

November 9, 2023

The Honorable Roberto Rodriguez
U.S. Department of Education
400 Maryland Ave SW
Washington, DC 20202

Dear Assistant Secretary Rodriguez,

Thank you for meeting with us recently and for your ongoing support of Promise Neighborhoods. We appreciate the Department's leadership in recognition of the impact that Promise Neighborhoods programs are having on the education and well-being of our nation's children.

Building on our discussion with you, we request that the Administration, in its fiscal year (FY) 2025 budget, proposes to double the FY 2023 Promise Neighborhoods appropriations level. The Promise Neighborhoods program is funded at \$91 million for FY 2023. Doubling this amount in the FY 2025 Administration budget proposal would increase program funding to \$182 million. Programs represented by the National Coalition for Promise Neighborhoods and many others across the country effectively utilize funds provided through the Promise Neighborhoods and other critical education programs to continue building the infrastructure of support to create vibrant, economically strong communities with a focus on family. These programs create an environment for residents to be their own agents of sustainable educational and economic change. By supporting the coordination of community, educational, and workforce services, these programs seek the permanent transformation of their communities.

Funding of the Promise Neighborhoods program has led to key impacts. The program has been recognized by the Government Accountability Office (GAO) as ensuring impactful collaboration that aligns with leading practices on the coordination of Federal resources. In a GAO report, Promise Neighborhood grantees noted that this collaboration yielded significant benefits, such as deeper relationships with community partners and the ability to attract additional funding. Specifically, 44 of 46 grantees reported that their collaboration with service providers broke down silos within their communities. Promise Neighborhood grantees also noted that the program uniquely funds organizations to build partnerships and facilitate collaboration.

Individually, Promise Neighborhoods boasts impressive results. Grantee data indicates that the program has led to leveraging resources and tracking performance within communities. For example, the percentage of kindergarten-ready students in the Chula Vista Promise Neighborhood in California has increased from 77 percent to 100 percent, more than double the national average. Further, graduation rates at Mission Promise Neighborhood schools in San Francisco, California, climbed to 86 percent, nearly a 20 percent increase since the schools became Promise Neighborhood programs. At Lockard Elementary in the Delta Health Alliance's Indianola Promise Neighborhood in Mississippi, kindergarten readiness rates increased by 55 points between 2013 and 2017, rising from 99th best to 8th best in the state. Lastly, Partners for Rural Impact Perry Promise Neighborhood in Kentucky contributed to a college-going rate of 74 percent, up from 63 percent.

Increasing funding to Promise Neighborhood programs means supporting evidence-based early childhood education programs that put children on a path to academic success, strengthening families while reducing their reliance on social welfare support, enabling parents to complete job training and financial literacy programs to boost family income and savings, increasing tax revenues for the States, fostering community engagement and civic pride and helping students overcome the large-scale learning loss associated with the COVID-19 pandemic. Our programs are instrumental in breaking generational cycles

of poverty and poor health that have trapped so many of America's families, and increased funding will increase our impact on these communities.

We urge you to strongly consider proposing \$182 million for the Promise Neighborhoods program in the Administration's FY 2025 budget proposal to Congress. Thank you for considering our views on this important matter.

Sincerely,

National Coalition for Promise Neighborhoods

Delta Health Alliance (Mississippi)
Mission Economic Development Agency (San Francisco, CA)
Partners for Rural Impact (Kentucky)
SBCS (San Diego, CA)