



**The School District  
of Greenville County**  
*Board of Trustees*

March 25, 2014

The Honorable Lindsey O. Graham  
United States Senate  
290 Russell Senate Office Building  
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senator Graham:

As members of the Greenville County Schools Board of Trustees, we would like to encourage you to support restoring funding for Title I Grants and for special education under the Individuals With Disabilities Education Act, IDEA.

As you know, Title I is the federal program implemented to ensure that Federal dollars reach those students with the greatest needs, specifically those living in communities with the highest levels of poverty. These students often need targeted assistance to reach their potential and these federal funds have been instrumental in narrowing the longtime achievement gap between children with means and those without.

Unfortunately, the combined impacts of inflation, sequestration and budget reductions have decreased these funds to local school districts while the number of our children living in poverty has significantly increased as a result of our Nation's economic downturn.

Horace Mann once said, "Education...beyond all other devices of human origin, is a great equalizer of conditions of men -- the balance wheel of the social machinery...It does better than to disarm the poor of their hostility toward the rich; it prevents being poor." Title I funding can help educate those children who need the most help to ensure that they can escape the poverty in which they live. We hope that you will use your influence in Congress to protect these funds and the children who benefit from them.

Furthermore, Congress has never met its obligation to fund IDEA which provides the major source of federal funding to meet the federal mandates for services to students with disabilities. In fact, while Congress promised to fund 40 percent of the average per pupil cost for every student served under IDEA, the federal share for FY2013 was less than 16 percent. We implore you to increase the federal share of funding for special education before considering future funding for any new programs. It is well past time for Congress to meet its responsibility to local school districts and the students they serve for this 39-year-old mandate.

Thank you for your service to our School District and community. If we can be of service to you, please do not hesitate to call upon us.

Sincerely,

Charles Saylor  
Chairman