

# STEM Education Coalition



April 27, 2007

The Honorable David Obey  
Chairman  
Subcommittee on Labor, HHS, and  
Education  
House Committee on Appropriations  
2314 Rayburn House Office Building  
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable James T. Walsh  
Ranking Member  
Subcommittee on Labor, HHS, and  
Education  
House Committee on Appropriations  
2369 Rayburn House Office Building  
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairman Obey and Ranking Member Walsh:

On behalf of the Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) Education Coalition, we strongly urge you to provide \$450 million in funding for the Math and Science Partnership (MSP) program at the U.S. Department of Education (Title II B) as you consider appropriations for fiscal year 2008.

Innovative teacher training professional development programs like the Math and Science Partnerships are critical if we hope to meet the challenges posed by the globally competitive economy of the 21st Century. Teacher quality is an essential factor in promoting student achievement and STEM educators must be provided thorough preparation prior to entering the classroom, adequate mentoring during the critical first few years in the classroom, and opportunities for continual growth and enrichment of skills and knowledge in order to be effective teachers.

Funding the Math and Science Partnership program at the authorized level of \$450 million will allow states to provide more research-based reform initiatives to enhance teacher content knowledge and increase student achievement in these areas. Current MSP programs are helping teachers to deepen content knowledge, to gain inquiry experiences, to strengthen pedagogical skills, and to better evaluate student learning. MSP initiatives also foster professional learning communities and programs that link classroom teachers with researchers in STEM fields and in STEM pedagogy.

Our Coalition acknowledges and appreciates the Administration's efforts under the proposed American Competitiveness Initiative to provide additional resources for STEM education activities at the Department of Education and we are working with the appropriate authorizing Committees to explore ways to implement these new initiatives.

We also want to emphasize our support for the continued strong focus on STEM education programs at the National Science Foundation. We believe it is vitally important that Congress make funding for Math and Science Partnerships at NSF and DoEd and other innovative STEM education programs at these two agencies a high priority as you complete the FY 2008 appropriations process.

The STEM Education Coalition is composed of a diverse range of organizations representing all sectors of the technological workforce – from knowledge workers, to educators and education researchers, to scientists, engineers, and technicians. Our Coalition works to raise awareness in Congress and throughout the Executive Branch about the critical role that STEM education plays in enabling the U.S. to remain the economic and technological leader of the global marketplace of the 21st century.

If we can provide you with any additional information please contact James Brown at 202-872-6229 or Jodi Peterson at 703-312-9214.

Sincerely,

*Acoustical Society of America*  
*American Association of Colleges for Teacher Education*  
*American Association of Physics Teachers*  
*American Association of Physicists in Medicine*  
*American Association of University Women*  
*American Chemical Society*  
*American Council of Engineering Companies*  
*American Institute of Physics*  
*American Nuclear Society*  
*American Society of Civil Engineers*  
*American Society of Heating, Refrigerating and Air Conditioning Engineers*  
*ASME Center for Public Awareness*  
*Business Higher Education Forum*  
*The Campaign for Environmental Literacy*  
*The Chesapeake Bay Foundation*  
*Education Development Center (EDC)*  
*Exploratorium*  
*Hands on Science Partnership*  
*Institute of Food Technologists*  
*ITEA- International Education Technology Association*  
*Knowledge Alliance (formerly NEKIA)*  
*Museum of Science – Boston*  
*National Center for Technological Literacy*  
*National Council of Teachers of Mathematics*  
*National Science Teachers Association*  
*The New England Council*  
*The Ohio Academy of Science*  
*Ohio Technology Education Association*  
*Optical Society of America*  
*Project Lead the Way*  
*SAE International*  
*SPIE – The International Society for Optical Engineering*  
*Society of Women Engineers*  
*University of Kansas*