

October 10, 2019

The Honorable Roy Blunt
Chair, Appropriations Subcommittee on
Labor, HHS, Education & Related Agencies
U.S. Senate
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Patty Murray
Ranking Member, Appropriations
Subcommittee on Labor, HHS, Education
& Related Agencies
U.S. Senate
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Rosa DeLauro
Chair, Appropriations Subcommittee on
Labor, HHS, Education & Related Agencies
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Tom Cole
Ranking Member, Appropriations
Subcommittee
on Labor, HHS, Education & Related Agen
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairman Blunt, Ranking Member Murray, Chairwoman DeLauro and Ranking Member Cole:

As you work to finalize funding levels for Fiscal Year (FY) 2020 within the Labor, Health and Human Services, Education and Related Agencies (Labor-H) appropriations bill, the 131 undersigned organizations urge you to adopt the House-passed level of \$15 million for the Statewide Family Engagement Centers (SFECs) grant program.

Research shows that family engagement advances the academic and developmental progress of children and drives student achievement. The SFECs program builds capacity for states and school districts to systematically embed family engagement policies and practices in their education plans. It provides states, school districts, school leaders and parents the professional development, skills and resources to effectively engage families as critical stakeholders to in student success and school improvement.

SFECs are engaging families in thirteen states, thanks to the initial investments of \$10 million in FYs 2018 and 2019. A \$5 million increase would enable the Department to fund additional states, expanding access to high-quality, evidence-based systemic family engagement to some of the 41.7 million K-12 students and their families who are currently unable to benefit from enhanced engagement supports and services provided by SFECs. The increased appropriation will also address a funding shortfall for existing grantees, which was caused by a Department of Education internal error. At a minimum, failing to provide sufficient funding to cover this shortfall in FY 2020 will shortchange all existing grantees.

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, workforce and career opportunities in the 21st century.

We very much appreciate the Subcommittees' leadership in funding this program and bringing attention to the existing shortfall through the FY 2020 appropriations process. Thank you for considering our request to ensure this important program receives \$15 million in FY 2020.

Sincerely,

National Organizations

Advocates for Justice and Education
African American Ministers In Action
African Caribbean American Parents of Children with Disabilities, Inc.
Afterschool Alliance
American Counseling Association
American Federation of School Administrators
ASPIRA Association, Inc.
Association of Educational Service Agencies (AESA)
City Year
Community Inclusion & Development Alliance
Council for Exceptional Children
Council of Administrators of Special Education (CASE)
Disability Rights Education & Defense Fund
Easterseals
EDGE Consulting LLC
Family Resource Center for Disabilities & Special Needs/Parent Training & Resource Center
First Focus Campaign for Children
Futures Without Violence
Healthy Teen Network
Home Instruction for Parents of Preschool Youngsters (HIPPY)
Institute for Educational Leadership
Justice For Families
Lawyers' Committee for Civil Rights Under Law
Learning Disabilities Association of America
NAACP
National Association for Family, School and Community Engagement (NAFSCE)
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 (NASDSE)
National Center for Families Learning
National Center for Learning Disabilities
National Center for Parent Leadership, Advocacy, and Community Empowerment (National PLACE)
National Council for Community and Education Partnerships
National Council of Teachers of Mathematics (NCTM)

National Disability Rights Network
National Education Association
National Military Family Association
National Organization for Women
National PTA
Network for Public Education
NW Disability Support
PACER Center
Parent Educational Advocacy Training Center (PEATC)
Parents as Teachers
Parents Helping Parents
PEAL Center
Pyramid Community Parent Resource Center
Sandy Hook Promise
SchoolHouse Connection
SPAN Parent Advocacy Network
Stone Soup Group
TASH
Teach Plus
The Advocacy Institute
The Arc of the United States
THRIVE Center

State Organizations

Alabama PTA
Alaska Parent Teacher Association
Arizona PTA
Arkansas PTA
California State PTA
Center for Family Involvement (Virginia)
Center on Disability Studies at University of Hawaii-Manoa (Hawaii)
Colorado PTA
Connecticut PTA
Delaware PTA
European PTA
Families Helping Families of Greater New Orleans
Family Resource Center on Disabilities (Illinois)
Families Together, Inc. (Kansas)
Family Voices NJ
Florida PTA
Georgia PTA
Hawaii State PTSA
Idaho PTA
Illinois PTA

IN*SOURCE (Indiana)
Indiana PTA
Iowa PTA
Kansas PTA
Kentucky State PTA
Leadership in Disabilities & Achievement of Hawaii
LINKS Mat-Su Parent Resource Center (Arkansas)
Louisiana State Parent Teacher Association
Maine Parent Federation
Maine PTA
Maryland PTA
Massachusetts PTA
Michigan PTA
Minnesota PTA
Mississippi PTA
Missouri Congress of Parents and Teachers
Nebraska PTA
Nevada PTA
New Jersey PTA
New Mexico PTA
New York State PTA
North Carolina PTA
North Dakota PTA
Ohio PTA
Oklahoma PTA
Oregon PTA
Parent Information Center of Delaware
Parent to Parent of Georgia
Parent to Parent of Miami
Pennsylvania Congress of Parents & Teachers, Inc
PTI Nebraska
Utah PTA
Puerto Rico PTA
Rhode Island Parent Information Network
Rhode Island PTA
South Carolina PTA
South Dakota Parent Connection
South Dakota PTA
Southwest Human Development (Arizona)
SPAN Parent Advocacy Network (New Jersey)
State Education Resource Center (Connecticut)
STEP, Inc. (Pennsylvania)
Tennessee PTA
Texas PTA

The Parents' Place of MD

Vermont Family Network

Vermont PTA

Virginia PTA

Washington State PTA

West Virginia Parent Teacher Association

Wisconsin Family Assistance Center for Education Training and Support

Wisconsin PTA

Wyoming PTA