

Biden-Harris Administration Calls on Colleges, Universities, and Schools to Partner in Addressing K-12 Learning Loss, Announces Initial Cohort of Committed Partners

Today, the U.S. Department of Education released a Dear Colleague Letter calling on colleges, universities, and school districts to work together to use Federal Work Study (FWS) or other resources to increase the number of college students supporting school-aged children and youth in our nation's K-12 schools and out-of-school time programs.

With this call to action and as a part of its work with AmeriCorps and Johns Hopkins University through the National Partnership for Student Success (NPSS), the Department is pleased to announce the first cohort of 26 early adopter colleges and universities that have committed to using Federal Work Study or other resources to increase the number of students working as tutors, mentors, student success coaches, postsecondary transition coaches, and integrated student support coordinators in other support roles.

"Our colleges and universities have always been a driving force in solving America's greatest challenges; and, today, we're calling on these critical institutions to stand up once again by using Federal Work Study and other dollars to help accelerate learning and recovery in our K-12 schools," said U.S. Secretary of Education Miguel Cardona. "I applaud the 26 colleges and universities that are leading the way as early adopters of this effort by answering the call and partnering with the National Partnership for Student Success in this work. By serving as tutors and mentors, college students can make a positive difference in the lives of children and youth, and ultimately, it is in the best interests of our colleges and universities to help accelerate academic recovery in our public elementary and secondary schools. I'm hopeful that this initiative will inspire more college students of diverse backgrounds and income levels to consider careers as educators."

The Department's Dear Colleague Letter calls on colleges and universities that receive FWS dollars to set a goal of using at least 15 percent of their FWS funds for community service within the next two years, and to devote any increase in the use of FWS compensation for community service to employment in P-12 schools or out-of-school time programs as tutors, mentors, student success coaches, and in other NPSS roles supporting students. Colleges and universities may also join this effort by significantly increasing the number of college students placed in these kinds of roles, regardless of if Federal Work Study funds are used.

The Dear Colleague Letter also encourages colleges and universities to share data with the NPSS on the number of college students serving in these roles, and highlights how federal funds can account for a larger share of FWS compensation paid for these roles than other FWS roles.

Acknowledging the staffing challenges that many schools have faced as they work to mount high-impact tutoring and mentoring programs, the Dear Colleague Letter encourages school and district leaders to partner with regional colleges and universities to establish partnerships that will enable college students to fill these student support roles in schools and out-of-school time programs. In addition, the letter highlights federal resources that schools and districts can use to increase the number of individuals serving in these roles.

"Institutions of higher education have an unprecedented opportunity to swiftly address community learning needs and create pathways to service by pairing federal work study with AmeriCorps funding to establish or expand programs that place college students as tutors, mentors, postsecondary transition coaches and other student support roles," said Michael D. Smith, CEO of AmeriCorps. "AmeriCorps members and their peers in postsecondary institutions, along with our more than 200 higher education partners that manage AmeriCorps programs, can help lay the groundwork for closing this growing gap. We are proud to stand with our colleagues at the U.S. Department of Education, the National Partnership for Student Success, and those institutions that are rising to the challenge to help our country's students stay on track."

"We know the profound impact of the pandemic on K-12 students in Baltimore. They



have lost months and years of academic preparation that will have lingering effects on their economic opportunity in the years to come," said Ron Daniels, the President of Johns Hopkins University, home of the Everyone Graduates Center. "Through the National Partnership for Student Success, our work-study students will be able to make a measurable and meaningful difference in the lives of future learners while also learning new skills and engaging with our neighbors and communities. This project represents a truly mutually beneficial opportunity for all involved. As the home of the National Partnership for Student Success Support Hub, Johns Hopkins University and the Everyone Graduates Center at our School of Education are thrilled to support not only students in Baltimore through this work, but students in schools and higher education institutions nationwide."

The first cohort of early adopter colleges and universities committed to increasing the number of college students supporting K-12 schools and students includes:

- AZ - Arizona State University
- DC - Howard University
- MD - Johns Hopkins University
- MD - Montgomery College
- MI - Grand Valley State University
- MI - University of Michigan
- NY - New York University
- NY - State University of New York (SUNY) System
- Campuses: Buffalo State, Binghamton, College of Environmental Science and Forestry, Cortland, Old Westbury, Oneonta, Onondaga Community College, Rockland, Tompkins Cortland Community College, Upstate, and University of Albany
- OH - Rhodes State College
- TN - University of Memphis
- TX - Texas A&M University System
- Campuses: Central Texas and Kingsville
- VA - Longwood University
- VA - University of Virginia
- VA - Virginia Commonwealth University
- VA - Virginia Tech University

The COVID-19 pandemic has had a significant impact on our students' learning and mental health and has widened long-standing inequities and opportunity gaps for low-income students, students of color, English learners, and students with disabilities. As a result of President Biden's historic investment of \$130 billion through the American Rescue Plan to safely reopen schools, keep them open, and address the academic and mental health needs of students, schools nationwide are investing in high-impact interventions, such as tutoring and mentoring, afterschool and summer learning programs, and school-based

health services. As a result, today, many more students are on the path to recover fully from the pandemic and succeed in school, college, and future careers.

Despite this progress, many schools have faced challenges in finding staff to support these critical programs. Today's announcement supports President Biden's call for an additional 250,000 Americans to support our schools and youth-serving organizations by serving as tutors and mentors and in other high-impact roles that help address the academic, mental health, and broader impacts of the pandemic on school-aged children. To help meet this goal, the Biden-Harris Administration launched the NPSS in July 2022 at an event at the White House.

The NPSS is a research-based, locally-driven public-private partnership between the Department, AmeriCorps, and the Everyone Graduates Center at Johns Hopkins University that helps schools, districts, nonprofits, and State and local governments create, expand, and improve evidence-based programs that support the academic recovery, mental health, and overall well-being of students. It specifically supports increasing the number of tutors, mentors, student success coaches, postsecondary transition coaches, and wraparound/integrated student support coordinators providing research-based supports to students that promote their academic recovery and overall well-being.

We encourage additional colleges and universities to sign up to join the Administration's

effort to increase the number of college students serving in these roles, share their goals and progress, and participate in a professional learning community through the NPSS using this link: <https://www.partnershipstudentsuccess.org/colleges/>. School districts are encouraged to engage with the NPSS and access support implementing high-quality tutoring, mentoring and other programs, including help attracting volunteers or staff or identifying a college, university, or other partner, using this link: <https://www.partnershipstudentsuccess.org/schools-districts/>.

The Dear Colleague Letter released today is posted here.

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