Advocacy During COVID: What to Focus on and How to Deliver the Message

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How Has COVID Impacted Communication with the Hill?

- Congress/Department of Education are closed to visitors, with few exceptions
- If you meet, expect it to be virtually
- Offices are still scheduling meetings at the same rate
- Staff are as reliant as ever on outside information to inform their work
  - i.e. how is the pandemic impacting education?
- Inboxes are overflowing
- If you are communicating with a staff member, you may need to send a nudge
Advocacy Results During COVID

CEC Emergency IDEA Funding Request, March 2020*

- $11.3b for IDEA Part B
- $500m for IDEA Part C
- $400m for Section 619
- $300m for IDEA Part D

Supporting Children with Disabilities During COVID-19 Act

- $11b for IDEA Part B
- $500m for IDEA Part C
- $400m for Section 619
- $300m for IDEA Part D

*Over 8,000 letters sent

Additional Emergency COVID Asks

- Provide no less than $175 billion in emergency relief funds to help school districts address the litany of needs for students playing catch up in the aftermath of COVID-19
- Provide an additional $100 million for the Teacher Quality Partnership (TQP) Grants in Title II of the Higher Education Act
- Appropriate $5 billion for an Emergency Connectivity Fund, administered through the Federal Communications Commission’s (FCC) E-Rate program
- Provide emergency funding to support evidence-based professional development on remote learning for special education teachers and support staff
“Regular Business” Continues

- Fiscal Year 2021 appropriations
- Educator shortages
- Mental health
- School Climate
- Planning for the 117th Congress

How to Get Involved

- Participate in the annual Special Education Legislative Summit, where you can join with your colleagues to advocate!

- Learn about weekly updates from Washington, DC in the Policy Insider:
  Check your inbox on Fridays or find it at https://exceptionalchildren.org/policy-insider

- Reach out with any questions!
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