

Auburn University  
College of Education

Boston University  
Wheelock College of Education and Human  
Development

Boston College  
Lynch School of Education

Florida State University  
College of Education

Georgia State University  
College of Education & Human Development

Indiana University  
School of Education

Iowa State University  
College of Human Sciences

John Hopkins University  
School of Education

Lehigh University  
College of Education

North Carolina State University  
College of Education

Oklahoma University  
Jeanine Rainbolt College of Education

Penn State University  
College of Education

Purdue University  
College 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 Arizona  
School 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 Maryland College Park  
College of Education

University of Minnesota  
College of Education and Human Development

University of Missouri  
College of Education

University of Nevada-Reno  
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

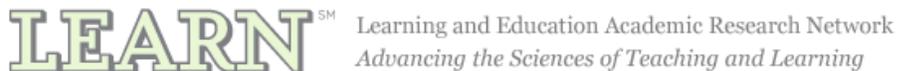
University of Texas at Austin  
College of Education

University of Vermont  
College of Education and Social Services

University of Wisconsin – Madison  
School of Education

Vanderbilt University  
Peabody College of Education and Human  
Development

Virginia Commonwealth University  
School of Education



April 21, 2020

Honorable Nancy Pelosi  
Speaker of the House  
U.S. House of Representatives  
Washington, DC 20515

Honorable Kevin McCarthy  
Minority Leader  
U.S. House of Representatives  
Washington, DC 20515

Honorable Mitch McConnell  
Majority Leader  
United States Senate  
Washington, DC 20510

Honorable Charles E. Schumer  
Minority Leader  
United States Senate  
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Speaker Pelosi, Minority Leader McCarthy, Majority Leader McConnell, and Minority Leader Schumer:

On behalf of the Learning and Education Academic Research Network (LEARN) Coalition, thank you for your efforts to mitigate the impacts of this pandemic and provide financial relief to many through the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act. Despite the initial efforts by Congress, significant COVID-19 related financial pressures are beginning to impact and unfortunately jeopardize Institution of Education Sciences (IES) funded research. **As a result, we are requesting \$75 million in supplemental appropriations to support research programs under IES that have been negatively impacted by COVID-19.**

LEARN Coalition Members, the 38 leading research colleges of education across the country that make up the coalition, have been working to help school districts respond to COVID-19 issues, chiefly by ensuring schools have evidence-based approaches to maximize online learning opportunities for their students. For example, a research-practice partnership with mathematics teachers in Los Angeles Unified School District shared resources for distance learning in culturally responsive and equitable ways and provided professional development that engages questions about teachers' pedagogical responsibility in the time of a pandemic. Additionally, several research teams (comprised of faculty members and doctoral research assistants) are working with community partners (e.g., parents, school districts, intermediate units) on mental health support for teachers, parents, and youth in response to stressors and challenges associated with stay-at-home restrictions and the COVID crisis. Other researchers at LEARN schools have been helping teachers and other educators adapt learning experiences and materials for PreK and kindergarten students for online use.

According to IES Director Mark Schneider, the Institute of Education Sciences had 400 to 500 research grants in the field when the pandemic hit the United States. Most of these grants will be affected in many ways, from missing data due to school closures to researchers who are idled due to their inability to work in their labs or the field because of social distancing orders in most states. Also, data sources mostly commonly used by researchers won't be available for them to conduct their typical data collections this year due to school closures.

While researchers are trying to help our nation's schools as we describe above, many graduate students will not be able to complete their research on schedule and career opportunities will be missed for early career researchers. These shutdowns also mean that salary, benefits, stipend support and tuition support is more critical now than ever. However, those using IES grants to

[www.learncoalition.org](http://www.learncoalition.org) ♦ [info@learncoalition.org](mailto:info@learncoalition.org)

continue these for graduate students, postdocs investigators and other personnel will deplete funding needed to complete the research they were doing before COVID-19.

Many of the impacts of this pandemic will require institutions to seek significant supplements to Federal research grants to cover unforeseen costs in order to complete the research. Anticipating this, we recommend including supplemental funds in the next COVID-19 bill in the following fashion –

- 1) Supplemental appropriations of \$75 million for the Institute for Education Sciences. This recommendation is based on three or more months of research slowdowns, school closures, and issues with research capacity and the necessity that approximately 30 percent of the IES yearly budget for research through the Research, Development and Dissemination and National Center for Special Education Research would be needed to compensate for this impact. The supplemental funds would be used to –
  - a. Cover requests for research grant (i.e., cost extensions) due to COVID-19 related impacts. As data collection and implementation is being delayed, personnel are still being paid and the field will need ongoing supplemental funding to continue critical projects that have been disrupted. Additionally, supporting immediate (and new) research on the impact of online learning and social distancing on student experiences in learning and social-emotional outcomes is critical. Further, documenting the experiences of students as well as families and teachers now is needed, and would require this supplemental funding.
  - b. Support the costs of transitioning to online implementation and data collection, as well as research on the implications of this, particularly if this continues into the fall.
  - c. Develop and validate professional learning systems that support high quality professional development opportunities for teachers and even greater virtual instructional coaching support. Providing professional development in an online environment and providing teachers with individualized coaching support will be even more critical for schools that expand their online footprint.
  - d. Help address and understand the effects of the digital divide and how to handle its impact. Many districts have tried different approaches (roaming hot spots, working with ISPs, phone friendly services). Evidence regarding what works is essential as we respond to these circumstances.
  - e. Develop online-personalized learning tools and assessment systems that are integrated with and support them is more important than ever due to COVID-19.

We appreciate your consideration of these recommendations and please contact us if we can be of any assistance.

Sincerely,

Glenn E. Good, Ph.D.

Co-Chair, Learning and Education Academic Research Network (LEARN)  
Dean of the College of Education, University of Florida

Camilla P. Benbow, Ed.D.

Co-Chair, Learning and Education Academic Research Network (LEARN)  
Patricia and Rodes Hart Dean of Education and Human Development of the Peabody College of Education and Human Development, Vanderbilt University

Rick Ginsberg, Ph.D.

Co-Chair, Learning and Education Academic Research Network (LEARN)  
Dean of the School of Education, University of Kansas