

KNOWLEDGE ALLIANCE*

Research to Action in Education

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*formerly NEKIA

May 29, 2007

The Honorable David Obey
Chairman,
House Appropriations Committee

The Honorable James T. Walsh
Ranking Member
House Appropriations Committee
Subcommittee on Labor, HHS, Education and Related Agencies

U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairman

On behalf of our member organizations and the millions of students and teachers who are served by them, the Knowledge Alliance (formerly NEKIA) thanks you for your ongoing leadership in advancing research and development in education.

We are pleased that the Subcommittee will soon be marking up its FY 2008 measure with what promises to be much needed increased funding. We would like to take this opportunity to remind you of our priorities for federal investments in research-based programs to help states and districts respond to the rapidly increasing needs of low performing schools that we are seeing from the No Child Left Behind accountability schedules.

Knowledge Alliance recommends:

- Funding the Comprehensive Centers at \$66.8 million, a \$10.5 million increase over FY 2007. The Centers provide intensive technical assistance for increasing the capacity of states to implement key research-based school improvement provisions in NCLB. The increase would enable the centers to intensify their research-based services and help states respond directly to increasing numbers of schools in need of improvement and corrective action.
- Funding the Regional Education Laboratories (RELs) at \$75.5 million, a \$10 million increase over FY 2007. The ten RELs serve the education reform and school improvement needs of a designated region. The laboratories provide access to high quality scientifically valid research through applied research and development projects, studies and related technical assistance activities. The recommended increase could support the creation of a special triage "urgent response" system for immediately addressing urgent educational reform problems identified by the laboratory governing boards in each region.

- Funding Research, Development, and Dissemination at \$182 million, a \$20 million increase over FY 2007. This fund supports a small but diverse portfolio of programs, projects and studies that create, translate, disseminate and/or apply research-based knowledge relevant to school improvement and implementation of NCLB. Ongoing initiatives cover key issue areas including academic subjects, teacher quality, cognition and learning, reading, and math. The fund includes discretionary grants and contracts for directed and field-initiated research, including eight national research and development centers.
- Funding the National Research and Development Centers at the requested level of \$26 million. The centers address enduring issues of national significance in education through a sustained, focused, interdisciplinary program of research. Much of the centers' work contributes to building the capacity for addressing the needs of low-performing schools.
- Funding the Title I School Improvement Grants at the \$500 million request. This program supports state level school improvement activities directed at schools and districts that have not met adequate yearly progress for at least two years. The President's request would strongly support school improvement activities, including the development and implementation of effective restructuring plans.
- Supporting the following programs at in the President's budget at the level requested: Teacher Quality State Grants, Special Education Research, 21st Century Learning Centers, Statewide Data Systems, Math Science Partnership, Striving Readers, Reading First and Title 1 formula grants.
- Reinstating the following programs proposed for elimination: Comprehensive School Reform, Even Start, Parental Information Resource Centers, Technology State Grants, Smaller Learning Communities and State Grants for Innovative Programs.

Knowledge Alliance's mission is to advance the development and use of research-based knowledge to improve schools and help all students achieve. Our members are committed to creating new and better approaches to research-based knowledge to support education programs and policies at all levels of education.

Thank you for your consideration of our requests, and do not hesitate to contact me if you have any questions or would like additional information on any of the programs we support.

Sincerely,



Jim Kohlmoos
President

