



March 28, 2014

U.S. House of Representatives  
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Member of Congress,

The undersigned education stakeholders represent the major K-12 organizations dedicated to improving public education in our nation. We ask that you sign the “Dear Colleague” letter being circulated by Reps. Marcia Fudge, Chris Van Hollen and Judy Chu, which asks the Committee on Appropriations to increase funding for Title I of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act in the Labor, Health and Human Services, Education, and Related Agencies appropriations bill for fiscal year 2015.

Investing in public education is not only one of the single most effective ways to help students succeed in an increasingly competitive global workplace, but also a way to help stabilize and grow the nation’s economy. Title I—the nation’s flagship education program—ensures that critical federal education dollars reach and support students with limited resources and provides additional educational supports for more than 1 million students who have disabilities. It is designed to ensure that students in greatest need master curricula and meet state standards.

Title I remains critically vital to the nation’s schools, as the percentage of low-income students in public schools continues to rise dramatically. In 2011, the percentage of students in public schools eligible for free or reduced-price lunch was 53 percent in the South, 50 percent in the West, 44 percent in the Midwest and 40 percent in the Northeast. Increased investment in our schools is a national issue. Despite this well-documented need, Title I funding remains below pre-sequestration levels—funded at \$14.38 billion in fiscal year 2014, well below recent calculations that estimate the cost to serve all eligible students at more than \$50 billion.

Budget recommendations and appropriations have shortchanged this critical K-12 education program for too many years. The effectiveness of Title I hinges on the availability of funding to ensure that high-quality teaching, curriculum materials, specialized instructional and other supports reach a critical mass of the target population. While we understand the interest in supporting other programs and proposals, our nation, its schools and the students they serve cannot afford to see the crucial programs supported under Title I placed on the back burner. It is time to reaffirm the federal government’s commitment to equity and excellence through a program that directly addresses the needs of the nation’s public schools and students.

We ask that you sign the “Dear Colleague” letter being circulated by Reps. Fudge, Van Hollen and Chu, to send a strong signal of support for Title I of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act. To sign, please contact Clifton Williams in Rep. Fudge’s office at [Clifton.williams@mail.house.gov](mailto:Clifton.williams@mail.house.gov) or 202-225-7032.

Sincerely,

AASA: The School Superintendents Association  
American Federation of Teachers  
American School Counselor Association  
Association of Educational Service Agencies  
Council for Exceptional Children  
Council of the Great City Schools  
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 Education Association  
National PTA  
National Rural Education Advocacy Coalition  
National Rural Education Association  
National School Boards Association  
National Title I Association