

The Honorable Rodney Frelinghuysen  
U.S. House of Representatives  
Chairman  
House Appropriations Committee  
H-309 U.S. Capitol  
Washington, DC 20515-3011

The Honorable Tom Cole  
U.S. House of Representatives  
Chairman  
Subcommittee of Labor, HHS, Education  
and Related Agencies  
2358-B Rayburn House Office Building  
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Nita Lowey  
U.S. House of Representatives  
Ranking Member  
House Appropriations Committee  
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Rosa DeLauro  
U.S. House of Representatives  
Ranking Member  
Subcommittee of Labor, HHS, Education  
and Related Agencies  
Washington, DC 20515

June 19, 2017

Dear Representatives Frelinghuysen, Lowey, Cole, and DeLauro:

The undersigned organizations on behalf of the Title IV, A Coalition write to request that the Committee provide full funding for the Student Support and Academic Enrichment (SSAE) grant program, found under Title IV, Part A of the bipartisan Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA).

The SSAE grant program, authorized at \$1.6 billion for fiscal year 2018 (FY 2018), 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 has the potential to benefit millions of students by allowing districts to choose how to spend their dollars to support safe and healthy schools, well-rounded education, and the effective use of technology. The critical education programs meant to be supported by SSAE funds include: 1) safe and healthy students activities, such as providing mental health services to students; 2) increasing student access to STEM, computer science and accelerated learning courses, physical education, the arts, music, foreign languages, and college and career counseling; funds for an effective school library program; and, 3) providing students with access to technology and digital materials and educators with technology professional development opportunities.

We strongly urge Congress to fully fund the SSAE program in FY 2018, as the FY 2017 allocation of only \$400 million is wholly inadequate to provide the flexibility at the local level or to run the program as Congress intended. Funding this program at less than 25% of its authorized level in its first year has already presented serious implementation issues, including the need to allow states to allocate funds to districts competitively, contrary to what is authorized in ESSA. States electing to run a competition will incur significant burdens as they grapple with creating, initiating, and judging a competition. Altering the structure of the program in this manner also negates the Congressional

intent of increasing access to SSAE programs for all students and instead is likely to continue to benefit those districts already adept at winning competitive grants.

As a result of the low funding and the confusion around a competition, we are deeply concerned that many states might ignore the competitive option altogether and choose to allocate the money by formula for the sake of ease and fairness to all districts. While our groups ultimately want these dollars to go to every district, electing to distribute the money by formula at this low funding level has its own potentially negative consequences. For instance, many states or districts might choose to simply transfer the dollars for another purpose, as the amounts received by formula may simply not be enough to make meaningful investments in these areas, thereby leaving districts with no federal funds to support Title IVA's abovementioned activities.

In addition to the financial challenges of such a low funding level, the amount allocated for SSAE does 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 will 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.

On behalf of the millions of students, parents and educators that we collectively represent, we urge you to please appropriate full funding in FY 2018 for the Student Support and Academic Enrichment grant program under Title IV, A of ESSA and allow states and districts to make meaningful investments in programs that are critical to student success.

Sincerely,

**National Organizations and Companies**

AASA, The School Superintendents Association

Action for Healthy Kids (AFHK)

Advance CTE

AESA

Alliance for Excellent Education

American Association of School Librarians

American Council for School Social Work

American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages

American Counseling Association

American Dance Therapy Association

American Federation of School Administrators

American Heart Association

American Library Association

American Music Therapy Association

American Occupational Therapy Association

American School Counselor Association  
Apple  
ASCD  
Association of School Business Officials  
Blackboard Inc.  
Campaign for the Civic Mission of Schools  
Cengage Learning  
Chorus America  
Coalition for Community Schools  
Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning (CASEL)  
College in High School Alliance  
Committee for Children  
Communities In Schools  
CoSN  
Council of Administrators of Special Education  
D2L  
Edgenuity  
Facebook  
Futures Without Violence  
Girl Scouts of the USA  
Google  
In Reach, Inc.  
Intel  
International ACAC  
International Society for Technology in Education (ISTE)  
Jobs for the Future  
Learning Disabilities Association of America  
Little Kids Rock  
Matific USA  
McGraw-Hill Education  
Music for All, Inc.  
Music Teachers National Association  
MusicFirst  
NAMM  
National Alliance of Concurrent Enrollment Partnerships  
National Association for College Admission Counseling

National Association for Music Education (NAfME)  
National Association of Elementary School Principals (NAESP)  
National Association of School Nurses  
National Association of School Psychologists  
National Association of Secondary School Principals (NASSP)  
National Association of State Directors of Special Education (NASDSE)  
National Center for Learning Disabilities  
National Center for Technological Literacy at the Museum of Science, Boston  
National Council of Teachers of Mathematics  
National Interscholastic Athletic Administrators Assoc. (NIAAA)  
National PTA  
National Rural Education Association  
National Science Teachers Association  
National Summer Learning Association  
National Summer Learning Association  
Noodle Markets  
Organization of American Kodály Educators  
Organization of American Kodály Educators  
Phi Mu Alpha Sinfonia Fraternity of America  
Quadrant Research  
Recording Academy  
Safe Routes to School National Partnership  
School Social Work Association of America  
SETDA  
SHAPE America - Society of Health and Physical Educators  
Society for Public Health Education  
Software & Information Industry Association  
STEM Education Coalition  
STEM LA3–Girls Collaborative Project  
Students4STEM  
The Fitting Room Educational Media Corporation  
Trust for America's Health  
VH1 Save The Music Foundation

### **Regional Organizations**

**Alaska, Idaho, Montana, Oregon, & Washington**

Pacific Northwest Association of College Admission Counseling (PNACAC)

**Arizona, Colorado, New Mexico, Utah, and Wyoming**  
RMACAC

**California, Nevada**  
CUE  
Western Association of College Admission Counseling

**New England**  
New England Association of College Admissions Counselors

**Southern**  
Southern Association for College Admission Counseling (SACAC)

**State Organizations**

**Alabama**  
Alabama Educational Technology Association (AETA - ISTE Affiliate)

**Arizona**  
Arizona Association of School Psychologists  
CocoNuts FIRST Robotics Team

**California**  
CA Association of School Psychologists (CASP)  
California Association of School Psychologists  
California Association of School Psychologists  
California Educational Technology Professionals Association  
San Diego Association of School Psychologists  
The Joyful Child Foundation  
The Joyful Child Foundation  
Winters Joint Unified School District

**Colorado**  
Canon City School District Fremont RE-1  
Colorado Society of School Psychologists  
Garfield County School District 16  
Innovative Education Colorado (InnEdCO) (ISTE)  
Pikes Peak BOCES

**Connecticut**  
Connecticut Music Educators Association

**Delaware**

Delaware Association of School Psychologists (DASP)

**Florida**

Florida Association of School Psychologists

**Georgia**

Georgia Library Media Association

Georgia K-12 CTO Chapter of CoSN

**Hawaii**

Hawaii Music Educators Association

**Illinois**

Illinois Association for College Admission Counseling

Illinois Music Education Association

Illinois School Psychologist Association

**Indiana**

Indiana Connected Educators

Westfield Washington Schools

**Kentucky**

Kentucky Association for Psychology in the Schools

Kentucky Music Educators Association

**Louisiana**

LACUE (ISTE Affiliate)

Louisiana Association of Computer Using Educators

**Maine**

Maine Music Educators Association

**Maryland**

Kent County Public Schools

Maryland Society for Educational Technology (MSEA)

Team 449 The Blair Robot Project

**Massachusetts**

Massachusetts Music Educators Association (MMEA)

**Michigan**

Bionic Blackhawks - Team 2834

MACUL

Michigan Association for College Admission Counseling

Michigan Music Education Association

### **Mississippi**

Mississippi Foreign Language Association

### **Missouri**

Missouri Association of School Psychologists

### **Montana**

Montana Educational Technologists Association

JML Strategy–Montana Afterschool Alliance

Montana Education Partnership

### **Nebraska**

Nebraska School Psychologists Association

### **Nevada**

Nevada Association of School Psychologists (NVASP)

### **New Hampshire**

New Hampshire Music Educators Association

New Hampshire Society for Technology in Education (NHSTE)

NHCTO Council

School Administrative Unit #6

### **New Jersey**

FIRST Robotics Team 1676 - The Pascack Pi-oneers

New Jersey Association of School Psychologists

New Jersey Music Educators Association (NJMEA)

### **New Mexico**

Albuquerque Public Schools

Explora

### **New York**

FIRST Team 1511 - Rolling Thunder

New York State Association for Computers and Technologies in Education

New York State Association for Computers and Technologies in Education (NYSCATE)

New York State School Music Association

New York State Association for College Admission Counseling

### **North Carolina**

FIRST Team 2655, Inc., The Flying Platypi

North Carolina CoSN

### **North Dakota**

North Dakota Music Educator's Association

### **Ohio**

FRC 3324 Metrobots

Ohio Music Education Association

### **Oregon**

Oregon Music Education Association

Salem Keizer Education Foundation

### **Pennsylvania**

Association of School Psychologists of Pennsylvania

Marine Advanced Technology Education (MATE) PA

Parkland School District

Progressive Music

PAECT

### **Rhode Island**

Rhode Island Society for Technology in Education (RISTE)

### **South Dakota**

South Dakota Music Education Association

### **Tennessee**

TETA - Tennessee Educational Technology Association

### **Texas**

Texas K-12 CTO Council

### **Virginia**

Tunstall High School Robotics Boosters Club

Virginia Society for Technology in Education (VSTE)



**Washington**

Washington Music Educators Association

**West Virginia**

West Virginia Foreign Language Teachers Association (WVFLTA)

West Virginia Music Educators Association

**Wisconsin**

FIRST Wisconsin

Washington Music Educators Association (WMEA)

WEMTA Wisconsin Educational Media & Technology Association

Wisconsin Educational Technology Leaders (CoSN)

Wisconsin Music Educators Association

**Wyoming**

Wyoming School Psychology Association