



September 5, 2023

The Honorable Tammy Baldwin
Chairwoman, Appropriations Subcommittee on
Labor, HHS, Education & Related Agencies
U.S. Senate
Washington, DC 20510

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

The Honorable Robert Aderholt
Chairman, Appropriations Subcommittee on
Labor, HHS, Education & Related Agencies
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

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

CC: Members of Congress

Dear Chairwoman Baldwin, Ranking Member Capito, Chairman Aderholt, Ranking Member DeLauro, and members of Congress:

The National Association of Secondary School Principals (NASSP) and the undersigned state school leader associations, who together represent thousands of administrators across the country, are writing to express our strong opposition to the House of Representatives' FY 2024 appropriations proposal that would slash funding for K–12 schools in FY 2024 appropriations. We urge members of Congress to prioritize our children's education and increase investment in key Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) programs that have proof of impact on student outcomes, well-being, and achievement.

NASSP is the leading organization of and voice for middle level principals, high school principals, and other school leaders across the United States. Reflecting its long-standing commitment to student leadership development, NASSP also administers the National Honor Society, National Junior Honor Society, National Elementary Honor Society, and National Student Council, programs that would be tragically and negatively impacted by such devastating cuts. The associations below also act on behalf of thousands of K–12 school leaders throughout their states.

The FY 2024 funding proposal put forward by the House Appropriations Subcommittee on Labor, HHS, Education and Related Agencies calls for an astounding 28% overall cut to federal education funding, and within that number, essential ESSA programs face even more drastic reductions. **Title I**, which supports schools serving low-income areas and our students and families with the greatest need, would receive an 80% reduction. Independent analysis shows that it could force a staggering nationwide reduction of 220,000 teachers from schools serving low-income students. At a time of immense and growing educator shortages across the country, that is something our students' education and families cannot afford.

Funding for **Title II-A**, which supports key professional development for teachers and school leaders, as well as recruitment and retention efforts that address the widespread educator shortage crisis, are completely eliminated in the House proposal. [NASSP's 2022 national survey](#) found that 38% of school leaders are looking to leave within the next three years and 73% of school leaders believe staffing shortages are a problem at their school. Title II is one of our best tools to staff our schools with excellent educators, bolstering the infrastructure districts rely on to recruit high-quality educators and provide them

with job-embedded practice, mentoring, and coaching opportunities that sustain them in their careers. Other recent research shows such support leads to a higher rate of retention, which is critical to addressing educator shortages. An important [study from the Economic Policy Institute](#) found that high-quality professional learning and teacher retention are strongly correlated: on average, teachers with no professional development in a school year showed only a 60% chance of retention, while teachers with over 20 hours of professional development demonstrated an 85% chance of retention. Title II is already severely underfunded, and demand for the services it provides has only increased. A larger investment in the program will help accelerate student learning, provide support through professional learning to keep educators in the profession, and recruit new individuals into the educator workforce.

Title IV-A is another key ESSA program that we strongly urge Congress to appropriate increased funding for in FY 2024. As students continue to grapple with mental health challenges exacerbated by the pandemic, Title IV has become a key source of funding for school mental health personnel and programs. More broadly, the program ensures districts can provide an array of services and learning opportunities that support the whole child and contribute to academic success. As a formula-based program focused on the flexible, locally determined use of funds, the grant is well suited to ensuring that a large number of diverse districts have resources they can direct in a manner that best addresses their specific needs.

Our country is facing an education crisis—teachers and school leaders are leaving the profession in higher and higher numbers, while the number of new educators entering the profession is waning. Education is the national workforce. It is the economic and competitive driver of this nation and of every city and community. Cutting and eliminating these programs, which in essence eliminates their proper intention and functionality, sends a clear message that a highly qualified workforce is not necessary. Congress should be increasing support for programs that support students, educators, and college and career readiness. On behalf of all the school leaders and students that our organizations and Congress serve, we implore you to prioritize these programs as you continue to work towards a final FY 2024 funding agreement.

Sincerely,

National Association of Secondary School Principals (NASSP)

Alabama Association of Secondary School Principals

CLAS, the Council for Leaders in Alabama Schools

Alaska Association of Secondary School Principals

Arizona School Administrators

Arkansas Association of Educational Administrators

Association of California School Administrators

Connecticut Association of Schools

Delaware Association of School Administrators

Florida Association of School Administrators

Georgia Association of Secondary School Principals

Hawaii Association of Secondary School Administrators

Idaho Association of School Administrators

Illinois Principals Association

Indiana Association of School Principals

Kansas Principals Association

Maine Principals' Association

Maryland Association of Secondary School Principals

Massachusetts School Administrators Association
The Michigan Association of Secondary School Principals
Minnesota Association of Secondary School Principals
Missouri Association of Secondary School Principals
School Administrators of Montana
Nebraska State Association of Secondary School Principals
Nevada Association of School Administrators
New Hampshire Association of School Principals
NJ Principals and Supervisors Association
New Mexico Association of Secondary School Principals
School Administrators Association of New York State
North Carolina Principals and Assistant Principals' Association
North Dakota Council of Educational Leaders
North Dakota Association of Secondary School Principals
Ohio Association of Secondary School Administrators
Oregon Coalition of School Administrators
Pennsylvania Principals Association
Rhode Island Association of School Principals
School Administrators of South Dakota
South Dakota Association of Secondary Principals
Texas Association of Secondary School Principals
Utah Association of Secondary School Principals
Vermont Principals' Association
Virginia Association of Secondary School Principals
Association of Washington School Principals
West Virginia Association of Secondary School Principals
Association of Wisconsin School Administrators
Wyoming Assn. of Secondary School Principals