STUDENT SUPPORT AND ACADEMIC ENRICHMENT GRANTS:

Providing Flexible Support for a Well-Rounded Education

Across the country, schools are facing urgent social issues that keep young people from success. While teachers and education leaders work hard to provide all students with a safe place to learn and grow, they often lack the resources to address the most pressing crises, like school safety concerns and the effect of the opioid epidemic on students and families.

Student Support and Academic Enrichment (SSAE) grants provide flexibility for school districts to make investments in initiatives that reflect the needs of their students. This new block grant, created by the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA), will empower districts to make meaningful, strategic decisions about which schools have the greatest need or have been identified for improvement. Funding can be used to support three important areas:

Well-Rounded Education

- Social and emotional learning
- College and career counseling
- Partnerships with local music and arts institutions
- Supporting STEM activities and competitions
- Dropout prevention programs

Safe and Healthy Students

- School safety and climate initiatives
- Trauma-informed care
- Physical and mental health (drug prevention, healthy lifestyle, counseling, etc.)
- Schoolwide positive behavioral interventions
- Supportive learning environment (anti-bullying, dropout prevention, conflict resolution, mentoring, etc.)

Effective Use of Technology

- Building technological capacity to support:

  - Collaboration between schools and community partners (learning communities)

  - EL parent engagement

Funding this program at $1.1 billion for FY18 is a meaningful step in the right direction, and we urge Congress to appropriate $1.6 billion in FY19, the level authorized in ESSA.

Funding SSAE program fully would:

- Provide districts enough funds and flexibility to make meaningful investments in priority program areas determined by the needs of their students; and
- Provide flexible block grants that will benefit all districts equitably.