

The Hon. Charles Schumer
Majority Leader
U.S. Senate
317 Russell Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

The Hon. Mitch McConnell
Minority Leader
U.S. Senate
322 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

The Hon. Nancy Pelosi
Speaker
U.S. House of Representatives
1236 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

The Hon. Kevin McCarthy
Minority Leader
U.S. House of Representatives
2463 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

February 23, 2021

Dear Majority Leader Schumer, Minority Leader McConnell, Speaker Pelosi and Minority Leader McCarthy:

The undersigned over 200 national, state, and local organizations endorse the **passing and funding of the Full-Service Community Schools Expansion Act of 2020 and the inclusion of full-service community schools as an allowable use of funding for public schools and school districts in future COVID-19 relief packages.**

The time is now for a significant investment in community schools. Currently, the federal Full-Service Community Schools program is funded at \$30 million supporting 54 communities, but this amount falls far short of the need and demand for this strategy from communities who want to create community schools both to stabilize families that have been most severely impacted during the pandemic and to accelerate learning beyond. **The Full-Service Community Schools Expansion Act (S. 4865) introduced in November 2020 and that will be reintroduced this week, would meet this need and demand** with a significant federal investment in community schools of \$500 million for FY 2021 and increasing to \$1 billion by FY 2025.

This funding would enable Congress to direct limited resources to the schools and communities where at least 40% of the students qualify for free and reduced-price lunch or are identified by the state as in need of additional support, to optimize the coordination of resources that meet family's basic needs, support the mental health of students, accelerate learning, and support the families' re-entry into the workforce.

Community schools are an effective, [evidence-based strategy for school improvement](#) and we can [point to](#) several examples of the power of community schools to transform high-poverty, low-performing schools into thriving schools including a recent [RAND study of NYC's community schools](#). They are also a smart investment: the coordination of resources at both the school and system levels translates to [a return on investment](#) of over \$7 for every \$1 invested in a Coordinator's salary.

Throughout the pandemic, individual community schools and systems of community schools were able to mobilize quickly and effectively to support the social, emotional, physical, and learning needs of students and their families. Community schools are demonstrating, from [Florida and North Carolina](#) to [New York](#) and elsewhere, how their strong relationships, relational trust, agility, and coordination are helping schools and their communities better respond to and recover from the pandemic. As a result, **we urge Congress to include full-service community schools as an allowable use of funding for schools and districts in future COVID-19 relief packages**, reinforcing President Biden's [call to expand community schools](#) through funding in his American Rescue Plan.

Because federal funding for community schools is currently so small compared to the level of demand in the field, the U.S. Department of Education routinely turns down highly ranked, near-perfect score applications, therefore squandering the opportunity to support communities that are committed and ready to apply this strategy to advance educational equity. Passing and funding the Full-Service Community Schools Expansion Act would enable hundreds of these communities to coordinate the assets of their schools, families, and community partners for students' immediate and long-term success.

We have an opportunity to learn from the experiences of students, families and educators during the pandemic and carve a bold vision for public education going forward. This bold vision ensures that all students have access to the foundational supports necessary for learning to address their physical, social, and emotional needs; that they have enriching, high-quality instruction, access to a full curriculum including the arts, social sciences, foreign language, civic education, and Advanced Placement courses, and to out-of-school time opportunities; and that their families and communities are actively engaged as important partners in their learning and well-being. Community schools offers a time-tested, effective, collaborative, hyper-local, and evidence-based strategy to implement and help achieve this vision. **We urge you to pass and fund the Full-Service Community Schools Expansion Act as soon as possible, and to include full-service community schools as an allowable use of funding in future COVID-19 relief packages**, to give millions of students the opportunity to be supported and successful in school, and to set a bold vision of public education for all our schools in the country.

Signed,

National Organizations:

Alliance for Excellent Education

Alliance for Strong Families and Communities

American Federation of Teachers

ASCD

Association of Latino Administrators and Superintendents [ALAS]

Beacon National Network

Boys & Girls Clubs of America
Center for Popular Democracy
Children's Aid
Children's Health Fund
City Year, Inc.
Coalition for Community Schools
Communities In Schools, National Office
Concordia - Community Centered Planning and Design
Council of Administrators of Special Education
ED Across America
EDGE Consulting Partners
Education Redesign Lab, Harvard Graduate School of Education
First Focus on Children
GLSEN
Healthy Schools Campaign
Institute for Educational Leadership
Journey for Justice Alliance
MENTOR National
National Association for Family, School, and Community Engagement (NAFSCE)
National Association of Counsel for Children
National Association of Elementary School Principals
National Association of School Nurses
National Association of School Psychologists
National Association of Secondary School Principals
National Center for Community Schools
National Children's Campaign
National Education Association
National League of Cities
National Youth Advocate Program, Inc.

NEA Foundation

Netter Center for Community Partnerships, University of Pennsylvania

Nexus Family Healing

One Hope United

Pacific American Foundation

Pacific Resources for Education and Learning

Prepared To Teach, an initiative out of Bank Street College of Education

Prevent Blindness

Public Advocacy for Kids

Public Health Management Corporation

Rural School and Community Trust

School-Based Health Alliance

Search Institute

Southern Education Foundation

Starr Commonwealth

StriveTogether

Structured Solutions Educational Consulting

Student Voice

Teach Plus

Teacher-Powered Schools

The Children's Guild Alliance

UCLA

United Way Worldwide

Yale School of 21st Century and Mutt-I-grees

State Organizations:

AFT Massachusetts

AFT Maryland

AFT Michigan

AFT New Jersey

Alliance for Quality Education New York

AR Hunger Relief Alliance Little Rock, AR

Arizona Center for Afterschool Excellence

Arkansas Coalition for Community Schools

California AfterSchool Network

Ceeds of Peace HONOLULU

Children's Home Society Florida

Citizens' Committee for Children of New York

Communities In Schools of Indiana

Communities In Schools of Pennsylvania

Communities In Schools of Tennessee

Creative Scenarios, LTD New Jersey

Education Minnesota

Encouragement and Enrichment Motivational Services New York

Essex County College Adjunct Faculty New Jersey

Excel by Eight Arkansas

Florida Medical Practice Plan, Inc. Florida

Georgia Federation of Teachers

Grassroots Arkansas

Hawaii Afterschool Alliance

Hawai'i Children's Action Network

Hawaii Statewide Family Engagement Center Project, Center on Disability Studies, University of Hawaii
Honolulu

Idaho Chapter of the American Academy of Pediatrics

Idaho Coalition for Community Schools

Idaho Out-of-School Network

Illinois Federation of Teachers/AFT

Indiana Community Schools Network

Indiana State Teachers Association

Latino Institute, Inc. New Jersey

Lili'uokalani Trust Hawaii

Make the Road New York New York

Maryland Coalition for Community Schools

Maryland Out of School Time Network

New Jersey Citizen Action

New Jersey Community Schools Coalition

New Jersey Education Association

North Carolina Justice Center

New York State Network for Youth Success

Ohio Community Learning Center Collaborative

Ohio Federation of Teachers

Resilience Matters Hawaii

Rural Community Alliance Arkansas

Save Our Schools New Jersey Community Organizing

Sheppard Pratt Hospital Maryland

Step Up Louisiana

Texas AFT

United Adjunct Faculty New Jersey

University of Central Florida Center for Community Schools

University of Tennessee - University Assisted Community Schools

Local Organizations:

4Cs of Passaic County Paterson, NJ

ABC Community School Partnership Albuquerque, NM

Albion's Future Albion, MI

Arrowhead Youth and Family Services Coal Valley, IL

Batesville Area Chamber of Commerce Batesville, AR

BestSelf Behavioral Health Buffalo, NY

Binghamton University Community Schools Broome County, NY

Birmingham Federation of Teachers Birmingham, Alabama

Boise Schools Education Foundation Boise, ID

Boys & Girls Clubs of Southwest Washington Vancouver, Washington

Branches, Inc. Miami, FL

Brevard Family Partnership Melbourne, FL

BronxWorks Bronx, NY

Brooklyn Center Community Schools Brooklyn Center, MN

Cape Cod Neighborhood Support Coalition Mashpee, MA

CASA Hyattsville, MD

Child First Authority Baltimore, Maryland

Children & Families First Wilmington, DE

Children's Institute Los Angeles, CA

Cleveland Play House Cleveland, OH

Cleveland Teachers Union Cleveland, OH

Communities In Schools of Memphis Memphis, TN

Communities in Schools of Middle Tennessee Nashville, TN

Communities In Schools Pittsburgh - Allegheny County Pittsburgh, PA

Connected Community Schools - Rome Alliance for Education Rome, NY

Counseling In Schools New York, NY

Cypress Hills Local Development Corporation Brooklyn, NY

District 214 Education Association Schaumburg, IL

Duluth Community School Collaborative Duluth, MN

El Pueblo Nola New Orleans, Louisiana

Episcopal Community Services Philadelphia, PA

Essex County College Adjunct Federation Newark, NJ

Families First Atlanta, GA

Family Foundations Jacksonville, FL

Family League of Baltimore Baltimore, Maryland

Family-Community Resource Center of Camas School District Camas, WA

Family Service of the Piedmont Jamestown, NC

Family Service Society, Inc. Marion, IN

Family Services, Inc. Winston-Salem, NC

Family Support Services of North Florida Jacksonville, FL

Foundation for Vancouver Public Schools Vancouver, WA

FullBlast STEAM Baltimore, MD

Greater Baltimore Urban League Baltimore, MD

Harlem Children's Zone New York, NY

Hartford Public Schools Hartford, CT

Hathaway-Sycamores Child and Family Services Pasadena, CA

Hayward Unified School District Hayward, CA

Indianapolis Coalition for Community School Partnerships Indianapolis, IN

Introspect Youth Services, Inc. Chicago, IL

Irvington NAACP Irvington, NJ

John Boner Neighborhood Centers Indianapolis, IN

Keep The Vote/No Takeover Detroit, MI

Kent School Services Network Grand Rapids, MI

Kenwood Oakland Community Organization Chicago, IL

Knox Education Foundation Knoxville, TN

Latin American Youth Center Washington, D.C.

Laurus Grant-Writing and Evaluation Services Madison, NJ

Lincoln Community Foundation Lincoln, Nebraska

Lincoln Public Schools Lincoln, NE

Los Angeles Education Partnership Los Angeles, CA

Malone Community Center Lincoln, NE

Martha O'Bryan Center Nashville, TN

Marsing Joint School District Marsing, ID

Metropolitan Family Service Portland, OR
Metropolitan Family Services Chicago, IL
Milwaukee Christian Center Milwaukee, WI
Milwaukee Community Schools Partnership Milwaukee, WI
Minneapolis Public Schools-Community Education Minneapolis, MN
Montclair Community Farms Montclair, New Jersey
New Beginnings Community Church Hampton, VA
Northside Neighborhood House Chattanooga, TN
Noser Consulting LLC Nashville TN
Notus Community Schools Notus, ID
Oakland Unified School District Oakland, CA
Oasis A Haven for Women and Children Paterson, NJ
Ogden School District & United Way of Northern Utah Ogden, UT
Oklahoma City AFT Oklahoma City, Oklahoma
Our Children/Our Schools Newark, NJ
Parent Education Organizing Council Paterson, NJ
Parents Educating Parents Inc Newark, NJ
Partnership with Children New York, NY
Paterson Alliance Paterson, NJ
Paterson Education Fund Paterson, NJ
People of Color Union Members Minneapolis, MN
Phipps Neighborhoods Bronx, NY
Pillsbury United Communities Minneapolis, MN
Pinellas Educational Support Professionals Association Largo, FL
Power of families program/Community Service Council Tulsa, OK
Prince George's County Department of Social Services Landover, Maryland
Propel Schools Pittsburgh, PA
PTLFC-AAUP-AFT, Rutgers Adjunct Union New Brunswick, NJ
Racine Unified School District Racine, WI

RISE Treasure Valley Educational Partnership Boise, ID

Rome Alliance for Education Rome, NY

Rome Teachers Association Rome, New York

Saranac Lake Teachers Association Saranac Lake, NY

Scholars Life Center Baltimore, MD

School District of Lancaster Lancaster, PA

Seneca County Community Schools Seneca Falls, NY

Seneca Family of Agencies Oakland, CA

Slc People Project /AFT Ogdensburg, NY

Solvay Union Free School District Solvay, NY

Springfield Public Schools Springfield

Step Up Louisiana New Orleans, LA

Taos School Zone Taos, NM

The Baby Fold Normal, IL

The City of New York - Department of Education New York, NY

The Wei LLC Fair Lawn, NJ

The Y in Central Maryland Baltimore, MD

United Way of Asheville and Buncombe County Asheville, NC

United Way of Broward County Ft. Lauderdale, FL

United Way of Buffalo and Erie County Buffalo, NY

United Way of Central Georgia Macon, GA

United Way of Central Maryland Baltimore, MD

United Way of Erie County Erie, PA

United Way of Greater Milwaukee & Waukesha County Milwaukee, WI

United Way of Greater Toledo Toledo, Ohio

United Way of Lancaster County Lancaster, PA

United Way of Lee, Hendry, Glades, & Okeechobee Fort Myers, FL

United Way of Racine County Racine, WI

United Way of the Chattahoochee Valley Columbus, GA

United Way of the Greater Lehigh Valley Allentown, PA
United Way of Treasure Valley Boise, ID
University-Assisted Community Schools Knoxville, TN
Van Buren Resiliency Project / Rural Resiliency Community Alliance Van Buren, ME
Vancouver Public Schools Vancouver, WA
Wediko Children's Services Bronx, NY
Wide Angle Youth Media Baltimore, MD
YMCA of Greater Erie Erie, PA
YMCA of Greater New York New York, NY
Yonkers Federation of Teachers Yonkers, NY
Zone 126 Long Island City, NY