



The National Association for Magnet and Theme-based Schools

Every Student Succeeds Act Improves Access to Magnet Programs and Provides Needed Support to Address Growing Problem of Resegregation in American Public Schools

Washington, DC December 10, 2015 – In a substantial victory for magnet schools across the country, President Obama signed the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA). This legislation will reauthorize the Elementary and Secondary Education Act also known as the No Child Left Behind Act and expand federal support for magnet programs. It would reauthorize the Magnet Schools Assistance Program (MSAP) and allow funding for MSAP to gradually grow from its current level of \$91 million to \$108 million in FY 2020. In addition, the ESSA will extend the length of the grant by two years and increase cumulative grant funding for successful magnet programs to \$15 million.

Magnet Schools of America (MSA) Executive Director, Todd Mann stated, "We are very pleased that ESSA embraces the very real need for magnet schools in our 21st century public education system. The continuation of this crucial funding will help numerous school districts develop new magnet programs that promote school integration and prepare our students to flourish in an increasingly diverse and competitive global economy."

In addition to reauthorizing the program, the ESSA makes several strategic changes to (MSAP):

- It prioritizes the creation of magnet schools that promote socioeconomic integration and diversity. This acknowledges a wide body of research that shows that the socioeconomic composition of schools is the greatest factor affecting student achievement.
- The ESSA will improve the timeliness of the MSAP grant by instructing the U.S. Department of Education to disperse its grant funds at the beginning of the summer. Typically, MSAP grants are awarded in late September after the start of the school year, which limits the ability of school districts to properly plan before first-year magnet implementation.
- The bill will encourage school districts to work in coordination to break down barriers that sustain racial and socioeconomic isolation by creating interdistrict or regional magnet programs. This provision recognizes that the greatest amount of school segregation now occurs between school districts, rather than at the neighborhood level.
- The act will also eliminate the prohibition against using MSAP funds for transportation purposes, as long as it is sustainable and these costs do not constitute a significant portion of grant funds. This will help school districts improve access to new thriving magnet schools for all students while ensuring that a vast majority of MSAP funds will support core grant activities.

MSA is optimistic that passing this legislation will help stem the tide of growing [resegregation](#) occurring in our classrooms and ensure that all students are provided with equitable educational opportunities.

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MISSION STATEMENT

Providing leadership for high-quality innovative instructional programs that promote choice, equity, diversity, and academic excellence for all students.