



SCHOOL DISTRICT OF SOUTH MILWAUKEE

901 15th Avenue - South Milwaukee, Wisconsin 53172

Blaise Paul
Director of Business Services
Phone: 414-766-5027
Fax: 414-766-5029

May 14, 2020

Dear Wisconsin Congressional Delegation:

The School District of South Milwaukee educates over 3,000 students and conducts business in a fiscally sustainable fashion. Working diligently to meet the needs of our students and employing several hundred adults, the school district is dedicated to educating and nurturing the whole child. We provide an array of services to the students and families of South Milwaukee including what may be considered typical educational services, food services, and co-curricular services. However, effectively meeting the growing needs of our students also means most recently expanding our social-emotional services for our students.

COVID-19 has challenged our delivery of services to students; however we have succeeded in adjusting in spite of the traumatic pace in which our students and staff pivoted from traditional instruction to virtual and remote learning. We are working through the reopening timeline and looking to provide services throughout the summer. The process will continue to be different but we are hopeful that once our nation and state resurface from the COVID-19 virus, our district can return to a somewhat predictable system.

Our anxiety is currently at an all time high due to the funding stress that we are seeing at our state level. Wisconsin has been a fiscally responsible state that has made tough funding decisions in the past, one of which, Act 10, has left lasting memories in the state of Wisconsin, and likely the nation. As tax revenues are challenged by the unprecedented pandemic that COVID-19 has presented, we are being told that we will need to adjust our budgets, however the figures we are looking at will cause significant harm to our students and the educational programming. In light of the COVID-19 financial impact, we are appealing to you to allocate funding for a State Stabilization Fund that will help bridge the gap between the expected revenues and the realized revenues. By bridging this gap, it will allow Wisconsin to fund education at the rate that will allow students to continue learning without losing opportunities due to budget cuts.

The School District of South Milwaukee Board of Education passed Board Resolution 20-4 (see attached), that supports the request sent in from the Council of the Great City Schools (a copy is attached). It is very important that we as a society do not hurt future generations due to a pandemic that has a deep financial impact, and is hopefully short in length. It is our hope that our economy gets up and running stronger than ever in the near future. However, the financial impact from this short period of time is significant. I implore you, please review the impact on state and local governments, specifically the loss of revenue due to the COVID-19 pandemic and create a state stabilization fund that will help stabilize the critical services that schools, police and fire departments provide to our communities.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads 'Blaise Paul'.

Blaise Paul
Director of Business Services

School District of South Milwaukee School Board
Resolution 20-4 Support for the Council of the Great City Schools Request for
Educational Stabilization Funds
May 6, 2020

Whereas, the school board, administrators, teachers, staff, parents and community members of the School District of South Milwaukee are united in our effort to provide all children with the highest quality educational opportunities possible; and

Whereas, School Districts throughout Wisconsin and the Nation are working hard to fulfill the educational needs of our students during the COVID-19 pandemic; and

Whereas, during these difficult times educators in Wisconsin and throughout the Nation have converted teaching and learning, with little time to prepare, to a temporary digital format; and

Whereas, the COVID-19 pandemic has caused significant financial hardships on state and local budgets; and

Whereas, Governor Tony Evers has estimated that the Wisconsin will likely have a shortfall of over \$2 Billion due to COVID-19; and

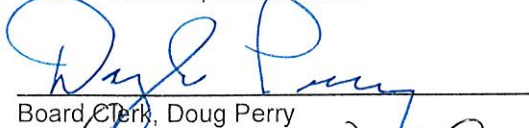
Whereas, the Council of Great City Schools warns of at least 275,000 teachers being laid off in big city public school systems alone; and

Therefore, the School District of South Milwaukee School Board resolves to express its support of the request made by the Council of the Great City Schools:

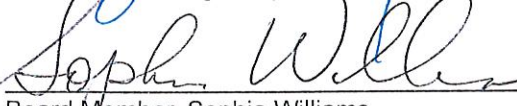
Therefore, Be It Further Resolved, that the School District of South Milwaukee Board of Education calls on Senator Ron Johnson, Senator Tammy Baldwin, Representative Gwen Moore, and all of the Representatives and Senators of the United States Congress to support an additional federal allocation of \$175 billion in Educational Stabilization Funds to schools throughout this Great Nation.



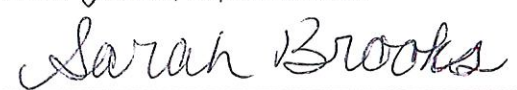
Board President, David Maass



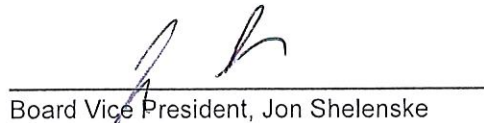
Board Clerk, Doug Perry



Board Member, Sophia Williams



Board Member, Sarah Brooks



Board Vice President, Jon Shelenske



Board Member, Patrick Hintz



Board Member, Augie Vega

Council of the Great City Schools®

1331 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW, Suite 1100N, Washington, DC 20004

(202) 393-2427 (202) 393-2400 (fax) www.cgcs.org

Council of the Great City Schools® MEMBER DISTRICTS

Albuquerque
Anchorage
Arlington, TX
Atlanta
Aurora, CO
Austin
Baltimore
Birmingham
Boston
Bridgeport
Broward County
Buffalo
Charleston
Charlotte-Mecklenburg
Chicago
Cincinnati
Clark County
Cleveland
Columbus
Dallas
Dayton
Denver
Des Moines
Detroit
Duval County
El Paso
Fort Worth
Fresno
Guilford County
Hawaii
Hillsborough County
Houston
Indianapolis
Jackson
Jefferson County, KY
Kansas City
Long Beach
Los Angeles
Manchester, NH
Miami-Dade County
Milwaukee
Minneapolis
Nashville
New Orleans
New York City
Newark
Norfolk
Oakland
Oklahoma City
Omaha
Orange County, FL
Palm Beach County
Philadelphia
Pinellas County
Pittsburgh
Portland
Providence
Puerto Rico
Richmond
Rochester
Sacramento
San Antonio
San Diego
San Francisco
Santa Ana
Seattle
Shelby County
St. Louis
St. Paul
Stockton
Toledo
Toronto
Tulsa
Washington, D.C.
Washoe County
Wichita

April 28, 2020

The Honorable Nancy Pelosi
Speaker of the House
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Kevin McCarthy
Minority Leader
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Mitch McConnell
Majority Leader
U.S. Senate
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Charles Schumer
Minority Leader
U.S. Senate
Washington, D.C. 20510

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

The Council of the Great City Schools, the nation's primary coalition of large urban public-school districts, writes to urge you in the strongest possible terms to approve new funding for local school systems in the next coronavirus supplemental appropriations bill. The Great City Schools support an additional federal allocation of \$175 billion in Educational Stabilization Funds distributed to the local level through the Title I formula. We also urge Congress to provide an additional \$13 billion for IDEA, \$12 billion in additional Title I program funding, \$2.0 billion for E-Rate, and emergency infrastructure funds that include public schools.

The down payment you made in our public education system by allocating some \$13.5 billion in the CARES Act for our schools was a critical lifeline for public education in this country. But we now urge you to provide a second, substantially larger installment for public school systems as you work on the fourth supplemental appropriations bill.

The initial allocation will help offset the unexpected costs we are incurring in providing meal services to our students and reestablishing instruction. Our public schools, in major cities and elsewhere, have stepped up to the challenge on very short order to revamp our operations and instructional systems to help meet the unexpected health threats that the nation now confronts. In the first chaotic days of the crisis, with no promise of any aid, our schools organized to provide meals to millions of students and families, set up drop-off points, arranged home deliveries, and distributed meals at homeless shelters and to students on the street. This work continues today, even as our staff and volunteers have contracted COVID-19. Your assistance will help sustain these vital efforts.

On the instructional side, our schools are providing instructional packets and making a rapid transformation from school-based to home-based learning. Lesson plans have been written and sent home with meals. Thousands of electronic devices are being purchased and distributed. Hot spots are being set up. Virtual instruction is being provided in many places alongside traditional although remote instruction, and teachers are being trained in how to teach from a distance. To be sure, school districts have a way to go before these instructional changes and online delivery systems are as effective for all students as they need to be. But the energy, dedication, and sense of urgency that have gone into these efforts have been nothing short of extraordinary.

At the same time, dark clouds are forming on the educational horizon that will spell disaster if Congress does not intervene. Significant revenue shortfalls are looming for local school districts that will exacerbate the disruption students have already faced. Some 40 to 50 percent of school district revenues, in fact, come from local sources that are expected to drop precipitously in the months ahead. This revenue decline will come on top of revenue losses in the months to come from state sources that have been more widely reported. Several big city school districts are now projecting 15 to 25 percent cuts in overall revenues going into next school year.

We are alarmed by these projections because we've seen them before. Similar losses occurred during the 2008-09 recession. At that time, Congress stepped up with nearly \$100 billion in education funding through the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA). While not compensating for all losses at the time, ARRA provided an essential infusion of funds that allowed local school systems to rebuild their instructional and operational capacity. As local revenues declined further, Congress then approved an additional \$10 billion in 2010 for an Education Jobs Fund to help school districts retain existing employees, recall former employees, and hire new ones.

The situation now, however, is far more severe and promises to cause much more substantial damage. Unlike in 2008 and 2009, schools nationwide had to close in mid-March and will likely stay shuttered through the balance of the school year. As aggressive as schools have been in providing instruction at a distance, districts continue to need resources to provide electronic learning devices and internet connections to every child. The amount of time devoted each day to lessons is less now than what would occur in a regular classroom. Students' ability to interact with their teachers remains limited. Some teachers will have little more than a crash course on how to conduct online learning. And, the research on the efficacy of virtual learning is not particularly strong. The truth is that there is simply no substitute for students being with their teachers all day.

The result, coming out of this school year, will be substantial unfinished learning for many students. On top of the predictable summer learning loss, vast numbers of students will be entering the next school year substantially behind academically—at exactly the time when budget cuts due to local and state revenue shortfalls will be occurring.

These budget cuts will mean teaching staff will be laid off, class sizes will balloon, and remaining teaching staff will likely be redeployed into classes and subjects that they may not be used to teaching—all at a time when they will be asked to address unprecedented unfinished learning from the last school year. An estimated 20 percent loss in combined state and local revenues would likely result in some 275,000 teachers being laid off in big city public school systems alone. The ramifications are not only profound for the students involved, but for the nation. This educational catastrophe could weaken the country's economic foundation for years to come without significant financial support from Congress.

In fact, multiple economic studies have shown that there is a direct connection between a country's GDP growth and its investments in elementary and secondary education. Research published by the National Bureau of Economic Research (NBER), for example, has concluded that, "For 15 OECD countries, 38 percent of the variance in (economic) growth-rate changes can be explained by test score changes." Another NBER study found that, "Increasing (educational) spending by 10 percent for all school-age years increased wages by 7.25 percent each year." And another study published in the American Economic Journal concluded that roughly 20 to 30

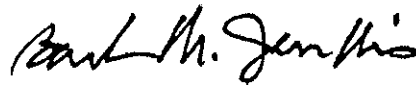
percent of variation in state GDP per capita was attributable to variations in knowledge capital. Finally, public education is one of the largest employers in the nation, dwarfing many private sector companies. In other words, investing in education is one of the best investments the country can make, not only for the success of its citizens but for its overall long-term viability. Sustaining and increasing educational spending now not only saves jobs in the short-run; it ensures economic strength and stability in the long-run.

With additional federal funds, America's public schools will be able to add summer school, expand the school day after reopening in the fall, retain and stabilize our teaching force, address the needs of our most vulnerable students, narrow the digital divide, and have a fighting chance at salvaging the futures of millions of young people. Moreover, your investment in education will help save the country long term. We hope you recognize the importance of your investment in the nation's public schools and work to ensure that the country remains strong in the aftermath of this crisis. Thank you.

Sincerely,



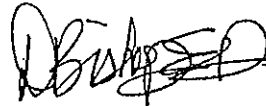
Eric Gordon, Chair of the Board
Council of the Great City Schools and
CEO, Cleveland Metropolitan Public Schools



Barbara Jenkins, Secretary/Treasurer
Council of the Great City Schools and
Superintendent, Orange County (FL) Public Schools



Raquel Reedy
Superintendent
Albuquerque Public Schools



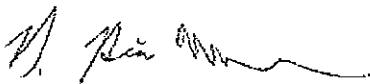
Deena Bishop
Superintendent
Anchorage School District



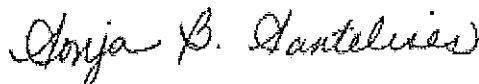
Meria Carstarphen
Superintendent
Atlanta Public Schools



Paul Cruz
Superintendent
Austin Independent School District



Rico Munn
Superintendent
Aurora (CO) Public Schools



Sonja Santelises
Chief Executive Officer
Baltimore City Public Schools



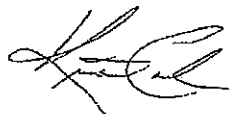
Brenda Cassellius
Superintendent
Boston Public Schools



Michael J. Testani
Superintendent
Bridgeport Public Schools



Robert Runcie
Superintendent
Broward County Public Schools



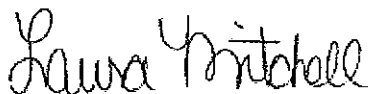
Kriner Cash
Superintendent
Buffalo Public Schools



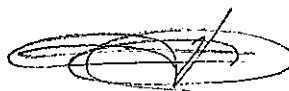
Earnest Winston
Superintendent
Charlotte-Mecklenburg Public Schools



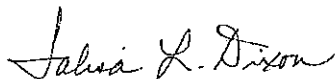
Janice Jackson
Chief Executive Officer
Chicago Public Schools



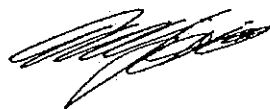
Laura Mitchell
Superintendent
Cincinnati Public Schools



Jesus Jara
Superintendent
Clark County School District



Talisa Dixon
Superintendent/CEO
Columbus City (OH) Public Schools



Michael Hinojosa
Superintendent
Dallas Independent School District



Elizabeth Lolli
Superintendent
Dayton Public Schools



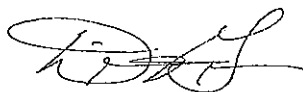
Susana Cordova
Superintendent
Denver Public Schools



Tom Ahart
Superintendent
Des Moines Public Schools



Lewis Ferebee
Chancellor
District of Columbia Public Schools



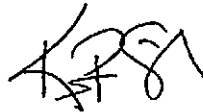
Diana Greene
Superintendent
Duval County Public Schools



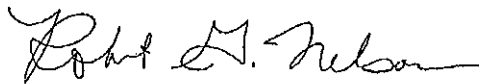
Nikolai Vitti
Superintendent
Detroit Public Schools Community District



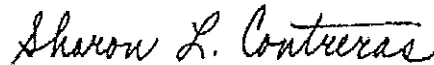
Juan Cabrera
Superintendent
El Paso Independent School District



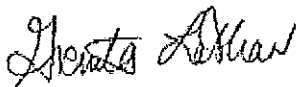
Kent Scribner
Superintendent
Fort Worth Independent School District



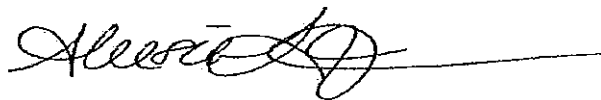
Robert Nelson
Superintendent
Fresno Unified School District



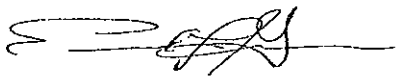
Sharon Contreras
Superintendent
Guilford County Public Schools



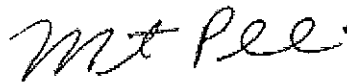
Grenita Lathan
Superintendent
Houston Independent School District



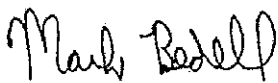
Aleesia Johnson
Superintendent
Indianapolis Public Schools



Errick Greene
Superintendent
Jackson (MS) Public Schools



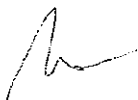
Martin Pollio
Superintendent
Jefferson County (KY) Public Schools



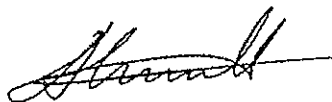
Mark Beddell
Superintendent
Kansas City (MO) Public Schools



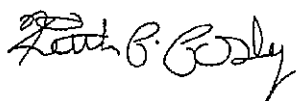
Christopher J. Steinhauser
Superintendent
Long Beach Unified School District



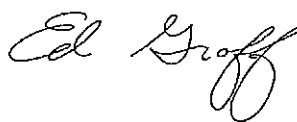
Austin Beutner
Superintendent
Los Angeles Unified School District



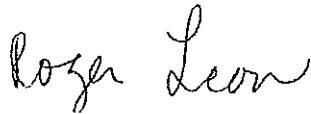
Alberto Carvalho
Superintendent
Miami-Dade County Public Schools



Keith Posley
Superintendent
Milwaukee Public Schools



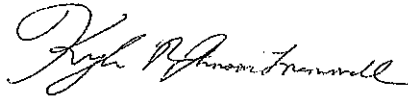
Ed Graff
Superintendent
Minneapolis Public Schools



Roger Leon
Superintendent
Newark Public Schools



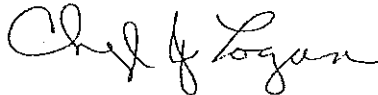
Richard Carranza
Chancellor
New York City Department of Education



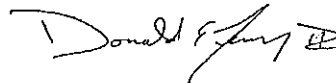
Kyla Johnson-Trammell
Superintendent
Oakland Unified School District



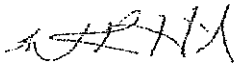
Sean McDaniel
Superintendent
Oklahoma City Public Schools



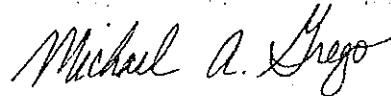
Cheryl Logan
Superintendent
Omaha Public Schools



Donald E. Fennoy II
Superintendent
Palm Beach County Public Schools



William Hite
Superintendent
School District of Philadelphia



Michael Grego
Superintendent
Pinellas County Public Schools



Guadalupe Guerrero
Superintendent
Portland (OR) Public Schools



Anthony Hamlet
Superintendent
Pittsburgh Public Schools



Harrison Peters
Superintendent
Providence Public Schools



Jason Kamras
Superintendent
Richmond (VA) Public Schools



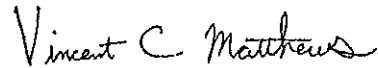
Jorge Aguilar
Superintendent
Sacramento City Unified School District



Pedro Martinez
Superintendent
San Antonio Independent School District



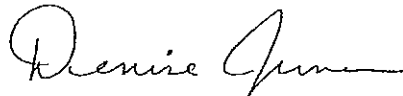
Cindy Marten
Superintendent
San Diego Unified School District



Vincent Matthews
Superintendent
San Francisco Unified School District



Jerry Almendarez
Superintendent
Santa Ana Unified School District



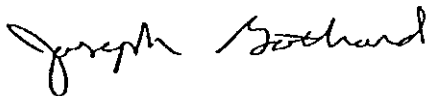
Denise Juneau
Superintendent
Seattle Public Schools



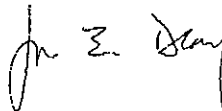
Joris M. Ray
Superintendent
Shelby County Public Schools



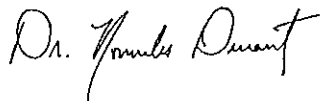
Kelvin Adams
Superintendent
St. Louis Public Schools



Joe Gothard
Superintendent
St. Paul Public Schools



John Deasy
Superintendent
Stockton Unified School District



Romules Durant
Superintendent
Toledo Public Schools



Deborah Gist
Superintendent
Tulsa Public Schools



Michael Casserly
Executive Director
Council of the Great City Schools