

## IDEA: FUNDING

### ACTION

Tell your members of Congress to defend and support increased funding for the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA).

### WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW?

Static federal appropriations of funding for IDEA has forced states and school districts to seek alternative funding streams to support the education and services for students with disabilities. Congress needs to keep its promise to provide up to 40% of special education funding by restoring and then increasing funding for IDEA grants and programs. The primary alternative funding stream for IDEA is now Medicaid, which is also under threat.

Permissive and mandated use of IDEA funds (up to 15%) for struggling learners in general education also erode the financial support for special education students. IDEA and the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) should share funding responsibility for those struggling learners who receive comprehensive early intervening services (CEIS); and the U.S. Department of Education (ED) should provide additional guidance to states and local districts about how to ensure that Multi-Tiered System of Supports (MTSS) services are appropriately provided and funded.

### WHAT YOU NEED TO SAY?

- The federal funding commitment to children with disabilities remains unmet.
- The IDEA Full Funding Act, introduced in the 114th Congress, would gradually increase IDEA funding from its current annual appropriation of \$11.6 billion to \$35.6 billion by fiscal year 2025.
- Local, state, and federal budgets for special education barely meet the basic requirements in order to comply with the law; however, the educational and service requirements for the academic success of children with disabilities never go away.
- Congress should authorize ED to provide incentives to states for increasing the frequency and intensity of services. These incentives could include funding bonuses.
- ED should encourage Results Driven Accountability (RDA), which shifts ED's accountability efforts from a primary emphasis on compliance to a framework that focuses on improved results for students with disabilities.
- RDA would emphasize child outcomes—such as performance on assessments, graduation rates, and early childhood outcomes.

### ASHA CONTACT:

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