

The Honorable Mitch McConnell
Majority Leader
U.S. Senate
The Capitol, S-230
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Paul Ryan
Speaker
U.S. House of Representatives
The Capitol, H-232
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Charles Schumer
Democratic Leader
U.S. Senate
The Capitol, S-221
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Nancy Pelosi
Democratic Leader
U.S. House of Representatives
The Capitol, H-204
Washington, D.C. 20515

November 28, 2017

Dear Leader McConnell, Speaker Ryan, and Democratic Leaders Schumer and Pelosi:

Our organizations are deeply concerned about our nation's commitment to the education of its young people. We urge you to ensure an adequate funding level for education moving forward and to facilitate that investment by raising the budget caps on federal spending that are currently in place.

Federal education funding is an investment in the future of our nation. Our economic strength and vitality are dependent upon having a citizenry that is fully participating in our economy. Education is the path for each child to become a contributing member of our society.

In 2015, when Congress passed the bipartisan Every Student Succeeds Act, it recognized that the foundation each child needs to achieve the American dream is education. The current cuts to education are in direct conflict with the commitment Congress has made to our nation's youth, their teachers, parents, classified school employees and principals, and our world-renowned higher education system. In addition, as state budgets continue to be tightened—with 23 states being forced to make midyear cuts last year—states increasingly depend on Congress to stay committed to investing in elementary, secondary, postsecondary, and adult education.

We urge you to come together and craft a budget deal that raises both the defense and non-defense discretionary caps by the same dollar amount. Education programs, as well as other services that support the most vulnerable here at home, need to be at least level-funded at the Fiscal Year 2017 levels, and preferably higher.

In addition, we urge you to ensure that the additional funds from a budget deal are appropriately distributed. In particular, please work to ensure that the Labor, Health and Human Services, Education, and Related Agencies bill receives its proportional share—about one third—of any increase in non-defense discretionary funding.

Thank you for your leadership on this critical matter.

Sincerely,

AASA, The School Superintendents Association

Afterschool Alliance
Alliance for Excellent Education
American Association for Employment of Education
American Association of Colleges for Teacher Education
American Association of University Women
American Dance Therapy Association
American Federation of School Administrators
American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees
American Federation of Teachers
American Foundation for the Blind
American Music Therapy Association
American Occupational Therapy Association
American Psychological Association
Association of Educational Service Agencies
Association of Independent Liberal Arts Colleges for Teacher Education
Association of School Business Officials International
Association of Teacher Educators
Association of University Centers on Disabilities
Autism Society of America
Autistic Self Advocacy Network
Benjamin Banneker Association, Inc.
Center for American Progress
Code.org
Collaborative for Academic and Social and Emotional Learning
Committee for Children
Committee for Education Funding
Council for Christian Colleges & Universities
Council for Exceptional Children
Council of Academic Deans from Research Education Institutions
Council of Administrators in Special Education
Democrats for Education Reform
Generation Progress
GLSEN
Higher Ed, Not Debt!
Higher Education Consortium for Special Education
Hispanic Association of Colleges and Universities
International Literacy Association
Joint National Committee for Languages
Kappa Delta Pi
League of United Latin American Citizens
Learning Disabilities Association of America
Learning Forward
MENTOR: The National Mentoring Partnership
National Alliance on Mental Illness
National Association for Bilingual Education
National Association for College Admission Counseling
National Association for Family, School and Community Engagement
National Association for Music Education
National Association for the Education of Young Children
National Association of Councils on Developmental Disabilities
National Association of Secondary School Principals

National Association of Social Workers
National Association of State Directors of Special Education
National Black Justice Coalition
National Board for Professional Teaching Standards
National Center for Learning Disabilities
National Center for Special Education in Charter Schools
National Center for Youth Law
National Council for Languages and International Studies
National Council for the Social Studies
National Council of Jewish Women
National Council of State Directors of Adult Education
National Council of Teachers of English
National Council of Teachers of Mathematics
National Down Syndrome Congress
National Education Association
National Forum to Accelerate Middle-Grades Reform
National Indian Education Association
National PTA
National Rural Education Advocacy Consortium
National Rural Education Association
National Science Teachers Association
National Title I Association
National Writing Project
New Teacher Center
Partnership for America's Children
Public Advocacy for Kids
Rural School and Community Trust
School Social Work Association of America
Teach for America
Teacher Education Council of State Colleges and Universities
Teacher Education Division of the Council for Exceptional Children
Teaching Matters
TESOL International Association
The Arc of the United States