

February 21, 2017

Secretary DeVos
U.S. Department of Education
Washington, DC

Dear Secretary DeVos:

I am writing on behalf of the National Center for Parent Leadership, Advocacy, and Community Empowerment (National PLACE), to introduce our organization and to let you know of our interest in working with you to ensure that the voices of families and family organizations are heard as you and other federal agencies review and develop new policies that impact our nation's children and families.

National PLACE is a national, non-profit membership organization committed to helping family-led organizations and individual families acquire the knowledge and skills needed to effectively "sit at the table" as partners and advocates to influence the policies and decisions that impact the lives of our children, youth, and families, including families that face the greatest challenges due to disability, special healthcare needs, poverty, and discrimination. Our members include a variety of non-profit family-led organizations including the organizations that house Parent Training and Information Centers, Community Parent Resource Centers, Family to Family Health Information Centers, Federation of Families for Children's Mental Health chapters, Parent to Parent organizations, etc.

In the past few years, we have submitted comments regarding the voice and participation of families in education policy now under your jurisdiction, including the regulations on the Every Student Succeeds Act and the Joint Guidance on Early Childhood Family Engagement.

Our organization is intimately familiar with the issues and concerns faced by families and by the family-led organizations who serve and support them. We would like to share our insights with you as you assume this critical role leading the U.S. Department of Education and begin to develop your agenda to improve educational services to, and outcomes for, our nation's children.

Please reach out to me at your earliest convenience to start this important conversation!

Very truly yours,



Diana MTK Autin
Executive Director, National PLACE