

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

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 Iowa
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

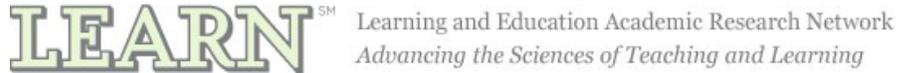
University of Texas at Austin
College of Education

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



March 15, 2021

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

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

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

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

Dear Chair Murray, Ranking Member Blunt, Chair DeLauro and Ranking Member Cole:

We are writing on behalf of the Learning and Education Academic Research Network (LEARN) Coalition to express our support for increased funding for several key education research programs that your subcommittee will debate as part of the Fiscal Year (FY) 2022 appropriations process. LEARN, a coalition of 38 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). Specifically, LEARN is requesting \$700 million for IES overall with \$216 million dedicated to Research, Development and Dissemination and \$70 million for NCSE. LEARN is also requesting that \$1.71 billion go towards NICHD and \$2.21 billion go towards NIMH in FY2022. While advocating for these increased resources for FY2022, we want to express our appreciation for the increases for IES and NIH that were made in FY2021.

Institute of Education Sciences

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. Unfortunately, IES is only able to fund one out of every 10 applications it receives due to the limitations in its budget, despite a far greater percentage of such applications being rated excellent and worth of funding.

The focus IES drives on education research is even more important now as our schools must ensure that efforts to reduce learning loss as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic are rooted in research and evidence-based practice. Examples of critical education research funded by IES include the development and adoption of a statewide approach to math instruction in one state that is now utilized in other states; the development and implementations of a reading curriculum now being adopted as a statewide literacy approach by a State legislature and improved instructional and behavioral practices for children with disabilities.

Given the importance of developing reliable evidence, LEARN is requesting \$700 million

for IES overall and \$216 million for the Research, Development, and Dissemination line item within IES. These resources for the R, D and D line item will build upon the critical resources provided in the American Rescue Plan Act for IES to further combat the negative learning outcomes resulting from the COVID-19 pandemic.

In addition, we recommend that funding for research in special education, through the National Center for Special Education Research (NCSE), be increased to \$70 million. NCSE is the only Federal agency specifically designated to develop and provide evaluations for programs for students with disabilities, but currently has a budget that has remained relatively flat since FY 2014. Research funded by NCSE provides special educators and administrators research-based resources that improve educational academic outcomes for children with or at risk of disabilities. During a time when special education students have been dramatically impacted by the change in schooling due to COVID-19, additional funding to NCSE is necessary to support data and evidence-based resources that will guide the continued COVID-19 response and recovery for these students.

The closure of schools and transition to virtual learning due to the COVID-19 pandemic has greatly disrupted education research at a time when it is more critical than ever before. Although IES grantees have adjusted their research where possible to remote and hybrid instruction, this pivot has also resulted in unanticipated costs, delays, and cancellations. Nevertheless, IES funded work has provided insightful research findings and valuable tools for educators and caregivers throughout the pandemic. This includes a longitudinal study on the impact of COVID-19 on the educational attainment of economically disadvantaged undergraduates and an interactive tool guide on teaching math to young children at home. The work of IES and its grantees, can guide the nation's learning recovery so that we can exit the pandemic with a stronger, more equitable, educational system than we entered with.

National Institutes of Health

There are critical education research programs within the National Institutes of Health 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 an increase in NICHD funding to \$1.71 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. Additionally, it will support NICHD's efforts to understand the effects of COVID-19 on key at-risk populations, including the cognitive development of children and adolescents.

LEARN also supports an increase in funding for NIMH to \$2.21 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 optimize learning and development. At a time when the mental health impact to children and adolescents is dire due to the COVID-19 pandemic, this research is needed more now than ever.

The LEARN Coalition believes strongly that these key investments in education research will drive improvements in teacher and student performance in the coming years and allow for the beginning of a successful recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic. Thank you for considering these requests and please contact us if we can be of any assistance.

Sincerely,

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

Glenn E. Good, Ph.D.

Co-Chair, Learning and Education Academic Research Network (LEARN)

Dean of the School of Education, University of Florida

Rick Ginsberg, Ph.D.

Co-Chair, Learning and Education Academic Research Network (LEARN)

Dean of the School of Education, University of Kansas