

The Council for Exceptional Children (CEC) is the national voice for special educators and children and youth with disabilities and/or gifts and talents. CEC works closely with its Children and Youth Action Network (CAN) in formulating its advocacy agenda and is a national leader in the formulation and implementation of federal and national special education policy. CEC's advocacy emerges from one essential conviction: education for children and youth with disabilities and/or gifts and talents must be the nation's top priority. CEC is committed to ensuring that the voice of special education is heard in public policy forums in which special education decisions are made or influenced. The unique purpose of our country's education system is to educate ALL children and youth to high standards. Quality education requires superior leadership, full funding, effective instruction, competent staff, appropriate programs, suitable facilities, and community and family support and involvement. Therefore, the Council for Exceptional Children declares the following as its public policy agenda for the 110th United States Congress.

High Priority

Requires immediate federal legislation or regulatory attention and requires major resources on the Council's part

Issue Objectives

- ♦ Advocate for the regulatory provisions and full implementation of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA 2004), with emphasis on key policy issues including finance, disproportionate representation, qualified personnel, increased accountability while reducing paperwork, identification and eligibility, learning disabilities, discipline procedures, and early childhood.
- ♦ Advocate for CEC's recommendations during the reauthorization of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act, including an emphasis on key policies issues surrounding finance, highly qualified special educators, progress measurement, assessment, capacity, and sanctions.
- ♦ Advocate for federal gifted education legislation that would continue to provide funds for research and demonstration grants, and provide for a new formula grants to states program.
- ♦ Advocate for policies to maintain the provision of medical services through Medicaid to children and youth with disabilities by schools districts and early intervention agencies.
- ♦ Advocate for special education research priorities with the Institute for Education Sciences.

Priority

Important to the Council but activities will be determined as opportunity and available resources permit

Issue Objectives

- ♦ Advocate for the reauthorization of the Higher Education Act.
- ♦ Advocate for the reauthorization of the Head Start Act.
- ♦ Advocate for the reauthorization of the Workforce Investment Act.

Monitoring

Relevant to the Council, but will be acted upon only when specific opportunities arise or conditions change members' needs and priorities

Issue Objectives

- ♦ Advocate for other relevant legislation as introduced.