

Broad coalition of groups release statement on President Obama's FY 17 funding request for Title IV of ESSA
Urge Congress to adequately fund Title IV, Part A

Washington D.C. — February 16, 2016

On behalf of the organizations listed below, we offer the following response to President Obama's proposed funding level for the Student Support & Academic Enhancement Grants (Title IV, Part A of the Every Student Succeeds Act, ESSA) in his proposed FY17 budget:

"We applaud President Obama for his overall strong support for education in his FY17 budget proposal.

We are disappointed, however, that the President's budget only includes \$500 million for the Student Support & Academic Enhancement Grant program (ESSA, Title IV, Part A). Title IV, Part A represents a significant consolidation of previous programs, and this proposal is less than one-third of ESSA's \$1.65 billion authorization level. Indeed, we contend that the President's Title IV, Part A funding request fails to adequately reflect the importance that Congress attached to this program when it made it the third largest authorized program in ESSA.

We are also concerned that this funding proposal represents short-sighted policy: it will undermine the long-term success of Title IV because the amount proposed in the President's budget will not allow states and districts to make meaningful investments in a range of programs that will help students receive a well-rounded education, improve the conditions for student learning, and invest in educational technology.

Finally, we believe that such a low funding level will actually limit schools' flexible use of Title IV program funds. The reauthorized structure of Title IV in ESSA was a strongly bipartisan proposal, garnering the support of Republicans and Democrats alike, a proposal that President Obama himself signed into law. Part of its appeal was Title IV, Part A, which provides schools a bold opportunity to use the flexibility provided in the law to do critical, innovative work. Flexibility can only go so far in supporting school districts to stretch limited dollars, and a prohibitively low budget request like this one sets the stage for an overall funding level that not only mitigates flexibility, but is in direct conflict with Congressional intent.

In addition to our concern with the low funding level, we oppose the requested appropriations language that would allow states to limit or target the allowable uses in Title IV, Part A. By more adequately funding Title IV, Part A, Congress can eliminate the perceived need for this prescriptive language and can instead provide a funding level that more closely aligns with the spirit of the legislation."

Organizations Represented

AASA, The School Superintendents Association
Afterschool Alliance
Alliance for Excellent Education
American Art Therapy Association
American Association of University Women
American Council for School Social Work

American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages
American Counseling Association
American Dance Therapy Association
American Music Therapy Association
American School Counselor Association
ASCD
Association of Educational Service Agencies
Association of School Business Officials International
Clearinghouse on Women's Issues
Coalition for Community Schools
Collaborative for Academic and Social and Emotional Learning (CASEL)
College Board
Committee for Children
Consortium for School Networking
Essilor Vision Foundation
Futures Without Violence
HealthCorps
Healthy Schools Campaign
Interactive Health Technologies
International Society for Technology in Education
K-12, Inc
Lions Clubs International
MENTOR: The National Mentoring Partnership
National Association for College Admission Counseling
National Association *for* Music Education
National Association of Elementary School Principals
National Association of Pupil Services Administrators
National Association of School Nurses
National Association of School Psychologists
National Association of Secondary School Principals
National Council for Languages and International Studies
National PTA
National Rural Education Advocacy Coalition
National Rural Education Association
Partnership for 21st Century Learning
Safe Routes to School National Partnership
School Social Work Association of America
SHAPE America - Society of Health and Physical Educators
State Education Technology Directors Association
U.S. Soccer Foundation