



Great Public Schools  
for Every Student

1201 16th St., N.W. | Washington, DC 20036 | Phone: (202) 833-4000

Lily Eskelsen García  
*President*

Rebecca S. Pringle  
*Vice President*

Princess R. Moss  
*Secretary-Treasurer*

John C. Stocks  
*Executive Director*

June 27, 2019

U.S. Senator Bernie Sanders  
332 Dirksen Senate Office Building  
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senator Sanders:

On behalf of our three million members and the 50 million students they serve, we thank you for introducing the College for All Act. We believe the legislation's debt-forgiveness provisions will encourage talented, committed individuals to become educators who might otherwise be forced to make career decisions based on salary alone. Moreover, the legislation achieves our goal of making postsecondary education as financially accessible as possible, instead of forcing students to incur huge debts that will keep them from buying homes, starting families, and pursuing their dreams.

As Congress begins reauthorizing the Higher Education Act, the College for All Act achieves several of NEA's principles for that process, including:

- Tackling the burden of student debt—which is now nearly \$1.5 trillion and exceeds total credit card debt, according to the Federal Reserve Bank of New York;
- Making community college tuition- and fee-free for all students, regardless of income, and taking several other steps to make higher education more accessible;
- Enhancing Pell Grants' purchasing power, now at its lowest rate in more than 40 years, by expanding its use and ensuring low-income students can use the financial aid for textbooks, housing, transportation, and other college costs; and
- Increasing the number of full-time tenure-track instructional faculty at colleges and universities, thereby reducing reliance on underpaid adjunct and contingent faculty.

NEA members devote their careers to instilling in students the confidence to pursue whatever goals they set—whether those goals include attending trade school, an apprenticeship program, community college, or a four-year institution. The College for All Act will give more students access to the opportunities that NEA members prepare them for, and provide many students with the support they need to achieve their goals.

Sincerely,

Marc Egan  
Director of Government Relations  
National Education Association