

Boston University
Wheelock College of Education and Human
Development

Boston College
Lynch School of Education

Columbia University
Teachers College

Indiana University
School of Education

Iowa State University
College of Human Sciences

Georgia State University
College of Education & Human Development

John Hopkins University
School of Education

Louisiana State University
College of Human Sciences and Education

North Carolina State University
College of Education

Oklahoma University
Jeannine Rainbolt College of Education

Purdue University
College of Education

Penn State University
College of Education

Syracuse University
School of Education

Rutgers University
Graduate 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 Arizona
School of Education

University of Alabama
College of Education

University of California – Santa Barbara
Gevirtz Graduate School of Education

University of Central Florida
College of Community Innovation and Education

University of Connecticut
Neag School of Education

University of Florida
College of Education

University of Georgia
School of Education

University of Houston
College of Education

University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign
College of Education

University of Kansas
School of Education

University of Kentucky
School of Education

University of Maryland College Park
College of Education

University of Minnesota
College of Education and Human Development

University of Missouri
College of Education

University of North Carolina
School of Education

University of Oregon
College of Education

University of Pittsburgh
School of Education

University of Southern California
Rossier School of Education

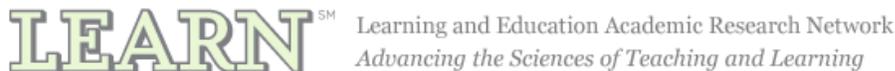
University of South Carolina
College of Education

University of South Dakota
School of Education

University of Vermont
College of Education and Social Services

Vanderbilt University
Peabody College of Education and Human
Development

Virginia Commonwealth University
School of Education



April 4, 2019

The Honorable Jose Serrano, Chairman
Appropriations Subcommittee on
Commerce, Justice and Science
Appropriations
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Robert Aderholt, Ranking
Member Appropriations Subcommittee on
Commerce, Justice and Science
Appropriations
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairman Serrano and Ranking Member Aderholt:

We are writing on behalf of the Learning and Education Academic Research Network Coalition (LEARN) to express our support for a \$9 billion overall National Science Foundation (NSF) Fiscal Year (FY) 2020 appropriation. Additionally, within NSF we support a \$1.01 billion FY 2020 appropriation for the Education and Human Resources (EHR) directorate. LEARN, a coalition of nearly 40 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 NSF.

We recognize that non-defense discretionary (NDD) funding for FY 2020 would absorb a \$55 billion cut under the existing spending caps required by the Budget Control Act. While strongly advocating for additional NSF and EHR funding, we urge Congress to first reach a new budget agreement to avert these cuts and increase NDD funding levels over FY 2019. This budget deal and its increase is vital for NSF to advance research across all scientific disciplines. Coupled with the need for a budget deal and to provide robust NSF funding, it is also critical to ensure that decisions regarding directorate-level funding are left in the hands of the scientific community and not dictated by Congress. This will ensure that NSF is able to adequately support research across scientific disciplines and target investments to the most promising research.

We are grateful for the appropriations the agency received in FY 2018 and FY 2019, yet we respectfully recognize that more is required to address the effects of historical underinvestment in fundamental research in the United States. According to the National Science Board, approximately \$3.92 billion of cutting-edge research deemed “very good or higher” in NSF’s merit criteria was unfunded in FY 2017. The potential impact of these missed opportunities is even more stark when considering the return on investment of fundamental scientific research and the significant investments that other nations—both allies and adversaries—are making in comparable research areas.

In addition to our call for a \$9 billion funding level for NSF overall, LEARN specifically supports funding for NSF’s Education and Human Resources (EHR) directorate, at \$1,010 billion in FY2020. Within the \$3.92 billion in unmet STEM funding opportunities are many essential activities and areas of discovery and development. Specifically, funding for the EHR Directorate has stagnated for many years, leaving critical gaps in our ability to address fundamental challenges for K-12, undergraduate, and graduate STEM

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education. Stagnation in key U.S. talent development programs comes as our national security leaders are sounding alarm bells over foreign talent recruitment programs which are effectively siphoning STEM capacity from the United States and elsewhere to countries that are strongly investing while we remain complacent.

Additionally, NSF is working to broaden participation in the STEM fields, but current funding levels are far short of what the United States needs to close the achievement gap and enable necessary progress through efforts such as North Carolina State University ability to develop a museum-based family STEM program that significantly increases the science expectancy value and science experiences of the youth participants and positively impacts the cultural capital and family science habitus of the parent participant, suggesting that sustained family STEM programming is a useful tool for increasing the science interests and career aspirations of youth. To ensure we have a workforce prepared to serve our present and future government, business, and academic needs, especially given global competition and national security concerns, it is critical that Congress provide this increase for EHR. Given the increasing importance of science and technology education in today's global economy, and the attendant need for high-quality, scientifically-valid research in these areas,

Thank you for considering these requests. These important funding increases will ensure that critical investments are supported that advance scientific understanding of learning and development. Please contact us if we can be of any assistance.

Sincerely,

Glenn E. Good, Ph.D.
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Dean of the College of Education, University of Florida

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