February 19, 2019

Dear Speaker Pelosi, Leader McConnell, Democratic Leader Schumer, and Republican Leader McCarthy:

The undersigned organizations, representing parents, teachers, principals, and other educators, urge you to ensure an adequate funding level for education by raising the current budget caps on federal spending. Without raising the caps, many programs will face detrimental cuts or possible elimination, including the Supporting Effective Instruction State Grants Program, which provides school districts with critical funding to support professional development for teachers, principals, and other educators.

In 2015, when Congress passed the bipartisan Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA), it identified education as the foundation each child needs to achieve the American dream. Because research has shown that the most important in-school factors in student achievement are effective teachers and school leaders, ESSA includes the Supporting Effective Instruction State Grants program (Title II-A). Funded at $2.055 billion in each of the past two fiscal years, Title II-A supports state and school district efforts to recruit, prepare, mentor, and provide professional development for their teachers, principals, and other educators.

While we are pleased that Congress approved this level of funding in FY 2018 and FY 2019, we are mindful that the president has proposed eliminating this program’s funding in each of these past fiscal years. We believe that eliminating or cutting additional funding for this program would have a particularly acute impact on schools serving low-income and minority students—which often have higher concentrations of inexperienced teachers and school leaders—and would further exacerbate teacher and school leader shortages. Given the importance of this program to our nation’s education system, we hope that Congress will ensure that it will be placed on firm financial footing going forward. Therefore, as you begin conversations about the FY 2020 budget, we urge you to ensure that it raises both the defense and nondefense discretionary caps by the same dollar amount. All federal education programs, as well as other school-related services that support students, need to be at least level-funded at the FY 2019 levels.

Strong investments in Title II-A are critical to supporting teachers, school leaders, and other educators’ efforts to improve instruction, and they ensure that all students graduate high school poised for lifelong success. Ensuring that budget caps are raised and that the Labor, Health and Human Services, Education, and Related Agencies bill receives its proportional share—about one third—of any increase in discretionary funding will greatly aid this effort. Thank you for your leadership in this critical matter.

Sincerely,
National Organizations

AASA, The School Superintendents Association
Advance CTE
Afterschool Alliance
American Federation of School Administrators
ASCD
Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning (CASEL)
Committee for Children
Consortium for School Networking (CoSN)
Council for Exceptional Children
Council of Administrators of Special Education
EDGE Consulting LLC
Educators for Excellence
International Society for Technology in Education
Learning Disabilities Association of America
Learning Forward
National Association of Elementary School Principals
National Association of School Psychologists
National Association of Secondary School Principals
National Association of State Directors of Special Education
National Center for Learning Disabilities
National Council of Teachers of English
National Council of Teachers of Mathematics
National Forum to Accelerate Middle-Grades Reform
National PTA
National Science Teachers Association
National Writing Project
New Leaders
School Social Work Association of America
TASH
TESOL International Association
State and Local Organizations
Administrators Association of St. Louis Public Schools
Alabama ASCD
Alabama Association of Elementary School Administrators
Arizona ASCD
Arizona School Administrators
Association of California School Administrators
Association of Madison Administrators
Association of Washington School Principals
Association of Wisconsin School Administrators
Bethel Administrators Association
Boston Association of School Administrators
California ASCD
California Association of School Business Officials
Chicago Principals’ Association
City Association of Supervisors and Administrators
Colorado Association of Elementary School Principals
Colorado Association of School Executives
Connecticut Federation of School Administrators
Confederation of Oregon School Administrators
Council of School Supervisors and Administrators
Delaware Association of School Administrators
District of Columbia Association of Secondary School Principals
East Hampton School Administrators Association
Educadores Puertorriqueños en Acción, Inc.
Georgia Association of Elementary School Principals
Hartford Principals and Supervisor’s Association
Hawaii Association of Secondary School Administrators
Idaho Association of Elementary School Principals
Illinois ASCD
Illinois Principals’ Association
Indiana Association of School Principals
Kansas Association of Elementary School Principals
Kansas Association of Secondary School Principals
Learning Forward New Jersey
Learning Forward Ohio
Learning Forward Oklahoma
Learning Forward Virginia
Louisiana Association of Principals
Maryland Association of Elementary School Principals
Maryland Association of Secondary School Principals
Massachusetts ASCD
Massachusetts School Administrators’ Association
Michigan Elementary and Middle School Principals Association
Minnesota Elementary School Principals Association
Mississippi Association of Elementary School Administrators
Missouri Association of Elementary School Principals
New Hampshire ASCD
New Hampshire Association of School Principals
New Jersey Principals and Supervisors Association
North Carolina ASCD
North Carolina Principal and Assistant Principals’ Association
North Dakota Association of Elementary School Principals
North Dakota Association of School Administrators
North Dakota Association of Secondary School Principals
North Dakota Council of Educational Leaders
Norwich School Administrators Association
Ohio ASCD
Ohio Association of Elementary School Administrators
Ohio Association of Secondary School Administrators
Oklahoma Association of Elementary School Administrators
Oregon Association of Secondary School Principals
Pennsylvania Principals Association
Public School Administrators and Supervisors Association of Baltimore City
Rhode Island Association of School Principals
San Francisco Retirees
School Administrators Association of New Haven
School Administrators Association of New York State
School Administrators of Iowa
School Administrators of South Dakota
South Carolina Association of School Administrators
Southington Administrators Association
St. Thomas/St. John Educational Administrators’ Association
Taylor Principals Association
Texas Association of Secondary School Principals
Texas Elementary Principals and Supervisors Association
Union of Berkeley Administrators
United Administrators of Oakland Schools
Utah Association of Elementary School Principals
Utah Association of Secondary School Principals
Vermont Principals’ Association
West Virginia Association of Elementary and Middle School Principals
Wyoming Association of Elementary and Middle School Principals
Yonkers Council of Administrators