FUNDING CONSIDERATIONS

The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) Infants and Toddlers with Disabilities Program (Part C) is a voluntary grant program for states to develop and implement a statewide, comprehensive, coordinated, multidisciplinary, interagency system that provides early intervention services for infants and toddlers with disabilities, ages birth through 2 years, and their families.

Part C Funds are administered by a lead agency appointed by the governor of the state, with the participation of a state interagency coordinating council also appointed by the governor. Federal funds under this program are used for the planning, development, and implementation of a statewide system for the provision of early intervention services. Funds may also be used for the general expansion and improvement of early intervention services. Infants and toddlers are eligible for this program if they have a developmental delay or a diagnosed condition with a high probability of resulting in developmental delay. At state discretion, children who are at risk for developmental delay may also be included in the target population for the program. Early intervention services for each eligible child include:

1. A multidisciplinary evaluation and assessment; and
2. A written individualized family services plan (IFSP) developed by a multidisciplinary team which includes the parents. Services are available to each child and his or her family as stated in the IFSP. Teams must design and provide service coordination and the services based on individual developmental needs.

Over the last decade, 20% of states have narrowed their eligibility criteria and states are increasingly enacting systems that charge families for early intervention services. States and communities struggle to appropriately address the needs of young children with disabilities, especially in this vulnerable economy.

CEC RECOMMENDATION

CEC urges Congress to strengthen its partnership with states by investing $1.029 billion in the IDEA Infants and Toddlers with Disabilities Program (Part C) for FY 2016. This increase will assist states in planning, developing, and implementing statewide Early Intervention systems. The President recommended a $53.6 million dollar increase for this program in his FY 2016 budget. A substantial federal commitment will help ensure that infants and toddlers and their families receive the services they need and deserve.
FUNDING CONSIDERATIONS

The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) Preschool Grant Program (also known as Part B Section 619) is intended to help states ensure that all preschool-aged children with disabilities receive special education and related services. In 1986, before this program existed, only half of the states provided services to preschoolers with disabilities.

Funds are used to provide the full range and variety of appropriate preschool special education and related services to children with disabilities 3 through 5 years of age. State education agencies (SEAs) receive this funding, and through them, local education agencies (LEAs) and educational service agencies are eligible for grants under this program.

Over the last two decades, the enrollment of preschool children with disabilities receiving services provided by IDEA has grown by over 420,000 or 60%, while federal funding has only increased by 25%, without taking into account inflation. Over the last decade alone, funding has decreased by over $15 million. In 1992, the federal government spent $803 dollars per child; by 2013 it was only spending $471 dollars per child, a decrease of 37%. Without a sustained commitment to funding, it will be extremely challenging to ensure children will receive appropriate services, particularly in these difficult economic times. Thus, the reality is that when federal funding fails to keep pace with program growth, children, families, schools, and states bear a disproportionate share of the financial burden.

States and districts have had to bear the brunt of these increased costs while seeing no increase in the federal share. In many cases, local education agencies have taken the hardest hit. The impact has resulted in increases in costs to states and local districts to continue to support federally mandated services. In many situations ongoing state and district services have had to be cut back or local taxes have had to increase in order to comply with federal regulations and mandates around IDEA.

CEC RECOMMENDATION

CEC urges Congress to reverse course and follow the advice of our nation’s leading researchers and practitioners by making a substantial investment in preschool children with disabilities.

A federal investment of $1.125 billion is critical to the success of this program and the children, families, and communities it serves.
FUNDING CONSIDERATIONS

When Congress enacted the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) formerly known as, The Education for All Handicapped Children Act P.L. 94-142, in 1975, it authorized the federal government to pay 40% of each state’s “excess cost” of educating children with disabilities. That amount – commonly referred to as the “IDEA full funding” amount – is calculated by taking 40% of the national average per pupil expenditure (APPE) multiplied by the number of children with disabilities served under IDEA in each state.

Unfortunately, Congress has never fulfilled this promise, and in recent years, the Federal share for IDEA funding has steadily fallen. As the law itself continues to thrive, the intended federal/state/local cost-sharing partnership has not been realized because Congress never fulfilled its financial obligation. As a result, states and local communities have been forced to pay a higher proportion of the special education costs. But ultimately, it’s the six million students with disabilities and their families who are shortchanged.

CEC RECOMMENDATION

When IDEA funding is reduced or remains stagnant, it is increasingly difficult for schools to provide the special education services needed by children and youth with disabilities. Moreover, when states confront deep deficits, education funding and the services it ensures are jeopardized, making an increased federal investment even more important.

Therefore, CEC calls on Congress to increase federal spending on IDEA. Congress should also make IDEA funding mandatory, instead of discretionary, which would ensure the certainty and consistency these programs need and children deserve.

Today, more than ever, children with disabilities learn alongside their general education peers. In fact, nearly 60% of students with disabilities are in general education classrooms for 80% or more of their school day. To effectively implement IDEA, funding is needed to improve the process of collaboration between special and general education. To support this environment, IDEA encourages and supports, among other priorities, comprehensive teacher training, and development of new materials and resources for teachers and students, including those that employ universal design for learning elements. These improvements cannot be made or sustained without a meaningful increase in federal funding.

CEC calls on Congress to give IDEA funding the high priority it requires. An appropriation of $12.9 billion for FY 2016 would represent an important reaffirmation of the federal commitment to IDEA. Congress should fulfill its 40-year old promise: IDEA funding should be available and mandatory.
The IDEA National Activities to Improve Education of Children with Disabilities Program (Part D) provides the critical infrastructure, training, research and development functions necessary to drive improvements in all aspects of special education practice through professional development, technical assistance, and parent information centers, among other initiatives.

According to the U.S. Department of Education, nearly every state has a shortage of special education professionals, a trend that has continued for decades and is further compounded by the growing number of children and youth with disabilities who have complex needs. IDEA Part D programs provide states, school districts and schools with the tools needed to address this challenge, when adequately resourced. Although these programs serve a critical function in the delivery of special education services, the total investment is a paltry 2% of the IDEA federal funding budget.

Specifically, the IDEA National Activities Program invests in:

1. **State Personnel Development Grants**: Competitive grants to help states reform and enhance systems for personnel preparation and professional development in the areas of early intervention, educational, and transition services to improve results for children with disabilities. Thirty-seven states currently receive a SPDG grant.

2. **Technical Assistance and Dissemination**: Competitive grants that provide educators, policymakers, other service providers and parents of children with disabilities with information on effective practices for meeting the needs of children with disabilities and their families.

3. **Personnel Preparation**: Competitive grants to increase the pipeline of well-prepared special education teachers, early interventionists, administrators, and related service personnel by providing financial assistance to individuals to access college and gain expertise, who are required to “pay back” through two years of service in a high-need area for every year of federal support; a wise use of federal funding.

4. **Parent Training and Information Centers**: Provide parents with the training and information they need to work with professionals in meeting the early intervention and special education needs of their children with disabilities.

5. **Educational Technology, Media and Materials Program**: Competitive grants for research, development, and other activities that promote the use of technology, including universal design features, in providing special education and early intervention services.
CEC calls on Congress to dramatically increase the investment for the IDEA National Activities Program (Part D) to $853.931 million. This investment would enable IDEA’s research and development program to be funded at a rate comparable to the industry standard. Currently, IDEA Part D receives only 2% of the total IDEA federal funding budget while the private sector – recognizing the importance of R&D – invests 10%. CEC’s recommendation takes a slightly more conservative approach by recommending an overall funding level for IDEA Part D at 7% of the total IDEA federal investment.

Specifically, CEC recommends the following:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>IDEA National Activities Programs</th>
<th>FY 2016 CEC Recommendation (in millions)</th>
<th>FY 2015 Appropriation (in millions)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>State Personnel Development Grants</td>
<td>$158,135</td>
<td>$41,630</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Technical Assistance and Dissemination</td>
<td>$168,678</td>
<td>$44,345</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Personnel Preparation</td>
<td>$316,270</td>
<td>$83,700</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parent Training and Information Centers</td>
<td>$105,424</td>
<td>$27,411</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education Technology, Media, and Materials</td>
<td>$105,424</td>
<td>$28,047</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>IDEA National Activities Programs (Part D) Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>$853,931</strong></td>
<td><strong>$7,583</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**IDEA National Activities Programs In Action!**

- Over 1.1 Million Families and Professionals Received Individual Assistance from IDEA’s Parent Training and Information Centers from 2010-2011.

- Of the 37 states currently receiving a State Personnel Development grant, Kansas has used this investment to support implementation of multi-tiered system of support across the state which has resulted in dramatic academic achievement in reading and math.

- The Center on Positive Behavioral Supports and Interventions – one of IDEA’s Technical Assistance and Dissemination Grants – has supported the implementation of PBIS in over 16,000 schools nationwide. Research has shown PBIS improves academic and behavioral outcomes for all students.

- Bookshare – a grantee of the Educational Technology, Media and Materials program – has provided over 190,000 accessible books/textbooks to over a quarter million users.

- The Personnel Preparation program provides financial assistance to approximately 8,000 scholars annually, all of whom are preparing for a career to serve children and youth with disabilities, which they “pay back” through a service obligation in a high-need school.
FUNDING CONSIDERATIONS

Research in special education and its dissemination to practitioners in the field is critical to supporting the academic achievement and development of America’s six million children and youth with disabilities. Additionally, practitioners are required by the Individuals With Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) and the Elementary and Secondary Education Act/No Child Left Behind (NCLB) to use evidence-based interventions, many of which come as the result of research supported by the National Center for Special Education Research (NCSER), one of four center within the Institute for Education Sciences, the research arm of the U.S. Department of Education.

NCSER funded research has made numerous significant contributions, such as:

- Autism: Building Comprehensive School-based Interventions to Improve Child Outcomes
- Early Identification and Intervention: Optimizing Developmental Outcomes and School Readiness
- Closing the Achievement Gap in Reading
- Building a Strong Foundation in Mathematics
- Improving Outcomes for Children with Disabilities through Technology and Small Business Innovations
- Understanding the Needs of Adolescents with Disabilities
- Improving Response to Intervention Models
- Improving Social, Emotional, and Behavioral Skills with Targeted Interventions

In FY 2011, federal funding for research in special education was cut by 30% -- $20 million. As a result, NCSER was forced to reduce its investment in new research by 75% for 2013.

Educators and early interventionists rely on research findings by NCSER to expand and enhance their knowledge, understanding, and services for children and youth with disabilities. A significant increase in funding is crucial to ensure that children and youth with disabilities and the professionals who work on their behalf have access to the evidence-based practices they deserve.

CEC RECOMMENDS

To support research in special education and early intervention for infants, toddlers, and children with disabilities, CEC recommends an appropriation of $200.305 million for special education research for FY 2016. This additional funding would support grants that focus on understanding the needs of children with disabilities. Furthermore, it would enable practitioners to access scientifically/evidence-based research, as mandated by IDEA and NCLB.
FUNDING CONSIDERATIONS

Although there has been a substantial focus on closing achievement gaps at lower levels of performance, policy makers have given little attention to the growing *excellence gap*, the difference between disadvantaged students and their more advantaged peers at the top levels of achievement. Recent research analyzing data derived from the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) and state assessments demonstrates the existence of an *excellence gap* in every state which will take up to a century to close among various subgroups.

Unfortunately, federal and state policy makers have largely ignored the *excellence gap*, investing few resources into gifted education programs. In the absence of federal support, states – and more often, local school districts – are forced to decide if and how much to invest in gifted education. State commitments to gifted education vary dramatically with some states mandating and funding gifted education and others remaining virtually silent on the issue. Furthermore, a closer look at the distribution of gifted education programs within states – including those states with mandates and funding – expose a concentration of gifted programs in more affluent school districts, thereby neglecting students with high potential from disadvantaged backgrounds. A trend further confirmed by the Office of Civil Rights, U.S. Department of Education.

Although the Jacob K. Javits Gifted and Talented Student Act seeks to directly address this issue, its funding was eliminated in FY 2011, but partially restored to $5.0 million in FY 2014 and $10.0 million in FY 2015.

CEC RECOMMENDATION

At a time when the nation recognizes the importance of remaining globally competitive, Congress has eliminated funding for the only federal program that addresses the educational needs of students with gifts and talents, the Javits Act.

CEC recommends reversing course and investing in the Javits Act by allocating an appropriation of $20 million to enable the Javits program to better support its research, and state and local grant initiatives.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Education Act</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Research in Special Education</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>IDEA TOTAL</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Individuals with Disabilities Education Act</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jacob K. Javits Gifted and Talented Students</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Part C</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Preschool Grants Program</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>State and Local Grant Program</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Research</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>IDEA TOTAL</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Individuals with Disabilities Education Act</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Preschool Grants Program</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>State and Local Grant Program</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>