



November 15, 2022

Shalanda Young  
Director  
Office of Management and Budget  
Executive Office of the President  
1650 Pennsylvania Avenue NW  
Washington, DC 20503

Dear Director Young,

We write on behalf of the Friends of IES, a coalition representing scientific associations, education groups spanning early childhood through workforce, universities, and special education organizations. We are committed to supporting the essential role of the Institute of Education Sciences (IES) in producing research, statistics, and evidence-based resources that aim to inform education policy and practice. We appreciate the administration's commitment to advancing the use of evidence and data to improve education, as well as the recent appointments made to the IES advisory board, the National Board for Education Sciences.

As you develop the FY 2024 budget, we encourage two recommendations that would support the continued work of IES to invest in innovative research, training programs that seek to broaden participation in education research, and the capacity to produce high-quality and trustworthy data. These recommendations align with the administration's FY 2024 research and development priority of innovating for equity and with the FY 2022-26 Department of Education learning agenda.

**First, support the highest possible increase over the FY 2023 funding level for the top line of IES.** This recommendation aligns with the recent enabling recommendation in March 2022 from the National Academies of Science, Engineering, and Medicine (NASEM) Committee on the Future of Education Research at IES for a re-examination of the IES budget compared with funding for similar scientific agencies. The NASEM report acknowledges that its recommendations require additional investments. The committee also expressed "dismay" at the "modest size" of the current IES budget, noting that "the modest size seems particularly unwarranted in light of the high degree of success IES has demonstrated in pursuit of its mission."<sup>1</sup>

The Research, Development, and Dissemination line (RD&D) includes funding for rigorous research in core education research areas and in emerging topics to support teaching and learning. Additional funding could address research needs in education technology and the impact of pre-service teacher preparation models on student outcomes, among other important

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<sup>1</sup> National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine. 2022. *The Future of Education Research at IES: Advancing an Equity-Oriented Science*, p. 195. Washington, DC: The National Academies Press. <https://doi.org/10.17226/26428>.

topics. We encourage robust funding in RD&D in FY 2024 to expand innovative research with the potential to transform education, restore and maintain research grant competitions to address persistent and emerging challenges and opportunities in education, and produce resources that help foster equitable educational outcomes.

The National Center for Special Education Research (NCSER) is the primary source of funding for education research that informs learning and instruction for students with disabilities. Additional investment in NCSER is critical to advance 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.

The National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) is the federal statistical agency that collects and produces data on important education indicators. NCES has been constrained by funding and staff in collecting, disaggregating, and disseminating data on timely education issues, such as information on the educator workforce and school crime and safety. We encourage additional funding for NCES to continue longitudinal surveys that inform understanding of the condition of education; bolster administrative data collection through its own programs and the State Longitudinal Data Systems; and produce near-real-time data, building on the success of the School Pulse Survey, that can be used in evidence-based policymaking.

The Regional Educational Laboratories (RELs) conduct applied research that is directly relevant to state and district administrators, principals and teachers. RELs also ensure that research is shared widely through its deep dissemination networks. Additional funding in the RELs could further scale up promising programs where there are important needs to address equity, including in postsecondary education and in rural educational settings.

**Second, address staffing needs to support IES research, statistics, assessment, evaluation, and dissemination activities.** We greatly appreciate the additional funding that IES has received over the past few fiscal years and in the American Rescue Plan to address potential learning gaps due to COVID-19. This additional support has and will continue to be important to understanding and improving learning outcomes. Unfortunately, staffing within the agency has not kept up with the new activities IES has undertaken with this additional funding.

We were pleased to see the inclusion of a program administration line item for IES beginning in FY 2022. This funding shift provided additional flexibility for IES to hire staff to more effectively meet its mission. In addition to robust investment in IES programs, we encourage an increase in the program administration line in the FY 2024 budget request.

Even prior to the pandemic, results from the 2019 National Assessment of Educational Progress reading and math assessments showed declining average scores in the 25<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup> percentiles. The recent declines in math and reading average scores on the 2022 fourth and eighth grade main NAEP and the Long-Term Trend assessment of nine-year-old students further underscore the urgency for evidence-based practices to support student learning, instruction, and

socioemotional needs. **We urge the administration to include robust increases in investments for all IES programs in the FY 2024 budget request to expand the capacity of IES to develop tools and resources to help ensure the success of our nation’s students, teachers, and education leaders.**

Sincerely,

American Educational Research Association  
American Mathematical Society  
American Psychological Association Services, Inc.  
American Sociological Association  
American Statistical Association  
Association of American Universities  
Association of Population Centers  
Boston University  
Carnegie Mellon University  
Consortium of Social Science Associations  
Council for Exceptional Children  
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  
LEARN Coalition  
Lehigh University  
Marzano Research  
National Center for Learning Disabilities  
New York University  
Penn State University  
Population Association of America  
Results for America  
Society for Research in Child Development (SRCD)  
University of California System  
University of Florida  
University of Oregon  
University of Virginia  
University of Washington College of Education  
Vanderbilt University