



LEGISLATIVE RECOMMENDATIONS

The Council for Exceptional Children, (CEC) founded in 1922, is an international nonprofit organization dedicated to improving the educational success of individuals with disabilities and/or gifts and talents. CEC supports children and youth with exceptionalities by advocating for appropriate governmental policies, setting professional standards, providing professional development, and supporting the professionals who work on behalf of children and youth with exceptionalities. CEC represents all disciplines in the field, including teachers, early interventionists, administrators, researchers, and higher education faculty who are teaching the next generation of special educators.

CEC works to ensure that the needs of children and youth with exceptionalities—and those of special educators—are heard and heeded by policy makers, and engages in an active grassroots advocacy network to advance CEC's critical messages.

CEC members gather to network, learn and share within state and provincial units in the United States and Canada. CEC's 18 special-interest divisions focus on the most critical issues in special education and early intervention.

- Council of Administrators of Special Education
- Council for Children with Behavioral Disorders
- Division for Research
- CEC Pioneers Division
- Council for Educational Diagnostic Services
- Division on Autism and Developmental Disabilities
- Division of Visual and Performing Arts Education
- Division for Communication, Language, and Deaf/Hard of Hearing
- Division on Career Development and Transition
- Division for Culturally and Linguistically Diverse Exceptional Learners
- Division for Early Childhood
- Division of International Special Education and Services
- Division for Learning Disabilities
- Division for Physical, Health and Multiple Disabilities
- Division on Visual Impairments and Deafblindness
- Innovations in Special Education Technology Division
- The Association for the Gifted
- Teacher Education Division

Education Appropriations

Recommendations

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.

IDEA Investments for Young Children

Recommendations

Members of Congress are urged to:

- Co-sponsor and support the House bill Funding Early Childhood in IDEA is the Right IDEA, which creates new authorization levels for IDEA Part C and Part B Section 619 (preschool) programs. Sponsor and support a similar bill in the Senate.
- Co-sponsor and support the Child Care for Working Families Act, H.R. 1364 (Scott, D-VA) and S. 568 (Murray, D-WA), which contains specific provisions and funding for children receiving services under IDEA.
- Increase investment in services and supports in FFY 2020 for young children with disabilities and their families through provision of:
 - ◊ \$537 million in funding for IDEA Part B, Preschool Special Education Program (Section 619), and
 - ◊ \$722 million in funding for IDEA Part C Early Intervention Program.

Keep Public Funds in Public Education

Recommendations

Members of Congress are urged to:

- Support efforts that maintain and enhance the use of public funds for public education and services offered through public school districts.
- Oppose the use of public funds for families to access private education through private school vouchers, tuition tax credits, direct tuition payments, taxpayer savings accounts, scholarships, and portability of public funds to private education entities for all students, including students with disabilities, as they are contrary to the best interests of students and their families, the public school system, local communities, and taxpayers.
- Oppose the Education Freedom Scholarships and Opportunity Act, S. 634 (Cruz, R-TX), that would expand elementary, secondary and vocational education opportunities for students by providing a federal tax credit to encourage individuals and business to donate to nonprofit scholarship funds.

Shortages of Special Education Teachers and Early Intervention Providers

Recommendations

Members of Congress are urged to:

- Provide \$102 million in FFY 2020 to fund IDEA Part D Personnel Preparation Grants that support aspiring special educators (teachers, early intervention providers, and administrators) and doctoral-level leaders (faculty in colleges and universities and special education administrators).
- Provide \$48 million in FFY 2020 to fund IDEA Part D State Personnel Grants to assist states to reform and improve personnel preparation and professional development.
- Strengthen and improve the implementation of the Higher Education Act TEACH Grant Program for students preparing to be teachers in high-need fields.
- Provide \$53 million in FFY 2020 to fund the Higher Education Act Teacher Quality Partnership Grant Program supporting higher education PK–12 partnerships to expand clinical preparation for educators in high-need fields and in low-income schools.
- Strengthen the Higher Education Act Public Service Loan Forgiveness Program, the Teacher Loan Forgiveness Program, and the Loan Forgiveness for Service in Areas of National Need.
- Co-sponsor and support the Educator Preparation Reform Act, S. 969 (Reed, D-RI), to strengthen and update Title II of the Higher Education Act.
- Co-sponsor and support Supporting the Teaching Profession Through Revitalizing Investments in Valuable Educators Act (STRIVE), S. 1866 (Booker, D-NJ) and H.R. 3139 (Norcross, D-NJ), strengthening the federal investment in recruiting, preparing, and retaining education and early childhood personnel and diversifying the teacher workforce.

- Co-sponsor and support Preparing and Retaining Education Professionals Act (PREP), S. 752 (Kaine, D-VA), strengthening the federal investment in “grow-your-own” programs which diversify the teaching workforce, and expanding this effort to include early childhood providers.
- Include education administrators and specialized instructional support personnel in any legislation applicable to addressing education shortages.

Mental Health: Building Positive Climates for Learning

Recommendations

Members of Congress are urged to:

- Provide \$2.55 billion for ESSA Title II, Part A in FFY 2020 to ensure educators are prepared to implement evidence-based mental health interventions.
- Provide \$1.6 billion to fund ESSA Title IV, Part A in FFY 2020 to support schools and early childhood programs to hire social workers, counselors, and psychologists.
- Co-sponsor and support the Resilience Investment, Support, and Expansion (RISE) from Trauma Act, S. 1770 (Durbin, D-IL, Capito, R-WV) and H.R. 3180 (Davis, D-IL, Gallagher R-WI), strengthening support for children who have been exposed to adverse childhood experiences (ACEs) and trauma through building a trauma-informed workforce and increasing resources for communities to support children who have experienced trauma.
- Maintain the current structure and funding for Medicaid that allows for reimbursement for IDEA services.
- Support legislative policies that increase access to mental health services through private health insurance and Medicaid.
- Support policy and funding for services and community interventions for children and youth who experience trauma, environmental stress, and mental health symptoms and disorders.
- Support policy and funding that promote prevention and an interdisciplinary partnership among education, early learning, juvenile justice, mental health, and community health providers to ensure the social and emotional well-being of all children and youth.