

Hon. Roy Blunt  
Chairman  
Subcommittee on Labor HHS  
Education Appropriations  
Washington, DC 20510

Hon. Patty Murray  
Ranking Member  
Subcommittee on Labor HHS  
Education Appropriations  
Washington, DC 20510

March 17, 2016

Dear Chairman Blunt and Ranking Member Murray:

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, St. Louis City Schools in Missouri, which would receive \$2.694 million in FY17 if Title IVA receives full funding, would only receive \$539,000 should the President's budget proposal become law. Similarly, the Seattle School District in Washington faces the prospect of losing \$1.058 million 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 21<sup>st</sup> 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