



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

Education Appropriations

Members of Congress Are Urged To Provide:

- No less than \$15.5 billion for IDEA's Part B, Section 611 State Grant Program.
- \$598 million to fund IDEA's Part B, Section 619 Preschool Program, and \$732 million to fund IDEA's Part C, Early Intervention Program.
- \$300 million to fund IDEA's Part D, Section 662 program.
- \$70 million to fund the National Center for Special Education Research.
- \$32 million for the Jacob K. Javits Gifted and Talented Students Education Act

Shortages of Special Education Teachers and Early Intervention Providers

Members of Congress Are Urged To:

- Promote and endorse policies that attract, prepare, and retain a diverse, qualified special education workforce fully reflective of the racial, cultural, and linguistic diversity of infants, toddlers, children, and youth with exceptionalities.
- Promote and provide incentives to increase diversity in the educator profession.
- Increase Part D funding and expand programs that provide incentives such as TEACH grants, Teacher Quality Partnership Grants, and federal loan payback opportunities to facilitate affordability of higher education. This will help recruit and retain teacher education candidates throughout the completion of their degrees and strengthen the capacity of educator preparation programs in higher education.

Mental Health: Building Positive Climates for Learning

Members of Congress Are Urged To:

- Provide \$606 million for Safe Schools National Activities, including the School-Based Mental Health Services Professional Demonstration Grant and the School-Based Mental Health Services Grant programs, to address severe shortages of school-based mental health professionals (school psychologists, school social workers, and school counselors).
- Provide \$3 billion for ESSA, Title II-A, for FY 2022 to ensure educators and early intervention providers are prepared to implement evidence-based mental health interventions.
- Provide \$2 billion to fund ESSA, Title IV-A, in FY 2022 to support schools and early childhood programs to hire school social workers, school counselors, and school psychologists.
- Provide \$300 million for IDEA, Part D Personnel Preparation grants, to increase the pipeline of well-prepared special educators and specialized instructional support personnel, including school-employed mental health professionals.
- Consider the mental health needs of students, staff, and families in any additional COVID-19 relief packages as schools continue to reopen, including the additional costs of providing those services for school districts and early intervention programs.
- 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 policies and funding for services and community interventions for children and youth who experience trauma, environmental stress, and mental health symptoms and disorders.
- Support policies and funding that promote prevention and interdisciplinary partnerships among education, early childhood, juvenile justice, mental health, and community health providers to ensure the social and emotional well-being of all children and youth.