



July 30, 2021

The Honorable Bernard Sanders
Chairman
Senate Committee on the Budget
624 Dirksen Senate Office Building
Washington DC, 20510

The Honorable Lindsey Graham
Ranking Member
Senate Committee on the Budget
624 Dirksen Senate Office Building
Washington DC, 20510

The Honorable John Yarmuth
Chairman
House Committee on the Budget
204-E Cannon House Office Building
Washington DC, 20515

The Honorable Jason Smith
Ranking Member
House Committee on the Budget
204-E Cannon House Office Building
Washington DC, 20515

Dear Chairman Sanders, Ranking Member Graham, Chairman Yarmuth, and Ranking Member Smith:

Every portion of our great nation, be it rural, urban or suburban – be it in the south, north, east or west is invested in educating our children to ensure a successful future for our country. Yet the education workforce, which is tasked with carrying out this important responsibility, is shrinking. Even before the COVID pandemic, over 100,000 classrooms were staffed by substitutes or teachers who had not received comprehensive preparation or full certification. The critical and pervasive shortage of teachers, especially in areas like special education, bilingual education, and teachers of English Learners, have caused some districts to cancel or postpone much needed summer programs. The pipeline for the future also looks bleak, as enrollment in educator preparation programs has declined significantly. The cost of higher education compared to the relatively low salaries for educators is prohibitive. For students of color and first generation college going students, this challenge is acute. Even those who choose to pursue the education profession too often leave after just a few years, as their support is limited and opportunities for professional growth are few. For educators, especially educators of color, the lack of financial and professional support can also impact their mental and financial well-being.

Students in all types of school districts – high-poverty and low-poverty, urban and rural, large and small – suffer because of these teacher shortages. We know that schools serving students of color and students from families with low incomes have [inequitable access](#) to well-prepared, experienced, and certified teachers.

We need robust, systemic, investments in the educator workforce that will help our country address inequities that have existed for decades, and rebuild from the pandemic in an equitable manner so all students have access to a well-prepared, diverse, experienced, stable, and supported educator workforce.

The American Families Plan lays out a comprehensive plan for addressing teacher shortages by supporting prospective and current teachers throughout their careers by:

- Investing in comprehensive educator preparation, while ensuring affordability;
- Supporting accomplished teachers by providing them with leadership opportunities, including opportunities to mentor new teachers; and
- Underwriting the cost of obtaining high-need certifications and certifications associated with greater effectiveness.

At this moment there is an opportunity for historic investment that has the power to transform the education profession and level long-standing inequities in student access to great educators. *We urge you to support President Biden's \$9 billion proposal for investing in the educator workforce.*

Sincerely,

AASA, The School Superintendents Association
ACTFL
Alliance for Excellent Education
American Association of Colleges for Teacher Education
American Federation of Teachers
ASCD
Bank Street College of Education
Californians Together
Center for American Progress
Center for Learner Equity
Children Now
Concord NH Showing Up for Racial Justice
Council of Administrators of Special Education
Council for Exceptional Children
Council of Parent Attorneys and Advocates

EDGE Consulting Partners
The Education Trust
HACU-Hispanic Association of Colleges and Universities
Higher Education Consortium for Special Education
Institute for Educational Leadership
International Society for Technology in Education
KnowledgeWorks
Latinos For Education
Learning Forward
Monmouth University School of Education
National Association of Elementary School Principals
National Association of Secondary School Principals
National Association of State Directors of Special Education (NASDSE)
National Board for Professional Teaching Standards
National Center for Learning Disabilities
National Center for Teacher Residencies
National Council of Teachers of Mathematics (NCTM)
National Disability Rights Network (NDRN)
National Down Syndrome Society
National Education Association
National Science Teaching Association
National Writing Project
PDK International
Portland Empowered
Poverty & Race Research Action Council (PRRAC)
Prepared To Teach
Public Advocacy for Kids (PAK)
Public Advocates
Rural School and Community Trust
The Southern Education Foundation
State Higher Education Executive Officers Association
StriveTogether
Teacher Education Division of the Council for Exceptional Children
TEACHMEducation Group Inc.
Teach Plus
The Commonwealth Institute for Fiscal Analysis
TNTF
UnidosUS

cc:

The Honorable Charles Schumer
Senate Majority Leader
S-221, The Capitol
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Mitch McConnell
Senate Minority Leader
S-230, The Capitol
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Nancy Pelosi
Speaker of the House
H-232, The Capitol
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Kevin McCarthy
Minority Leader
H-204, The Capitol
Washington, DC 20515