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CEC Reacts to New U.S. Department of Education Guidance Affirming Students' Rights Under Federal Special Education Law

Arlington, Va., March 22, 2020 — Yesterday, the Council for Exceptional Children (CEC) received [additional guidance](#) from the U.S. Department of Education (ED) regarding the state of special education during the COVID-19 pandemic.

The new [Supplemental Fact Sheet](#) reaffirms the rights of students to receive educational instruction and related services under federal special education law, recognizing that, for the safety of students and school personnel, it will likely need to be conducted remotely and with reasonable accommodations. It also provides examples of how schools and educators can provide these services.

The ED also articulates how schools may extend reasonable Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) timeframes as needed for eligibility under Part B and Part C; Individualized Education Programs (IEPs) and Individualized Family Service Plans (IFSPs); reevaluations; state complaints; and due process. These clarifications can help educators and school leaders understand where flexibility lies when striving to teach students in these extraordinary times.

“CEC is pleased to see that the U.S. Department of Education continues to be responsive to the needs of educators, students, and families,” says Chad Rummel, CEC Executive Director. “Together, we are committed to continue working with the Department of Education and all of our members to succeed in these uncharted times and provide support to the students who rely on us each and every day.”

Over the coming days, CEC will continue to monitor this guidance and provide support for implementing this new information in an accessible and reasonable manner. Please stay tuned for additional webinars for our community. In the meantime, the community can find the latest resources and guidance at cec.sped.org/ResourcesforTeachingRemotely.

The Council for Exceptional Children (CEC) is the professional association of educators dedicated to advancing the educational success of children and youth with exceptionalities through advocacy, standards, and professional development. Learn more about CEC at cec.sped.org.

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