December 7, 2015

The Honorable Ted Cruz
United States Senate
404 Russell Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510-4304

Re: Support for the Every Student Succeeds Act

Dear Senator Cruz:

As Congress considers the rewrite of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act, also called the No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB), the Texas Association of School Administrators (TASA) urges you to vote in favor of its reauthorization, the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA), which has bipartisan support. The House recently passed the redesigned legislation with a vote of 359-64.

Senate passage of the ESSA would lessen federal intrusion in states such as Texas in which local student populations continue to rapidly increase in enrollment numbers and in diversity. In Texas, our locally elected school boards need the maximum amount of flexibility to implement programs that meet their students’ needs.

The ESSA would allow school administrators and teachers to use a variety of assessments to gauge student achievement, going beyond NCLB’s current one-size-fits-all method of using standardized assessment results as the sole measure of student academic mastery. The ESSA would also remove the punitive federal mandate of “adequate yearly progress,” which labels most every school a failure and requires states to implement school improvement models that are unsuccessful in improving student achievement.

We urge that you vote in favor of the ESSA when it comes before the Senate. We appreciate your service to the State of Texas.

Sincerely,

Johnny L. Veselka
Executive Director