



January 7, 2009

Mr. Arne Duncan
Chief Executive Officer
Chicago Public Schools
125 S. Clark Street, 5th Floor
Chicago, IL 60603

Dear Mr. Duncan:

The National Science Teachers Association, the National Council of Teachers of Mathematics, and the American Chemical Society congratulate you on your nomination to serve as U.S. Secretary of Education. We look forward to working with the next Administration and believe that your extraordinary work with the Chicago Public Schools will guide your efforts as Education Secretary to greatly strengthen Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM) education and prepare our children for the 21st century economy.

Our respective organizations represent more than 150,000 mathematics and science teachers nationwide and more than 160,000 chemists and chemistry educators. In today's uncertain economic climate, it is critical that our citizens and students have a strong understanding of the STEM fields. We applaud President-elect Obama's pledge to make math and science a national priority, improve science assessments, and increase the number of science and math graduates. We believe these goals can be obtained in a shorter timeframe if the Department of Education immediately makes a strong public commitment to science and math by creating a senior-level position on the Secretary's staff with oversight for STEM education.

It is essential for senior policymakers to demonstrate clear leadership on STEM policy issues. A new "STEM Administrator" could be responsible for overseeing all STEM education efforts within the Department and collaborating with state and local stakeholders on best practices in STEM education that improve teacher quality, quantity, and retention and support student learning. The new "STEM Administrator" could also take the lead on efforts to achieve greater minority participation in STEM fields and close the achievement gap in math and science. Most importantly, the Department of Education "STEM Administrator" could lead other federal agencies with STEM education programs in a concerted effort to streamline these programs and maximize federal education dollars spent on STEM initiatives. Our organizations supported legislation introduced by Senator Barack Obama and Representative Mike Honda in 2008 that addressed this very issue.

Right now, in classrooms across America, our members are preparing the next generation of scientists, engineers, technologists and mathematicians and helping all children to

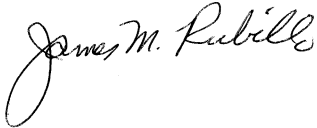
develop critical thinking and reasoning skills. As the incoming Secretary of Education, we urge you to take steps within the Department to recognize the critical role STEM education plays in our nation's future by immediately appointing a senior-level STEM Administrator to your leadership team.

Our organizations look forward to your Senate confirmation and are ready to assist in working with you on turning President-elect Obama's vision for science and math education into a reality. Thank you for your time and attention to our request.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Francis Q. Eberle".

Dr. Francis Q. Eberle
Executive Director, NSTA

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "James M. Rubillo".

James M. Rubillo
Executive Director, NCTM

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Thomas H. Lane".

Dr. Thomas H. Lane
President, American Chemical Society