



November 16, 2021

The Honorable Rosa DeLauro
Chair, Committee on Appropriations
United States House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Kay Granger
Ranking Member, Committee on Appropriations
United States House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Patrick Leahy
Chairman, Committee on Appropriations
United States Senate
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Richard Shelby
Vice Chairman, Committee on Appropriations
United States Senate
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Chair DeLauro, Ranking Member Granger, Chairman Leahy, and Vice Chairman Shelby,

We write on behalf of the Friends of IES, a coalition of 33 organizations committed to supporting the essential role of the Institute of Education Sciences (IES). We greatly appreciate the substantial increases for IES included in the House and Senate FY 2022 proposals that would address the continued need to invest in the important education research, statistical programs, and evidence-based resources that help inform policy and practice.

As you continue work on FY2022 appropriations, we urge you to include \$814 million for IES as part of a final appropriations agreement. This top-line level of funding was included in the Senate Labor, Health and Human Services, and Education appropriations bill and would help restore a decade of lost purchasing power that has limited the flexibility to fully fund emerging research areas and scale up promising interventions.

In particular, we strongly support the significant increase for Research, Development, and Dissemination included in both proposals. This additional investment is critical to ensure continued funding of core, field-initiated research within the National Center for Education Research. The proposed amount would also enable IES to expand its capacity to fund transformative research and replication studies to help determine what works and how to improve programs for specific student populations.

We also greatly appreciate the attention to the need to increase funding for Research in Special Education, particularly in the Senate bill. The National Center for Special Education Research (NCSER) is not holding its annual research or training competitions in FY 2022 due to limited funding. Additional investment in NCSER is critical to maintain ongoing special education research and to fund research in emerging areas including supporting students with disabilities in postsecondary education, pre-service teacher preparation in special education, and low-incidence disabilities.

We also are pleased to see additional funding in the House bill for the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES), which plays an essential role in collecting and disseminating high-quality, independent, and trustworthy data fundamental to understanding educational outcomes. As COVID-19 brought on significant disruptions in education over the past 18 months, NCES administrative data collections and longitudinal surveys are even more important for gauging the long-term effects of the pandemic on students, the education workforce, and school systems.

We value the increases in both proposals for the Regional Educational Laboratories (RELs), which serve as key partners with states and districts to build evidence-based strategies that support academic and socioemotional outcomes. Additional funding for the RELs could enhance ongoing efforts to bring promising practices to scale.

In addition to our appreciation for the proposed increases for these key programs within IES, we strongly endorse the Senate proposal to shift program administration funds for IES activities from the overall Department of Education to a new dedicated line within IES. Over the past decade, staff levels at IES have decreased by 15 percent, leading to overall challenges in the execution of key research, statistical, and evaluation activities. Providing IES the additional flexibility and resources to hire staff would allow the agency to more effectively carry out its mission.

We are concerned about the impact that a level-funded continuing resolution would have in further constraining the ability of IES to scale up evidence-based programs, fund research areas on pressing needs in education, and leverage the role of research-practice partnerships in connecting research findings with practitioner needs. We strongly encourage Congress to finish its work on FY 2022 appropriations by the end of this year.

We urge Congress to include \$814 million for IES in a final FY 2022 package. This significant increase in investment in IES is necessary to inform the development of tools and resources to support the success of our nation's students, teachers, and education leaders.

Sincerely,

American Educational Research Association
American Psychological Association
American Sociological Association
American Statistical Association
Association of American Universities
Association of Population Centers
Carnegie Mellon University
Consortium of Social Science Associations
Council for Exceptional Children
Council for Exceptional Children, Division for Research
Council of Administrators of Special Education

EDGE Consulting Partners
ETS
Federation of Associations in Behavioral and Brain Sciences
Institute for Higher Education Policy (IHEP)
Johns Hopkins University
Knowledge Alliance
Learning and Education Academic Research Network (LEARN)
Lehigh University
National Center for Learning Disabilities
National Council on Teacher Quality
National Down Syndrome Society
Penn State University
Population Association of America
Results for America
Society for Research in Child Development
Society for Research on Educational Effectiveness
University of Florida
University of Illinois Chicago College of Education
University of Missouri
University of Oregon
University of Washington College of Education
Vanderbilt University