

Washington

Washington State Association of School Psychologists

West Virginia

West Virginia School Counselor Association

Wisconsin

Girls Inc. of Racine
Wisconsin Association of Foreign Language Teachers
Wisconsin Education Technology Leaders