

February 1, 2021

The Hon. Michael Bennet
U.S. Senator
261 Russell Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

The Hon. Todd Young
U.S. Senator
400 Russell Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senator Bennet and Senator Young:

As local, state, and national organizations committed to investing in what works, we are writing to express our support for the Fund for Innovation and Success in Higher Education (FINISH) Act.

American colleges and universities have great untapped potential to increase economic opportunity and strengthen our democracy. Yet despite the fact that a growing number of higher education institutions and their partners have developed an increasing number of evidence-based solutions, we must accelerate this progress more broadly across the country.

We commend you for introducing the FINISH Act, which would leverage the power of evidence and innovation to improve outcomes in higher education. Specifically, we appreciate the inclusion of provisions in your legislation that would:

- create a tiered-evidence innovation fund that would test, replicate, and scale up successful approaches to improving access to and completion in higher education, including partnerships among states, nonprofits, K-12 institutions, and institutions of higher education;
- encourage institutions of higher education to create open educational resources;
- authorize 5 pilot Pay for Success initiatives that would invest federal funds in proven solutions once they demonstrate results; and
- authorize the U.S. Department of Education and Institute of Education Sciences to invest up to 1 percent of federal funds in evaluations to continuously improve their impact and results.

We believe that strategic investments in innovation, evidence-based practices, and evaluations have the potential to help many more students access and succeed in higher education.

Thank you for your continued efforts to ensure that federal taxpayer dollars are invested in what works in higher education.

Sincerely,

A+ Colorado
Abriendo Puertas/Opening Doors
Alliance for Excellent Education
America Forward
America's Promise
AppleTree Institute for Education Innovation
Association for Public Policy Analysis and Management (APPAM)
Bard College
Bay Path University
Boston Plan for Excellence
Bottom Line
BPC Action
Braven
California Association for Bilingual Education
Cascade Philanthropy Advisors, Inc.
Center for Research and Reform in Education, Johns Hopkins University
Center for the Social Organization of Schools, Johns Hopkins University
Chiefs for Change
Citizen Schools
City Year
Civic Enterprises
College Forward
College Possible
Colorado Succeeds
Communities In Schools National
Community Training and Assistance Center (CTAC)
Corporation for Supportive Housing (CSH)
Delta State University
Democracy Builders
Diverse Charter Schools Coalition
EDGE Consulting
Educate Texas
Education Analytics
Education Northwest
Education Research & Development Institute
EdVoice
EFFICACITY, LLC
Everyone Graduates Center
Eye to Eye National
FareStart
Farmingdale State College SUNY
Forum for Youth Investment
Friends of the Children
GreenLight Fund
Higher Learning Advocates
Hunger Task Force
IDEA Public Schools
iMentor
Institute for Child Success

Institute for Higher Education Policy (IHEP)
Jobs for the Future
Juma Ventures
JVS-Boston
KIPP
Knowledge Alliance
KnowledgeWorks
LIFT
Literacy Design Collaborative
Local Initiatives Support Corporation
Marzano Research
Maycomb Capital
McREL International
MENTOR: The National Mentoring Partnership
Millionaire Club Charity
Montgomery County Schools (NC)
New America Higher Education Program
New Classrooms
New Leaders
New Profit
Nonprofit Finance Fund
Project Evident
Quantified Ventures
RecycleForce
Reinvestment Fund
Research Institute for Key Indicators LLC
Results for America
RMC Research
Roca
Root Cause
Service Year Alliance
Social Finance
Sorenson Impact Center
Stand for Children
Stand for Children Colorado
Stand for Children Washington
Success for All Foundation
Teach For America
Teach Plus Colorado
Tennessee SCORE
Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi
The College of New Rochelle
The Dibble Institute
The Education Trust
The Institute for College Access and Success (TICAS)
The Policy & Research Group
Third Sector
Third Way
TNTP
uAspire
University System of Maryland

Venture Philanthropy Partners
Wake Technical Community College
Western Interstate Commission for Higher
Education
Year Up

Brian Merritt, Vice President, Learning &
Workforce Development, and Chief Academic
Officer, Central Carolina Community College
Diane Schanzenbach, Director, Institute for
Policy Research, Northwestern University
Doug Harris, Professor of Economics, Tulane
University
Jennifer Wade-Berg, Associate Professor,
Kennesaw State University
John Bridgeland, former Director of the White
House Domestic Policy Council (Pres. G.W.
Bush), and CEO, Civic, LLC
Joshua Ogburn, Director, University of
Virginia Pay for Success Lab
Joshua Powers, Professor of Higher
Education Leadership, Indiana State
University
Kathryn Stack, former Deputy Associate
Director and Senior Advisor, U.S. Office of
Management and Budget
Lynn Cominsky, Professor and Chair, School
of Education, Sonoma State University
Martin R. West, Professor of Education,
Harvard Graduate School of Education
Matt Segneri, Director, Harvard Business
School Social Enterprise Initiative
Paul Tchounwou, Associate Dean and
Presidential Distinguished Professor,
Jackson State University
Robert Shea, former Associate Director,
White House Office of Management and
Budget, and Principal, Public Sector, Grant
Thornton, LLP
Timothy Renick, Senior Vice President for
Student Success, Georgia State University

