

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

March 2, 2022

The Honorable Rosa DeLauro
Chair
House Appropriations Committee
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Patrick Leahy
Chairman
Senate Committee on Appropriations
U.S. Senate
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Kay Granger
Ranking Member
House Committee on Appropriations
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Richard Shelby
Vice Chairman
Senate Committee on Appropriations
U.S. Senate
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Chair DeLauro, Chair Leahy, Ranking Member Granger, and Vice Chairman Shelby:

Thank you for your efforts to finalize funding for Fiscal Year (FY) 2022. As this work continues, we urge you to include \$443 million for Full-Service Community Schools. This funding was secured in the House-passed FY2022 Labor, Health and Human Services, Education, and Related Agencies (LHHS) bill and matches the funding level included in the President's Budget request. This funding level represents a \$413 million increase from FY2021, which would support the creation of an estimated 800 new community schools.

Community schools use evidence-based, comprehensive leadership practices to treat schools as community hubs and provide integrated student supports, expanded and enriched learning time, active family and community engagement, and collaborative leadership and practices to support high-quality teaching. By leveraging these strategies and partnerships with established community organizations, community schools support well-rounded educational opportunities that meet the social, emotional, physical and mental health, and academic needs of students.

While evidence-based support for the community schools strategy predates the COVID-19 pandemic, this public health and economic crisis has underscored the urgency to invest in community schools and the infrastructure that support them. Many families rely upon community schools for critical resources, including medical, mental, and nutrition health services, before- and after-school programming that accommodate family work schedules, mentoring and youth development programs, technical assistance, and connection to resources,

including Emergency Rental Assistance. Without connection and access to these basic needs, students are not able to fully engage in learning and communities are not able to thrive.

Due in part to close partnerships between schools and community partners, community schools were better prepared to coordinate and deliver services based on community needs in response to the COVID-19 crisis.¹ After Congress passed and the President signed the *American Rescue Plan* into law, the U.S. Department of Education issued guidance for schools looking to use *American Rescue Plan* funding to adopt the community school strategy and improve student outcomes.² Securing this \$443 investment in the FY22 budget is necessary to provide community schools with the long-term resources and financial resources they need to meet the holistic needs of the whole child and support the well-being and success of students, families, and communities for years to come.

Thank you for your attention and consideration of this request.

Sincerely,



Jamaal Bowman, Ed.D.
Member of Congress



Kirsten Gillibrand
U.S. Senate



Chris Van Hollen
U.S. Senate



Sherrod Brown
U.S. Senate

¹ [How Community Schools Were Better Prepared for COVID-19 Crisis | NEA](#)

² U.S. Department of Education, *Frequently Asked Questions: Using American Rescue Plan Funding to Support Full-Service Community Schools & Related Strategies*, Washington, DC, 2021.
<https://oese.ed.gov/files/2021/07/21-0138-ARP-Community-Schools-OMB-and-OS-Approved-071421-1.pdf>

/s/

Eleanor Holmes Norton
Member of Congress

/s/

Katie Porter
Member of Congress

/s/

Steven Horsford
Member of Congress

/s/

Thomas R. Suozzi
Member of Congress

/s/

Danny K. Davis
Member of Congress

/s/

Dwight Evans
Member of Congress

/s/

Dianne Feinstein
U.S. Senate

CC:
Speaker Pelosi
Majority Leader Schumer