The Honorable Tom Cole  
Chairman  
Subcommittee on Labor, Health, and Human Services, and Education  
House Appropriations Committee  
H-309, U.S. Capitol  
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Rosa DeLauro  
Ranking Member  
Subcommittee on Labor, Health, and Human Services, and Education  
House Appropriations Committee  
1016 Longworth House Office Building  
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Chairman Cole and Ranking Member DeLauro:

As you develop the Fiscal Year (FY) 2017 appropriations bill for the U.S. Departments of Labor, Health and Human Services, and Education, we encourage you to help close opportunity and resource gaps in our nation’s public schools by funding the Student Support and Academic Enrichment grant program at its authorized level of $1.65 billion.

Last year, Congress passed a bipartisan education bill that replaced the failed policies of the No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB). The new law, the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA), returns a great deal of control to states and school districts, and it eliminates federally-mandated one-size-fits-all interventions for struggling schools. Unlike NCLB, the ESSA empowers school districts to identify and respond to the unique needs of their students and communities.

To enable school districts to provide locally-tailored programming and supportive services for students who need them most, Title IV, Part A, of ESSA authorizes flexible funding through the new Student Support and Academic Enrichment formula grant program. This new formula program will deliver federal funding to promote safe and healthy students, ensure all students have access to a well-rounded education, and equip schools with effective technology.

More specifically, the Student Support and Academic Enrichment grant program will enable states and local school districts to support a variety of services, such as school-based mental health programs, drug and violence prevention programs, and physical education programs. The grant will also support well-rounded learning opportunities, including expanded access to arts, music, civics, and foreign language courses; Advanced Placement, dual enrollment, and other rigorous and accelerated courses; and STEM courses, which may integrate arts and music to foster innovation and creative thinking.

The Student Support and Academic Enrichment grant program will certainly play a central role in giving all students the resources and opportunities they need to prepare for success in college and career. Bipartisan members of Congress recognized the value of this flexible formula funding to support and enrich students in school districts across the country when, in drafting the ESSA, we authorized $1.65 billion for the program in FY 2017. We respectfully ask that you appropriate no less than this amount.
Thank you for your consideration of this request. We look forward to working with you to make sure students in every community are supported and enriched to reach their maximum potential.

Sincerely,

Suzanne Bonamici  
Member of Congress

Carlos Curbelo  
Member of Congress

Katherine Clark  
Member of Congress

Elise M. Stefanik  
Member of Congress

Robert C. "Bobby" Scott  
Ranking Member  
Committee on Education and the Workforce

Sander M. Levin  
Member of Congress

Brian Higgins  
Member of Congress

James R. Langevin  
Member of Congress

Louise M. Slaughter  
Member of Congress

Eric Swalwell  
Member of Congress
Alma Adams, Ph.D.
Member of Congress

Charles B. Rangel
Member of Congress

Jan Schakowsky
Member of Congress

Mike Doyle
Member of Congress

Mark Takano
Member of Congress

Sheila Jackson Lee
Member of Congress

David Scott
Member of Congress

Chellie Pingree
Member of Congress

Joe Courtney
Member of Congress

Joe Crowley
Member of Congress

Frederica S. Wilson
Member of Congress

Susan Brooks
Member of Congress

Daniel Lipinski
Member of Congress

Gregory W. Meeks
Member of Congress
Jackie Speier
Member of Congress

Zoe Lofgren
Member of Congress

Jared Polis
Member of Congress

Ryan Zinke
Member of Congress

John Garamendi
Member of Congress

John Yarmuth
Member of Congress

Jim McDermott
Member of Congress

Eddie Bernice Johnson
Member of Congress

Michelle Lujan Grisham
Member of Congress

Don Young
Member of Congress

Lynn Jenkins, CPA
Member of Congress

Stephen F. Lynch
Member of Congress

John K. Delaney
Member of Congress

Rick Larsen
Member of Congress
Steve Knight
Member of Congress

John Westmoreland
Member of Congress

Alan Grayson
Member of Congress

Will Hurd
Member of Congress

Raúl M. Grijalva
Member of Congress

Glenn ‘GT’ Thompson
Member of Congress

Ileana Ros-Lehtinen
Member of Congress

Niki Tsongas
Member of Congress

Danny K. Davis
Member of Congress