



June 18, 2013

The Honorable George Miller
Committee on Education and the Workforce
2101 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Senior Democratic Member Miller:

We are writing to thank you for the support you are providing for arts education in the Democratic Substitute which we understand you intend to offer during Committee consideration of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) this week. Your proposals, if enacted, would substantially advance student success in our nation's schools.

While the arts are defined as a core academic subject in federal law, many of our nation's students are being shortchanged of their potential by inequalities in our educational system. The 2009–2010 U.S. Department of Education's Fast Response Statistical Survey, *Arts Education in Public Elementary and Secondary Schools: 1999-2000 and 2009-10*, found that schools with a higher concentration of students in poverty were less likely to offer arts education. As you well know, addressing inequality in public education is precisely what the ESEA is intended to do. We support your proposals:

- **Emphasizing Title I support for all core academic subjects, including arts education.** The arts are currently defined in ESEA as a core academic subject of learning, but eligible uses for Title I funds have been unclear among state policy leaders
- **Including all core academic subjects in school turnaround provisions** ensures that these struggling schools could have greater flexibility to use the arts as a turnaround strategy
- **Including specified support for arts education grants in a Well Rounded Curriculum fund** at the U.S. Department of Education
- **Adding art and design into the definition of science, technology, engineering, and math (STEM)** program activities
- **Naming the arts as an eligible activity relating to expanded learning time (ELT)**

It is clear that there are critical equity gaps in student access to a quality arts education. The arts have a proven track record of improving student outcomes. The March 2012 report *The Arts and Achievement in At-Risk Youth* underscores the significant academic, workforce, and civic engagement gains associated with high levels of arts engagement for youth of lower socioeconomic status. As consideration of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act moves through Congress, we look forward to working with you to further strengthen any proposals you may offer as a part of this debate.

Thank you for your leadership and for including and expanding the focus on arts education in your legislation.

Association of Performing Arts Presenters
American Composers Forum
Chorus America
Dance/USA
Fractured Atlas
League of American Orchestras

National Alliance for Musical Theatre
OPERA America
Performing Arts Alliance
Theatre Communications Group