June 25, 2020

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

The Honorable Chuck Schumer
Minority Leader
U.S. Senate
Washington, DC 20510

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

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

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

Thank you for your leadership during the COVID-19 pandemic and for the K-12 education provisions included in the CARES Act, particularly the discretionary funding for governors and the inclusion of equitable services for private school teachers and students in the recovery. As Congress works on the next phase of education aid, we, the undersigned, write to express our strong support for language that would ensure all students receive education support, regardless of where they attend school.

For millions of K-12 students, the pandemic has led to an unprecedented interruption of critical classroom instruction time, educational programs, and services. Many of these students have fallen behind or will not be prepared to advance to the next grade. When governors took swift action to close schools at the onset of the pandemic, they treated public and private schools and their students equally by closing all schools. **We believe it is essential for the response to support students at all schools—both public and private—equally, too.**

We recognize many students and families are facing acute hardship as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic. This is true for students attending private schools across America, especially more than 1.7 million students from lower income families who are now facing additional economic uncertainty and potential instability in their children’s education. With many families suddenly facing unexpected and immense financial challenges with income loss, they may not be able to make required tuition payments. Those hardest hit by economic uncertainty and income loss are typically the most vulnerable—namely the poor and minority communities. **We believe that**
families seeking the best education opportunities for their children, especially those facing
difficulties due to COVID19, should be supported.

Additionally, many private schools support their economically diverse student body through
private philanthropy, which is also in jeopardy due to the economic downturn from COVID-19. **We believe public and private school students must be given the resources for success, particularly students in need.**

Private school closures would be devastating for families, students and communities. It will be
equally devastating, financially, for public school districts. A strategic federal investment will
help prevent a flood of students from private schools into districts that are already projecting
major budget shortfalls. States and districts will face an unbearable financial burden if current
private school students transfer into public schools in significant numbers. If private schools are
shuttered because families are not paying tuition for an extended period of time, the increase
of public education expenditures for millions of new students coming back into the district
systems will be staggering. **Should 20 percent of private school students have to be reabsorbed
into the public system, it will cost the public system roughly $15 billion.** **We believe students
should be supported in the education environment that is the best fit and causes the least
disruption to their learning.**

Further, migration of students from private schools to over-crowded public schools will not only
cost more money but will directly impact any re-opening of public schools and their capacity to
maintain social distancing. Such a prospect is all the more ominous given the higher than
average spread of the contagion in minority communities.

In response to these concerns, we submit the following ideas for inclusion in the next COVID-19
relief package:

**Emergency Appropriation** – Appropriate a one-time emergency tuition grant for low to
middle-income private school families.

**Federal Tax Credits for Scholarship Funds** – Create an annual federal tax credit for
voluntary donations to state-based scholarship granting organizations and workforce
training organizations. The scholarships could be used by families for an array of
educational options, including private school tuition, skilled trade union apprenticeship
programs, and industry recognized certification programs. The grant amount, per state,
could be tied to ESEA Title IIA calculations. States receiving these emergency grants
would continue the scholarship programs, funded through philanthropy and the federal tax credit, going forward.

These initiatives could be funded by setting aside 10 percent of any new federal COVID-19 relief funding provided to public schools. This percentage would be consistent with the overall population of private vs. public students in the country. Also, with continued uncertainty ahead, it is important to pair any one-time direct aid with a comprehensive, sustainable tax credit to sustain scholarships for children long term. **We believe it is important for families to receive education support and funding from these proposals.**

We all believe that *all of* our nation’s children deserve access to a quality education. As the country responds to COVID-19 and prepares for the 2020-21 school year, we look forward to working with you to preserve and strengthen educational opportunities for all students.

Sincerely,

Agudath Israel of America  
American Association of Christian Schools  
American Federation for Children  
Association of Christian Schools International (ACSI)  
Catholic Education Partners  
Center for Education Reform  
Center for Free Economy  
Council for American Private Education  
Cristo Rey National Network  
Ed Choice  
#EdTaxCredit50  
Invest in Education Coalition  
Jesuit School Network  
Leadership Roundtable  
Men and Women for a Representative Democracy in America  
National Catholic Education Association  
Phyllis Schlafly Eagles  
Ready Education Network  
The Catholic Association  
The Silver Shield Foundation  
Tradition, Family, Property, Inc.  
U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops, Committee on Catholic Education
University Consortium of Catholic Education
USA Workforce Coalition
William E. Simon Foundation
Xaverian Brother Sponsored School
Thomas B. Fordham Institute

AL  Alabama Opportunity Scholarship Fund
AR  ACE Scholarships - Arkansas
AZ  A Degree for Me
AZ  Arizona Christian School Tuition Organization
AZ  Arizona Council for American Private Education (AZCAPE)
AZ  Arizona Private Education Scholarship Fund, Inc.
AZ  Arizona Private School Tuition Organization AZPSTO
AZ  Arizona School Choice Trust
AZ  Arizona Tuition Organization (AZTO)
AZ  Arizona’s Catholic Tuition Support Organization (Arizona CTSO)
AZ  Arizona’s STO Association (ASTOA)
AZ  AZ4Education Scholarship Foundation
AZ  Children’s First Foundation
AZ  Cochise Christian School Tuition Organization
AZ  Institute for Better Education
AZ  Jewish Tuition Organization
AZ  Montessori Scholarship Organizations
AZ  Orme Primavera Schools Foundation
AZ  School Choice Arizona
AZ  School Tuition Organization 4 Kids (STO4Kids)
AZ  T.O.P.S. for Kids
AZ  White Mountain Tuition Support Foundation
CA  California Policy Center
CA  Pacific Research Institute
CA  The BASIC Fund (Bay Area, CA)
CO  ACE Scholarships - Colorado
CO  Independence Institute
CO  Ready Colorado
CO  Seeds of Hope (Denver, CO)
CT  CEO Foundation of Connecticut
CT  Yankee Institute
FL  Florida State Hispanic Chamber of Commerce
FL  James Madison Institute
FL  Step Up for Students (FL)
GA  Apogee Scholarship Fund
GA  Georgia Center for Opportunity
GA  GOAL Scholarships
IA  Iowa Advocates for Choice in Education
IA  Iowa Alliance for Choice in Education
IL  Big Shoulders Fund
IL  Empower Illinois
IN  Indiana Non-Public Education Association
IN  Institute for Quality Education (IN)
IN  Lutheran Scholarship Granting Organization of Indiana
KS  ACE Scholarships - Kansas City
KY  Bluegrass Institute for Public Policy Solutions
LA  ACE Scholarships - Louisiana
LA  Arete Scholars
LA  Aspiring Scholars
MA  Archdiocese of Boston
MA  Campaign For Catholic Schools
MA  CSF/ Inner-City Scholarship Fund
MA  Lynch Foundation
MA  The Catholic Foundation of Southeastern MA
MD  Children's Scholarship Fund Baltimore
MI  Mackinac Center for Public Policy
MN  AIM Higher Foundation
MN  Catholic Community Foundation
MN  Catholic School Center for Excellence
MN  Center of the American Experiment
MN  Freedom Foundation of Minnesota
MN  Minnesota Independent School Forum
MN  Opportunity For All Kids
MO  Children's Education Alliance of Missourhi
MO  Today and Tomorrow Foundation (St. Louis, MO)
MS  Mississippi Center for Public Policy
MT  ACE Scholarships - Montana
NC  Civitas Institute
NC  John Locke Foundation
NC  Parents for Educational Freedom in North Carolina
ND  Roughrider Policy Center
NE  Children's Scholarship Fund of Omaha
NH  Children's Scholarship Fund New Hampshire
NJ  Catholic Partnership Schools (Camden, NJ)
NJ  Diocese of Paterson
NJ  Healy Educational Fund
NJ  Tri-County Scholarship Fund (NJ)
NJ  Archdiocese of Newark
NV  AAA Scholarship Foundation
NV  Dinosaurs & Roses Scholarship Organization
NV  Education Nevada Of Northern Nevada (EFNN)
NV  IPOF Las Vegas
NV  Nevada Policy Research Institute
NY  Archdiocese of New York
NY  BISON Children's Scholarship Fund (Buffalo and Western NY)
NY  Catholic Foundation for Brooklyn and Queens
NY  Children's Scholarship Fund (New York)
NY  Cornelia Connelly Center
NY  Dominican Academy
NY  New York State Association of Independent Schools
NY  NYCAN
NY  Partnership for Inner-City Education
NY  Regis High School
NY  Saint Ignatius School
NY  The Loyola School
OH  Howley Foundation
OH  Northwest Ohio Scholarship Fund
OH  School Choice Ohio
OK  Crossover Scholarship Fund
OK  Go for Catholic Schools, Tulsa
OK  Opportunity Scholarship Fund Oklahoma
OK  Tax Credit Scholarship Program of the Archdiocese of Oklahoma City
OK  The Academy Scholarship Granting Organization
OR  Children's Scholarship Fund Oregon
PA  ACE Scholarship - Philadelphia
PA  ACSI Children’s Education Fund (ACEF)
PA  Business Leadership Organized for Catholic Schools (BLOCS)
PA  Children’s Scholarship Fund of Philadelphia
PA  Commonwealth Foundation
PA  Diocese of Scranton Scholarship Foundation
    Eastern Pennsylvania Scholarship Foundation (EPSF)-Diocese of Allentown Brooke
PA  Tesche’ Board Member & LLC Managing Member
PA  Faith In The Future
PA  Foundation for Catholic Education-Archdiocese of Philadelphia
PA  Independent Mission Schools
PA  Scholarship Partners Foundation-Diocese of Greensburg
PA  Second Century Scholarship Fund-Diocese of Altoona-Johnstown
PA  STAR Foundation scholarship Fund-Diocese of Erie
RI  Rhode Island Center for Freedom and Prosperity
SD  Great Plains Public Policy
TN  Beacon Center
TN  Memphis Opportunity Scholarship Trust
TX  ACE Scholarships - Houston
TX  Texas Public Policy Foundation
VA  Christ Chapel Academy
VA  Frontier Foundation
VA  Thomas Jefferson Institute for Public Policy
WA  Washington Policy Center
WI  MacIver Institute for Public Policy
WI  School Choice Wisconsin
WI  Wisconsin Council of Religious & Independent Schools
WI  Wisconsin Institute for Law & Liberty
WV  Cardinal Institute for West Virginia Policy
WY  ACE Scholarships - Wyoming