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Eric S. Gordon

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March 6, 2017

The Honorable Mr. Paolo DeMaria
Superintendent of Public Instruction
Ohio Department of Education
25 South Front Street
Columbus, Ohio 43215-4183

The Cleveland Metropolitan School District envisions an educational system that ensures every child the opportunity to attend a high quality school and that every neighborhood has a multitude of great schools for families to choose. We continue to utilize the tools given and implement the reforms made possible by the Cleveland Plan, Cleveland's plan for transforming schools (attached) and are showing significant progress (attached). We believe that Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) represents a new opportunity to craft a more equitable education system, one which compliments the investments we've made through the Cleveland Plan, and meets the needs of all Ohio students.

Yet our review of the state plan reveals too many reiterations of No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB). ESSA is an urban education bill and the targeting of the lowest performing 5% of schools will have a magnified impact "good or bad" on minority children. We fear the state's current plan represents a roll back away from the Cleveland Plan legislation and could significantly hamper future gains.

Accountability measures and the State Report Card must recognize growth and improvement. Districts that have greatly improved in one area but not necessarily met the proficiency goal should be recognized. Likewise, educator effectiveness and equity must reflect a teacher's impact through student outcomes more significantly. We cannot accept the contrast between consistently high evaluation scores for teachers and stagnant student achievement.

It is for reasons like these and others mentioned in the comments that compel us to request a later submission deadline. The September deadline can and should be used to develop workgroups to examine solutions to support student success.

Sincerely,

Eric S. Gordon
EDUCATOR: Chief Executive Officer

