

April 29, 2021

The Honorable Rosa DeLauro  
Chairwoman  
Subcommittee on Labor, Health, and  
Human Services, and Education  
Appropriations Committee

The Honorable Tom Cole  
Ranking Member  
Subcommittee on Labor, Health, and  
Human Services, and Education House  
House Appropriations Committee

The Honorable Patty Murray  
Chairwoman  
Subcommittee on Labor, Health and  
Human Services, and Education  
Appropriations Committee

The Honorable Roy Blunt  
Ranking Member  
Subcommittee on Labor, Health, and  
Human Services, and Education Senate  
Senate Appropriations Committee

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

As you develop the Fiscal Year (FY) 2022 appropriations bill for the U.S. Departments of Labor, Health and Human Services, and Education, **the undersigned organizations encourage you to significantly increase funding for the Full-Service Community Schools Program (Title IV Part F of the Every Student Succeeds Act) to match President Biden's 2022 budget request of \$443 million.** Community schools is a critical strategy to help schools and communities recover and stabilize from the ongoing effects of the pandemic, and an effective strategy of a whole-child approach to public education that is necessary now more than ever.

The pandemic has shown how critical effective coordination of school-family-community partnerships are to supporting students' and families' basic needs, student re-engagement, and learning both during crises like the pandemic and beyond. Pre-pandemic there were over 40,000 Title I schools with concentrations of students in poverty who would significantly benefit from the coordinated and enhanced supports and enrichment that community schools provide. Yet, the program's current level of \$30 million was only able to fund 18 new grantees in 2020, which is a drop in the bucket compared to the needs and demand for the strategy that we are seeing across the country coming through the pandemic.

Research and evaluations show community schools are an effective, [evidence-based strategy for school improvement](#) and we can [point to](#) several examples of the power of community schools to transform high-poverty, low-performing schools into thriving schools including a recent [RAND study of NYC's community schools](#). They are also a smart investment: the coordination of resources at both the school and system levels translates to [a return on investment](#) of over \$7 for every \$1 invested in a Coordinator's salary.

Throughout the pandemic, community schools were able to mobilize quickly and effectively to support the social, emotional, physical, and learning needs of students and their families. Community schools are demonstrating, from [Florida and North Carolina](#) to [New York](#) and elsewhere, how their strong relationships, relational trust, agility, and coordination are helping schools and their communities better respond to and recover from the pandemic. At Ganesha High School in Pomona, CA, when one student's mother died from Covid and their father was on a ventilator, staff and community partners of this community school [dropped off groceries and connected the family to counseling](#), and mobilized emergency aid to address the hospital bills so the family could stay in their home. Similarly, in Washington's Renton school district, when a single parent of three needed emotional and parenting

support, the community school's coordinator [mobilized a "wraparound team" for the mother](#) involving herself, a school counselor, and a therapist to provide parenting sessions, therapy, and general wellness check-ins that has enabled this parent to better support herself and her children. Significantly increasing funding for the Full-Service Community Schools program would enable hundreds more communities to coordinate the assets of their schools, families, and community partners for students' immediate and long-term success.

President Biden recognized this critical role of Community Schools in his FY 2022 budget request, calling for \$443 million for the program in contrast to its current level of \$30 million. Similarly, Congress has highlighted Community Schools as an effective strategy in the past few months: first through federal legislation -the Full-Service Community Schools Expansion Act (S. 385/H.R. 1241)- that calls for \$500 million for the program and increasing to \$1 billion by 2025; and through reference in the American Rescue Plan of community schools as an allowable use of funds for school districts for mental health services.

**We support the President's budget request of \$443 million for FY 2022 and request that you match this amount for the program in the FY 2022 appropriations process.** The Full-Service Community Schools Expansion Act noted above provides an effective path and structure for this increased investment and this level of funding would also help to meet the need and demand for the program from communities across the country.

We thank you for your continued support of Community Schools in your states and in general, and for your continued advocacy for children and families. We look forward to working with you to ensure all students are supported by their schools and communities working together to help them achieve success during and beyond their time in public education.

Sincerely,

### **National Organizations**

Alliance for Strong Families and Communities  
American Federation of Teachers  
Boston College Center for Optimized Student Support  
Boys & Girls Clubs of America  
Center For Popular Democracy  
Center for Youth & Community Leadership in Education (CYCLE) at Roger Williams University  
City Year Inc.  
Coalition for Community Schools  
Collaborative for Academic, Social and Emotional Learning (CASEL)  
Communities In Schools National Office  
Council on Accreditation  
Education Redesign Lab, Harvard  
First Focus on Children  
Forum for Youth Investment  
GLSEN  
Healthy Schools Campaign  
Institute for Educational Leadership

In The Public Interest

Journey for Justice Alliance

National Association for Family, School and Community Engagement (NAFSCE)

National Association of Counsel for Children

National Association of Elementary School Principals

National Association of School Nurses

National Association of School Psychologists

National Association of Secondary School Principals

National Association of State Directors of Special Education (NASDSE)

National Center for Community Schools

National Center for Youth Law

National Children's Campaign

National Urban League

National Youth Advocate Program, Inc.

NEA Foundation

Netter Center

Nexus Family Healing

One Hope United

Organizations Concerned About Rural Education

Prepared To Teach, Bank Street College of Education

Public Advocacy for Kids (PAK)

Rural School and Community Trust

School Culture and Climate Initiative

Schott Foundation for Public Education

Southern Education Foundation

Structured Solutions Educational Consulting, LLC

Student Voice

Teach Plus

Teacher-Powered Schools

YMCA of the USA

## **State Organizations**

Abbott Leadership Institute

AFT MA, President

Alliance for Quality Education

AR Hunger Relief Alliance

Arkansas Coalition for Community Schools

Arkansas United Alas/wings program

California AfterSchool Network

Center for the Education and Study of Diverse Populations

Children & Families First

Children's Home Society of Florida

Citizens' Committee for Children of NY

Communities In Schools of Pennsylvania

Communities In Schools of Tennessee  
Communities In Schools of Virginia  
Dual Language Education of New Mexico  
Excel by Eight  
Florida State University College of Medicine  
ForwARd Arkansas  
HawaiiKidsCAN  
Idaho Coalition for Community Schools  
Illinois Federation of Teachers  
Indiana Community Schools Network  
Latino Institute, Inc.  
Los Angeles Education Partnership  
Maryland Coalition for Community Schools  
Maryland Out of School Time Network  
Massachusetts Advocates for Children  
New Jersey Education Association  
NJ Association of School Administrators  
NJ Community Schools Coalition  
NYS Network for Youth Success, Inc.  
Public Advocates  
Rural Community Alliance  
Rural Schools Assn of NYS  
Save Our Schools NJ Community Organizing  
Starr Commonwealth  
Teach Plus Massachusetts  
Tennessee Community Schools State Network  
Texas American Federation of Teachers  
The Wei LLC

### **Local Organizations**

ABC Community School Partnership, NM  
Achievement Plus Initiative, Amherst H. Wilder Foundation,  
MN  
Batavia City School District, NY  
Batesville School District, AR  
Binghamton University Community Schools, NY  
Civic Nebraska  
Communities In Schools of Eastern PA  
Communities in Schools of Milledgeville/Baldwin County  
Communities In Schools of Renton-Tukwila  
Communities in Schools of the Twin Cities  
Cradle 2 Career, Rochester, MN  
Family Service Lincoln NE  
Greater Gallatin United Way, MT

Horseshoe Bend School District, ID  
Indianapolis Coalition for Community School Partnerships  
Irvington NAACP  
Kent School Services Network, MI  
Knox Education Foundation, TN  
Lincoln Community Foundation, NE  
Little Rock School District, AR  
Malone Center, NE  
MCCOY (Marion County Commission on Youth, Inc.), IN  
Mercer Street Friends, NJ  
Metro Nashville Public Schools/Community Achieves  
National Network of Beacons  
Northside Neighborhood House, TN  
Pathways to Prosperity, Inc., FL  
Paterson Education Foundation, Inc.  
Rochester Public Schools  
South Bend Community School Corporation  
United Federation of Teachers / United Community Schools  
United Way of Greater Toledo  
United Way of Treasure Valley  
United Way for Greater Austin  
United Way for Southeastern Michigan  
United Way of Asheville and Buncombe County  
United Way of Buffalo and Erie County  
United Way of Central Iowa  
United Way of Erie County  
United Way of Greater Milwaukee & Waukesha County  
United Way of Mason County  
United Way of New York City  
United Way of Northern Utah & Ogden City School District  
United Way of Olmsted County  
United Way of Racine County  
United Way of the Greater Lehigh Valley  
United Way of the National Capital Area  
Willard Community Center, NE  
YMCA of Greater Erie  
Youth & Family Services Division, Multnomah County, Oregon  
Young Audiences New York  
Zone 126, NY