

July 30, 2024

The Honorable Michael Bennet
261 Russell Senate Building
Washington, DC, 20510

The Honorable John Cornyn
517 Hart Senate Office
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senators Bennet and Cornyn,

We, the undersigned, write in support of the New Essential Education Discoveries (NEED) Act. The bill will strengthen education R&D to dramatically improve outcomes and experiences for teachers and learners. The future of education will require innovations and evidence-based practices that can only be unlocked by investing in research and development to help prepare all students for a globally competitive world.

The 2022 National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) scores for 9 year-olds revealed the largest drop in reading scores since 1990 and a 7-point decline in math. NAEP scores for 13 year-olds are similarly bleak. The COVID-19 pandemic prompted unprecedented learning loss and exacerbated existing disparities in student achievement. The loss of one-third of a year of learning translates to an economic downturn of \$14.2 trillion and threatens national competitiveness. The NEED Act will accelerate efforts to reverse this trend by advancing breakthrough ideas to improve teaching and learning.

The NEED Act will establish a National Center for Advanced Development in Education (NCADE) at the Institute of Education Sciences (IES). Modeled after the success of the Defense Advanced Research Projects Agency (DARPA), the Defense Department's renowned R&D incubator, NCADE will have the hiring flexibility to bring creative and nimble project managers that can lead multidisciplinary teams to conduct informed-risk, high-reward projects. Specifically, NCADE will fund projects to develop cutting-edge practices, breakthrough technologies, and pedagogical approaches based on their potential to transform education.

The NEED Act will also expand and upgrade the Statewide Longitudinal Data Systems (SLDS) program. This will help states better track students' progress through K-12 and into the workforce, integrate data across multiple domains, ensure the privacy of students' education records, and generate high-quality data in actionable formats. The modernization of SLDS will ensure that state data systems can be an effective tool to inform translational and use-driven research, resulting in meaningful and measurable benefits in school districts and postsecondary institutions.

Thank you for your leadership on this critical issue. We look forward to working with you to prioritize this legislation to become law.

Sincerely,

Accelerate
Advanced Education Research and Development Fund (AERDF)
All4Ed

Alliance for Learning Innovation
America Forward
American Association of Colleges for Teacher Education (AACTE)
American Educational Research Association
American Federation of Teachers
American Psychological Association Services
Association of Public Data Users (APDU)
Beyond100K
Buck Institute for Education
CAST, Inc.
Coalition for Community Schools
Colorado League of Charter Schools
Colorado Succeeds
Committee for Children
Common Sense Media
Data Quality Campaign
Digital Promise Global
EDGE Consulting Partners
Education Reform Now
Education Reimagined
Educators for Excellence
ExcelinEd in Action
Federation of American Scientists
Formation Ventures
Foundation for American Innovation
Getting Smart
Getting Smart Collective
InnovateEDU
Institute for Educational Leadership
JB Holston, former Dean of the Daniel Felix Ritchie School of Engineering and Computer Science at the University of Denver
John Bailey, Former White House Domestic Policy Advisor
Kathy Stack, Senior Fellow, Tobin Center for Economic Policy, Yale University; Former Deputy Associate Director for Education, Income Maintenance and Labor, White House Office of Management and Budget
Knowledge Alliance

Kumar Garg, Renaissance Philanthropy
Leading Educators
Learner-Centered Collaborative
LearnerStudio
LearningForge LLC
Lehigh University
Luminary Labs
National Alliance for Public Charter Schools
National Association of Secondary School Principals
National Center for Learning Disabilities
National Summer Learning Association (NSLA)
New Classrooms
New Leaders
North Dakota Department of Public Instruction
Pamela Cantor MD
PBLWorks
reDesign
Results for America
SETDA
Teach Plus
Texas Behavioral Science and Policy Institute, University of Texas at Austin
The Education Trust
The Learning Accelerator
The Learning Agency
The Society for Research in Child Development (SRCD)
The Tech Interactive
TNTP
Transcend
University of Colorado - Boulder, Colorado Springs, Denver, Anschutz Campuses
University of Denver
Zarek Drozda. Executive Director, Data Science 4 Everyone