

# United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

April 11, 2018

The Honorable Thad Cochran  
Chairman  
Senate Appropriations Committee  
Room S-128, The Capitol,  
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Patrick Leahy  
Vice Chairman  
Senate Appropriations Committee  
Room S-146A, The Capitol,  
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Roy Blunt  
Chairman  
Subcommittee of Labor, HHS, Education and  
and Related Agencies  
U.S. Senate Appropriations Committee  
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Patty Murray  
Ranking Member  
Subcommittee of Labor, HHS, Education  
and Related Agencies  
U.S. Senate Appropriations Committee  
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Chairman Cochran, Vice Chairman Leahy, Chairman Blunt and Ranking Member Murray:

As you develop the fiscal year 2019 Departments of Labor, Health and Human Services, and Education, and Related Agencies Appropriations bill, we urge you to appropriate \$670 million for the Institute of Education Sciences (IES).

IES is an independent and nonpartisan agency of the U.S. Department of Education and plays a critical role in developing the research base for and evaluating the effectiveness of the nation's education programs. 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 policymakers at all levels depend on IES-supported evidence to inform the best decisions for these dollars.

With IES support and leadership, the field of education continues to evolve with increased engagement with and dissemination of knowledge to state and local decision makers. Yet, the budget has remained flat – and some programs are functioning at funding levels lower than in years past. This means many pressing questions about education are left unanswered, including questions regarding school safety, serving non-traditional student populations, and creating affordable 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.

While 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. Students and families want to better understand institutional outcomes for students, such as enrollment, completion, and post-college success across programs and majors.

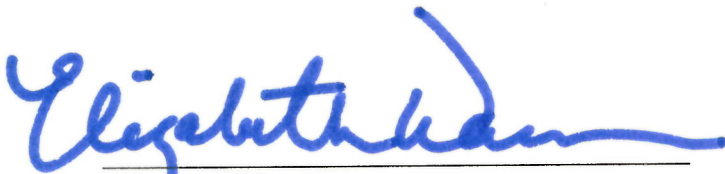
This would have the added benefit of increasing transparency at our higher education institutions.

Despite a budget that is only two-thirds of what it was in 2005, research from National Center for Special Education Research (NCSER) 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; supporting students with learning disabilities; 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 characteristics of high performing public charter schools. Continuation of this work, funding permitting, could further examine the common factors of the schools beating the odds and how to replicate those programs at other public schools. 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 investing taxpayer dollars on education. Other RELs have made strides to supporting success for rural students examining what affects the likelihood of their postsecondary success.

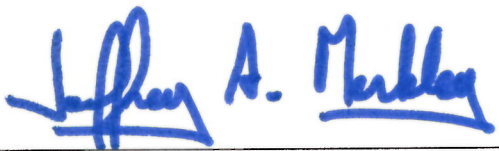
Thank you for your attention to our request to appropriate \$670 million for IES. Our education system will be stronger in the future if we provide meaningful, sustained support for rigorous education research and evaluation today.

Sincerely,




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Elizabeth Warren  
United States Senator




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Jeffrey A. Merkley  
United States Senator



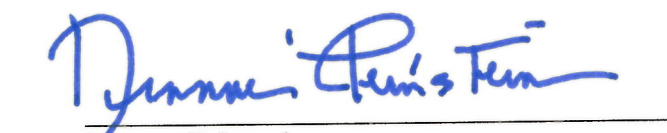
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Chris Van Hollen  
United States Senator




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Richard J. Durbin  
United States Senator



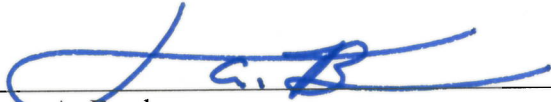
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Dianne Feinstein  
United States Senator



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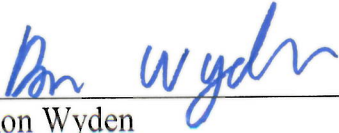
Robert P. Casey, Jr.  
United States Senator



Cory A. Booker  
United States Senator



Kirsten Gillibrand  
United States Senator



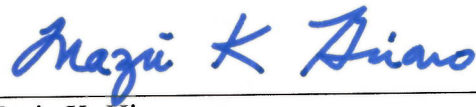
Ron Wyden  
United States Senator



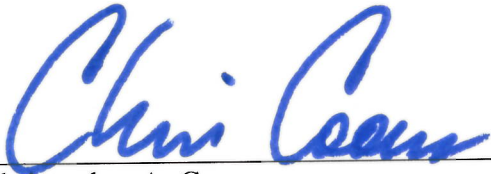
Richard Blumenthal  
United States Senator



Tammy Duckworth  
United States Senator



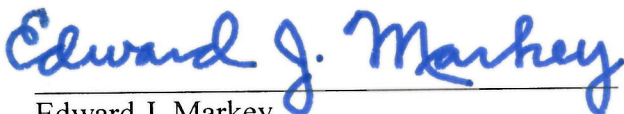
Mazie K. Hirono  
United States Senator



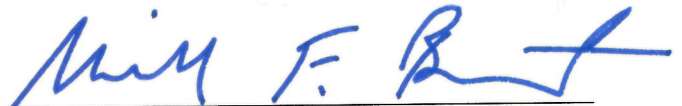
Christopher A. Coons  
United States Senator



Bernard Sanders  
United States Senator



Edward J. Markey  
United States Senator



Michael F. Bennet  
United States Senator



Sherrod Brown  
United States Senator



Bill Nelson  
United States Senator