

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

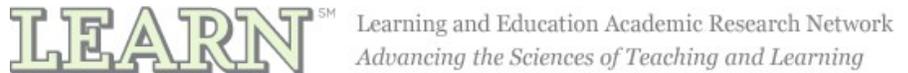
University of Texas at Austin
College of Education

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 Jeanne Shaheen
Chair, Appropriations
Subcommittee on Commerce, Justice,
Science, and Related Agencies
U.S. Senate
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Matt Cartwright
Chairman, Appropriations
Subcommittee on Commerce, Justice,
Science, and Related Agencies
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Jerry Moran
Ranking Member, Appropriations
Subcommittee on Commerce, Justice,
Science and Related Agencies
U.S. Senate
Washington DC 20510

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

Dear Chair Shaheen, Ranking Member Moran, Chairman Cartwright and Ranking Member Aderholt:

We are writing on behalf of the Learning and Education Academic Research Network Coalition (LEARN) to express our support for \$10 billion to be included for the National Science Foundation (NSF) in the Fiscal Year (FY) 2022 appropriations bill. Additionally, within NSF we support a \$1.141 billion FY2022 appropriation for the Education and Human Resources (EHR) directorate. 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 NSF.

While we are grateful for the funding NSF was appropriated in FY2021, we respectfully recognize that increased funding is required to address the effects of historical underinvestment in fundamental research in the United States as well as to respond to the current COVID-19 pandemic. According to the National Science Board, more than \$3 billion in high-quality proposals are submitted each year that cannot be funded with current appropriations. The potential impact of these missed opportunities is even starker 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 \$10 billion funding level for NSF, LEARN specifically supports funding for NSF's EHR directorate at \$1.141 billion in FY2022. Over the past 20 years, the share of U.S. research and development funded by the Federal government has declined; this decline has disproportionately impacted the higher education sector reducing resources to the sector that drives the most innovation in this area. Specifically, funding for the EHR directorate has not kept up with demand in recent years, leaving critical gaps in our ability to address fundamental challenges for K-12, undergraduate and graduate STEM 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. As the program devoted to promoting excellence in STEM education, EHR must be well funded in order to support the

development of a diverse, well-prepared and competitive scientific workforce.

As the only U.S. Federal agency that supports fundamental research and education across all fields of science and engineering, NSF is uniquely positioned to provide the best evaluation-based solutions to the COVID-19 pandemic. In addition to NSF's regular appropriations, NSF has mobilized funding from the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act to help the country respond and react to the challenges of the pandemic. One NSF supported project related to COVID-19 is the use of the Understanding America Study (UAS) by the University of Southern California to track educational experiences in the 2020-21 school year and analyze these overall outcomes for key demographic groups of interest. This study, which is housed in EHR, was immediately leveraged to address the COVID-19 pandemic and has been tracking the educational impacts of COVID-19 for a nationally representative sample of approximately 1,500 households with preK-12 children since March 2020. We urge Congress to provide NSF, and the programs within NSF, with the resources to continue supporting the research community and the critical work they are doing during this dire time.

NSF is also working to broaden participation in the STEM fields, but current funding levels are far short of what the U.S. needs to close the achievement gap and enable necessary progress. To ensure we have a workforce prepared to serve our present and future government, business and academic needs, especially given the current COVID-19 pandemic, global competition and national security concerns, it is vital that Congress provides adequate funding for NSF and the EHR Directorate. Examples of critical higher education research funded by NSF during the COVID-19 pandemic include an effort from the University of Arizona to explore how students and instructors, particularly those attending Hispanic Serving Institutions, cope with the challenges of online education. This research will help identify institutional resources and practices that effectively support students and can be employed to inform recovery from the pandemic.

Thank you for considering these requests. These important funding increases will advance scientific learning and development during a critical time in our nation's history. Please contact us if we can be of any assistance.

Sincerely,

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Dean of the College of Education, University of Kansas

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