

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

President George W. Bush
The White House
Washington, DC 20500

December 21, 2007

Dear Mr. President

As you prepare your Fiscal Year 2009 budget, we are writing to urge you to include a significant funding increase for the No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB). As we set high expectations for our schools and students, we must provide appropriate funding to help them achieve.

The goals of NCLB – to set high standards, improve student performance, and increase accountability – require a collaborative relationship between local education agencies, states, and the federal government. States agree to implement the law with the understanding that the federal government will provide a share of the funding. When we fail to fund programs adequately, we damage that relationship and limit the law's potential.

In the first year of NCLB, education funding did increase, though not to the levels that were authorized in the law. In the last few years, increases have slowed, even as many states are experiencing budget deficits. This has left schools struggling to make progress and stay on a path to achieve proficiency by 2014. It has also created challenges for the schools that have not met NCLB requirements, as there has not been sufficient funding to adequately implement school improvement measures.

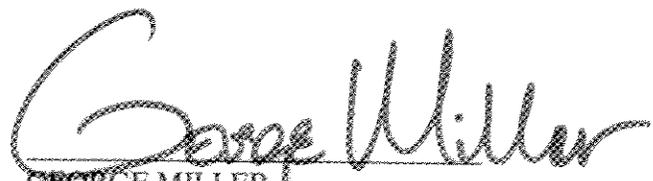
A significant funding increase for NCLB would have considerable positive effects. It would allow states to devote additional resources to train teachers to meet the academic needs of students with diverse learning requirements, create and implement better assessments that truly measure student performance, help turn around struggling schools, and work to narrow the achievement gap to ensure that every student has equal opportunity to succeed. Education is an investment that more than pays for itself; a well-educated workforce produces increased earnings and tax revenues and generates the knowledge and innovation that sparks economic growth. Furthermore, our democracy depends upon a world-class public education that prepares our citizenry to understand and succeed in a globally interdependent world.

Now more than ever, the federal government must renew its commitment to education funding. The Congressional funding boost this year represented a positive first step; we must continue that progress with additional investments and support.

We urge you to take the steps necessary to meet the federal government's obligation to NCLB by including a significant funding increase in your Fiscal Year 2009 budget. Education must be a top budget priority so we can ensure that all of our children have the resources they need for success.

Sincerely,


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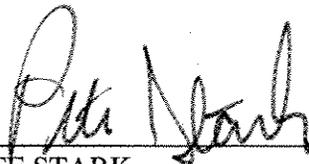
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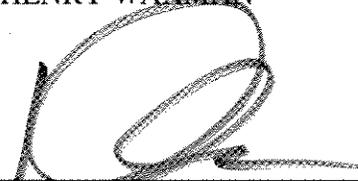
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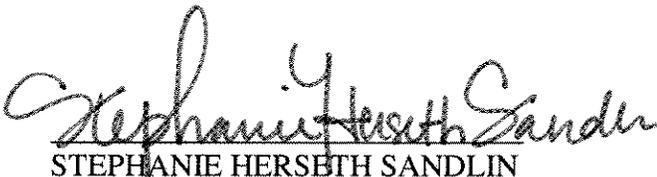

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