



**CONSORTIUM FOR CITIZENS
WITH DISABILITIES**

Chairwoman Rosa DeLauro
House Appropriations Subcommittee on Labor,
HHS, Education, and Related Agencies
2413 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Chairman Roy Blunt
Senate Appropriations Subcommittee on Labor,
HHS, Education, and Related Agencies
260 Russell Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

Ranking Member Tom Cole
House Appropriations Subcommittee on Labor,
HHS, Education, and Related Agencies
2207 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Ranking Member Patty Murray
Senate Appropriations Subcommittee on Labor,
HHS, Education, and Related Agencies
154 Russell Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Chairs and Ranking Members,

As you work to finalize the FY 2020 appropriations bill for the Departments of Labor, Health and Human Services and Education, the Consortium for Citizens with Disabilities (CCD) Education Task Force writes to urge you to support the highest possible spending levels for programs that support America's 6 million children and youth with disabilities and the educators who work on their behalf.

CCD is the largest coalition of national organizations working together to advocate for Federal public policy that ensures the self-determination, independence, empowerment, integration, and inclusion of children and adults with disabilities in all aspects of society. To support these goals and ensure that students with disabilities have every opportunity to succeed in school and beyond, CCD urges the following:

IDEA Part B – Grants to States: The CCD Education Task Force requests an increase to \$13.97 billion for Part B State Grants under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act. In FY19, IDEA Part B was funded at \$12.36 billion. Since 2009, the average federal share per child has remained stagnant, while the number of students served and the national average per pupil expenditure (APPE) has continued to rise. The result is a declining federal contribution to the costs of educating students with disabilities.

IDEA Part B's Section 619 and IDEA Part C: The CCD Education Task Force requests an increase to \$441.8 million for IDEA's Part B Section 619 and an increase to \$531 million for IDEA's Part C. In FY 19, IDEA Part B Section 619 was funded at \$391 million and Part C was funded at \$470 million. IDEA's early childhood programs serve over 1 million infants, toddlers, and preschool children with disabilities and their families through Part C (the infant, toddlers, and families program) and Part B Section 619 (the 3-5 preschool program) respectively. Over the past 20 years, both programs have increased the number of children served by approximately 50 percent. Despite this growth and positive outcomes for children and their families, federal funding has failed to keep pace with the needs of these children.

IDEA Part D – National Activities: The CCD Education Task Force requests an increase to \$254 million for IDEA’s Part D, which provide the infrastructure to implement programs for students with disabilities through necessary training and professional development for personnel, technical assistance, and more. In FY19, IDEA Part D was funded at \$225 million.

- CCD requests an increase for IDEA Part D Technology and Media line item to \$31.6 million, which provides funding for a competitive grant program that supports free access to electronic textbooks to over 450,000 school age students with print disabilities. Under IDEA, schools are required to provide students with disabilities with accessible versions of the books they need for school. In FY 19, this program was funded at \$28 million.
- CCD supports an increase for the State Personnel Development Grants to \$44 million (from \$38.6 million in FY19) and the Personnel Preparation Grants to \$98 million (from \$87.2 million in FY 19), which are the nation’s leading source of financial assistance for future special educators, early interventionists, researchers, and specialized instructional support personnel. These programs are particularly important because special education suffers from a decades-long national shortage of special educators, particularly in rural and urban areas.
- CCD supports an increase for the Technical Assistance and Development program to \$49.7 million (from \$44.3 million in FY 19).
- CCD supports continued funding for the Special Olympics program at \$17.6 million.
- CCD supports an increase of the Parent Training Information Centers to \$30.5 million (from \$27.4 million in FY 19).

National Center for Special Education Research (NCSER) within the Institute of Education Sciences:

CCD requests an increase in funding to restore the funding for NCSER to its 2011 funding level of \$70 million. In FY19, NCSER was funded at \$56 million. NCSER is one of four centers within the Institute of Education Sciences and supports a comprehensive research program to promote the highest quality and rigor in research on special education and related services, and to address the full range of issues facing children with disabilities, parents of children with disabilities, school personnel, and others. Its findings help inform interventions, teaching strategies, and other critical factors in educating children with disabilities.

Office for Civil Rights, U.S. Department of Education: CCD supports an increase to \$130 million for FY2020. The Office for Civil Rights is responsible for enforcing laws that prohibit discrimination on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, disability, and age in all programs and institutions that receive funds from the Department. These laws extend to 50 State educational agencies, 18,200 LEAs, and nearly 7,200 IHEs, including proprietary schools.

Model Transition Programs for Students with Intellectual Disabilities into Higher Education:

CCD recommends an increase in funding of \$500,000 from the current funding of \$11.8 million to \$12.3 million for the model transition programs for students with intellectual disabilities (TPSIDs) under the Office of Postsecondary Education. The current appropriations level sustains approximately 25 competitive grants and a national coordinating center that provides technical assistance to the grantees. The additional \$500,000 will be used by the national coordinating center to conduct research to determine the best strategies for postsecondary program approaches for youth with intellectual and developmental disabilities that lead to employment and independent living. The funds will also be used to document and disseminate information about state and federal policies that promote postsecondary education at the certificate, community college and four-year program levels and the approaches that result in increased employment and independent living. The funding will also be used for the development of capacity building partnerships within states to expand the reach of these programs.

ESSA Title I: CCD recommends an increase of funding for Title I to \$16.2 billion to support the 25 million students in our nation’s high poverty public schools that need extra academic support to meet challenging state standards and increase their opportunities for success.

ESSA Title II: CCD recommends funding Title II at previous funding levels of \$2.25 billion to continue a strong investment in creating profession-ready educators and reduce the dramatic teacher shortage facing our country.

Providing students with disabilities inclusive educational opportunities with high expectations and access to rigorous coursework is directly linked to better employment outcomes, higher wages and lower unemployment that provide opportunities for true community integration. Therefore, we urge appropriations negotiators to reject the budget proposed by the President and invest in the education of students with disabilities by providing key funding for IDEA and ESSA as recommended. Thank you for considering our views as you finalize the FY 2020 appropriations bill for the Departments of Labor, HHS, Education and Related Agencies.

Sincerely,

The Advocacy Institute
American Physical Therapy Association
American Speech-Language-Hearing Association
American Therapeutic Recreation Association
The Arc of the U.S.
Association of Assistive Technology Act Program
Autism Society of America
Brain Injury Association of America
Children and Adults with Attention-Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder
Conference of Educational Administrators of Schools and Programs for the Deaf
Council for Learning Disabilities
Council for Exceptional Children
Council of Parent Attorneys and Advocates
Council of State Administrators of Vocational Rehabilitation
Disability Rights Education & Defense Fund (DREDF)
Division for Early Childhood of the Council for Exceptional Children (DEC)
Higher Education Consortium for Special Education
The Jewish Federations of North America
National Association of Councils on Developmental Disabilities
National Association of School Psychologists
National Association of State Directors of Special Education (NASDSE)
National Association of State Head Injury Administrators
National Center for Learning Disabilities
National Center for Special Education in Charter Schools
National Disability Rights Network
National Down Syndrome Congress
National PTA
Teacher Education Division of the Council for Exceptional Children

Education Task Force Co-Chairs:

Annie Acosta, The Arc of the United States

Amanda Lowe, National Disability Rights Network

Meghan Whittaker, National Center for Learning Disabilities

Kim Musheno, Autism Society of America

Laura Kaloi, COPAA & Natl. Center for Special Education in Charter Schools

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