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August 31, 2017

The Honorable Roy Blunt
Chairman
Subcommittee on Labor, Health and Human Services, Education, and Related
Agencies
Committee on Appropriations
U.S. Senate
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Patty Murray
Ranking Member
Subcommittee on Labor, Health and Human Services, Education, and Related
Agencies
Committee on Appropriations
U.S. Senate
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Chairman Blunt and Ranking Member Murray:

ASCD is committed to ensuring that each child has access to highly effective educators who embrace a whole child and well-rounded approach to education. On behalf of our 115,000 members, we write to request that the Senate Subcommittee on Labor, Health and Human Services, Education, and Related Agencies maintain a robust investment in educator effectiveness by funding Title II, Part A, of the bipartisan Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) at the current \$2.1 billion in the Fiscal Year 2018 (FY18) education appropriations bill.

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 that all students are engaged and academically challenged, provide safe and nurturing learning environments, and address students' social and 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 slanted style.

David Griffith
Senior Director of Government Relations

C: Members, Senate Subcommittee on Labor, Health and Human Services,
Education, and Related Agencies