

April 13, 2015

The Honorable Lamar Alexander
Chairman, Committee on Health, Education,
Labor and Pensions
428 Dirksen Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Patty Murray
Ranking Member, Committee on Health,
Education, Labor and Pensions
154 Russell Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Chairman Alexander and Ranking Member Murray,

Thank you for your commitment to a bipartisan process to reauthorize the Elementary and Secondary Education Act. The introduction of the *Every Child Achieves Act of 2015* is an important step forward and contains many thoughtful provisions, particularly in support of principals and other school leaders.

New Leaders is a national non-profit dedicated to enabling high academic achievement for all children by developing transformational school leaders and advancing the policies and practices that allow great school leaders to succeed. Since our founding in 2000, we have helped to train and equip more than 1,600 school leaders with the knowledge and skills to positively impact the lives of more than 350,000 children, many of whom are students of color and come from low-income backgrounds.

Principals account for 25 percent of a school's impact on student achievement—which is significant for a single individual. A highly effective principal can increase student achievement by as much as 20 percentage points. This is particularly true in underperforming schools, where improvement simply does not occur without strong school leadership.

Given the importance of principals within the school system and drawing on our work at the local and state levels, we were pleased to see the following provisions included in the bill:

- Title II, Part A support for aspiring and sitting principals. In particular, we strongly support the inclusion of principals and other school leaders throughout the language, including the school leader residency program;
- The School Leader Recruitment and Support Program, which builds on current law and improves the recruitment, preparation, placement, support, and retention of effective principals and other school leaders in high-needs schools; and
- The Teacher and School Leader Incentive Program, which provides support not only for performance-based compensation but also human capital management systems.

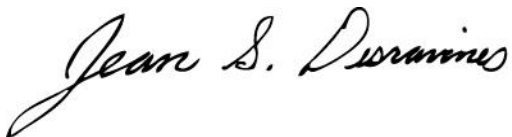
These provisions are critical to improving teaching and learning at the local level. As the reauthorization process continues, we look forward to working with you to improve Title II by strengthening:

- State-level commitment to principal effectiveness activities, including identifying, recruiting, preparing, placing, supporting, and retaining highly effective principals;
- Opportunities for professional growth, leadership opportunities, and multiple career pathways for teachers and principals; and
- Support for instructional leadership teams in high need schools.

In addition, effective principals want an accountability-for-responsibility compact. They embrace high expectations for student growth and achievement when the measures make sense, but they experience too little support and too many constraints on how to staff their schools, spend their resources, and run their programs. As the reauthorization process continues, we look forward to working with you to strengthen important provisions related to state accountability systems, such as those that both support great leaders and also identify struggling schools in need of intervention – especially those with the weakest overall performance and those with large achievement gaps.

Thank you again for your commitment to reauthorizing the Elementary and Secondary Education Act. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact our Chief Policy Officer, Jackie Gran, at jgran@newleaders.org.

Sincerely,



Jean Desravines
Chief Executive Officer