

April 23, 2013

The Honorable Al Franken
United States Senate
309 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Susan Davis
United States House of Representatives
1526 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Senator Franken and Congresswoman Davis:

We the undersigned national and state education organizations would like to thank you for your leadership on addressing the training and professional development needs of current and aspiring school principals and assistant principals through the reintroduction of the School Principal Recruitment and Training Act.

As you are aware, research has consistently shown that strong school leadership indirectly influences student achievement—second only to teaching among school influences on student success, and the impact of leadership is most significant in schools with the greatest needs. The quality of school leadership also has a significant impact on teacher quality and retention. Our nation’s 95,000 public school principals influence 3 million teachers and 55 million students, pre-K through grade 12, and are pivotal to ensuring that all students leave high school college and career-ready. Yet all too often principals and assistant principals enter the profession without having received the foundational instructional leadership skills needed for success as training and professional development programs have not kept pace with the dynamic and complex role of the principal.

The School Principal Recruitment and Training Act would create a competitive grant program to recruit, support, and prepare principals to improve student academic achievement in high-need schools. It would create one-year residencies to train aspiring principals on instructional leadership, organizational management, and the use of data to inform instruction, and would provide ongoing mentoring and support for at least two years after the aspiring principals complete the residency and commence work as school leaders.

The School Principal Recruitment and Training Act would also provide ongoing, job-embedded professional development to current principals and assistant principals to strengthen their capacity to engage in effective instructional practices and the use of a variety of data for the purposes of instruction, supervision, evaluation, and development of teachers and highly effective school organizations.

To carry out these activities, districts could form partnerships with nonprofit organizations or institutions of higher education to recruit, select, train, and support aspiring or current principals with track records of transforming student learning and outcomes and preparing these principals to lead the highest-need schools.

Our nation’s principals and assistant principals are responsible for the achievement of every child in their schools, and they deserve appropriate training, ongoing mentoring, and professional

development to tackle challenges with the implementation of college and career-ready standards, teaching students of diverse backgrounds, and new teacher evaluation systems.

Thank you again for demonstrating your support for meaningfully addressing the needs of school leaders by introducing the School Principal Recruitment and Training Act. We look forward to working with you and your staff to ensure this important legislation becomes law.

Sincerely,

National Organizations:

Alliance for Excellent Education
Alliance for Multilingual Multicultural Education
American Association of Colleges for Teacher Education
American Association of People with Disabilities
American Association of State Colleges and Universities
American Council for School Social Work
American Council on Education
American School Counselor Association
ASPIRA Association
Association for Middle Level Education
Association of University Centers on Disabilities
Autistic Self Advocacy Network
Autism National Committee
Center for Teaching Quality
Communities for Excellent Public Schools
Council for Exceptional Children
Council of Parent Attorneys and Advocates
Disability Policy Collaboration, a Partnership of The Arc and UCP
Disability Rights Education and Defense Fund, Inc.
Easter Seals
Education Law Center
FairTest, The National Center for Fair & Open Testing
First Focus Campaign for Children
Gamaliel Foundation
Helen Keller National Center
Higher Education Consortium for Special Education
HighScope Educational Research Foundation
Hispanic Association of Colleges and Universities
International Reading Association
Knowledge Alliance
Latino Elected and Appointed Officials National Taskforce on Education
Lawyers' Committee for Civil Rights Under Law
League of United Latin American Citizens
Learning Disabilities Association of America

Movement Strategy Center
NAACP
NAACP Legal Defense and Educational Fund, Inc.
National Alliance of Black School Educators
National Association of Elementary School Principals
National Association of Federally Impacted Schools
National Association of School Psychologists
National Association of Secondary School Principals
National Association of State Directors of Special Education
National Center for Learning Disabilities
National Consortium on Deaf-Blindness
National Council for Educating Black Children
National Council of Teachers of English
National Council of Teachers of Mathematics
National Disability Rights Network
National Down Syndrome Congress
National Down Syndrome Society
National Education Association
National Forum to Accelerate Middle-Grades Reform
National Indian Education Association
National Latino Education Research & Policy Project
National Opportunity to Learn Campaign
National PTA
National Urban League
Opportunity Action
Parents Across America
Partnership for 21st Century Skills
Public Advocacy for Kids
Public Advocates Inc.
Rural School and Community Trust
School Social Work Association of America
SEDL
South East Asia Resource Action Center
TASH - Equity, Opportunity, and Inclusion for People with Disabilities
Teacher Education Division of the Council for Exceptional Children
TESOL International Association
United Church of Christ Justice & Witness Ministries

State Organizations:

Alabama Association of Elementary School Administrators
Alabama Association of Secondary School Principals
Alaska Association of Secondary School Principals
Arkansas Association of Elementary School Principals

Arkansas Association of Middle Level Administrators
Arkansas Association of Secondary School Principals
Association of California School Administrators
California Association for Bilingual Education
Colorado Association of Secondary School Principals
Connecticut Association of Schools
Delaware Association of School Administrators
District of Columbia Association of Secondary School Principals
Florida Association of Secondary School Principals
Georgia Association of Elementary School Principals
Georgia Association of Middle School Principals
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
School Administrators of Iowa
Kansas Association of Secondary School Principals
Louisiana Association of Principals
Maryland Association of Elementary School Principals
Maryland Association of Secondary School Principals
Massachusetts Elementary School Principals' Association
Massachusetts Secondary School Administrators' Association
Minnesota Association of Elementary School Principals
Minnesota Association of Secondary School Principals
Mississippi Association of Secondary School Principals
Missouri Association of Secondary School Principals
Montana Association of Elementary and Middle School Principals
Montana Association of Secondary School Principals
Nevada Association of School Administrators
New Jersey 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
Ohio Association of Elementary School Administrators
Ohio Association of Secondary School Administrators
Oklahoma Association of Secondary School Principals
Pennsylvania Association of Elementary and Secondary School Principals
Rhode Island Association of School Principals
South Carolina Association of School Administrators
School Administrators of South Dakota
Tennessee Principals Association
Texas Elementary Principals and Supervisors Association
Utah Association of Secondary School Principals
Vermont Principals' Association

Association of Washington School Principals
West Virginia Association of Secondary School Principals
Association of Wisconsin School Administrators
Wyoming Association of Secondary School Principals