

July 22, 2009

Dear Representative Payne:

The 40 undersigned organizations support the Keeping Parents and Communities Engaged (PACE) Act. We commend you for your sponsorship and look forward to working together to include Keeping PACE in the reauthorization of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act.

The Keeping PACE Act creates incentives and structure for schools and communities to work together to support students through coordinated, comprehensive, and targeted approaches to meet the needs of students in school and outside school. We're confident that this approach, supported by extensive research, will lead to greater academic improvement and future success for our young people.

The legislation achieves these goals through a series of voluntary programs that will be supported by federal grants. Resources will be available to support parent and community outreach coordinators to assist schools in engaging with the community and achieving greater parental involvement. The bill also will connect students to community resources and comprehensive support services, so that effective community organizations and others can provide students with support outside the classroom to promote academic achievement. In addition, resources will be provided to schools as centers of communities, in order to expand the community school movement.

Extensive research and experience support the implementation of each of these three approaches. Through this approach, we believe that schools and communities will be able to provide the services needed by students, particularly those who are disadvantaged. We commend you for introducing this legislation and we look forward to working together to enact it.

Sincerely,

Communities In Schools
American Association of School Administrators
American Association of University Women
American Federation of Teachers
American Humane Association
America's Promise Alliance
Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development
Boys & Girls Clubs of America
Big Brothers Big Sisters of America
Center for American Progress

Center for Parent Leadership/Commonwealth Institute for Parent Leadership
Chicago Public Schools
Children's Aid Society
Citizen Schools
City Year
Coalition for Community Schools
Family Connection of Easton
First Focus
I Have A Dream Foundation
Massachusetts Parent Information & Resource Center
Mentor
National Alliance of Black School Educators
National Association of Elementary School Principals
National Association of School Psychologists
National Association of Secondary School Principals
National Association of State Boards of Education
National Association of State Directors of Special Education
National Collaboration for Youth
National Coalition for Parent Involvement in Education
National Education Association
National Youth Leadership Council
PACER
Parent Teacher Association
Parent Institute for Quality Education
Public Education Network
The Forum for Youth Investment
The National Coalition of ESEA Title I Parents –Region VII
Save the Children
United Way
Youth Service America