



March 23, 2017

The Honorable Thad Cochran
Chairman
Senate Appropriations Committee
Room S128, The Capitol
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Patrick Leahy
Vice Chairman
Senate Appropriations Committee
Room S128, The Capitol
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Roy Blunt
Chairman
Senate Appropriations LHHHS Subcommittee
Subcommittee
Room S128, The Capitol
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Patty Murray
Ranking Member
Senate Appropriations LHHHS
Subcommittee
Room S128, The Capitol
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Chairman Cochran, Vice Chairman Leahy, Chairman Blunt, and Ranking Member Murray,

As you continue consideration of fiscal year 2017 funding levels and begin to develop and mark up the fiscal year 2018 Labor-HHS Appropriations bill, we are writing to urge you to include \$120 million in funding for the bipartisan **Education Innovation and Research (EIR) Grants Program**, which drives outcomes for students and families by spurring innovation, rewarding results, and catalyzing public-private partnerships.

We believe EIR drives substantial and lasting improvements in student achievement by supporting the development, validation, and scale-up of successful innovations at the state and local levels. The program uses a tiered-evidence approach, which means that the more evidence of success a program has, the more funding it receives. This enables scaling of the most effective education interventions while also supporting innovative new ideas at lower levels of funding as evidence of success is being proven. In addition, the EIR program generates private investments in the form of matching funds and in-kind donations. All EIR programs are rigorously evaluated, ensuring that we continue to learn more about what works in education and what doesn't, so that schools and their partners can continue to improve.

We believe EIR is particularly important given the emphasis of the bipartisan Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) on policies and practices that are informed by evidence. By providing flexible funding for a broad range of community-driven projects and allowing states, school districts, nonprofits, and businesses to partner together to develop and grow innovative programs, projects funded by EIR will fulfill Congress' intent to contribute to the production of actionable, proven interventions in a given community or population and generate an evidence base that can be adapted to inform practices and funding decisions for states and school districts across the country.

Funding for education innovation is imperative in addressing our nation's most pressing education challenges and **we strongly encourage you to fund EIR at \$120 million in Fiscal Years 2017 and 2018** to ensure that every student, regardless of whatever his or her background may be, receives a first-class education. If FY17 funding levels are finalized as a continuing resolution, please include language directing the U.S. Department of Education to implement the EIR program, as newly authorized under ESSA.



We recognize the many difficult choices both the Subcommittee and full Committee face and thank you for your ongoing support for social innovation policies. We look forward to working with you to advance this important issue in the months ahead.

Sincerely,

Member of the America Forward Coalition (full list below)

America Forward Coalition

Acelero Learning/Shine Early Learning	Family Independence Initiative (FII)	Public Allies
Alternative Staffing Alliance	Fuse Corps	Reading Partners
America's Promise Alliance	Generation Citizen	REDF
ANet	Genesys Works	Roca
AppleTree Institute for Education Innovation	Global Citizen Year	Root Cause
AVANCE	GreenLight Fund	Save the Children
Bard Early Colleges	iMentor	Schools That Can
BELL	Institute for Child Success	Service Year Alliance
Beyond 12	Jumpstart	Single Stop
Bottom Line	JVS	Social Enterprise Alliance
BUILD	KIPP	Social Finance US
Citizen Schools	LIFT	Teach For America
City Year	LISC	The Children's Aid Society
College Advising Corps	Match Education	The Corps Network
College Forward	National Board for Professional Teaching Standards (NBPTS)	Third Sector Capital Partners
College Possible	National Center for Learning Disabilities (NCLD)	Turnaround for Children
College Summit	New Classrooms Innovation Partners	Twin Cities Rise!
Compass Working Capital	New Leaders	uAspire
Connecticut Center for Social Innovation	New Teacher Center	Urban Teachers
Corporation for Supportive Housing	Nonprofit Finance Fund (NFF)	UVA Pay For Success Lab
Educators 4 Excellence	Opportunity Nation	Year Up
Enterprise Community Partners	Peace First	YouthBuild USA
Eye to Eye	Peer Health Exchange	Youth Villages
	PowerMyLearning	10,000 Degrees