

Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

March 18, 2019

Mark Schneider
Director
Institute of Education Sciences
550 12th Street, SW
Washington, DC 20024

Dear Director Schneider,

We are writing in regard to the education research priorities of the Institute of Education Sciences (IES). As you know, the Education Sciences Reform Act (ESRA) requires the Director of the IES to propose priorities to the National Board of Education Sciences (NBES). Specifically, the statute states:

The Director shall identify topics that may require long-term research and topics that are focused on understanding and solving particular education problems and issues, including those associated with the goals and requirements established in the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 and the Higher Education Act of 1965.

Further, the Director is required to make such priorities available to the public for comment for not less than 60 days (including by means of the Internet and through publishing such priorities in the Federal Register). The Director must subsequently provide these comments to NBES.

NBES is required to approve or disapprove the priorities proposed by the Director, including any necessary revision of those priorities. NBES must also transmit any priorities so approved to the appropriate Congressional committees. Upon approval of the priorities, the Director must also make IES' plan for addressing these priorities available for public comment, again for not less than 60 days.

NBES has not met during this Administration and, therefore, you have not transmitted priorities to NBES, nor have the approved priorities been conveyed to the appropriate Congressional committees. Further, NBES has not submitted to Congress the two most recent statutorily mandated annual reports, which are meant to assess the effectiveness of IES in carrying out its priorities and mission. The role of NBES is to serve as an expert advisor to IES and Congress. Neither Congress nor IES can make use of NBES's expertise if the Board does not meet and produce the required work-products. While we are very supportive of the mission and work of the Institute of Education Sciences, as chairs of the Appropriations Subcommittee on Labor, Health and Human Services, Education and Related Agencies and the Committee on Education and Labor, we expect that you will submit your priorities in order to have confidence that resources are being used effectively and appropriately.

It is critical that IES, the nation's foremost source for education research, be transparent and make clear its priorities to the education community. Since its inception over 15 years ago, IES has increased the rigor and relevance of education research while maintaining its independent and nonpartisan status. The research generated by IES informs education policy and practice across the country. We must know where the future investments of these scarce federal resources will be made so that we can narrow

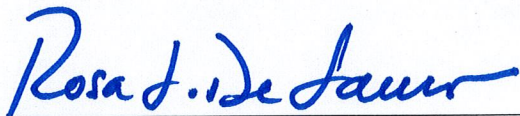
student achievement gaps and improve teaching and learning from pre-kindergarten to postsecondary education. Ensuring that every student receives a high-quality education is of the utmost importance, and IES plays an important role in ensuring that happens by producing and disseminating the evidence to the education community.

We therefore request that you provide the following information regarding IES' priorities by no later than April 1, 2019.

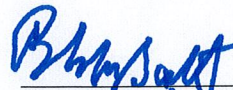
1. What priorities do you plan to propose to NBES, as required by 20 U.S.C. § 9515?
 - a. When do you plan to make these priorities available for public comment?
 - b. What is your process for determining these priorities?
2. Has NBES submitted the 2017 or 2018 annual report to your office, as required by 20 U.S.C. § 9516(e)?
 - a. If not, please explain why these reports have not been submitted.
 - b. If so, please transmit these reports to the appropriate Congressional committees.
3. An IES Director's Blog post on July 30, 2018 indicated skepticism about the value of research practice partnerships. What is your alternative vision for how to ensure that the critical viewpoint of education stakeholders is included in education research funded by IES?
4. What are your plans for ensuring that the research produced by IES is used by educators?
5. What large scale program evaluations does IES plan to develop to advance policy and practice?
 - a. What criteria did you use to select those evaluations?
 - b. Please provide your rationale for any planned evaluations.
6. What changes, if any, do you believe are needed to National Assessment of Educational Progress? Please provide your rationale for each change and any planned actions by the Department to implement those changes.
7. What changes, if any, are needed to the longitudinal and cross-sectional surveys conducted by IES? Please provide your rationale for each change and any planned actions by the Department to implement those changes.
8. What are your plans for the training of pre-doctoral and post-doctoral students?

Thank you in advance for your attention to this matter. If you have any questions or would like to further discuss this request, please contact Robin Juliano, Clerk, with the Appropriations Subcommittee on Labor, Health and Human Services, Education and Related Agencies, and Benjamin Sinoff, Director of Education Oversight, with the Committee on Education & Labor.

Sincerely,



ROSA L. DELAURO
Chair
Subcommittee on Labor, Health
and Human Services,
Education and Related Agencies
Committee on Appropriations



ROBERT C. "BOBBY" SCOTT
Chairman
Committee on Education and Labor