Boston University
  School of Education

Indiana University
  School of Education

Iowa State University
  College of Human Sciences

Purdue University
  College of Education

Penn State University
  College of Education

Rutgers University
  Graduate School 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 Florida
  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 Missouri
  College of Education and Human Development

University of Oregon
  College of Education

University of Pittsburgh
  School of Education

University of Southern California
  Rossier School of Education

Vanderbilt University
  Peabody College of Education and Human Development

March 28, 2017

The Honorable Richard Shelby, Chairman
The Honorable Jeanne Shaheen, Ranking Member
Appropriations Subcommittee on Commerce, Justice, Science, and Related Agencies
U.S. Senate
Washington, DC 20515

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

Dear Chairman Shelby, Ranking Member Shaheen, Chairman Culberson and Ranking Member Serrano,

We are writing on behalf of the Learning and Education Academic Research Network (LEARN) to express our support for funding several key education research programs at the National Science Foundation (NSF) that your subcommittees will debate as part of the FY2018 appropriations process. LEARN, a coalition of nearly 20 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.

NSF provides critical support to advance research across all scientific disciplines, and we believe it is important that Congress continue to provide robust funding for NSF overall, and ensure that decisions regarding directorate-level funding are left in the hands of the scientific community. This will ensure that NSF is able to adequately support research across scientific disciplines and target investments at the most promising research.

Specifically, LEARN supports funding a 7.8 percent increase – in line with growth and inflation – for NSF's Education and Human Resources (EHR) directorate, to $948.6 million in FY2018. The mission of EHR is to achieve excellence in U.S. science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) education at all levels; supporting new research will be essential to broadening participation in STEM and keeping America on the cutting edge of innovation. In addition, LEARN supports a similar increase – to $293.8 million – in funding for the Social, Behavioral and Economic Sciences (SBE) directorate. SBE is the sole source of federal funding for research on human cognition, behavior, social structures, and social interaction, as well as for research on the intellectual and social contexts that govern the development and use of science and technology. 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, it is critical that Congress provide adequate funding for both the EHR and SBE directorates.

Thank you for considering these requests 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 and Professor, School of Human Development and Organizational Studies in Education,
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
Peabody College of Education and Human Development, Vanderbilt University

David H. Monk, Ph.D.
Co-Chair, Learning and Education Academic Research Network (LEARN)
Professor of Educational Administration and Dean, College of Education, Penn State University