

Senator Patrick Leahy
Chairman
U.S. Senate Appropriations Committee
437 Russell Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

Senator Richard Shelby
Vice Chairman
U.S. Senate Appropriations Committee
304 Russell Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

Representative Rosa DeLauro
Chair
U.S. House Appropriations Committee
2413 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Representative Kay Granger
Ranking Member
U.S. House Appropriations Committee
1026 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

December 1, 2022

**National PTA Calls on Congress to Support Federal Investments
in Key Programs that Serve Our Nation's Children & Families**

Dear Chairman Leahy, Vice Chairman Shelby, Chair DeLauro, & Ranking Member Granger:

On behalf of National PTA and our millions of members nationwide, we would like to submit the following federal funding requests for the year-end omnibus appropriations package for Fiscal Year 2023 (FY23). As the oldest and largest child advocacy association in America, we know that federal investments are critical to ensuring the educational success, health, and well-being of all children in our country.

In particular, we urge you to invest in our children and families by ensuring that key child nutrition provisions are included within the omnibus package, consistent with the Healthy Meals, Healthy Kids Act (H.R. 8450), including:

- **Establishing permanent, nationwide Medicaid direct certification**, streamlining the process by allowing a family to qualify for free school meals if they already participate in Medicaid;
- **Expanding eligibility of the Women, Infants and Children (WIC) Program** to cover children up to age 6;
- **Establishing a permanent Summer Electronic Benefit Transfer (EBT) program** that would offer \$75 per month per child to help cover the cost of food over the summer months when children lose access to free or reduced-price school meals; and
- **Providing all states with the option to opt into statewide community eligibility**, lowering the eligibility threshold from 40% identified students to 25% identified students, and raising the multiplier for federal reimbursement from 1.6 to 2.5.

The academic recovery needs of our nation's students is too great right now for families and educators alike to worry if our students are even ready to learn. Millions of families rely on federal child nutrition programs, and our association supports any efforts that will help end child hunger, support our nation's families, and improve the mental and physical health of our nation's youth. As our nation recovers from the COVID-19 pandemic and in the face of rising costs of groceries and fresh food, families simply cannot wait any longer for Congress to act.

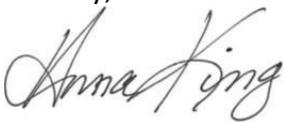
We also strongly urge you to provide in the Labor, Health and Human Services, Education, and Related Agencies Appropriations bills for FY23 at least:

- \$20 million for the **Statewide Family Engagement Centers grant program**ⁱ and \$45 million for the **Parent Information Centers program** to foster meaningful parent and family engagement in their children's educationⁱⁱ
- \$16.2 billion for the **Individuals with Disabilities Education Act** Part B, putting IDEA on a glidepath to full funding and support our nation's students with disabilitiesⁱⁱⁱ
- \$36.5 billion for **Title I of the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA)** to provide all students, especially those living in low-income households with the support needed to succeed
- \$3 billion for the **Title II, Part A, the Supporting Effective Instruction State Grants program**, to invest in retaining and recruiting teachers, principals, and other school leaders, as well as improving their practice^{iv}
- \$2 billion for **Title IV-A, the Student Support & Academic Enrichment grant program** under Title IV-A of ESSA to provide all students access to a well-rounded education^v
- \$1 billion for **school-based mental health supports and services**, including School Based Mental Health Services Professionals & School Based Mental Health Services programs^{vi}
- Robust funding for the **Project AWARE grant program**, including \$25 million for **Section 7134** grants to provide mental health education and training to students and school personnel and prevent youth suicide and violence^{vii}
- \$30 million to support a federally funded five-year grant program to launch, implement, and evaluate new or existing **Foster Youth Education programs**^{viii}
- \$8.3 million for the **Interagency Task Force on Trauma-Informed Care** through the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration

Additionally, we request that no public money be diverted to funding any private school voucher programs, including the District of Columbia private school voucher program. Unfortunately, private school choice systems have detrimental effects on our public school systems, and public dollars must remain invested in public schools for the benefit of all students and the future of our nation.

PTA has long advocated to ensure children have access to adequately funded public schools that improve their overall well-being and allow students to reach their fullest potential. Through meaningful investments which support states, districts and schools, the federal government plays a critical role in ensuring a high quality public education for every student. We strongly urge you to champion federal investments that serve our nation's children and families, consistent with the recommendations described above. Thank you for your consideration, and please feel free to contact our Director of Government Affairs, Kate Clabaugh, at kclabaugh@pta.org if you have any questions. We look forward to working with you to make every child's potential a reality.

Sincerely,



Anna King
President
National PTA



Nathan R. Monell, CAE
Executive Director
National PTA

ⁱ For more information on this request, see www.pta.org/docs/default-source/files/advocacy/2021-letters-to-policy-makers/sfec-letter-fy23.pdf

ⁱⁱ For more information on this request, see <https://www.pta.org/docs/default-source/files/advocacy/2022/appropriations-for-fiscal-year-2023/april-25-2022---national-pta-joins-letter-urging-congress-to-adopt-the-highest-proposed-levels-for-the-federal-investment-in-programs-that-support-infants-toddlers-children-and-youth-with-disabilities-and-their-families.pdf>

ⁱⁱⁱ For more information on this request, see www.pta.org/docs/default-source/files/advocacy/2022/appropriations-for-fiscal-year-2023/april-25-2022---national-pta-joins-letter-urging-congress-to-provide-the-maximum-increase-possible-in-funding-for-idea.pdf

^{iv} For more information on this request, see <https://www.pta.org/docs/default-source/files/advocacy/2021-letters-to-policy-makers/fy23-title-ii-a-ed-organization-sign-on-letter.pdf>

^v For more information on this request, see <https://www.pta.org/docs/default-source/files/advocacy/2022/appropriations-for-fiscal-year-2023/april-26-2022---national-pta-joins-nearly-100-national-state-and-local-organizations-in-letter-urging-congress-to-fund-title-iv-part-a-of-the-every-student-succeeds-act.pdf>

^{vi} For more information on this request, see [https://www.pta.org/docs/default-source/files/advocacy/2022/appropriations-for-fiscal-year-2023/april-28-2022---national-pta-joins-letter-calling-for-funding-to-address-the-severe-shortages-of-school-based-mental-health-professionals-\(e-g-school-psychologists-school-counselors-and-school-social-workers\).pdf](https://www.pta.org/docs/default-source/files/advocacy/2022/appropriations-for-fiscal-year-2023/april-28-2022---national-pta-joins-letter-calling-for-funding-to-address-the-severe-shortages-of-school-based-mental-health-professionals-(e-g-school-psychologists-school-counselors-and-school-social-workers).pdf) and <https://www.pta.org/docs/default-source/files/advocacy/2021-letters-to-policy-makers/april-21-2022---national-pta-joins-letter-calling-for-funding-to-support-mental-health-professionals-and-trauma-informed-practices-in-our-nation-s-schools.pdf>

^{vii} For more information on this request, see <https://www.pta.org/docs/default-source/files/advocacy/2022/appropriations-for-fiscal-year-2023/april-25-2022---national-pta-joins-letter-urging-congress-to-invest-in-programs-that-prevent-and-address-childhood-trauma.pdf>

^{viii} For more information on this request, see <https://www.pta.org/docs/default-source/files/advocacy/2021-letters-to-policy-makers/fye-program-letter-of-support-house-senate--april-22-2022.pdf>