July 28, 2022

The Honorable Suzanne Bonamici   The Honorable Brian K. Fitzpatrick
2231 Rayburn House Office Building   271 Cannon House Office Building
Washington, DC, 20515-3701   Washington, DC, 20515-3801

Dear Representatives Bonamici and Fitzpatrick,

We, the undersigned, are writing in support of HR 8548, the New Essential Education Discoveries (NEED) Act. The law authorizes critical funding for education R&D projects that hold the potential to dramatically improve outcomes and experiences for teachers and learners. The future of education will require skills and approaches that can only be unlocked by investing in research, development, and implementation to ensure all students are prepared for a globally competitive world.

The need to expand the evidence base about what works and develop new tools in education is urgent. Gaps in educational opportunity and achievement in our country remain shockingly persistent. Reading and math scores have remained stagnant or declined since 2012, with losses concentrated among those scoring at the bottom, widening achievement gaps. The COVID-19 pandemic has only further exacerbated education gaps and led to serious learning loss. These deficits threaten America's competitive position in the world — particularly in relation to China, whose students routinely score better than American students on international achievement tests.

As we recover from the pandemic, transformative changes in education and education research are needed. Unfortunately, R&D in education is woefully under-resourced when compared with similar large-scale national sectors like health and science. The COVID-19 vaccines showed what public-private R&D efforts can produce with proper investment and urgency. A similar series of federal investments in better data systems and education R&D are required to spur the development of education innovation at scale.

The NEED Act will establish a National Center for Advanced Development in Education (NCADE) and authorize an expansion of the Statewide Longitudinal Data Systems (SLDS) program.

Title I of the bill will establish NCADE at the Institute of Education Sciences (IES). Modeled after DARPA, the Defense Department's renowned R&D incubator, NCADE will support high-reward projects that require a nimble program management approach. Specifically, NCADE will fund projects based on their potential to create dramatic breakthroughs in learning and teaching, especially for underserved populations. NCADE projects will also foster a sophisticated understanding of what specific interventions and strategies work for a diverse range of students and learning environments.

Title II will modernize and authorize additional funds into SLDS. "These systems have made significant strides in collecting high-quality data, and improvements in integrated data can help make that data actionable for individuals, researchers, policymakers, practitioners, and other end users." The improved and expanded program will ensure that systems have the capacity for timely research so that school districts and postsecondary institutions know more quickly what is working and what needs to improve.

Thank you for your leadership on this critical issue.

Sincerely,

Advanced Education Research and Development Fund (AERDF)

Data Quality Campaign

Digital Promise Global

EDGE Consulting Partners

EdTech Evidence Exchange

Education Reform Now

The Education Trust

Federation of American Scientists / The Day One Project

Lincoln Network

InnovateEDU

Knowledge Alliance

Learn Launch

The Learning Agency

LearningForge LLC

LearnPlatform

New Classrooms Innovation Partners

New Leaders

State Educational Technology Directors Association (SETDA)

Teach Plus

The Tech Interactive

John Bailey, Former White House Domestic Policy Advisor

Mario Cardona, Professor of Practice and Director of Policy, Arizona State University - Children's Equity Project

Kumar Garg, Schmidt Futures