Government Report Identifies Hurdles in Providing Supplemental Education Services; Difficulty in Addressing Needs of Students with Disabilities

- Official IDEA Part B Final Regulations Published in Federal Register; Model Forms for IEPs, Procedural Safeguards, Prior Written Notice Available
- Department of Education Gives Feedback on State Highly Qualified Teacher Plans
- Government Report Identifies Hurdles in Providing Supplemental Educational Services; Difficulty in Addressing Needs of Students with Disabilities
- Education Committee and Government Report Focus on Student Growth as Basis for AYP

Official IDEA Part B Final Regulations Published in Federal Register; Model Forms for IEPs, Procedural Safeguards, Prior Written Notice Available

In case you missed CEC Policy Updates from earlier this month, the Department of Education has released the final regulations for IDEA Part B and model forms to provide states and localities with sample documents on IEPs, procedural safeguards and prior written notice, which can be used to ensure compliance with IDEA 2004.

Look in future Updates for CEC’s analysis of the final IDEA Part B regulations!

Read CEC’s Public Policy Update on the release of the IDEA Part B final regulations.

Read CEC’s Special Public Policy Update on the model forms.

Read the final regulations.

Department of Education Gives Feedback on State Highly Qualified Teacher Plans

On August 16, the Department of Education released initial feedback on state plans to have all teachers highly qualified by the end of the 2006-2007 school year. As required under NCLB, all 50 states submitted plans on achieving the goal of having 100 percent of teachers deemed as highly qualified. The Department graded the state plans against six criteria that addressed:

- An analysis of the data identifying teachers that do not meet highly qualified requirements, including trends that the State Plan will address;
- Steps local districts will take to help teachers quickly attain highly qualified teacher status;
- Technical assistance, programs, and resources the State Education Agency (SEA) will offer to help the Local Education Agency (LEA) implement their highly qualified plans;
• Actions states will take of LEAs do no ensure all teachers of core academic subjects are highly qualified;
• The use of an alternative method to ensure that all teachers are highly qualified (e.g. the state’s use of the High Objective Uniform State Standard of Evaluation (HOUSSE) procedures);
• Taking steps to ensure that minority students and students from low-income families are not disproportionately taught by inexperience or unqualified teachers.

The plans of nine states were deemed as satisfying all six criteria (New Jersey, Ohio, South Carolina, South Dakota, Louisiana, New Mexico, Kansas, Maryland and Nevada); thirty-nine states submitted plans that only addressed some of the criteria; and four states did not address any of the criteria (Hawaii, Missouri, Utah and Wisconsin). Those states that did not satisfy all of the criteria will be required to submit a revised plan to the Department by September 29, 2006.

CEC expects at a minimum that entry-level special educators possess a bachelor’s degree from an accredited institution, have mastered appropriate core academic subject matter content, and can demonstrate that they have mastered the knowledge and skills in the CEC Common Core and an appropriate Area of Specialization.

Read more of CEC’s resources/positions on highly qualified teachers.

More information from the Department of Education

**Government Report Identifies Hurdles in Providing Supplemental Educational Services; Difficulty in Addressing Needs of Students with Disabilities**

Earlier this month, the Government Accountability Office – the investigative arm of Congress – issued *Education Actions Needed to Improve Local Implementation and State Evaluation of Supplemental Educational Services*, a report that investigates the use of supplemental educational services (SES) in districts and states across the nation, including the program’s impact on students with disabilities. Under No Child Left Behind (NCLB), SES are to be offered to Title I schools that have not met state performance goals for at least three years. These supplemental services – which include tutoring and remediation – are intended to provide students in low performing schools with educational opportunities that will compliment the classroom curricula and increase academic performance. The report uncovered that 80 percent of SES eligible students are not receiving these services.

While GAO found an increase in SES eligible students, participants and promising practices in some areas, GAO concluded that there are strides that the Department of Education must make to increase the widespread implementation and effectiveness of the program. The report highlighted that there are not enough SES providers available to meet the needs of students with disabilities in approximately one-quarter of the districts evaluated. In addition, the report found that some providers interviewed reported that their tutoring programs were not designed for
students with disabilities and any modification of the tutoring programs would be difficult to meet the needs of students with disabilities.

Formal recommendations made by GAO to the Department of Education include:

- Providing federal guidance and possibly sample parental notification letters on SES to help states and districts comply with federal requirements.
- Collect and disseminate information on promising practices used by states to attract more providers for certain areas and groups.
- Provide example of how districts can involve schools and school officials to facilitate local coordination with providers.

Read the full report.

Read Congressman McKeon’s reaction to the report.

Read Congressman Miller’s reaction to the report.

Education Committee and Government Report Focus on Student Growth as Basis for NCLB

Late last month, the House Education and the Workforce Committee and the Government Accountability Office formally reviewed utilizing student growth – often referred to as ‘growth models’ – for accountability purposes under No Child Left Behind.

The House Education and the Workforce Committee, led by Chairman McKeon (R-CA) and Ranking Member George Miller (D-CA), held a hearing on July 27 titled No Child Left Behind: Can Growth Models Ensure Improved Education for All Students. As Congress prepares to reauthorize NCLB, the House Education and the Workforce Committee has held a series of hearings focusing on major themes of NCLB. CEC has long advocated for a growth model approach for accountability under NCLB and believes that this measurement will reflect a more accurate view of a student’s academic progress.

The Congressional hearing featured testimony from Marlene Shaul, Director, Government Accountability Office; Katie Haycock, Director, The Education Trust; William Sanders, Ph.D., Senior Manager, Value-Added Assessment and Research; Joel Klein, Chancellor, New York City Department of Education; and Reg Weaver, President, National Education Association (NEA).

Read the testimony from the hearing.

Last month, the Government Accountability Office (GAO) published States Face Challenges Measuring Academic Growth that Education’s Initiatives May Help Address, a report that provided a nationwide look at the use of existing growth models as a means of meeting NCLB
requirements. GAO found that growth models can provide states with more detailed information on how schools’ and student’s performance has changed from year to year, as a growth model is defined for this report as tracking the same students over time (including tracking schools and groups of students). In addition, GAO found that educators can use growth models to tailor specific interventions based on a students’ performance from year to year. CEC is pleased that GAO was commissioned to investigate the use of growth models as a means for measuring student performance.

Read CEC’s policy on assessment and accountability.

Read the full GAO report.