

December 11, 2023

The Honorable Bernie Sanders  
Chair  
Senate Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions Committee

The Honorable Bill Cassidy  
Ranking Member  
Senate Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions Committee

Dear Chair Sanders and Ranking Member Cassidy,

We, the undersigned, congratulate you on the advancement of the bipartisan Advancing Research in Education Act (AREA) of 2023. We commend the bill's commitment to strengthening the quality, transparency, and responsiveness of federally-funded education research and development. At the same time, while we support the bill's advancement, we hope you will consider including an Advanced R&D Program, inspired by informed-risk, high-reward R&D conducted in other sectors like defense, health, and energy. We are eager to work with you after the mark-up to accomplish this as the bill moves forward in the legislative process.

AREA is particularly strong in its attention to improving data infrastructure and being responsive to community needs. AREA enhances the Statewide Longitudinal Data Systems Program by encouraging the integration and interoperability of data sources, and promoting the accessibility and usage of data insights while ensuring student privacy. To build R&D capacity at the state level and enable education R&D that takes place closer to communities, AREA authorizes new State Capacity R&D grants. We are optimistic that these improvements will result in meaningful insights and applications of research in classrooms across the country.

We appreciate HELP leadership's openness to stakeholder input, demonstrated by the updates you made to the definition of "evidence-based" in the manager's amendment. We support the revised definition that references the bill's widely respected definition of "principles of scientifically valid research."

While AREA would improve federally-supported education research in many ways, it continues to be light on the "development" aspect of R&D. We are disappointed that, despite 77 organizations across four letters (from the undersigned group, the Alliance for Learning Innovation, the Learning Systems Leadership Network community, and a group of nonprofit innovative model providers) calling for an Advanced Education R&D Program, it was not included in the manager's amendment. An Advanced Education R&D Program would build upon the Accelerate, Transform, and Scale pilot currently underway at the Institute of Education Sciences. This pilot is supporting the development of bold, early-stage innovations that could lead to cutting-edge advancements in teaching and learning. In the post-COVID era, when learning acceleration is more important than ever, the federal government should be sustaining efforts like this. The reauthorization of the Education Sciences Reform Act is an ideal

opportunity to authorize an Advanced Education R&D Program. We hope to continue to work with you to make this happen.

Thank you for your bipartisan leadership on this important legislation, and your openness to our input. If you have questions, please contact Tasha Hensley ([tasha@the-learning-agency.com](mailto:tasha@the-learning-agency.com)) and Meg Benner ([meg@the-learning-agency.com](mailto:meg@the-learning-agency.com)).

Sincerely,

2Revolutions

Advanced Education Research and Development Fund (AERDF)

Alliance for Learning Innovation

America Forward

American Association of Colleges for Teacher Education (AACTE)

American Psychological Association Services

Association of Latino Administrators and Superintendents (ALAS)

CAST

CodeAsia

Committee for Children

Common Sense Media

Data Science 4 Everyone

Digital Promise

EDGE Consulting Partners

Education Reform Now

Education Reimagined

Educators for Excellence

ExcelinEd in Action

Federation of American Scientists

Formation Ventures, Inc

InnovateEDU

Innovations4Education

Kumar Garg, Schmidt Futures

LearningForge LLC

Luminary Labs

National Association of School Psychologists

National Association of Secondary School Principals

National Center for Learning Disabilities

New Classrooms

North Dakota Department of Public Instruction

Pamela Cantor MD LLC

SETDA

Software & Information Industry Association

Student Achievement Partners

The Education Trust

The Learning Agency

The Tech Interactive

Thomas B. Fordham Institute

Transcend