



Education Appropriations

Members of Congress are urged to:

- Provide \$14 billion to fully fund IDEA's Part B Program in the FFY 2020 appropriations bills.
- Support and co-sponsor the IDEA Full Funding Act (Part B), H.R. 1878 (Huffman, D-CA), and S. 866 (Van Hollen, D-MD).
- Provide \$537 million to fully fund IDEA's Part B Section 619 Program in the FFY 2020 appropriations bill.
- Provide \$722 million to fully fund IDEA's Part C Early Intervention Program in the FFY 2020 appropriations bills.
- Provide \$254 million to fund IDEA's Part D Program in the FFY 2020 appropriations bills.
- Provide \$70 million to fund the National Center for Special Education Research (Department of Education Institute of Education Sciences) in the FFY 2020 appropriations bills.
- Provide \$32 million to fund the Jacob K. Javits Gifted and Talented Students Education Act in the FFY 2020 appropriations bills.

ISSUE BRIEF

Background

In 1975, President Gerald R. Ford signed into law what we now know as the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), pioneering legislation that mandates a free appropriate public education for all children and youth with disabilities. Prior to IDEA's passage, children and youth with disabilities were shunned from school, and plagued by stereotypes, misconceptions, and low expectations. As a civil rights law, over the last 44 years IDEA has revolutionized the lives of children and youth with disabilities, now serving over 7 million children from birth through young adulthood throughout the country.

Providing Individualized Special Education in Schools

Over 6.8 million school-aged students in the United States benefit from the individualized special education and related services provided by IDEA. These services—provided by special and general education teachers and specialized instructional support personnel—are tailored to meet the specific needs of each child.

Students with disabilities represent approximately 13% of the total student enrollment. When IDEA was originally passed 44 years ago, the Federal Government pledged to pay 40% of the “excess cost” of educating a student with a disability, what is referred to as full funding. Unfortunately, in FFY 2019, the federal share is approximately 16%, leaving states and school districts to pay the balance and increasing the burden of local taxpayers.

Addressing the Needs of Young Children with Disabilities

IDEA's early childhood programs serve over 1.1 million infants, toddlers, and preschool children with disabilities and their families through Part C and Part B Section 619. Over the last 23 years, both programs have increased the number of children served by approximately 50%.

Despite this growth and documented positive outcomes for children, federal funding has failed to keep pace. In fact, the federal cost per child has decreased by 40% during this time. Additional funds must be appropriated to support the needs of children with disabilities.

Ensuring High-Quality Special Education Services

Together, IDEA's National Activities Program (Part D) and the National Center for Special Education Research (NCSER) within the Institute of Education Sciences provide the infrastructure to enable high-quality special education and early intervention services for children and youth with disabilities. Part D focuses on preparing personnel, disseminating information, providing resources to families, and utilizing technology. NCSER is the primary driver of special education research in the nation, and identifies evidence-based practices for classroom teachers. Unfortunately, funding for IDEA Part D and NCSER remains devastatingly low. In fact, in 2011, 30% of NCSER's budget was cut, resulting in a near stoppage of special education research in 2014.

Meeting the Needs of Learners with Gifts and Talents

There is a growing education crisis playing out in every state across the nation which receives little attention among policy makers in Washington: A significant "excellence gap" exists at the top achievement levels between ethnic and racial minority students and white students, and between low-income students and their more advantaged peers. The Javits Act—the sole federal initiative supporting students with gifts and talents—seeks to remedy this by promoting research and programs to better identify and serve high-ability students from underserved backgrounds. In 2019, the Javits program is funded at \$12 million, following 6 years of receiving little or no funding. A \$32 million investment is needed for the Javits program to reach its potential.

Support education funding legislation that matches the needs of children and youth with disabilities and/or gifts and talents, their families, and the educators who work on their behalf.