

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

March 19, 2018

The Honorable Tom Cole
Chairman
Subcommittee on Labor, Health, and
Human Services, and Education
House Appropriations Committee
H-309, U.S. Capitol
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Rosa DeLauro
Ranking Member
Subcommittee on Labor, Health, and
Human Services, and Education
House Appropriations Committee
1016 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Chairman Cole and Ranking Member DeLauro:

As you develop the Fiscal Year (FY) 2019 appropriations bill for the U.S. Departments of Labor, Health and Human Services, and Education, we respectfully encourage you to appropriate \$670 million for the Institute of Education Sciences (IES). This funding will also support the work of the National Center for Education Statistics, National Center for Special Education Research, and Regional Educational Laboratories.

IES is an independent branch of the Department of Education and it plays a critical role in developing the research base for and examining the effectiveness of education programs. IES is comprised of four national centers: the National Center for Education Research, the National Center for Education Statistics, the National Center for Education Evaluation and Regional Assistance, and the National Center for Special Education Research. The four centers support one another's activities to establish an evidence base and also communicate research-based findings and resources to policymakers, school and district leaders, teachers, parents, and students. As the nonpartisan agency for education research and data and the evaluator of federal education policies, IES helps make sure that taxpayers' money is being invested in efforts that are supported by rigorous research and demonstrated results. Local, state, and federal governments invest billions of dollars on public education each year and we depend on the evidence base to inform the best decisions for these dollars.

With IES support and leadership, the field of education continues to evolve with new methodologies and findings as well as increased engagement with and dissemination to state and local decision makers. And yet, the budget has remained flat – and some programs are functioning at funding levels lower than in years past. This means that many pressing questions about education remain unanswered, such as what we can do to prevent school shootings and how to best serve conventional students and create pathways for good-paying technical jobs that do not require a four year degree. Additional funding for Research, Development and Dissemination would enable further work in these areas. Although IES research has several studies on the higher education in the works, there is a lot that students and families still can't know without additional investment in the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES). NCES research can help inform students and families about education outcomes, including enrollment, completion, and post-college success. This research would have the added benefit of increasing transparency at our higher education institutions.

Despite a budget that is only two-thirds of what it was in 2005, research from the National Center for Special Education Research helps inform educators and families of evidence-based interventions and strategies that support the development and academic success of children with disabilities, which includes strategies for improving early childhood special education; advancing reading, writing, and language development; educating students on the autism spectrum; and helping students transition to post-secondary education and careers.


The Regional Educational Laboratories (RELs) are making important progress on a wide range of education issues facing states. Recent highlights include identifying charter schools that, based on the demographics and social economic levels of students, were performing better than expected in both math and English. Continuation of this work, funding permitting, could further examine the common factors of the schools beating the odds and how to replicate those programs. In addition, RELs have developed expenditure to performance ratios using existing data to better understand the relationship between the level of investment per student and student performance – an essential question to those responsible for spending tax payer dollars on education. Other RELs have made strides to supporting success for rural students examining what affects the likelihood of their postsecondary success.

Thank you for your attention to our request to appropriate \$670 million for IES. Our education system will be stronger in the future if we provide meaningful, sustained support for rigorous education research and evaluation today.

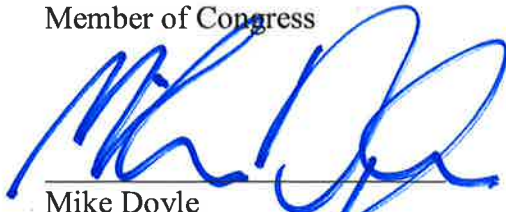
Sincerely,


Suzanne Bonamici
Member of Congress


Jared Huffman
Member of Congress


Robert C. "Bobby" Scott
Member of Congress


Mark DeSaulnier
Member of Congress


Mike Doyle
Member of Congress


Ruben J. Kihuen
Member of Congress

A. Donald McEachin

A. Donald McEachin
Member of Congress

Pramila Jayapal

Pramila Jayapal
Member of Congress

Jamie Raskin

Jamie Raskin
Member of Congress

Sean Patrick Maloney

Sean Patrick Maloney
Member of Congress

Earl Blumenauer

Earl Blumenauer
Member of Congress

Donald S. Beyer Jr.

Donald S. Beyer Jr.
Member of Congress

Lisa Blunt Rochester

Lisa Blunt Rochester
Member of Congress

Beto O'Rourke

Beto O'Rourke
Member of Congress

Michael E. Capuano

Michael Capuano
Member of Congress

John K. Delaney

John K. Delaney
Member of Congress

Jerrold Nadler

Jerrold Nadler
Member of Congress

Peter A. DeFazio

Peter A. DeFazio
Member of Congress

Eleanor H. Norton

Eleanor Holmes Norton
Member of Congress

Danny K. Davis

Danny K. Davis
Member of Congress

Sheila Jackson Lee

Sheila Jackson Lee
Member of Congress

Bobby L. Rush

Bobby L. Rush
Member of Congress

Terri Sewell

Terri A. Sewell
Member of Congress

David N. Cicilline

David N. Cicilline
Member of Congress

Jerry McNerney

Jerry McNerney
Member of Congress

Barbara Lee

Barbara Lee
Member of Congress

Stephen F. Lynch

Stephen F. Lynch
Member of Congress

Nydia Velázquez

Nydia M. Velázquez
Member of Congress

Daniel W. Lipinski

Daniel W. Lipinski
Member of Congress

William R. Keating

William R. Keating
Member of Congress

Bill Pascrell, Jr.

Bill Pascrell, Jr.
Member of Congress

Steve Cohen

Steve Cohen
Member of Congress

C.A. Dutch Ruppertsberger

C.A. Dutch Ruppertsberger
Member of Congress