



Learning and Education Academic Research Network  
Advancing the Sciences of Teaching and Learning

March 28, 2017

The Honorable Roy Blunt, Chair  
The Honorable Patty Murray, Ranking Member  
Appropriations Subcommittee on Labor, HHS, Education & Related Agencies  
U.S. Senate  
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Tom Cole, Chair  
The Honorable Rosa DeLauro, Ranking Member  
Chair, Appropriations Subcommittee on Labor, HHS, Education & Related Agencies  
U.S. House of Representatives  
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairman Blunt, Ranking Member Murray, Chairman Cole, and Ranking Member DeLauro,

We are writing on behalf of the Learning and Education Academic Research Network (LEARN) to express our support for funding several key programs that your subcommittees will debate as part of the ongoing FY2018 appropriations process. LEARN, a coalition of nearly 20 leading research colleges of education across the country, supports critical investments in research aimed at advancing the scientific understanding of learning and development. We advocate for greater funding for these priorities across all Federal agencies, including the Institute of Education Sciences (IES), the National Institute of Child Health and Human Development (NICHD), and the National Institute of Mental Health (NIMH).

As the primary Federal Agency charged with supporting research for education practice and policy, IES is essential to developing a comprehensive, reliable evidence-base, and ensuring that teaching and learning practices are grounded in scientifically-valid research. Increased funding for education research is vital to the implementation of the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA), considering the legislation's focus on evidence based interventions. Given the importance of developing reliable evidence, LEARN is requesting \$210 million for the Research, Development, and Dissemination line item within IES, in order to keep up with growth and inflation. In addition, we believe that funding for research in special education, through the National Center for Special Education Research (NCSER), should be increased by \$4.26 million, to \$58.26 million, still well below its FY2010 level of \$71.1 million, to which it has never been restored following the FY2011 appropriations process.

There are critical education research programs in other agencies that also need additional support. NICHD is essential to education research as it examines brain functions and the impact of different educational services on learning and development. LEARN supports a similar percentage increase in NICHD funding – in line with growth and inflation – to bring the total to \$1.42 billion. This increase will ensure that researchers can build on the knowledge already gained, evaluate what works best in treating developmental disorders, and develop new research-based strategies to improve student's learning and development.

*Boston University  
School of Education*

*Indiana University  
School of Education*

*Iowa State University  
College of Human Sciences*

*Purdue University  
College of Education*

*Penn State University  
College of Education*

*Rutgers University  
Graduate School of Education*

*Syracuse University  
School of Education*

*Texas A&M University  
College of Education and Human  
Development*

*The Ohio State University  
College of Education and Human  
Ecology*

*University of Florida  
College of Education*

*University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign  
College of Education*

*University of Kansas  
School of Education*

*University of Maryland College Park  
College of Education*

*University of Missouri  
College of Education and Human  
Development*

*University of Oregon  
College of Education*

*University of Pittsburgh  
School of Education*

*University of Southern California  
Rossier School of Education*

*Vanderbilt University  
Peabody College of Education and  
Human Development*

In addition, LEARN supports a similar percentage increase in funding for NIMH over FY2016 enacted levels, bringing the total funding to \$1.6 billion. This increase will help further understanding of the behavioral, biological, and environmental mechanisms necessary for developing interventions to reduce the burden of mental and behavioral disorders and optimizing learning and development.

The LEARN Coalition believes strongly that these key investments in education research will drive improvements in teacher and student performance in the coming years. Thank you for considering these requests and please contact us if we can be of any assistance.

Sincerely,

Glenn E. Good, Ph.D.

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