

June 6, 2016

The Honorable Roy Blunt  
Chairman  
Subcommittee on Labor, Health and Human  
Services and Education  
260 Russell Senate Office Building  
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Patty Murray  
Ranking Member  
Subcommittee on Labor, Health and Human  
Services and Education  
154 Russell Senate Office Building  
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Chairman Blunt and Ranking Member Murray:

The 83 undersigned national and state organizations write in support of robust funding for the Statewide Family Engagement Centers grant program and respectfully request no less than its authorized level of \$10 million—in the FY 2017 Labor, Health and Human Services, Education and Related Agencies (L-HHS-ED) appropriations bill.

The Statewide Family Engagement Centers (SFECs) grant program is one of the few non-categorical programs from No Child Left Behind (NCLB) that was maintained in the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA). Both the House of Representatives and the Senate recognized the importance of parent and family engagement in education by including the SFECs program as a standalone program in their respective reauthorization bills. Known as the Parental Information and Resource Centers (PIRCs) under NCLB, the improved SFECs program will build capacity for states and school districts to systematically embed family engagement policies and practices in their education plans. The SFEC program will provide much needed professional development for educators and school leaders to strengthen school-family partnerships and parent-teacher relationships. Additionally, SFECs will provide direct services to families to give them the tools to effectively work with their child's school to improve their child's academic outcomes and overall well-being.

Family engagement has always been, and continuous to be, a bipartisan issue in Congress. In March 2016, [22 Senators](#) and [38 Representatives](#) from both sides of the aisle signed a Dear Colleague letter in support of funding for Statewide Family Engagement Centers in FY 2017. With ESSA implementation underway, states, school districts, school leaders and parents need programs such as SFECs to engage parents as stakeholders and effectively implement the law as Congress intended.

Research shows that family engagement advances the academic and developmental progress of our nation's children and drives increases in student achievement. Our organizations believe that an investment in SFECs is critical to ensuring that families are meaningfully supported and engaged in their child's education so they can support our nation's students in becoming fully prepared for higher education and careers.

Thank you for your consideration of our request and we look forward to working with you to support this important program.

Sincerely,

National Organizations

American School Health Association  
Campaign for Youth Justice  
Coalition for Community Schools at the Institute for Education Leadership  
Council of Administrators of Special Education  
Council of Chief State School Officers  
Disability Rights Education & Defense Fund  
Heising-Simons Action Fund  
Home Instruction for Parents of Preschool Youngsters  
Learning Disabilities Association of America  
Magnet Schools of America  
National Association for Family, School and Community Engagement  
National Association of Elementary School Principals  
National Association of School Psychologists  
National Association of State Boards of Education  
National Association of State Directors of Special Education  
National Center for Learning Disabilities  
National Council of La Raza  
National Education Association  
National PTA  
PACER Center  
Parents as Teachers  
TESOL International Association  
United Way Worldwide

State Organizations

Alabama PTA  
Alaska PTA  
Arizona PTA  
Arkansas PTA  
California PTA  
Colorado PTA  
Colorado Statewide Parent Coalition  
Connecticut PTA  
Delaware PTA  
District of Columbia PTA  
Education Northwest (OR)  
European PTA

Fact Oregon  
Family Matters Parent Training & Information Center (IL)  
Family Resource Center on Disabilities (IL)  
Federation for Children with Special Needs (MA)  
Florida PTA  
Georgia PTA  
Hawaii PTA  
Idaho PTA  
Illinois PTA  
INCLUDEnyc (NY)  
Indiana PTA  
Indiana Resource Center for Families with Special Needs  
Kansas Parent Information Resource Center (KPIRC)  
Kansas Parent Training and Information Center  
Kansas PTA  
Kentucky PTA  
Kentucky Special Parent Involvement Network (KY-SPIN)  
Louisiana Parent Training & Information Center  
Louisiana PTA  
Maine PTA  
Maryland PTA  
Massachusetts PTA  
Michigan PTA  
Minnesota PTA  
Missouri PTA  
Montana PTA  
Nevada PTA  
New Hampshire PTA  
New Jersey PTA  
New York State PTA  
North Carolina PTA  
North Dakota PTA  
Ohio PTA  
Oklahoma PTA  
Oregon PTA  
Parent Educational Advocacy Training Center (VA)  
Parent to Parent of Miami  
Pennsylvania PTA  
Philadelphia HUNE Inc.  
Raising Special Kids (AZ)  
South Carolina PTA  
South Dakota Parent Connection  
Tennessee PTA  
Texas PTA

Virginia PTA  
Washington State PTA  
West Virginia PTA  
Wisconsin PTA