

Auburn University College of Education

*Boston University
Wheelock College of Education & Human
Development*

*Boston College
Lynch School of Education and Human
Development*

*Florida State University
Anne Spencer Daves College of Education, Health,
and Human Sciences*

*Georgia State University College of Education &
Human Development*

Indiana University School of Education

*Iowa State University College of Health and
Human Sciences*

Johns 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

Teachers College, Columbia University

*Texas A&M University College of Education &
Human Development*

*The Ohio State University College of Education
and Human Ecology*

The University of Arizona School of Education

*University of California – Berkeley
Berkeley School of Education*

*University of California – Santa Barbara
The 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
Mary Frances Early College of Education*

University of Houston College of Education

*University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign College
of Education*

*University of Kansas School of Education and
Human Sciences*

*University of Maryland College Park College of
Education*

*University of Minnesota College of Education and
Human Development*

*University of Missouri College of Education &
Human Development*

*University of Nevada-Reno College of Education &
Human Development*

*University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill School
of Education*

*University of Oklahoma
Jeannine Rainbolt College of Education*

University of Oregon College of Education

*University of Pennsylvania
Graduate School of Education*

University of Pittsburgh School of Education

*University of Southern California
Rossier School of Education*

*The University of Texas at Austin College of
Education*

*University of Vermont
College of Education and Social Services*

*University of Wisconsin – Madison School of
Education*

University of Wyoming College of Education

*Vanderbilt University
Peabody College of Education and Human
Development*

*Virginia Commonwealth University School of
Education*

**Written Testimony of the Learning and Education Academic Research Network
(LEARN) Coalition Regarding FY2026 Science Technology Engineering and
Mathematics (STEM) related research programs before the Senate Subcommittee
on Commerce, Justice, Science, and Related Agencies (CJS) with respect to
funding for the National Science Foundation
June 13, 2025**

On behalf of the LEARN Coalition, we respectfully urge the Subcommittee to support increased funding for critical Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM) research programs as part of the Fiscal Year (FY) 2026 appropriations process. LEARN is a national alliance of 43 leading research colleges of education dedicated to advancing the scientific understanding of learning and development. We advocate for robust federal investment in education research across agencies—especially at the National Science Foundation (NSF). For FY 26, we request \$9.9 billion for NSF overall and \$1.53 billion for the Directorate for STEM Education (EDU).

NSF plays a pivotal role in supporting rigorous, ethical research that improves classroom instruction, strengthens teacher preparation, and addresses persistent challenges in K–12 and higher education. NSF-funded initiatives have produced measurable benefits—such as data-driven math interventions, technology-enhanced science instruction, and proven professional development models for educators. These investments yield tangible returns by directly supporting student achievement and improving teaching nationwide.

The EDU Directorate is especially well-positioned to advance this mission. Through research on how students learn STEM content and how educators can most effectively deliver it, EDU equips schools and districts with evidence-based tools that drive educational improvement. Its funding supports innovative curriculum development, scalable training models, and partnerships between universities and school systems. That is why we continue to strongly support a \$1.53 billion appropriation for EDU in FY 26.

Investments in EDU are not only timely—they are among the most effective uses of taxpayer dollars. These programs provide a strong return by translating research—including the responsible use of artificial intelligence—into classroom practice, ensuring our education system can prepare future scientists, engineers, and problem-solvers. As global competition for STEM talent increases and domestic research infrastructure faces continued pressure, EDU's work is essential to maintaining U.S. competitiveness and economic security.

President Trump's FY 26 budget request significantly reduces funding to NSF overall and specifically reduces funding to the EDU directorate by 75 percent. These funding levels leave the agency under-resourced at a time of growing demand. Funding reduction restricts grant access, slows progress on urgent challenges, and limits the capacity of researchers to deliver practical solutions for schools and educators.

Operational challenges, including recent staffing reductions, also pose serious risks to NSF's ability to carry out its mission. Without sufficient personnel and resources, grant processing may slow and support for high-impact research may be delayed. These inefficiencies ultimately shortchange students, educators, and the taxpayers who expect their investments to yield meaningful results.

America's leadership in STEM innovation depends on a strong foundation in education research. Strategic investments in NSF and EDU represent not only a commitment to educational excellence—they reflect a sound, results-oriented use of public funds that drives national progress.

The LEARN Coalition urges the Subcommittee to appropriate \$9.9 billion for NSF and \$1.53 billion for the EDU Directorate in FY 2026. These investments will strengthen the research infrastructure behind effective teaching, support student learning, and ensure taxpayer dollars are used to generate the greatest possible public benefit. We thank you for your consideration and would be pleased to provide additional information or examples of NSF-supported research that is delivering real results across the country.

Sincerely,

Camilla P. Benbow, Ed.D.

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