

April 6, 2017

The Honorable Rodney P. Frelinghuysen
Chairman
Committee on Appropriations
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Nita M. Lowey
Ranking Member
Committee on Appropriations
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Tom Cole
Chairman
Subcommittee on Labor, Health and
Human Services, Education, &
Related Agencies
Committee on Appropriations
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

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

Dear Chairman Frelinghuysen, Ranking Member Lowey, Chairman Cole, & Ranking Member DeLauro:

We, the undersigned Future Ready Schools® (FRS) superintendents, write to request that full funding be provided for the Student Support and Academic Enrichment Grants (SSAEGs) under Title IV, Part A, of the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) for Fiscal Year (FY) 2017. Initially authorized at \$1.65 billion for FY 2017, this amount will ensure funding for programs that support three areas of student learning: (1) a well-rounded education, (2) a safe and healthy school climate, and (3) the effective use of schoolwide technology.

FRS helps district leaders plan and implement personalized, research-based digital learning strategies that prepare students for success in college and a career. As the FRS initiative has shown, the effective integration of technology in the classroom is essential for producing globally competitive students with a twenty-first-century skillset. FRS districts understand that technology, when implemented properly, can produce significant gains in academic achievement and boost engagement, particularly for traditionally underserved students and their communities.

However, the use of technology in the classroom is only effective when schools and educators are provided with appropriate supports for implementation. This includes funding for professional development opportunities, investing in schools' technological capacity and infrastructure, and combatting the "digital divide" between students from low-income families and their more affluent peers. The SSAEG program is key in this process.

Under ESSA, using technology to improve the digital learning experience is only one of three funding priorities the SSAEG program was created to address. Under SSAEG, if districts receive less than \$30,000, they can choose to allocate the entire grant to one of the aforementioned three categories of student learning. Failure to authorize SSAEG at the full amount could reduce funding nationwide and place districts in a compromising position of having to choose between

investing in equally important needs, such as Advanced Placement/International Baccalaureate course work or technology-driven professional development.

Forcing districts to sacrifice funding in any of the three areas of student learning undermines the intent, efficacy, and flexibility of this important grant program. Authorizing SSAEG at its full level will reaffirm the commitment made under ESSA to provide students, educators, and communities with quality educational experiences. As superintendents, we recognize that the most meaningful student experiences will result from SSAEG funding that is sufficient enough to allow districts to prioritize digital learning alongside other educational initiatives supported by the SSAEG program.

In order to create classrooms where all students have access to technology and the learning opportunities it affords, please appropriate the full \$1.65 billion authorized level for the Title IV SSAEGs for FY 2017. On behalf of the students, parents, and educators that we represent, thank you for considering this request.

Sincerely,

Alabama

Kathy Murphy
Superintendent
Hoover City Schools
Alabama

Alaska

Eric Gebhart
Superintendent
Nenana City School District
Alaska

Arizona

Edna Morris
Superintendent
Baboquivari Unified School District
Arizona

Gail Pletnick
Superintendent
Dysart Unified school District
Arizona

Arkansas

John Hoy
Superintendent
Helena-West Helena School District
Arkansas

California

Kimberly Berman
Superintendent
Greenfield Union School District
California

Anne Campbell
Superintendent
San Mateo County
California

Allan Carver
Superintendent
Scott Valley Unified School District
California

Donna Colosky
Superintendent
Paradise Unified School District
California

Andres Duran, Ph.D.
Principal
Oxnard School District
California

Pam Gildersleeve-Hernandez
Superintendent
San Antonio Union Elementary School
District
California

Christina Goennier
Superintendent
Bonita Unified School District
California

Melissa Moore
Superintendent
El Segundo Unified
California

Mary Sieu
Superintendent
ABC Unified School District
California

Janet Skulina
Superintendent-Principal
Knights Ferry Elementary School District
California

Rob Stockberger
Superintendent
John Swett Unified School District
California

Ron Williams
Superintendent
Victor Valley Union High School District
California

Colorado

Troy Lange
Western Regional Director
Mountain Board of Cooperative Educational
Services
Colorado

Kim McClelland
Executive Director
Colorado Digital Board of Cooperative
Education Service
Colorado

Susan Sonnenberg
Superintendent
Lone Star School
Colorado

Connecticut

Mark Benigni
Superintendent
Meriden Public Schools
Connecticut

Thomas Giard
Superintendent
Waterford Public Schools
Connecticut

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Avon Public Schools
Connecticut

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Avon Public Schools
Connecticut

Pamela Muraca
Deputy Superintendent
Newington Public Schools
Connecticut

Florida

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Superintendent
Pinellas County Schools
Florida

Georgia

Joseph Barrow
Superintendent
Fayette County Schools
Georgia

Valya Lee
Superintendent
Liberty County School System
Georgia

Illinois

Jill Barger
Superintendent
Geff Community Consolidated School
District #14
Illinois

Shannon Duling
Superintendent
Princeville Community Unit School District
#326
Illinois
Ed Fletcher
Superintendent
Monmouth-Roseville CUSD #238
Illinois

Brian Harris
Superintendent of Schools
Barrington School District #220
Illinois

Lisa Hichens
Superintendent
Batavia Public School District #101
Illinois

Jeff Hinman
Superintendent
Tremont School District #702
Illinois

Alex Moore
Superintendent
Montmorency School District #145
Illinois

Donald Owen
Superintendent
Urbana School District #116
Illinois

Bill Robertson, Ph.D.
Superintendent of Schools
Creston Community Consolidated School
District #161
Illinois

Beth Sagett-Flores
Superintendent
Golf School District #67
Illinois

Joe Sornberger
Superintendent
ROWVA Community Unit School District
#208
Illinois

Karen Sullivan
Superintendent
Indian Prairie District 204
Illinois

Chad Wagner
Superintendent
Elmwood Community Unit School District
#322
Illinois

Nancy Wagner
Superintendent
Beach Park School District #3
Illinois

Jeff Whitsitt
Superintendent
United Community Unit School District
#304
Illinois

Indiana

Wayne Barker
Superintendent of Schools
Bluffton-Harrison Metropolitan School
District
Indiana

Carey Dahncke
Superintendent
Christel House Academies
Indiana

Destin Haas
Superintendent
North Newton School Corporation
Indiana

David Hoffert
Superintendent
Warsaw Community Schools
Indiana

John Hunter
Superintendent
Union Township School Corporation
Indiana

Ann Linson
Superintendent
East Noble School Corporation
Indiana

Jim Roberts
Superintendent
Bartholomew Consolidated School
Corporation
Indiana

Stacey Schmidt
Superintendent
Porter Township School Corporation
Indiana

Thomas Taylor
Superintendent
Hanover Community Schools
Indiana

Tonya Weaver
Superintendent
Garrett-Keyser-Butler Community School
District
Indiana

Iowa

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Iowa

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Iowa City Community School District
Iowa

Quintin Shepherd
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Linn-Mar Community School District
Iowa

Kansas

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Superintendent
USD 360 Caldwell Schools
Kansas

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Superintendent
Nemaha Central Schools
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Josh Swartz
Superintendent
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Kansas

Chris Vignery
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North Ottawa County Schools
Kansas

Mark Whitener
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Wellington Public Schools
Kansas

Kentucky

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Superintendent
Owsley County Schools
Kentucky

Jim Evans
Superintendent
Lee County Schools
Kentucky

Michael Rowe
Superintendent
Lincoln County Schools
Kentucky

Maine

Kenneth Kunin
Superintendent
South Portland Schools
Maine

Larry Malone
Superintendent of Schools
Regional School Unit #57
Maine

Massachusetts

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North Reading Public Schools
Massachusetts

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Collaborative for Educational Services
Massachusetts

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Superintendent of Schools
Reading Public Schools
Massachusetts

Robert Gerardi
Superintendent
Maynard Public Schools
Massachusetts

Cindy Landanno
Executive Director
CAPS Collaborative
Massachusetts

Michigan

Charles North
Superintendent
Reading Community Schools
Michigan

George Rierson
Superintendent
Unionville-Sebewaing Area School District
Michigan

Cherie Vannatter
Superintendent
Manchester Community Schools
Michigan

Minnesota

Chuck Ehler
Superintendent
Rushford – Peterson School District
Minnesota

David Krenz
Superintendent
Austin Public School District #492
Minnesota

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Superintendent
Long Prairie Grey Eagle Public Schools
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Minnesota

Missouri

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Missouri

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Superintendent
Neosho School District
Missouri

Cheryl Mack
Superintendent
Community R-VI School District
Missouri

Keith Marty
Superintendent
Parkway School District
Missouri

John Mulford
Superintendent
West Plains R-VII School District
Missouri

Andrew Underwood
Superintendent
Belton School District #124
Missouri

Montana

Bud Scully
Superintendent
Florence-Carlton School District
Montana

Nebraska

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Bancroft-Rosalie Comm School
Nebraska

Randall Gilson
Superintendent
South Central Unified School District
Nebraska

New Hampshire

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New Hampshire

New Jersey

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Jamesburg Public School District
New Jersey

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Highlands Borough School District
New Jersey

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Accountability and Research
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New Jersey

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New Jersey

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New Jersey

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Nutley Public Schools
New Jersey

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Superintendent of Schools
Westwood Regional School District
New Jersey

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Superintendent
Westampton Township Schools
New Jersey

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Superintendent
Eatontown Public Schools
New Jersey

Darren Peterson
Superintendent of Schools
Montvale Public Schools District
New Jersey

Timothy Purnell
Superintendent
Somerville Public Schools
New Jersey

New York

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Director - Computer Resource Centers
NYC Department of Parks & Recreation
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Superintendent of Schools
Sewanhaka Central High School District
New York

North Carolina

Lory Morrow
Superintendent
Davidson County Schools
North Carolina

David Stegall
Superintendent
Newton-Conover City Schools
North Carolina

Ohio

Valerie Browning-Thompson
Superintendent
Pickerington Local Schools
Ohio

Russell Chaboudy
Superintendent
Coventry Local Schools
Ohio

David James
Superintendent
Akron City School District
Ohio

Matthew Miller
Superintendent
Mentor Public Schools
Ohio

Todd Osborn
Superintendent
Liberty Union-Thurston Local Schools
Ohio

David Toth
Superintendent
Crestwood Local Schools
Ohio

Greg Williams
Superintendent
New Lebanon Local Schools
Ohio

Oklahoma

Chad Broughton
Superintendent
Marietta Public School
Oklahoma

Bill Caruthers
Superintendent
Allen Public Schools
Oklahoma

David Cash
Superintendent
Chickasha Public Schools
Oklahoma

Janet Neufeld, Ph. D.
Superintendent
Pawhuska Public Schools
Oklahoma

Pennsylvania

Michael Bjalobok
Superintendent
Highlands School District
Pennsylvania

George Fiore
Superintendent
Kutztown Area School District
Pennsylvania

William Gretzula
Superintendent
Pennsbury School District
Pennsylvania

Rona Kaufmann
Superintendent
South Eastern School District
Pennsylvania

Bridget O'Connell
Superintendent
Palisades School District
Pennsylvania

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Southern Tioga School District
Pennsylvania

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General McLane School District
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Penn-Delco School District
Pennsylvania

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Mount Carmel Area School District
Pennsylvania

Brian Toth
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St. Mary's Area School District
Pennsylvania

Randy Ziegenfuss
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Salisbury Township School District
Pennsylvania

Rhode Island

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Rhode Island

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Christopher Haskins
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Paul Cuffee School
Rhode Island

Melinda Smith
Superintendent
North Providence School Department
Rhode Island

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Superintendent of Schools
West Warwick Public Schools
Rhode Island

South Carolina

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Clarendon County School District #2
South Carolina

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Calhoun County public Schools
South Carolina

Tennessee

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Superintendent
Lenoir City Schools
Tennessee

Dan Lawson
Superintendent
Tullahoma City Schools
Tennessee

Texas

Paul Cruz
Superintendent
Austin Independent School District
Texas

David Flowers
Superintendent
Huntington Independent School District
Texas

Dr. Bruce Gearing
Superintendent
Dripping Springs Independent School
District
Texas

Jeffrey Hanks
Superintendent
Weatherford Independent School District
Texas

Paul Jones
Superintendent
Paris Independent School District
Texas

Michael Kuhrt
Superintendent
Wichita Falls Independent School District
Texas

Ana Mendoza
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Texas

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Texas

David Plymale
Superintendent
Goliad Independent School District
Texas

Abelardo Saavedra
Superintendent
South San Antonio Independent School
District
Texas

Gonzolo Salazar
Superintendent
Los Fresnos Consolidated Independent
School District
Texas

Vicki Thomas
Superintendent
Diboll Independent School District
Texas

Zekeriya Yuksel
Superintendent
Harmony Public Schools
Texas

Virginia

Charles Berkley, Jr.
Superintendent
Lunenburg County Public Schools
Virginia

Eric Jones
Superintendent
Powhatan County Public Schools
Virginia

Washington State

Krestin Bahr
Superintendent
Eatonville Public Schools
Washington

Michelle Price
Superintendent
Moses Lake School District
Washington

Steven T. Webb
Superintendent
Vancouver Public Schools
Washington

West Virginia

Dr. Martin P. Keller, Jr.
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West Virginia Schools for the Deaf and the
Blind
West Virginia

Wisconsin

Traci Davis
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Juda School District
Wisconsin

Patricia Deklotz
Superintendent
Kettle Moraine School District
Wisconsin

Luke Francois
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Mineral Point Unified School District
Wisconsin

Kristine Gilmore
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D.C. Everest Area School District
Wisconsin

Tonya Gubin
Superintendent
Waupun Area School District
Wisconsin

Steve Lutzke
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Samantha Polek
District Administrator
Linn Joint 6 School District
Wisconsin

Steve Salerno
Superintendent
Mount Horeb Area School District
Wisconsin

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Wisconsin

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Wisconsin

Patricia Vickman
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Southern Door County School District
Wisconsin

Wyoming

Summer Stephens
Superintendent
Weston County School District #7
Wyoming