



# MARS AREA SCHOOL DISTRICT

545 Route 228, Mars, Pennsylvania 16046

Administration Office: (724) 625-1518

Business Office: (724) 625-9030

Fax: (724) 625-1060

July 13, 2018

The Honorable Elaine Chao  
Secretary, U.S. Department of Transportation  
1200 New Jersey Avenue, SE  
Washington, DC 20590  
United States

**RE: Gateway 228 Project  
Butler County, Pennsylvania**

Dear Secretary Chao:

On behalf of Mars Area School District, I would like to convey our strongest support for Butler County's funding request through the U.S. Department of Transportation – Better Utilizing Investment to Leverage Development (BUILD) Discretionary Grant Program for the Gateway 228 Project. The transportation improvements as part of Gateway 228 provide significant safety benefits for our students in Adams Township, Middlesex Township, Mars Borough, and Valencia Borough.

Mars Area School District serves approximately 3,000 K-12 students across southern Butler County, comprised of both rural and suburban neighborhoods. Gateway 228 is targeting transportation improvements to Balls Bend, a segment of Route 228 with significant safety and accessibility issues. This 1.6-mile, two-lane stretch is notorious for traffic congestion, increased travel times, and excessive crashes and fatalities. As the primary transportation route between the District's schools and outlying residential neighborhoods, Route 228 carries all our students to and from school daily. The safety of our students is of highest importance, and we commend Butler County's commitment to improve safety and capacity along Route 228.

Recognizing the impact of the proposed transportation improvements to the safety of our students, parents, and bus drivers, Mars Area School District is pleased to offer its support for Butler County's BUILD request. Should you have any questions regarding my support for this important transportation initiative, please do not hesitate to contact me at (724) 625-1518, ext. 1511. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Dr. Wesley W. Shipley, Superintendent  
Mars Area School District