

## 2019 Education Priority Issues for Congressional Office Visits

- **Significantly Increase Funding for Key ESSA and IDEA Formula Grants as Congress Considers FY 2020 Spending Priorities and Ensure the Congressional Budget Cap for Domestic Programs is not Shortchanged.**
  - **Title I:** Additional Title I funding in FY 2020 is needed to implement the new accountability, school-level interventions, and data and reporting provisions required under ESSA. The \$100 million (0.6%) increase in Title I appropriations this year does not even keep pace with inflation (1.9% for 2018). The Department of Education estimates that over half of the nation's Title I-eligible school districts will have their Title I funding allocation cut for the upcoming school year.
  - **Title II:** Oppose the cuts to Title II funding proposed by the White House. This funding is vital for recruiting, retaining, and training a high-caliber teaching force, particularly since many cities pay for teacher coaching and for teacher salaries in class-size reduction programs with Title II funds.
  - **IDEA and EL (Title III):** ESSA retained – and expanded – the required subgroup accountability interventions beyond earlier requirements of NCLB. More schools, including non-Title I schools, are now being identified under ESSA for targeted interventions, particularly for students with disabilities and English learners. Funding increases in IDEA and ESEA Title III programs for these traditionally under-performing subgroups of students remains a major priority.
  - **Title IV:** The new Title IV Student Support and Academic Enrichment grant consolidates previous programs for school safety, technology, advanced placement tests, and support services through poverty-based formula funding of school districts. Oppose the cuts to Title IV proposed by the White House, as adequate funding is needed to ensure districts have predictable, annual funding available for a variety of services including counseling and mental health services and school safety measures.
- **Support the Inclusion of School Facilities in Any Federal Infrastructure Legislation.** Federal investment in our nation's infrastructure must not ignore the needs of urban school districts for modernizing and maintaining our aging and often outdated school buildings. Federal support for school districts in building, renovating, and improving school facilities will help modernize our classrooms, increase the security of our schools, provide learning benefits for our students, and create a wide variety of skilled jobs in our local communities. The Rebuild America's Schools Act (H.R. 865) provides for \$70 billion in school facilities grants and \$30 billion in tax-subsidized school infrastructure bonds over a ten-year period under the joint jurisdiction in the House of the Education and Labor Committee and the Ways and Means Committee. Targeting infrastructure assistance to high poverty school districts is essential.
- **Approve a DACA Fix Immediately.** Multiple bills addressing the legal status of Dreamers were introduced in the 115th Congress – including the bipartisan DREAM Act and the Republican SUCCEED Act – that would create ways for eligible Dreamers to apply for citizenship. An updated DREAM Act is expected to be introduced in March and may also include individuals with Temporary Protected Status. Urgent action is needed to find a solution for the hundreds of thousands of students, family members, and teachers in our communities who want to live, study, work and contribute in the United States.
- **Oppose Private School Vouchers, Demonstration Programs, or Grants.** Underscore your unequivocal opposition to any legislative subsidy or funding proposal that would support private school tuition, including vouchers, private choice demonstrations, education savings accounts, and the Administration's new Education Freedom Scholarship tax credits. Depriving public schools of any public funding or any public revenue sources – whether at the federal, state or local level – will undercut the financial integrity of public education in the nation.
- **Adopt Meaningful School Safety and Gun Violence Legislation to Protect Our Students.** The current piecemeal legislative initiatives do not provide school districts with the support they need to maintain a safe and secure learning environment for the students we serve. Urban schools call on Congress to pass comprehensive federal legislation that bans assault weapons, requires universal background checks, provides substantial funding for school safety measures, supports more mental health and counseling services in schools, and reform the collection of data on gun violence.