**Sample letter to Local Education Leader**

Dear **NAME**,

As a civil rights organization, **ORGANIZATION NAME** has been pursuing the fight for equitable schools in **CITY/STATE/OUR COMMUNITY** for over **YEARS OF OPERATION.** **BRIEF ORGANIZATIONAL BACKGROUND, SUMMARY OF EDUCATION WORK.** As a member of the National Coalition on School Diversity (see school-diversity.org), we believe that integration by race and socioeconomic status is one of the most important steps **LEA** could take under the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA), and implore **the LEA** to seriously consider:

Including Strategies for Fostering Racial and Socioeconomic Integration as Evidence-Based Title I Interventions. Studies consistently show that racially, culturally, and economically diverse schools are strongly associated with a range of short and long term benefits for all racial groups.[[1]](#footnote-1) This includes gains in math, science, reading, and critical thinking skills and improvements in graduation rates.[[2]](#footnote-2) Research also demonstrates that diverse schools are better equipped than high-poverty schools to counteract the negative effects of poverty.[[3]](#footnote-3) Over the long-term, students who attend diverse schools are more likely than students from homogeneous schools to choose diverse colleges, neighborhoods, and workplaces later in life.[[4]](#footnote-4) They possess better critical thinking skills and analytical ability and are more likely to form cross-racial friendships.[[5]](#footnote-5) In light of the numerous benefits associated with diverse, integrated schools, LEAs should consider programs designed to foster greater integration as evidence-based Title I interventions.

Including Strategies for Fostering Racial and Socioeconomic Integration in Applications to Receive Funds Under Title IV Part A. Title IV Part A funds are provided to LEAs to ensure targeted groups, including minority and low-income students, have access to high quality course offerings in STEM, music, art, foreign languages, and other hallmarks of a well-rounded education. Additionally, these funds are to be used to support a positive school climate and foster improved mental health. All of the goals under Title IV Part A would be well served by racial and socioeconomic integration, as recent research illustrates that students in integrated schools have access to a broader range of high-quality course offerings and supportive school climates.[[6]](#footnote-6)

ESSA includes the requirement that local education agencies engage in "timely and meaningful consultation" with a variety of stakeholders while developing many aspects of Title I intervention plans and Title IV Part A applications. As a group deeply concerned about equity in education, we ask to be included as a stakeholder in your planning for ESSA implementation. Specifically, we request the involvement of **PERSON(S)** from our organization during **the LEA'**s consultations regarding Title I intervention development and Title IV Part A applications.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

**[ORGANIZATION PRESIDENT/CEO]**

1. For a summary of this research, see Roslyn Mickelson, “School Integration and K-12 Educational Outcomes: A Quick Synthesis of Social Science Evidence,” (National Coalition on School Diversity, 2015), available at http://www.school-diversity.org/pdf/DiversityResearchBriefNo5.pdf; Genevieve Siegel-Hawley, "How Non-Minority Students Also Benefit from Racially Diverse Schools," (National Coalition on School Diversity, 2012), available at http://school-diversity.org/pdf/DiversityResearchBriefNo8.pdf. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. For a summary of this research, see Susan Eaton, “School Racial and Economic Composition & Math and Science Achievement,” (National Coalition on School Diversity, 2011), available at http://www.school-diversity.org/pdf/DiversityResearchBriefNo1.pdf; Susan Eaton, "How the Racial and Socioeconomic Composition of Schools and Classrooms Contributes to Literacy, Behavioral Climate, Instructional Organization and High School Graduation Rates," (National Coalition on School Diversity, 2011), available at http://schooldiversity.org/pdf/DiversityResearchBriefNo2.pdf. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. For a summary of this research, *see* Philip Tegeler, Roslyn Mickelson, and Martha Bottia, “What We Know about School Integration, College Attendance, and the Reduction of Poverty,” (National Coalition on School Diversity, 2011), available at http://schooldiversity.org/pdf/DiversityResearchBriefNo4.pdf. [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
4. For a summary of this research, see Susan Eaton and Gina Chirichigno, “The Impact of Racially Diverse Schools in a Democratic Society,” (National Coalition on School Diversity, 2011), available at http://www.school-diversity.org/pdf/DiversityResearchBriefNo3.pdf [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
5. *Supra* note 1. [↑](#footnote-ref-5)
6. Amy Stuart Wells, Lauren Fox, and Diana Cordova-Cobo, *How Racially Diverse Schools and Classrooms Can Benefit All Students*, (April 9, 2016), The Century Foundation, *available at* https://tcf.org/content/report/how-racially-diverse-schools-and-classrooms-can-benefit-all-students/. [↑](#footnote-ref-6)