Purpose

The Preschool Grants Program (also known as Section 619) is intended to help states ensure that all preschool-aged children (3-5 years of age) 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. Since 1987, however, when this expanded program began operating, the number of children served has increased from 265,000 to an estimated 710,400 in fiscal year 2011.

Who Receives Funding

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.

Activities Supported

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.

Funding Considerations

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 2010 it was only spending $527 dollars per child, a decrease of 34%. While ARRA infused a substantial and needed amount into this program, without a sustained commitment to funding, children will fail to receive appropriate services especially 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.

Decreasing Commitment: Decline in IDEA Preschool Funding
Individuals with Disabilities Education Act – Part B Section 619
Preschool Program

Wisconsin State Profile

How Many Children in Wisconsin Receive Preschool Services?

In 2008, 15,153 Wisconsin children ages 3-5 received preschool services.

What was the federal IDEA Part B Section 619 allocation awarded to Wisconsin in 2010? What was the ARRA appropriation?

In 2010, Wisconsin received $9,322,199 for IDEA Part B Section 619; and in 2009 Wisconsin received $9,827,791 for Part B Section 619 under ARRA.

How is Wisconsin’s IDEA preschool program administered?

The Wisconsin state education agency special education unit administers preschool special education.

How does Wisconsin use federal IDEA preschool funds?

Direct services, accountability and outcomes activities, and state level administration.

How is Wisconsin’s IDEA preschool program involved in comprehensive services for all young children and their families?

Discretionary funds are used for Early Childhood Community Councils and committees at the local level. Also, regional discretionary grants support professional development activities that facilitate joint planning and training of school staff, parents, and other community preschool providers. A number of activities related to the Wisconsin Model Early Learning Standards are supported by Section 619 involvement, which includes training, planning, and implementing the outcome system and supporting local activities.

What training opportunities are provided for preschool personnel that support inclusive settings?

Preschool Options training, technical assistance, mini-grants to communities, demonstration communities, and specific consultation is provided through statewide discretionary grant projects.

Has Wisconsin developed preschool policies to enhance parent involvement?

Yes, Wisconsin has developed preschool specific policies and strategies to enhance the involvement of parents.

How does Wisconsin work with federally funded parent information centers?

Wisconsin’s state education agency work with parent information centers through special projects, provision of technical assistance, shared resources, joint conferences, as well as other services.

Does Wisconsin have early learning standards/guidelines?

Yes, Wisconsin has early learning standards/guidelines that apply to all children ages birth through five. [http://www.collaboratingpartners.com/EarlyLS.htm](http://www.collaboratingpartners.com/EarlyLS.htm)

Does Wisconsin have a pre-kindergarten program?

Yes, Wisconsin has the following general education pre-kindergarten programs: state funded Pre-K for at risk; Title I Pre-K; locally funded Pre-K; state Head Start, and Pre-K early reading.

Source: National Early Childhood Technical Assistance Center [http://www.nectac.org/~pdfs/pubs/q1-44.pdf](http://www.nectac.org/~pdfs/pubs/q1-44.pdf)