



*The National Association of Magnet and Theme-Based Schools*

## **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

### **Magnet Schools of America Opposes Action by House Subcommittee to Eliminate Funding to Combat School Segregation**

**Washington, DC July 6, 2016** - Magnet Schools of America, representing approximately 3,800 magnet schools and 2.6 million students nationwide, expresses its strong opposition to the House FY 2017 Labor, Health and Human Services, Education and Related Agencies bill that would entirely eliminate funding for the Magnet Schools Assistance Program (MSAP), despite being reauthorized in the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA). Our members are perplexed by the action of the subcommittee to cut the only federal education grant designed specifically to reduce racial and socioeconomic segregation in the classroom through voluntary school choice.

The need for magnet schools is abundantly clear in light of the recent Government Accountability Office (GAO) [report](#) that found that students have become increasingly isolated by both race and socioeconomic status, with the number of intensely segregated schools more than doubling since 2001. According to the NAACP Legal Defense Fund, there are 300 open school desegregation orders in place across the nation.

“By eliminating funding for MSAP, the subcommittee is thoughtlessly choosing to cut off the only targeted support provided to school districts to combat the intransigent problem of school segregation,” said Executive Director, Todd Mann.

Since the landmark Supreme Court decision of *Brown vs. Board Education*, magnet programs have demonstrated their ability to lead the nation’s efforts in promoting racial, ethnic, and socioeconomic diversity in the classroom. For example, with support from MSAP, inter-district magnet programs in Hartford, Connecticut have successfully increased the number of students attending [integrated schools](#) from 11 percent to nearly 50 percent. According to a U.C.L.A. Civil Rights Project [report](#), magnet schools in New York City have the highest proportion of multiracial student bodies and the lowest proportion of segregated schools. In contrast, the vast majority of the city’s charter schools are intensely segregated, and only a fraction are multiracial.

In addition, last year the Los Angeles Unified School District (LAUSD) [announced](#) that magnet school students outperformed their peers on Math and English/Language Arts assessments across the state, district, and in charter schools. In fact, in almost every student classification - female, male, African-American, Asian, and Latino, magnet school students outshined their peers in math and English/Language Arts. The same is true for economically disadvantaged students and those with learning disabilities.

To meet growing public demand and to address the alarming problem of racial tension and unrest in our communities, which is rooted in the harmful effects of school segregation, we urge Congress to appropriate \$115 million to the Magnet Schools Assistance Program in Fiscal Year 2017 as requested by President Obama.