



NATIONAL COUNCIL OF  
TEACHERS OF MATHEMATICS

February 23, 2018

The Honorable Lamar Alexander  
The Honorable Patty Murray  
Senate Health, Education, Labor and Pensions Committee  
US Senate  
Washington, DC 20510  
*Transmitted via email to [HigherEducation2018@help.senate.gov](mailto:HigherEducation2018@help.senate.gov)*

Dear Chairman Alexander and Ranking Member Murray:

The National Council of Teachers of Mathematics (NCTM) and its 60,000 members thank you for the opportunity to submit comments on the ongoing reauthorization of the *Higher Education Act* as you and your colleagues develop legislation to revise the law.

Founded in 1920, NCTM supports and advocates for the highest-quality mathematics teaching and learning for each and every student. We are invested in the preparation of mathematics teachers and care about the programs they rely upon to become effective educators, such as federal student aid programs, as well as federal investments in the institutions and programs that prepare them.

**The country needs mathematics educators and federal and state governments and coffers must support the identification, preparation and ongoing professional development of mathematics educators.** As such, an HEA reauthorization proposal should:

- Revise Title II of the Higher Education Act to recognize the continued need for federal incentives to support and further develop colleges of education and their programs to enhance prospective teacher preparation and provide ongoing support for early career teachers. The revisions should also recognize the role of research and scholarship in mathematics teacher education, with a particular focus on equity, diversity, and justice.
- Develop and invest in programs that target middle and high school teachers of mathematics and their preparation, and programs that develop and support mathematics specialists, coaches, and teacher leaders within elementary and middle schools.
- Develop and invest in programs for school administrators to support their understanding and leadership in creating schools with rigorous and engaging mathematics learning for all students.



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- Develop and invest in programs for educational research and educational researchers to expand and enhance students' learning and application of mathematics, the roles of communities, schools and teachers therein, and to positively impact student identity and agency relative to mathematics.
- Preserve the Public Service Loan Forgiveness (PSLF) Program, which encourages college graduates to pursue careers in education, firefighting, law enforcement, and other forms of public service. Mathematics educators are in short supply in underserved rural and urban areas, and this program is a tool to encourage teachers to serve in these schools.
- Preserve the TEACH Grant program, which provides grants of up to \$4,000 per year to students who agree to teach for four years at an elementary school, secondary school, or educational service agency that serves students from low-income families. Recipients must also teach in a high-need field, such as mathematics. This program is important to mathematics teachers nationwide.

A strong mathematics education for all preK-12 students is undeniably important to our nation's economic stability, future national security, and workforce productivity. An economically competitive society recognizes the importance of mathematics learning and depends on citizens who are mathematically literate.

NCTM believes that teachers and what they do in the classroom are at the heart of making this vision a reality. NCTM encourages support for prospective teachers and investing in in-service teachers at every stage of their development.

We look forward to working with you and your colleagues as you revise the HEA. If you have any questions about these comments, please do not hesitate to contact Dave Barnes, NCTM Associate Executive Director ([dbarnes@nctm.org](mailto:dbarnes@nctm.org) 703-620-9840 x2101).

Thank you for your attention to these views.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Matt Larson". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal line extending to the right.

Matt Larson, President