



Majority Leader Mitch McConnell  
United States Senate  
Washington, DC 20510

Speaker Nancy Pelosi  
United States House of Representatives  
Washington, DC 20515

Minority Leader Chuck Schumer  
United States Senate  
Washington, DC 20510

Minority Leader Kevin McCarthy  
United States House of Representatives  
Washington, DC 20515

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

As Superintendents, we write to urge you to expand AmeriCorps in the next COVID-19 relief package. In addition to the public health and economic crises created by COVID-19, we are facing an educational crisis, with 55 million students out of school for months. AmeriCorps and Senior Corps members are already partnering with schools and communities across the country, with established relationships, infrastructure and a track record of results. They have been essential partners as our districts transitioned to distance learning, helping us effectively meet the needs of our students in the wake of school closures. When we return to school this fall, we will need this help and more, if we are to close achievement gaps that have been exacerbated by the pandemic and school closures.

We anticipate a “COVID slide” that will affect students of all ages. Elementary students will have the largest academic losses and could be a year behind when they return. Middle and high school students who face barriers to online learning due to family responsibilities or lack of technology will be at an increased risk of falling off track to high school graduation. They will also face the challenge of re-entering school with unmet social-emotional needs and are more likely to be held back, which further increases their likelihood of dropping out. And COVID-related school closures have reduced or eliminated supports to high school students applying to college or seeking post-secondary training. As a result, the number of students who graduate without secure college placement or a viable career opportunity will grow and could lead to increased numbers of out of school and unemployed youth.

Expanding AmeriCorps is an efficient way of addressing these challenges. In the face of COVID-19, diverse teams of AmeriCorps members are serving on the front lines of the pandemic's fallout, supporting students with distance learning, narrowing the opportunity gap, and will help students and teachers recover from learning loss and increased exposure to trauma when schools re-open.

Expanding the number of national service members who can partner with teachers and schools to catch students up would provide critical relationships and the necessary capacity for schools to address increased levels of need. Investing in AmeriCorps will provide additional support for our students struggling with the impact of COVID-19 and will help ensure that we can all benefit from their talents and contributions in the future.

We were pleased to see the introduction of The Pandemic Response and Opportunity Act, S. 3602/H.R. 6702, a bicameral, bipartisan proposal to leverage the existing national service infrastructure to expand AmeriCorps to help our communities respond and recover.

On behalf of our students, educators, and schools, we urge you to expand AmeriCorps in the next pandemic relief package so we can tap the talent and energy of national service members to help ensure our students receive the attention and the support they need.

Sincerely,

Superintendent Name, Title, School District, City, State

cc: Chairman Lamar Alexander, Senate Health, Education, Labor and Pensions Committee  
Ranking Member Patty Murray, Senate Health, Education, Labor and Pensions Committee  
Chairman Bobby Scott, House Education and Labor Committee  
Ranking Member Virginia Foxx, House Education and Labor Committee