

Department of Education
SPECIAL EDUCATION
Fiscal Year 2018 Budget Request

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¹ State tables reflecting final 2016 allocations and 2017 and 2018 estimates are posted on the Department's webpage at: <https://www2.ed.gov/about/overview/budget/statetables/index.html>

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For carrying out the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), \$12,942,126,000, of which \$2,591,321,000 shall become available on July 1, 2018, and shall remain available through September 30, 2019, and of which \$10,124,103,000 shall become available on October 1, 2018, and shall remain available through September 30, 2019, for academic year 2018-2019:¹ *Provided*, That the amount for section 611(b)(2) of the IDEA shall be equal to the lesser of the amount available for that activity during fiscal year 2017, increased by the amount of inflation as specified in section 619(d)(2)(B) of the IDEA, or the percent change in the funds appropriated under section 611(i) of the IDEA, but not less than the amount for that activity during fiscal year 2017:² *Provided further*, That the Secretary shall, without regard to section 611(d) of the IDEA, distribute to all other States (as that term is defined in section 611(g)(2)), subject to the third proviso, any amount by which a State's allocation under section 611, from funds appropriated under this heading, is reduced under section 612(a)(18)(B), according to the following: 85 percent on the basis of the States' relative populations of children aged 3 through 21 who are of the same age as children with disabilities for whom the State ensures the availability of a free appropriate public education under this part, and 15 percent to States on the basis of the States' relative populations of those children who are living in poverty:³ *Provided further*, That the Secretary may not distribute any funds under the previous proviso to any State whose reduction in allocation from funds appropriated under this heading made funds available for such a distribution:⁴ *Provided further*, That the States shall allocate such funds distributed under the second proviso to local educational agencies in accordance with section 611(f):⁵ *Provided further*, That the amount by which a State's allocation under section 611(d) of the IDEA is reduced under section 612(a)(18)(B) and the amounts distributed to States under the previous provisos in fiscal year 2012 or any subsequent year shall not be considered in

calculating the awards under section 611(d) for fiscal year 2013 or for any subsequent fiscal years:⁶ *Provided further*, That, notwithstanding the provision in section 612(a)(18)(B) regarding the fiscal year in which a State's allocation under section 611(d) is reduced for failure to comply with the requirement of section 612(a)(18)(A), the Secretary may apply the reduction specified in section 612(a)(18)(B) over a period of consecutive fiscal years, not to exceed five, until the entire reduction is applied:⁷ *Provided further*, That the Secretary may, in any fiscal year in which a State's allocation under section 611 is reduced in accordance with section 612(a)(18)(B), reduce the amount a State may reserve under section 611(e)(1) by an amount that bears the same relation to the maximum amount described in that paragraph as the reduction under section 612(a)(18)(B) bears to the total allocation the State would have received in that fiscal year under section 611(d) in the absence of the reduction:⁸ *Provided further*, That the Secretary shall either reduce the allocation of funds under section 611 for any fiscal year following the fiscal year for which the State fails to comply with the requirement of section 612(a)(18)(A) as authorized by section 612(a)(18)(B), or seek to recover funds under section 452 of the General Education Provisions Act (20 U.S.C. 1234a)⁹ *Provided further*, That the funds reserved under 611(c) of the IDEA may be used to provide technical assistance to States to improve the capacity of the States to meet the data collection requirements of sections 616 and 618 and to administer and carry out other services and activities to improve data collection, coordination, quality, and use under parts B and C of the IDEA:¹⁰ *Provided further*, That the Secretary may use funds made available for the State Personnel Development Grants program under part D, subpart 1 of IDEA to evaluate program performance under such subpart:¹¹

NOTES

A full-year 2017 appropriation for this account was not enacted at the time the budget was prepared; therefore, the budget assumes this account is operating under the Further Continuing Appropriations Act, 2017 (P.L. 114-254). The amounts included for 2017 reflect the annualized level provided by the continuing resolution.

Each language provision that is followed by a footnote reference is explained in the Analysis of Language Provisions and Changes document which follows the appropriations language.

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Analysis of Language Provisions and Changes

Language Provision	Explanation
<p>¹...<u>\$12,942,126,000, of which \$2,591,321,000 shall become available on July 1, 2018, and shall remain available through September 30, 2019, and of which \$10,124,103,000 shall become available on October 1, 2018, and shall remain available through September 30, 2019, for academic year 2018-2019:</u></p>	<p>This language provides for funds to be appropriated on a forward-funded basis for a portion of the Grants to States program, and all of the Preschool Grants, and Grants for Infants and Families programs. The language also provides that a portion of the Grants to States funds be available in an advance appropriation that becomes available for obligation on October 1 of the fiscal year following the year of the appropriation.</p>
<p>² <u>Provided, That the amount for section 611(b)(2) of the IDEA shall be equal to the lesser of the amount available for that activity during fiscal year 2017, increased by the amount of inflation as specified in section 619(d)(2)(B) of the IDEA, or the percent change in the funds appropriated under section 611(i) of the IDEA, but not less than the amount for that activity during fiscal year 2017:</u></p>	<p>This language limits the amount of funds required to be transferred to the Department of the Interior under the Grants to States program to the lesser of an amount equal to the amount transferred to the Department of the Interior in 2017 plus inflation or the percent change in the appropriation for the Grants to States program. This language also clarifies that in the event of a decrease or no change in the appropriation for the Grants to States program, the amount of funds required to be transferred to the Department of the Interior remains level with the amount they received under the fiscal year 2017 appropriation.</p>

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Analysis of Language Provisions and Changes

Language Provision	Explanation
<p>³ <u>Provided further, That the Secretary shall, without regard to section 611(d) of the IDEA, distribute to all other States (as that term is defined in section 611(g)(2)), subject to the third proviso, any amount by which a State's allocation under section 611, from funds appropriated under this heading, is reduced under section 612(a)(18)(B), according to the following: 85 percent on the basis of the States' relative populations of children aged 3 through 21 who are of the same age as children with disabilities for whom the State ensures the availability of a free appropriate public education under this part, and 15 percent to States on the basis of the States' relative populations of those children who are living in poverty:</u></p>	<p>This language authorizes the Department to reallocate funds that are reduced from a State's award as a result of a failure to meet the maintenance of State financial support requirements of section 612 of the IDEA and requires that those funds be distributed to other States on the basis of their relative populations of children in the age ranges for which a State ensures a free appropriate public education and those children living in poverty.</p>
<p>⁴ <u>Provided further, That the Secretary may not distribute any funds under the previous proviso to any State whose reduction in allocation from funds appropriated under this heading made funds available for such a distribution:</u></p>	<p>This language ensures that any State receiving a reduction in their section 611 allocation as a result of not meeting the maintenance of State financial support requirements of section 612 of the IDEA does not receive funds redistributed as a result of another State's failure to meet those same requirements.</p>
<p>⁵ <u>Provided further, That the States shall allocate such funds distributed under the second proviso to local educational agencies in accordance with section 611(f):</u></p>	<p>This language requires States to distribute the funds received under the second proviso to local educational agencies without reserving a portion of those funds for State-level activities.</p>

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Analysis of Language Provisions and Changes

Language Provision	Explanation
<p>⁶ <u>Provided further, That the amount by which a State's allocation under section 611(d) of the IDEA is reduced under section 612(a)(18)(B) and the amounts distributed to States under the previous provisos in fiscal year 2012 or any subsequent year shall not be considered in calculating the awards under section 611(d) for fiscal year 2013 or for any subsequent fiscal years:</u></p>	<p>This language allows the Department to calculate a State's allocation under section 611(d) in future years without regard to reductions in awards made as a result of a failure to meet the maintenance of State financial support requirements in section 612. This language mitigates the potential long-term impact of one-time reductions in awards.</p>
<p>⁷ <u>Provided further, That, notwithstanding the provision in section 612(a)(18)(B) regarding the fiscal year in which a State's allocation under section 611(d) is reduced for failure to comply with the requirement of section 612(a)(18)(A), the Secretary may apply the reduction specified in section 612(a)(18)(B) over a period of consecutive fiscal years, not to exceed five, until the entire reduction is applied:</u></p>	<p>This language permits the Secretary to spread out a reduction from a State's award as a result of a failure to meet the maintenance of State financial support requirements of section 612 of the IDEA over a maximum of 5 years.</p>
<p>⁸ <u>Provided further, That the Secretary may, in any fiscal year in which a State's allocation under section 611 is reduced in accordance with section 612(a)(18)(B), reduce the amount a State may reserve under section 611(e)(1) by an amount that bears the same relation to the maximum amount described in that paragraph as the reduction under section 612(a)(18)(B) bears to the total allocation the State would have received in that fiscal year under section 611(d) in the absence of the reduction:</u></p>	<p>This language permits the Secretary to reduce the maximum State set-aside for State administration by the same percentage as the reduction in the State's overall IDEA section 611 grant.</p>

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Analysis of Language Provisions and Changes

Language Provision	Explanation
<p>⁹ <u>Provided further, That the Secretary shall either reduce the allocation of funds under section 611 for any fiscal year following the fiscal year for which the State fails to comply with the requirement of section 612(a)(18)(A) as authorized by section 612(a)(18)(B), or seek to recover funds under section 452 of the General Education Provisions Act (20 U.S.C. 1234a):</u></p>	<p>This language permits the Secretary to: (1) seek to recover non-Federal (State) funds in the amount of the State's failure to meet the maintenance of State financial support requirements of section 612 under the recovery of funds provision in section 452 of the General Education Provisions Act, or (2) reduce the State's IDEA section 611 grant.</p>
<p>¹⁰ <u>Provided further, That the funds reserved under 611(c) of the IDEA may be used to provide technical assistance to States to improve the capacity of the States to meet the data collection requirements of sections 616 and 618 and to administer and carry out other services and activities to improve data collection, coordination, quality, and use under parts B and C of the IDEA:</u></p>	<p>This language authorizes the Department to use funds available under section 611(c) to provide technical assistance and support to States on a broad range of issues, including compliance with applicable privacy laws and appropriate coordination and linking of information within and across Federal, State and local data systems for the unique needs of students with disabilities and their families and the purposes of the IDEA programs and data collections.</p>
<p>¹¹ <u>Provided further, That the Secretary may use funds made available for the State Personnel Development Grants program under part D, subpart 1 of IDEA to evaluate program performance under such subpart:</u></p>	<p>This language permits the Secretary to use funds appropriated for the State Personnel Development Grants program under Part D of the IDEA to evaluate program performance.</p>

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Appropriation, Adjustments, and Transfers
(dollars in thousands)

Appropriation/Adjustments/Transfers	2016	2017 Annualized CR	2018
Discretionary:			
Appropriation	\$12,959,210	\$12,952,190	\$12,942,126
Advance:			
Advance for succeeding fiscal year.....	-9,265,735	-9,283,383	-10,124,103
Advance from prior year	<u>9,283,383</u>	<u>9,265,735</u>	<u>+9,283,383</u>
Total, budget authority	12,976,858	12,934,542	12,101,405

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Summary of Changes
(dollars in thousands)

2017 Annualized CR	\$12,952,190
2018	<u>12,942,126</u>
Net change	-10,064

Decreases:	<u>2017 base</u>	<u>Change from base</u>
<u>Program:</u>		
Elimination of funding for the Special Olympics Education program	\$10,064	-\$10,064
Total, decreases:		-10,064

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Authorizing Legislation
(dollars in thousands)

Activity	2017 Authorized	2017 Annualized CR	2018 Authorized	2018 Request
State Grants:				
Grants to States (<i>IDEA-B-611</i>).....	Indefinite ¹	\$11,890,202 ²	Indefinite ¹	\$11,890,202 ²
Preschool grants (<i>IDEA-B-619</i>).....	Indefinite	367,538	Indefinite	367,538
Grants for infants and families (<i>IDEA-C</i>).....	0 ³	457,684	0 ³	457,684
National activities:				
State personnel development (<i>IDEA-D-1</i>).....	0 ³	41,551	0 ³	41,551
Technical assistance and dissemination (<i>IDEA-D-2-663</i>).....	0 ³	44,261	0 ³	44,261
Personnel preparation (<i>IDEA-D-2-662</i>).....	0 ³	83,541	0 ³	83,541
Parent information centers (<i>IDEA-D-3-671-673</i>).....	0 ³	27,359	0 ³	27,359
Educational Technology, Media, and Materials (<i>IDEA-D-3-674</i>).....	0 ³	29,990	0 ³	29,990
Special Olympics education programs (<i>SOSEA 3(a)</i>) ...	<u>Indefinite</u>	<u>10,064</u>	<u>Indefinite</u>	<u>0</u>
Total definite authorization	0		0	
Total annual appropriation		12,952,190		12,942,126
Portion of request subject to reauthorization				684,866

¹ Funding for technical assistance on State data collection is limited to \$25,000 thousand adjusted for inflation. This amount is estimated to be \$32,666 thousand for fiscal year 2017 and \$33,444 thousand for fiscal year 2018.

² Includes \$21,400 thousand for technical assistance on State data collection in fiscal year 2017 and \$21,500 thousand in fiscal year 2018.

³ The GEPA extension expired September 30, 2011; continued funding is proposed for this program in fiscal year 2018 through appropriations language.

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Appropriations History (dollars in thousands)

Year	Budget Estimate to Congress	House Allowance	Senate Allowance	Appropriation
2009	\$12,335,943	\$12,587,920 ¹	\$12,511,631 ¹	\$12,579,677
2009 Advance for 2010 Recovery Act Supplemental (P.L. 111-5)	(7,647,444) 0	(8,592,383) 13,600,000	(7,647,444) 13,500,000	(8,592,383) 12,200,000
2010	12,579,677	12,579,677	12,587,856 ²	12,587,035
2010 Advance for 2011	(8,592,383)	(8,592,383)	(8,592,383)	(8,592,383)
2011	12,846,190	12,564,953 ³	12,787,035 ²	12,526,672 ⁴
2011 Advance for 2012 Rescission (P.L. 112-74)	(8,592,383)	(8,592,383)	(8,592,383)	(8,592,383) (-16,240) ⁴
2012 (2012 Advance for 2013)	12,861,351 (9,433,103)	13,757,844 ⁵ (8,592,383)	12,553,066 ² (8,592,383)	12,640,709 (9,283,383)
2013 2013 Advance for 2014	12,687,307 (10,124,103)	12,640,709 ⁶ (9,283,383)	12,770,709 ⁶ (9,283,383)	11,982,364 (9,283,383)
2014 2014 Advance for 2015	12,657,307 (10,124,103)	N/A ⁷	12,803,387 ² (9,283,383)	12,497,300 (9,283,383)
2015 2015 Advance for 2016	12,600,627 (10,124,103)	N/A ⁷	12,555,044 ⁸ (9,283,383)	12,522,358 (9,283,383)
2016 2016 Advance for 2017	12,822,358 (9,283,383)	13,024,510 ⁹ (9,283,383)	12,636,817 ⁹ (9,283,383)	12,976,858 (9,283,383)
2017	13,066,858	13,406,517 ¹⁰	13,066,858 ¹⁰	13,064,358

¹ The levels for the House and Senate allowances reflect action on the regular annual 2009 appropriations bill, which proceeded in the 110th Congress only through the House Subcommittee and the Senate Committee.

² The level for the Senate allowance reflects Senate Committee action only.

³ The level for the House allowance reflects the House passed full-year continuing resolution.

⁴ The level for appropriation reflects the Department of Defense and Full-Year Continuing Appropriations Act, 2011 (P.L. 112-10).

⁵ The level for the House allowance reflects an introduced bill and the level for the Senate allowance reflects Senate Committee action only.

⁶ The levels for the House and Senate allowances reflect action on the regular annual 2013 appropriations bill, which proceeded in the 112th Congress only through the House Subcommittee and the Senate Committee.

⁷ The House allowance is shown as N/A because there was no Subcommittee action.

⁸ The level for the Senate allowance reflects Senate Subcommittee action only.

⁹ The levels for the House and Senate allowances reflect action on the regular annual 2016 appropriations bill, which proceeded in the 114th Congress only through the House Committee and Senate Committee.

¹⁰ The levels for the House and Senate allowances reflect Committee action on the regular annual 2017 appropriations bill.

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Year	Budget Estimate to Congress	House Allowance	Senate Allowance	Appropriation
2017 Advance for 2018	(9,283,383)	(9,283,383)	(9,283,383)	(9,283,383)
2018	12,942,125			
2018 Advance for 2019	(10,124,103)			

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DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION FISCAL YEAR 2018 PRESIDENT'S BUDGET □
(dollars in thousands)

Account, Program and Activity	Category Code	2016 Appropriation	2017 Annualized CR	2017 Appropriation	2018 President's Budget	2018 President's Budget Compared to 2017 Annualized CR Amount	2018 President's Budget Compared to 2017 Annualized CR Percent	2018 President's Budget Compared to 2017 Appropriation Amount	2018 President's Budget Compared to 2017 Appropriation Percent
Special Education									
1. State grants:									
(a) Grants to States (IDEA B-611)									
Annual appropriation	D	2,629,465	2,606,818	2,719,465	1,766,099	(840,719)	-32.25%	(953,366)	-35.06%
Advance for succeeding fiscal year ^{1,2}	D	9,283,383	9,283,383	9,283,383	10,124,103	840,720	9.06%	840,720	9.06%
Subtotal		11,912,848	11,890,202	12,002,848	11,890,202	0	0.00%	(112,646)	-0.94%
(b) Preschool grants (IDEA B-619)	D	368,238	367,538	368,238	367,538	0	0.00%	(700)	-0.19%
(c) Grants for infants and families (IDEA C)	D	458,556	457,684	458,556	457,684	0	0.00%	(872)	-0.19%
Subtotal, State grants		12,739,642	12,715,424	12,829,642	12,715,424	0	0.00%	(114,218)	-0.89%
2. National activities (IDEA D):									
(a) State personnel development (subpart 1)	D	41,630	41,551	38,630	41,551	0	0.00%	2,921	7.56%
(b) Technical assistance and dissemination (section 663)	D	44,345	44,261	44,345	44,261	0	0.00%	(84)	-0.19%
(c) Personnel preparation (section 662)	D	83,700	83,541	83,700	83,541	0	0.00%	(159)	-0.19%
(d) Parent information centers (sections 671-673)	D	27,411	27,359	27,411	27,359	0	0.00%	(52)	-0.19%
(e) Educational technology, media, and materials (section 674)	D	30,047	29,990	28,047	29,990	0	0.00%	1,943	6.93%
Subtotal		227,133	226,701	222,133	226,701	0	0.00%	4,568	2.06%
3. Special Olympics education programs (Special Olympics Sport and Empowerment Act)	D	10,083	10,064	12,583	0	(10,064)	-100.00%	(12,583)	-100.00%
Total, Appropriation	D	12,976,858	12,952,189	13,064,358	12,942,126	(10,063)	-0.08%	(122,232)	-0.94%
Total, Budget authority	D	12,976,858	12,934,541	13,064,358	12,101,406	(833,135)	-6.44%	(962,952)	-7.37%
Current		3,693,475	3,668,806	3,780,975	2,818,023	(850,783)	-23.19%	(962,952)	-25.47%
Prior year's advance ¹		9,283,383	9,265,735	9,283,383	9,283,383	17,648	0.19%	0	0.00%

NOTES: D = discretionary program; M = mandatory program
Detail may not add to totals due to rounding.

¹ The Advance for succeeding fiscal year shown in the 2016 Appropriation column and the Prior year's advance shown in the 2017 Appropriation column reflect the final 2016 appropriation level. The Prior year's advance shown in the 2017 Annualized CR column reflects the 0.1901 percent across-the-board reduction applied to the 2016 Advance for succeeding fiscal year that was part of the 2017 Annualized CR that expired April 28, 2017.

² The fiscal year 2018 amount for Advance for succeeding fiscal year is increased to account for the proposed elimination of advances in Supporting Effective Instruction State Grants in the School Improvement Programs account.

SPECIAL EDUCATION

Summary of Request

The Administration is committed to ensuring that all children, including students with disabilities, have an equal opportunity to participate in a high quality education; are expected to perform to high levels; and to the maximum extent possible, are prepared to lead productive, independent lives. The fiscal year 2018 Budget Request for Special Education of \$12.9 billion is aimed at making this goal a reality by helping States and school districts improve the results for children with disabilities. A full-year 2017 appropriation was not enacted at the time the FY 2018 Budget was prepared; therefore, the Budget assumes the Department is operating under the Further Continuing Appropriations Act, 2017 (P.L. 114–254). The amounts included for 2017 reflect the annualized level provided by the continuing resolution. The Department of Education Appropriations Act, 2017, provided \$13.1 billion, an increase of \$87.5 million, or 0.67 percent, over the 2016 level for programs in this account.

The Administration requests \$11.9 billion for the **Grants to States** program, level with the fiscal year 2017 annualized continuing resolution (CR) level, to assist States and schools in covering the excess costs of providing special education and related services to children with disabilities ages 3 through 21. The request would provide an average of \$1,742 for each of the 6.8 million children with disabilities who are estimated to be served in 2018. The Federal contribution toward meeting the excess cost of special education and related services would be approximately 15 percent of the national average per pupil expenditures under this request.

The request of \$367.5 million for **Preschool Grants** would provide support to States and schools for providing special education services to children ages 3 through 5. The request of \$457.3 million for **Grants for Infants and Families** would provide assistance to States to help them implement statewide systems of early intervention services for children from birth through age 2.

The \$226.7 million request for **National Activities** programs would support a variety of technical assistance, dissemination, training, and other activities to help States, local educational agencies, parents, and others in improving results for children with disabilities. The Administration's request eliminates funding for the **Special Olympics Education Programs** and maintains Federal support for all other National Activities programs at the fiscal year 2017 annualized CR level.

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State grants: Grants to States

(Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, Part B, Section 611)

(dollars in thousands)

FY 2018 Authorization: Indefinite ^{1,2}

Budget Authority:

	<u>2017</u> <u>Annualized CR</u>	<u>2017</u> <u>Appropriation</u>	<u>2018</u>	<u>Change from</u> <u>Annualized CR</u>
Annual appropriation	\$2,606,818	\$2,719,465	\$1,766,099	-\$840,719
Advance for succeeding fiscal year	<u>9,283,383</u>	<u>9,283,383</u>	<u>10,124,103</u>	<u>+\$840,719</u>
Total	<u>11,890,202</u>	<u>12,002,848</u>	<u>11,890,202</u>	<u>0</u>

¹ Section 611(c) of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act limits technical assistance activities to \$25,000 thousand, increased by the amount of inflation from year to year. It is estimated that the maximum amount authorized for fiscal year 2018 would be \$33,444 thousand.

² Section 611(b)(2) of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act requires that from the funds appropriated for Grants to States, 1.226 percent shall be set aside for the Department of the Interior. It is estimated that the maximum amount authorized for fiscal year 2018 would be \$145,744 thousand.

PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

The Grants to States program provides formula grants to assist the 50 States, the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico, the Department of the Interior, Outlying Areas, and the Freely Associated States in meeting the excess costs of providing special education and related services to children with disabilities. In order to be eligible for funding, States must serve all children with disabilities between the ages of 3 through 21, except they are not required to serve children aged 3 through 5 or 18 through 21 years if services are inconsistent with State law or practice or the order of any court. A State that does not provide a free appropriate public education (FAPE) to children with disabilities aged 3 through 5 cannot receive base payment funds attributable to this age group or any funds under the Preschool Grants program.

Funding Formula – Funds are allocated among States in accordance with a variety of factors, as outlined in the funding formula under section 611(d) of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA). First, each State is allocated an amount equal to the amount that it received for fiscal year 1999. If the total program appropriation increases over the prior year, 85 percent of the remaining funds are allocated based on the number of children in the general population in the age range for which the States guarantee FAPE to children with disabilities. Fifteen percent of the remaining funds are allocated based on the number of children living in poverty that are in the age range for which the States guarantee FAPE to children with disabilities.

The IDEA also includes several maximum and minimum allocation requirements that are triggered when the amount available for distribution to States increases. The amount that any single State's allocation may increase from one year to the next is capped at the amount the State received in the prior year multiplied by the sum of 1.5 percent and the percentage

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State Grants: Grants to States

increase in the total amount appropriated for Part B of IDEA from the prior year. The maximum amount that any State may receive in any single fiscal year is calculated by multiplying the number of children with disabilities ages of 3 through 21 served during the 2004-2005 academic year in that State by 40 percent of the annual per pupil expenditure, adjusted by the rate of annual change in the sum of 85 percent of the children aged 3 through 21 for whom that State ensures FAPE and 15 percent of the children living in poverty. Because there are multiple caps, in any single year, the “effective cap” on any single State’s allocation is the lowest cap for that State.

If the amount available for allocation to States remains the same from one year to the next, States receive the same level of funding as in the prior year. If the amount available for allocation to States decreases from the prior year, any amount available for allocation to States above the 1999 level is allocated based on the relative increases in funding that the States received between 1999 and the prior year. If there is a decrease below the amount allocated for 1999, each State’s allocation is ratably reduced from the 1999 level.

Most of the Federal funds provided to States must be passed on to LEAs. However, a portion of the funds may be used for State-level activities. Any funds not set aside by the State must be passed through to LEAs. These sub-State allocations are made in a fashion similar to that used to allocate funds among States when the amount available for allocation to States increases.

State Administration – A State may reserve for State administration up to the greater of the maximum amount the State could reserve for State administration from fiscal year 2004 funds, or \$800,000, increased by inflation as reflected by the Consumer Price Index for All Urban Consumers. For fiscal year 2018, the latter amount is estimated to be approximately \$1 million.

Other State Activities – A State may also reserve funds for a variety of other State-level activities such as monitoring, enforcement, addressing personnel needs, and providing technical assistance to LEAs. One authorized activity involves allocating set-aside funds to support a risk pool, or high cost fund, that is used to assist LEAs in meeting the costs of serving high need, high-cost children. If a State opts to use State-level funds for a risk pool, it must use 10 percent of the funds it reserves for other State-level activities for this purpose. Federal funds set aside by a State must be distributed to LEAs or consortia of LEAs to address the needs of specific high-cost children.

Starting in 2007, the amount that a State may set aside for other State-level activities is based on a percentage of its total allocation for 2006, increased for inflation. The percentage is based on whether the State opts to use funds for a risk pool and the amount of funds that the State sets aside for administration. If the State opts to use funds for a risk pool and the State sets aside \$850,000 or less for administration, the percentage is 10.5 percent. If the State opts to use funds for a risk pool and the State sets aside more than \$850,000 for administration, the percentage is 10 percent. If the State opts not to use funds for a risk pool and the State sets aside \$850,000 or less for administration, the percentage is 9.5 percent. If the State opts not to use funds for a risk pool and the State sets aside more than \$850,000 for administration, the percentage is 9 percent.

Maintenance of Effort – The IDEA also requires each State to maintain its level of State financial support for special education and related services from one year to the next. This requirement is commonly referred to as the State maintenance of effort, or MOE. However, the IDEA allows

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any State that provided 100 percent of the non-Federal costs of special education services in the 2003-2004 school year, or any subsequent year, to reduce its level of expenditures by up to 50 percent of any increase in its allocation under the Grants to States program over the prior year. The Department may prohibit a State from exercising this authority if it is determined that a State is not adequately carrying out its responsibilities under the IDEA.

The IDEA also contains a local “maintenance of effort” requirement. Under this requirement, each LEA must maintain its total expenditures, including State and local contributions, on special education from one year to the next. The standard for determining whether this MOE requirement has been met is that the LEA actually expends, in total or per capita, an equal or greater amount of local, or State and local, funds in each subsequent year. However, in any fiscal year that an LEA’s IDEA Part B subgrant allocation exceeds the amount that the LEA received in the previous fiscal year, the IDEA also permits certain LEAs to reduce the level of support otherwise required by this local maintenance of effort requirement by up to 50 percent of any increase in their Part B allocation. LEAs taking advantage of this flexibility must use any funds that otherwise would have been used for the education of children with disabilities to support activities that are authorized under the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) of 1965, as amended. Also, if a State educational agency (SEA) determines that an LEA is not meeting the requirements of Part B, including meeting targets in the State’s performance plan, the SEA must prohibit that LEA from reducing its level of support.

Coordinated Early Intervening Services (CEIS) – LEAs typically may use up to 15 percent of their allocation, less any amount used to reduce that LEA’s maintenance of effort level, for early intervening services. Early intervening services generally address the needs of students who require additional academic and behavioral supports to succeed, but who are not identified as needing special education. If an SEA determines that an LEA has significant disproportionality on the basis of race in the identification of children as children with disabilities, in particular disability categories, in placement in particular educational settings, or in discipline, the SEA must require the LEA to use the full 15 percent for comprehensive coordinated early intervening services.

The IDEA requires awards to the Freely Associated States of the Pacific Basin (Palau, the Federated States of Micronesia, and the Republic of the Marshall Islands) to be the same amounts that they received from the fiscal year 2003 appropriation.

The IDEA also authorizes the Department to set aside a portion of the Grants to States appropriation to provide technical assistance to improve the capacity of States to meet data collection requirements necessary for the implementation of the program.

IDEA requires that from the funds appropriated for Grants to States, 1.226 percent must be set aside for the Department of the Interior to meet the need for assistance for the education of children with disabilities on reservations aged 5 through 21, inclusive, enrolled in elementary and secondary schools for Indian children operated or funded by that Department. It is estimated that the maximum amount authorized for fiscal year 2018 would be approximately \$146 million.

This is a forward-funded program that includes advance appropriations. A portion of the funds becomes available for obligation on July 1 of the fiscal year in which they are appropriated, and remains available for Federal obligation for 15 months. The remaining funds become available

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on October 1 of the following fiscal year and remain available for Federal obligation for 12 months, expiring at the same time as the forward-funded portion. For fiscal year 2018, school districts will use both the forward- and advance-funded amounts primarily during the 2018-2019 school year.

Both forward-funded and advance funds remain available for obligation at State and local levels for an additional year. Hence, States and local educational agencies (LEAs) will have until September 30, 2020, to obligate their fiscal year 2018 awards.

Funding levels for the past 5 fiscal years were:

Fiscal Year	(dollars in thousands)
2013.....	\$10,974,866
2014.....	11,472,848
2015.....	11,497,848
2016.....	11,912,848
2017.....	12,002,848

FY 2018 BUDGET REQUEST

The Administration requests \$11.9 billion in fiscal year 2018 for Grants to States to assist in covering the excess costs associated with providing special education and related services to children with disabilities and improving the quality of those services. The request is the same as the fiscal year 2017 annualized continuing resolution (CR) level. The Department of Education Appropriations Act, 2017, provided 12.0 billion for this program.

Prior to the enactment of the IDEA, as many as 1 million children with disabilities were excluded from educational services. To remedy that, the IDEA guarantees that any child identified as having a disability that is covered by the IDEA will have access to a free appropriate public education in the least restrictive environment. The Grants to States program is aimed at assisting States and districts to meet that mandate.

The request would assist all States in implementing improvement efforts identified in their State Systemic Improvement Plans (SSIP) in addition to providing special education and related services for children with disabilities. States submit SSIPs to the Department to evaluate their results for children with disabilities, their capacity to improve those results, and the needed steps to improve State support systems and local service delivery systems.

In addition, the request level would maintain the Federal contribution toward offsetting the cost of special education and related services for children with disabilities to approximately 15 percent of the national average per pupil expenditure (APPE) based on the anticipated growth of APPE in fiscal year 2018. The request would provide an average of \$1,742 per child. This average is based on the assumption that the number of children aged 3 through 21 who will be served will remain constant at the 2015-2016 school year level of 6.8 million.

From 1975, when the IDEA was enacted, through 2005, the growth in the number of children with disabilities served outpaced the growth in the general population ages 3 through 21. Since 2011, the number of children with disabilities served under IDEA increased each year, with

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increases exceeding 1.5 percent annually during the 2014-2015 and 2015-2016 school years. However, the Department cannot reliably estimate whether this trend is expected to continue. In the absence of more certain information, the Department has projected the numbers of children with disabilities expected to be served for fiscal years 2016 through 2018 at 6.8 million, the same level reported by States for the 2015-2016 school year.

One of the primary objectives of the Grants to States program is to improve the quality of the education provided to children with disabilities so that they can be involved in, and make progress in, the general education curriculum. This includes helping to ensure that eligible children have access to grade-level academic content, meet the same rigorous standards that have been established for all children to help prepare them for college and a career, and are prepared to lead productive, independent adult lives to the maximum extent possible.

Results Driven Accountability (RDA)

In 2012, the Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP) began developing a new accountability system, RDA, designed to improve State performance by emphasizing student outcomes. RDA shifted the focus of the Department's monitoring efforts from compliance to improved results for infants, toddlers, children, and youth with disabilities under Parts B and C of the IDEA (e.g., early childhood outcomes, performance on assessments and graduation rates). The Department recognizes the importance of States' compliance with the statutory requirements of the IDEA, and will continue to ensure that States meet those obligations. However, the Department believes that focusing monitoring and technical assistance efforts on significant areas of need identified by States, such as academic performance, will have the greatest impact on improving results for children with disabilities receiving services under the program.

In developing RDA, the Department worked extensively with States and other stakeholders to develop fair, results-driven performance measures; however, because RDA's success is dependent on State-level capacity to evaluate data and thoughtfully modify or refine support and service-delivery systems at the local level, some States need technical assistance in transitioning to this new framework. Therefore, the Administration is investing more than \$20 million in fiscal year 2018 for technical assistance centers through the IDEA Technical Assistance and Dissemination and the Technical Assistance to Improve State Data Capacity programs that help States improve their data quality and assist with the implementation of SSIPs.

As the Department continues to shift to the RDA framework, States, lead agencies, districts, and early childhood providers will need support on multiple fronts to identify, prioritize, and implement evidence-based practices to improve results for children with disabilities. The Administration, in turn, will continue to support States through targeted efforts by assisting in the identification and development of evidence-based practices as well as enhancing State systems of support. The funds requested under the Grants to States program and the National Activities programs would provide needed support to States and lead agencies. These investments will be used to enhance State-wide technical assistance, professional development, or other coordinated activities across a broad range of service providers; build the evidence base for promising interventions; and ensure that local education agencies and early childhood providers

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have additional resources to provide high quality direct services to children with disabilities and their families.

FY 2018 Proposed Appropriations Language

The Administration is proposing to continue appropriations language provided in previous years regarding State Maintenance of Effort (MOE) requirements, the technical assistance set-aside under section 616(i) of the IDEA, and the allocation provided to the Bureau of Indian Education.

State Maintenance of Effort

The IDEA requires each State to make available for special education and related services at least as much funding as it did in the prior year. If a State fails to maintain its fiscal support for special education and related services and does not receive a waiver of the requirement, the IDEA directs the Department to reduce that State's award under the Special Education Grants to States program. In 2012, the Department reduced Kansas' award under this provision and expects to reduce awards to Illinois, Tennessee, West Virginia, and American Samoa under this provision in 2017. Under IDEA, the Department does not have authority to redistribute or otherwise spend any funds made available as a result of such a reduction.

As in previous years, the Administration proposes appropriations language that would (1) allow the Department to redistribute reductions to other States and (2) mitigate the ongoing impact of a reduction on a State's future year awards. Without the language, any funds reduced from a State's award would revert to Treasury at the end of the period of availability. The proposed language would allow the Department to provide these funds to other States that have not had their awards reduced as a result of a failure to maintain financial support for special education and related services, so that these funds are used to offset the additional costs of providing services to students who qualify for services under the IDEA. Additionally, because of the way that the formula for determining State allocations operates, a State's award in any year depends, in part, on the amount the State received in the prior year. Without this additional language, a reduction in a State's award taken in any 1 year could have long-lasting impacts on that State's award, depending on the growth in the Grants to States appropriation and the size of the reduction in the individual State's award.

As in fiscal years 2016 and 2017, the Administration also proposes appropriations language that would provide additional flexibility in enforcing MOE requirements while protecting the services provided to students with disabilities supported with Federal funds. Specifically, the proposed language would allow the Department, for a State's failure to meet MOE in any fiscal year, to: (1) spread out the reductions in awards due to a State's failure to meet MOE over a maximum of 5 years; (2) reduce the maximum State set-aside by the same percentage as the reduction in the State's overall award; and (3) either recover non-Federal (State) funds in the amount of the State's MOE shortfall under the recovery of funds provision in section 452 of the General Education Provisions Act (GEPA), or reduce the State's IDEA grant.

Under the IDEA, in any year for which a State fails to meet the MOE requirement, the Department must reduce that State's award in 1 fiscal year, and cannot spread the penalty over a number of years. The Department is concerned that, due to the potential size of future reductions as a percentage of overall State awards, services provided to students with disabilities will be adversely affected, particularly those supported with Federal funds. By

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providing the Department the authority to spread out the penalty over a maximum of 5 years, the Department hopes to limit the direct impact on students with disabilities in any given year.

Under current law, in a year in which the Department has reduced a State's award due to an MOE violation, a State can pass on the entire reduction in its IDEA funding to LEAs. Providing the Department the authority to proportionally reduce the maximum available State set-aside by the same percentage as the reduction in the overall State award would directly impact State entities for failing to maintain financial support. For example, a 30 percent reduction in a State's award would result in a 30 percent reduction in the maximum amount that can be set-aside by the State for State-level activities.

When LEAs have fewer Federal funds available for expenditure, children with disabilities may receive reduced services. By exercising the flexibility to either recover State funds or reduce the State's IDEA grant, the Department can mitigate the impact of a reduction in funds on services for children with disabilities.

Technical Assistance

The IDEA emphasizes improving results for children with disabilities through the collection and use of performance data. The law requires each State to develop a State Performance Plan that includes measurable and rigorous targets in a number of key monitoring areas: free appropriate public education in the least restrictive environment; disproportionate representation of children in special education based on race and ethnicity; and State exercise of general supervision authority in areas such as child find, monitoring, mediation, and transition. Each State has supervisory responsibility over the provision of special education and related services to children with disabilities within its jurisdiction, to ensure that the requirements in the IDEA are met. State performance data are collected through Annual Performance Reports.

The IDEA authorizes the Department to use a portion of Grants to States funds to provide technical assistance to States to improve their capacity to meet these data collection requirements. In general, the Department uses these funds to improve data quality, drive data use, and inform program improvement at the State and local levels. The 2018 Request includes \$21.4 million for such technical assistance, level with the amount that would be set aside for this purpose in fiscal year 2017. The request would include funds for a planned new award for a National IDEA Technical Assistance Center on Early Childhood Longitudinal Data Systems, which would support States in developing and using their early childhood data systems. The request would also support a new award for a National Technical Assistance Center to Improve State Data Capacity, which would provide technical assistance to States and local educational agencies on improving their data collection and analytic processes in order to promote use of data to drive program improvement. The request would support continuation awards to several existing technical assistance centers, including the Fiscal Technical Assistance Center, which provides technical assistance to States to improve the reporting of fiscal data; and the Data Management Center, which works with States to improve system architecture to ensure IDEA data can be used with other data collections to improve results for students with disabilities. In addition, these funds would be used to support a contract to provide logistical support and quality control of State-reported data to ensure its accuracy and improve data quality.

As in previous years, the Administration is proposing appropriations language that would expand the authority of the Department to administer and carry out other services and activities

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to improve data collection, coordination, quality, and use under parts B and C of the IDEA. This language would maintain the expanded authority enacted through appropriations language in fiscal year 2016, which is currently being used in several of the Department's technical assistance investments.

Department of the Interior Set-Aside

Consistent with previous years, the Administration proposes that the fiscal year 2018 Budget Request include special appropriations language limiting the amount of funding required to be provided to the Department of the Interior (Interior). The language would limit funding for Interior to the prior year's funding level plus the lesser of inflation or the percentage change in the appropriation for the Grants to States program. In the event of a decrease or no change in the appropriation for the Grants to States program or deflation, the amount of funds to be transferred to Interior would remain level with the amount Interior received in the prior fiscal year. The IDEA requires that 1.226 percent of the funds appropriated for Grants to States be provided to Interior for serving Indian children with disabilities, regardless of the number of children served by Interior.

At the request level, the uncapped allocation to Interior would provide an average of approximately \$23,101 for each child with a disability it served in the fall of 2014, which is nearly 13 times the average amount per child that States would receive. At the fiscal year 2018 Request level with the cap, Interior would receive about 8.6 times the average amount per child that States would receive, which translates into an average of \$14,956 for each child with a disability, or about 130 percent of the national average per pupil expenditure (APPE) compared to 15 percent of the APPE for States overall.

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PROGRAM OUTPUT MEASURES

(dollars in thousands)

<u>Output Measures</u>	<u>2016</u>	<u>2017</u>	<u>2018</u>
<u>Formula grants:</u>			
Formula grants to States	\$11,757,795	\$11,845,719	\$11,733,749
Formula grants to Outlying Areas	34,304	34,269	34,304
Grants to Freely Associated States	6,579	6,579	6,579
Department of the Interior	<u>94,170</u>	<u>94,881</u>	<u>94,170</u>
Subtotal, formula grants	11,892,848	11,981,448	11,868,802
<u>Technical Assistance (TA):</u>			
IDEA Assessment Center	1,000	1,000	1,000
IDEA Data Validation Contract	0 ¹	200 ²	405 ³
Early Childhood Data	5,300	6,500	6,755
Fiscal Data Center	3,200	3,200	3,200
IDEA Data Management Center	2,500	2,500	2,500
TA Center on State Data	8,000	8,000	7,500
Peer review	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>40</u>
Subtotal, TA	<u>20,000⁴</u>	<u>21,400⁵</u>	<u>21,400⁶</u>
Total	11,912,848	12,002,848⁷	11,890,202
Number of children with disabilities served ages 3 through 21	6,814,410 ⁸	6,814,410 ⁸	6,814,410 ⁸
Average Federal share per child (whole dollars)	\$1,745 ⁸	\$1,758 ⁸	\$1,742 ⁸
Average per pupil expenditure (APPE) (whole dollars)	\$11,459 ⁸	\$11,478 ⁸	\$11,666 ⁸
Federal funding as a percentage of APPE	15% ⁸	15% ⁸	15% ⁸

¹ Excludes \$493 thousand of fiscal year 2015 carry over funds the Department obligated in fiscal year 2016.

² Excludes \$241 thousand of fiscal year 2016 carry over funds the Department plans to obligate in fiscal year 2017.

³ Excludes \$85 thousand of fiscal year 2017 carry over funds the Department plans to obligate in fiscal year 2018.

⁴ The Department carried over \$241 thousand of the remaining fiscal year 2016 multi year appropriation into fiscal year 2017.

⁵ The Department plans to carry over \$85 thousand of the remaining fiscal year 2017 multi year appropriation into fiscal year 2018.

⁶ The Department plans to carry over \$255 thousand of the remaining fiscal year 2018 multi year appropriation into fiscal year 2019.

⁷ On October 1, 2017, the Department plans to reduce an award to American Samoa by approximately \$35 thousand pursuant to section 612(a)(18)(B) of the IDEA. Under the terms of the continuing resolution, the Department does not have the authority to reallocate these funds to other States and will therefore lapse these funds.

⁸ Estimate, based on State-reported cumulative total for children served in the fall of 2015.

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Basis for Leaving Special Education for Youth with Disabilities Ages 14 and Older

<u>Basis:</u>	<u>School Year</u> 2012-2013	<u>School Year</u> 2012-2013	<u>School Year</u> 2013-2014	<u>School Year</u> 2013-2014	<u>School Year</u> 2014-2015	<u>School Year</u> 2014-2015
	<u>Percent</u>	<u>Number</u>	<u>Percent</u>	<u>Number</u>	<u>Percent</u>	<u>Number</u>
Graduating with regular diploma	41.9%	257,982	42.2%	258,969	45.2%	252,172
Graduating through certification	9.2%	56,399	8.6%	53,031	6.7%	37,590
Transferred to regular education	9.4%	57,639	9.2%	56,552	9.7%	53,999
Dropped out, or moved but not known to have continued in education	12.1%	74,502	11.8%	72,251	11.6%	64,850
Moved, but known to have continued in education	26.5%	162,887	27.2%	167,187	25.6%	142,847
Reaching maximum age for services and other reasons	<u>0.9%</u>	<u>5,839</u>	<u>1.0%</u>	<u>5,935</u>	<u>1.1%</u>	<u>6,054</u>
Total	100.0%	615,248	100.00%	613,925	100.0%	557,512

Source: Annual data collection from States by OSERS and through the Education Data Exchange Network (EDEN)/EDFacts.

NOTE: Percentages may not add to 100 percent due to rounding.

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History of Children Served and Program Funding – FYs 1985 through 2018

<u>Fiscal Year</u>	<u>Children Served (thousands)</u>	<u>Appropriation (dollars in thousands)</u>	<u>Federal Share Per Child (whole dollars)</u>	<u>Percentage of APPE</u>
1985	4,124	\$1,135,145	\$275	9%
1986	4,121	1,163,282	282	8%
1987	4,167	1,338,000	321	9%
1988	4,236	1,431,737	338	9%
1989	4,347	1,475,449	339	8%
1990	4,419	1,542,610	349	8%
1991	4,567	1,854,186	406	9%
1992	4,727	1,976,095	418	8%
1993	4,896	2,052,728	419	8%
1994	5,101	2,149,686	421	8%
1995	5,467	2,322,915	425	8%
1996	5,629	2,323,837	413	7%
1997	5,806	3,107,522	535	9%
1998	5,978	3,807,700	636	11%
1999	6,133	4,310,700	701	11%
2000	6,274	4,989,685	793	12%
2001	6,381	6,339,685	991	14%
2002	6,483	7,528,533	1,159	15%
2003	6,611	8,874,398	1,340	17%
2004	6,723	10,068,106	1,495	18%
2005	6,820	10,589,746 ¹	1,558	18%
2006	6,814	10,582,961 ¹	1,551	18%
2007	6,796	10,782,961 ¹	1,584	17%
2008	6,718	10,947,511 ¹	1,609	17%
2009	6,599	22,805,211 ^{1, 2}	3,453 ²	33% ²
2010	6,614	11,505,211 ¹	1,736	16%
2011	6,558	11,465,960 ¹	1,745	16%
2012	6,543	11,577,855 ¹	1,766	16%
2013	6,574	10,974,866 ¹	1,674	15%
2014	6,593	11,472,848 ¹	1,743	16%
2015	6,697	11,497,848 ¹	1,715	15%
2016	6,814	11,812,848 ¹	1,745	15%
2017	6,814	12,002,848 ¹	1,758	15%
2018	6,814	11,890,202 ¹	1,742	15%

NOTE: The Federal share per child is calculated from IDEA Part B Grants to States funding, excluding amounts available for studies and evaluations or technical assistance, as applicable.

¹ Includes \$10,000 thousand for technical assistance activities in 2005, \$15,000 thousand in 2006 through 2009 and 2014, \$25,000 thousand in 2010 through 2012, \$23,693 thousand in 2013, \$13,000 in 2015, \$20,000 thousand in 2016, and \$21,400 thousand in 2017 and 2018.

² Includes funds available in fiscal year 2009 under the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (P.L. 111-5).

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PROGRAM PERFORMANCE INFORMATION

Performance Measures

This section presents selected program performance information, including, for example, GPRA goals, objectives, measures, and performance targets and data; and an assessment of the progress made toward achieving program results. Achievement of program results is based on the cumulative effect of the resources provided in previous years and those requested in fiscal year 2018 and future years, as well as the resources and efforts invested by those served by this program.

Goal: Ensure all children with disabilities served under the IDEA have available to them a free appropriate public education to help them meet challenging standards and prepare them for independent living and postsecondary education and/or competitive employment by assisting State and local educational agencies and families.

Objective: All children with disabilities will meet challenging standards as determined by national and State assessments with accommodations as appropriate.

National Assessment of Educational Progress Measures

Measure: The percentage of fourth-grade students with disabilities scoring at or above Basic on the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) in reading.

Year	Target	Actual
2009	37%	34%
2011	39	32
2013	40	28
2015	40	30
2017	40	
2019	40	

Measure: The percentage of eighth-grade students with disabilities scoring at or above Basic on the National Assessment of Educational Progress in mathematics.

Year	Target	Actual
2009	35%	36%
2011	37	35
2013	38	31
2015	38	28
2017	38	
2019	38	

Additional information: As defined for purposes of NAEP, “students with disabilities” includes any student classified by a school as having a disability, including children who receive services under a Section 504 plan. These measures include data for “national public” schools only.

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“National public” is defined as: “public schools only. Includes charter schools; excludes Bureau of Indian Education schools and Department of Defense Education Activity schools.” NAEP is a biennial assessment. No comparable NAEP assessments were scheduled for mathematics in 2012 and 2014.

Fourth-grade Reading: NAEP defines “Basic” for students participating in the fourth-grade reading assessment as follows: “Fourth-grade students performing at the *Basic* level should be able to locate relevant information, make simple inferences, and use their understanding of the text to identify details that support a given interpretation or conclusion. Students should be able to interpret the meaning of a word as it is used in the text.”

Reading scores, measured every 2 years, increased slightly but have fallen short of their targets since 2009 after moderate increases over the course of the previous 4 years. The data show that the majority of students with disabilities do not meet or exceed even the Basic levels of achievement at any of the grade levels tested. Likewise, students with disabilities score well below other students. On the 2015 fourth-grade reading assessment, only 30 percent of students with disabilities scored at or above Basic, while 73 percent of other students scored at or above Basic.

The National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) collects data on the percentage of students with disabilities who are excluded from the NAEP assessments because of their disabilities. Exclusion rates are important to keep in mind when considering the performance of students with disabilities because increases in performance accompanied by reductions in students with disabilities tested might simply reflect higher exclusion rates among lower functioning students. Between 1998 (the first year accommodations were permitted) and 2015, the exclusion rate for students with disabilities on fourth-grade reading assessments dropped from 42 percent to 13 percent. In 2010, the National Assessment Governing Board (NAGB) released a policy statement setting a goal for no more than 15 percent exclusion of students with disabilities on NAEP assessments and began identifying national, State, and districts samples not meeting this goal in its reporting. In 2015, 7 States had exclusion rates of students with disabilities exceeding 15 percent on the fourth-grade reading assessment, down from 23 States in 2011. Note that these percentages only include students with disabilities who have been included in the NAEP testing sample. Students in schools specifically for children with disabilities are not included in the NAEP sample.

Eighth-grade Mathematics: NAEP defines “Basic” for students participating in the eighth-grade mathematics assessment as follows: “Eighth-graders performing at the *Basic* level should complete problems correctly with the help of structural prompts such as diagrams, charts, and graphs. They should be able to solve problems in all NAEP content areas through the appropriate selection and use of strategies and technological tools—including calculators, computers, and geometric shapes. Students at this level also should be able to use fundamental algebraic and informal geometric concepts in problem solving. As they approach the *Proficient* level, students at the *Basic* level should be able to determine which of the available data are necessary and sufficient for correct solutions and use them in problem solving. However, these eighth-graders show limited skill in communicating mathematically.”

NAEP data for mathematics demonstrate slow progress. The performance of students with disabilities had improved steadily over baseline years and exceeded the 2009 target. However,

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since 2011, eighth-grade math scores decreased and did not meet the target. These decreases correspond with decreasing rates of exclusion, which could produce a more diverse sample of students with disabilities. The NAEP data also show that the majority of students with disabilities do not meet or exceed even the Basic levels of achievement at any of the grade levels tested. Likewise, students with disabilities score well below other students. On the 2015 math assessment, only 28 percent of eighth-graders with disabilities scored at or above Basic, while 76 percent of other eighth-grade students scored at or above Basic.

The NCES collects data on the percentage of students with disabilities who are excluded from the NAEP assessments because of their disabilities. Exclusion rates are important to keep in mind when considering the performance of students with disabilities because increases in performance accompanied by reductions in students with disabilities tested might simply reflect higher exclusion rates among lower functioning students. Between 2000 (the first year accommodations were permitted) and 2015, the exclusion rate on eighth-grade mathematics assessments dropped from 32 percent to 10 percent. NAGB's 2010 policy statement regarding exclusion of students with disabilities also applied to the mathematics assessment. In 2015, zero States had exclusion rates of students with disabilities higher than 15 percent, down from 19 States in 2011. Note that these percentages only include students with disabilities who have been included in the NAEP testing sample. Students in schools specifically for children with disabilities are not included in the NAEP sample.

Elementary and Secondary Education Measures

The Department has adopted four measures for the Special Education Grants to States program that are parallel with those used for the ESEA Title I Grants to Local Educational Agencies program. Data on the measures are collected annually through the Education Data Exchange Network (EDEN) and made available through *EDFacts*. Targets have been based on a straight-line trajectory toward the No Child Left Behind (NCLB) goal to have all children performing at proficient or advanced levels by 2014. With the passage of the ESSA, which reauthorized ESEA, and the removal of the statutory requirement of 100 percent proficiency by 2014, the Department is currently revising and setting ambitious but realistic targets for these measures.

The first two measures focus on the percentages of students with disabilities scoring at the proficient or advanced levels in grades 3 through 8 on State reading and mathematics assessments. The other two measures focus on the differences between the percentages of students with disabilities in grades 3 through 8 scoring at the proficient or advanced levels on State reading and mathematics assessments and the percentage of all students in grades 3 through 8 scoring at these levels. The Department notes that, for many States, the 2014-2015 academic year was the first year of implementation of new assessments, which may have had an effect on performance on some of these measures.

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Measure: The percentage of students with disabilities in grades 3-8 scoring at the proficient or advanced levels on State reading assessments.

Year	Target	Actual
2013	92.4%	37%
2014	100	36
2015	100	22
2016	100	
2017	TBD	
2018	TBD	

Measure: The percentage of students with disabilities in grades 3-8 scoring at the proficient or advanced levels on State mathematics assessments.

Year	Target	Actual
2013	92.2%	36%
2014	100	35
2015	100	22
2016	100	
2017	TBD	
2018	TBD	

Measure: The difference between the percentage of students with disabilities in grades 3-8 scoring at the proficient or advanced levels on State reading assessments and the percentage of all students in grades 3-8 scoring at the proficient or advanced levels on State reading assessments.

Year	Target	Actual
2013	3.6	28%
2014	0	28
2015	0	30
2016	0	
2017	TBD	
2018	TBD	

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State Grants: Grants to States

Measure: The difference between the percentage of students with disabilities in grades 3-8 scoring at the proficient or advanced levels on State mathematics assessments and the percentage of all students in grades 3-8 scoring at the proficient or advanced levels on State mathematics assessments.

Year	Target	Actual
2013	3.4	27%
2014	0	27
2015	0	26
2016	0	
2017	TBD	
2018	TBD	

Additional information: States improved their performance with respect to students with disabilities on State mathematics and reading assessments between 2008 and 2010. However, since 2013, State scores regressed in both reading and mathematics. The data suggested States were making some progress in ensuring that students with disabilities who participate in State reading and math assessments were reasonably well-equipped to perform on these assessments, but that progress decreased and was not substantial enough to keep up with the increasing targets to bring all students with disabilities to proficiency by 2014. While performance among students with disabilities declined in the most recent year, that decrease can be most likely attributed to the implementation of new State assessments nationally in the 2014-2015 academic year, on which students tended to fare worse than the prior State assessments.

As is evident from the two previous tables, the gaps between the percent of students with disabilities scoring at proficient or advanced levels on State assessments in reading and math and the percent of all students scoring at the proficient or advanced levels remained relatively consistent, demonstrating that the drop in performance on the first two measures captures a wider phenomenon than one only affecting students with disabilities.

Objective: *Secondary school students will complete high school prepared for postsecondary education and/or competitive employment.*

Measure: The percentage of students with Individualized Education Programs (IEPs) who graduate from high school with a regular high school diploma.

Year	Target	Actual
2013	63.0%	65.1%
2014	64.0	66.1
2015	65.0	69.9
2016	66.0	
2017	68.0	
2018	70.0	

Additional information: Since 2008, States have successfully increased their graduation rates among students with disabilities and exceeded the targets for this measure. However, there

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have been significant changes to reporting requirements for graduation and dropout rates over the last 5 years.

The instructions States received from the Department for calculating and submitting their graduation and dropout rates changed substantially in 2009. Previously, States used various methods of defining and calculating graduates and dropouts. Beginning in 2009, through their Annual Performance Reports (APR), States were asked to report using the calculation and timeline required under the 2008 Title I ESEA regulations. The graduation rate under ESEA is a cohort rate that defines a graduate as someone who receives a diploma in 4 years and adjusts for transfers in and out of the school. Students who receive modified diplomas or GEDs do not count as graduates in this calculation. States may receive permission from the Department to report data on cohorts of different lengths of time (such as a 5- or 6-year cohort).

The new graduation rate calculation requires States to track students using a longitudinal data system, which not all States have fully implemented. Most States complied with the new requirements for reporting graduation rate data in 2009. Only 9 States reported graduation rates using previous methods with data compiled under Section 618 of the IDEA. In the 2010-11 through 2013-14 school-years, all but 4 States used the new methods for calculating their graduation rates.

For the 2010-11 school-year, the Office of Elementary and Secondary Education eliminated the State-reported data element "dropout" from the Consolidated State Performance Report for all students and subgroups due to substantial concerns with the validity and usability of the data. In an attempt to reduce the reporting burden of States, they are no longer required to report this data element.

Postsecondary Outcomes

One of the purposes of the IDEA is to help prepare children with disabilities for further education, employment, and independent living. In 2011, the Department developed an indicator on employment and postsecondary education. This indicator tracks the median percentage of students who are no longer in secondary school that had individualized education programs (IEPs) in effect at the time they left school, and were: a) enrolled in higher education within 1 year of leaving high school; b) enrolled in higher education or competitively employed within 1 year of leaving high school; or, c) enrolled in higher education or in some other postsecondary education or training program, or competitively employed or in some other form of employment within 1 year of leaving high school. Data for this indicator is collected directly from the States on an annual basis. The Department believes that this is a critical indicator for the program, since it is a reflection of the ultimate results of efforts to provide special education under the Grants to States program.

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Measure: The median percentage of youth who are no longer in secondary school, had IEPs in effect at the time they left school, and were enrolled in higher education or in some other postsecondary education or training program; or competitively employed or in some other employment within 1 year of leaving high school.

Year	Target	Actual
2013	Baseline	73.4%
2014	74.0%	76.3
2015	74.5	77.5
2016	75.0	
2017	76.0	
2018	78.0	

Additional information: The Department collected baseline data in fall 2011 and 2012 and identified numerous data quality and collection issues across States. The Department worked with States to provide technical assistance to identify improvement activities to produce meaningful and reliable data on postsecondary outcomes and set baseline data in 2014, and States met the target in 2014. However, States continue to struggle to collect a representative sample in the surveys through which data for this measure are collected. Response rates ranged from 14.2 percent to 100 percent, with an average response rate of 49 percent. In addition, only one State reported a respondent group that was representative of all five subgroups, which include disability, gender, race/ethnicity, age, and exit status. In fiscal year 2014, the Department funded the National Technical Assistance Center on Improving Transition to Postsecondary Education and Employment for Students with Disabilities, which will continue to work with States to improve their data quality and postsecondary outcomes for individuals with disabilities.

Efficiency Measure

The Department previously collected data through its program monitoring files to determine the average number of workdays between the completion of a site visit and the Office of Special Education Program's (OSEP) response to the State. In 2010, the last year the Department collected this data, the Department reduced the number of days to issue responses to 66 days, far exceeding its target of 79 days, by revising its reporting format to remove extraneous descriptions and text that is not relevant to the findings.

The Department did not conduct regular site visits to States from 2011 through 2015. During that time, OSEP continued to meet its statutory monitoring responsibilities through the State Performance Plan (SPP)/APR process, fiscal monitoring, and its work with State dispute resolution systems. In 2016, OSEP began conducting site visits using a risk-based approach to monitoring. Under this new system, the Department plans to establish a target that tracks the number of days between completion of site visits to OSEP's follow-up with each State. However, the Department does not expect data for the 2016 site visits to be available until summer 2017, at which point a baseline could first be established.

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Other Performance Information

IDEA National Assessment

Section 664 of the IDEA requires the Department to conduct a national assessment of activities carried out with Federal funds. To implement this requirement, funds requested for the Special Education Studies and Evaluation program in the Institute of Education Sciences (IES) account are being used to conduct an independent evaluation of the program. As required by the IDEA, the IDEA National Assessment addresses the extent to which States, districts, and schools are implementing the IDEA programs and services to promote a free appropriate public education for children with disabilities in the least restrictive environment possible and in partnership with parents. The National Assessment will also address the effectiveness of the IDEA programs and services in promoting the developmental progress and academic achievement of children with disabilities. The National Assessment includes the following activities:

Analytic Support. A report published in January 2010, "Patterns in the Identification of and Outcomes for Children and Youth with Disabilities (Patterns)" (see <http://ies.ed.gov/ncee/pubs/20104005/index.asp>), provided a synthesis of existing evidence and new analyses of extant data sources to address research questions for the IDEA National Assessment, targeting three topic areas: (1) identification of children for early intervention and special education, (2) declassification of children for early intervention and special education services, and (3) developmental and academic outcomes for children with disabilities. Among the data sources used for the study are the NAEP data from State academic assessments of children with disabilities, data submitted by States to the Department pursuant to section 618 of the IDEA, population counts by State and year from the NCES Common Core of Data and the National Vital Statistics System, and data gathered from four national longitudinal studies of children with disabilities (National Early Intervention Longitudinal Study, Pre-Elementary Education Longitudinal Study, Special Education Elementary Longitudinal Study, and National Longitudinal Transition Study-2).

From 1997 to 2005, the percent of children aged 6 to 17 served under IDEA increased from 12.3 to 12.9. The percentage varies by race/ethnicity, with a low of 6.3 percent for Asian children served under IDEA up to a high of 16.7 percent for Black children. There is also variation by State, ranging from 9.9 percent up to 18.6 percent. From 1997 to 2005, the largest increases by disability type were in the areas of autism and developmental delay. Autism showed a 400 percent increase among children ages 10 to 17 years, and developmental delay showed an almost 2,000 percent increase among children ages 3 to 9 years. The study cited research on declassification (Holt, McGrath, and Herring 2007) that showed almost 50 percent of children eligible in kindergarten were no longer eligible for services by third grade. Children with speech/language impairment are the most likely to be declassified within 2 years (34 percent). Declassified children had higher literacy and math outcomes than children who continued to receive services under IDEA.

The Patterns study confirms data presented above that children with disabilities are performing increasingly well on NAEP tests, but that they are still far behind their non-disabled peers. Children with disabilities also have a much larger range of performance on the NAEP exam than do children without disabilities. State assessment data point to a wide array of outcomes and standards for proficiency. In 4th grade math and reading, the percentage of children with

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disabilities who scored proficient or above on a State's assessment ranged from just less than 10 percent up to 80 percent.

Implementation Study. The final report for the IDEA National Assessment Implementation Study was published in July 2011. This study collected data from State agencies and school districts to address implementation questions for the IDEA National Assessment in four broad areas targeted for this study: (1) services to young children with disabilities; (2) identification of children and youth with disabilities; (3) efforts to promote positive developmental and educational outcomes for children and youth with disabilities; and (4) dispute resolution and mediation. Data collection included three surveys of State administrators: (1) IDEA Part B administrators responsible for programs providing special education services to school-aged children with disabilities ages 6-21; (2) IDEA Part B section 619 coordinators who oversee preschool programs for children with disabilities ages 3-5; and (3) IDEA Part C coordinators who are responsible for early intervention programs serving infants and toddlers. A fourth survey collected district level data from a nationally representative sample of local special education administrators about preschool and school-age programs for children with disabilities ages 3-21.

The study specifically focused on implementation related to new or revised provisions from the 2004 reauthorization of IDEA. One such provision, Coordinated Early Intervening Services (CEIS), allows districts to use up to 15 percent of their Part B funds to provide services to children not yet identified as in need of special education. Three percent of districts are required to use CEIS due to significant disproportionality and 11 percent of districts are voluntarily implementing CEIS. Of the districts that implement CEIS, it is used at the elementary school level in 93 percent of districts and focuses on literacy instruction in 84 percent of districts. The study found that the use of Response to Intervention (Rtl) is also widespread, and is being used in 71 percent of districts nationally. Similar to CEIS, Rtl is most commonly used in elementary schools and in reading/language arts. However, only 41 percent of districts reported using IDEA funds for Rtl, while 80 percent of districts reported using their own general funds.

The study looked at qualifications and distribution of "highly qualified" special education personnel. Almost 90 percent of special education teachers meet their State's definition of highly qualified, but States range from 56 percent to 100 percent. Districts reported difficulty finding qualified personnel for secondary schools, particularly those trained in math and working with students with emotional disturbances and with autism. The most common method districts use to increase the qualifications of their staff, implemented by 64 percent of all districts and 76 percent of districts facing routine shortages of quality applicants, is to provide professional development. No other approach was used by more than 25 percent of districts.

Finally, the study found that dispute resolution events are very infrequent, with 23 or fewer events for every 10,000 students served between 2004 and 2008. The number of due process hearing requests over that time has been steady at about 21 requests per 10,000 students, but the frequency of due process hearings completed has decreased from 3.36 hearings per 10,000 students in 2004 to 1.61 hearings in 2008.

Impact Evaluation of Response to Intervention Strategies. Response to Intervention (Rtl) is a multi-step approach to providing early and more intensive intervention and monitoring within the general education setting. In principle, Rtl begins with research-based instruction and behavioral support provided to students in the general education classroom, followed by screening of all students to identify those who may need systematic progress monitoring,

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intervention, or support. Students who are not responding to the general education curriculum and instruction are provided with increasingly intense interventions through a "multi-tiered" system, and they are frequently monitored to assess their progress and inform the choice of future interventions, including possibly special education for students determined to have a disability. The IDEA permits some Part B special education funds to be used for "early intervening services" such as Rtl and also permits districts to use Rtl to inform decisions regarding a child's eligibility for special education.

The Rtl evaluation employed a quasi-experimental design to examine the natural variations in elementary school reading instruction, intervention, and support in schools that may already be implementing Rtl in 13 States. The study compared two different samples: a "reference sample" of schools representative of elementary schools in the 13 states and an "impact sample" of 146 elementary schools with three or more years of implementing Rtl approaches in reading. This study attempted to address the following research questions:

- How did the prevalence of Rtl practices differ between a representative reference sample of schools and schools selected for the impact evaluation? To what extent were impact sample schools implementing more Rtl practices than the reference sample schools? How do special education identification rates in the impact sample compare with rates for the states as a whole?
- To what extent did schools place students in tiers as suggested by earlier Rtl models? To what extent did schools adjust tier placement during the school year? To what extent is there variation in how schools organize reading services for specific reading levels? To what extent were services for students reading below grade level more intense than for students reading at or above grade level?
- For students who fell just below school-determined standards for each grade on screening tests: What were the effects on reading achievement of actual assignment to receive reading intervention services in addition to core instruction? What is the extent of variation in estimated impacts across Rtl schools? How is the estimated impact associated with certain school features or student characteristics?

This study compared the intensity of Rtl services provided to elementary reading groups, in grades 1 through 3, at different reading levels within. The study measured the extent to which support is more intense for students reading below grade level compared to students at or above grade level. In addition, for those students who fell just below school-determined standards for each grade on screening tests, the study investigated the impacts of reading intervention services. We note that concerns have been raised in the field regarding the strength of the research design of this study, particularly its focus on students just below reading proficiency, and not those with moderate or significant needs.

The final report found that, for the 2011-12 school year, schools implementing three or more years of Rtl approaches in reading provided more support to students reading below grade-level standards than those reading at or above grade-level standards. For those students reading just below the grade-level standards (as measured by a school-determined eligibility cut point on a screening test) in Grade 1, Rtl reading interventions did not improve reading outcomes, but actually produced negative impacts (e.g., lower scores compared to the initial screening test) for

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such students. For Grades 2 and 3, the estimated effects on reading outcomes were not statistically significant. Researchers stated that some plausible factors that may be related to negative impacts of assignment to intervention on some Grade 1 students include: (1) false or incorrect identification of students for intervention, (2) mismatch between reading intervention and the instructional needs of students near the cut point, and (3) poor alignment between reading intervention and core reading instruction. Overall, the study found that the estimated impacts of reading interventions on reading outcomes vary significantly across schools. It is also worth noting that this study focused on a very specific population in one subject area, and did not assess whether RtI may be effective in improving student outcomes in other subjects areas and grade levels, or whether RtI elementary literacy interventions may be effective for students performing well below grade-level standards.

Other Studies: The Department sponsored the National Longitudinal Transition Study (NLTS) and the National Longitudinal Transition Study-2 (NLTS2) to provide nationally representative information about secondary-school-age youth who were receiving special education services in 1985 and 2000, respectively. Data collection consisted of telephone interviews or mail surveys with youth or the youth's parents if the youth were not able to respond themselves. The National Center for Special Education Research (NCSE), in a September 2010 report, "Comparisons Across Time of the Outcomes of Youth With Disabilities up to 4 Years After High School", compared the changes in outcomes among youth in the NLTS and NLTS2 who had been out of high school for up to 4 years. The report focused on changes in rates of postsecondary education, employment, engagement in either postsecondary education or employment, household circumstances and community integration. Researchers also compared outcomes of youth with disabilities to the general population and across subgroups including disability category, gender, race/ethnicity, household income, high school completion status, and length of time since leaving high school.

According to the NCSE report, youth with disabilities were more likely to have enrolled in postsecondary education within 4 years of leaving high school in 2005 than in 1990. Almost half (46 percent) of all youth with disabilities had spent some time in postsecondary education in 2005. The rate of youth with disabilities who were currently enrolled in postsecondary education and/or employed was 86 percent in 2005, a 21 percentage-point increase over 1990. This increase is likely attributable to an increase in youth who were concurrently enrolled in postsecondary education and employed, given that rates of engagement in only one of these activities did not change significantly over that period of time. The report also illustrated the increasingly important connection between high school completion and postsecondary outcomes, as high school completers had significant and positive changes between 1990 and 2005 in a greater number of outcome measures than non-completers. Youth with disabilities from low-income households increased their postsecondary enrollment rate by 16 percentage points to 35 percent in 2005, but a significant enrollment gap remains between the highest and lowest income households. Similarly, in 2005, youth with disabilities enrolled in postsecondary education at a rate well below the general population, specifically, 46 percent compared to 63 percent.

The National Longitudinal Transition Study 2012 (NLTS 2012), is the third in a series examining the characteristics and school experiences of a nationally representative sample of youth with disabilities. NLTS 2012 focuses on students ages 13 to 21 (in December 2011) but also includes a small sample of students without disabilities and those on 504 plans to enable direct

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comparisons of students with and without individualized education programs (IEPs). The study collected baseline data in the spring of 2012 through the summer of 2013 on a nationwide sample of youth, and is expected to be released in 2016. The study is addressing such questions as:

- What are the personal, family, and school characteristics of youth with disabilities in public schools across the country?
- What regular education, special education, transition planning, and other relevant services and accommodations do youth with disabilities receive?
- How do the services and accommodations differ from those of youth not served under IDEA, including those identified for services under Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act?
- How do the services and accommodations for youth with disabilities vary with the characteristics of youth?
- How much have the services and accommodations of youth with disabilities changed over time?

Post-High School Outcomes for Youth with Disabilities. Helping students, particularly those with disabilities, to complete high school prepared to pursue postsecondary education or begin productive jobs is a national priority. IDEA emphasizes transition services focused on improving the academic and functional achievement of students with disabilities to facilitate their transition from school to post-school activities, including postsecondary education and employment. The study, awarded in 2015, will address such questions as:

- To what extent do youth with disabilities who receive special education services under IDEA make progress through high school compared with other youth, including those identified for services under Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act? For students with disabilities, has high school course taking and completion rates changed over the past few decades?
- Are youth with disabilities achieving the post-high school outcomes envisioned by IDEA, and how do their college, training, and employment rates compare with those of other youth?
- How do these high school and postsecondary experiences and outcomes vary by student characteristics, including their disability category, age, sex, race/ethnicity, English Learner status, income status, and type of high school attended (including regular public school, charter school, career/technical school, special education school, or other State or Federally-operated institution)?

This new study will utilize administrative records data to follow a sample of youth with disabilities beyond high school. The sample for this study will focus on the youth who participated in the baseline study of the National Longitudinal Transition Study 2012 (NLTS 2012). The NLTS 2012 sample included a group of over 12,000 students ages 13 to 21 (in December 2011), including a small sample of students without disabilities.

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Study of School Accountability for Students with Disabilities. As part of the IDEA National Assessment, IES studied changes in student outcomes after schools adopted programs focused on improving academic outcomes for students with disabilities. The focus of the study was on comparing outcomes for students with disabilities in elementary and middle schools identified for improvement with corresponding outcomes in schools not identified for improvement but still accountable for the performance of students with disabilities (SWD).

The evaluation relied on existing data and surveys of school principals in 2010 and 2011. Key outcomes for this study aligned with the outcomes identified in section 664 of the IDEA, which relate to: academic achievement (including reading and mathematics); participation in the general education curriculum; receipt of special education services; receipt of such services in the least restrictive appropriate environment; and grade transitions.

The study used descriptive statistics to examine patterns of school accountability across States and over time, and examined how school practices varied with respect to school accountability for the SWD subgroup. Data sources for the evaluation included extant data from the Department of Education's *EDFacts* database and 2011 surveys of principals and special education designees from elementary and middle schools in 12 states. An interim report was released in May 2012; an update with information through the 2009–10 school year was released in October 2013; and a third report that provided the results of analysis of 2011 survey data on school practices in 12 States was released in February 2015 and is available at <http://ies.ed.gov/ncee/pubs/20154006/>. The study found that, when surveyed in 2011, elementary schools accountable for the SWD subgroup were 15.8 percentage-points more likely than never-accountable elementary schools to report moving students with disabilities from self-contained settings to regular classrooms over the previous 5 years. Middle schools accountable for the SWD subgroup were 16.7 percentage-points more likely than never-accountable middle schools to report moving students with disabilities from self-contained settings to regular classrooms over the previous 5 years.

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(Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, Part B, Section 619)

(dollars in thousands)

FY 2018 Authorization: Indefinite

Budget Authority:

<u>2017</u> <u>Annualized CR</u>	<u>2017</u> <u>Appropriation</u>	<u>2018</u>	<u>Change from</u> <u>Annualized CR</u>
\$367,538	\$368,238	\$367,538	0

PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

The Preschool Grants program provides formula grants to States, the District of Columbia, and Puerto Rico for the provision of special education and related services for children with disabilities aged 3 through 5. In order to be eligible for these grants, States must serve all eligible children with disabilities aged 3 through 5 and have an approved application under Part B of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA). A State that does not make a free appropriate public education (FAPE) available to all children with disabilities aged 3 through 5 cannot receive funds under this program or funds attributable to this age range under the Grants to States program. Currently, all States have provided assurances to the Department that they are making FAPE available to all children aged 3 through 5 with disabilities.

At their discretion, States may include preschool-aged children who are experiencing developmental delays (as defined by the State and as measured by appropriate diagnostic instruments and procedures) who need special education and related services. If consistent with State policy, State and local educational agencies also may use funds received under this program to provide FAPE to 2-year olds with disabilities who will turn 3 during the school year.

IDEA requires that, to the maximum extent appropriate, children with disabilities are educated with children who are not disabled. Removal of children with disabilities from the regular educational environment is only warranted when the nature or severity of the disability of a child is such that education in regular classes, with the use of supplementary aids and services, is not possible. However, States are not required to provide public preschool programs for the general population. For this reason, preschool-aged children with disabilities are served in a variety of settings, including public or private preschool programs, regular kindergarten, Head Start programs, and child care facilities.

Funding Formula

Funds are distributed to eligible entities through a formula based on general population and poverty. Under the formula, each State is first allocated an amount equal to its fiscal year 1997 allocation. For any year in which the appropriation is greater than the prior year level, 85 percent of the funds above the fiscal year 1997 level are distributed based on each State's

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relative percentage of the total number of children aged 3 through 5 in the general population. The other 15 percent are distributed based on the relative percentage of children aged 3 through 5 in each State who are living in poverty. The formula provides several floors and ceilings regarding the amount a State can receive in any year. No State can receive less than it received in the prior year. In addition, every State must receive an increase equal to the higher of either: (1) the percent the appropriation grew above the prior year, minus 1.5 percent, or, (2) 90 percent of the percentage increase above the prior year. The formula also provides for a minimum increase in State allocations of 1/3 of 1 percent of the increase in the appropriation over the base year, and places a ceiling on how much the allocation to a State may increase. Specifically, no State may be allocated an increase above the prior year greater than the percent of growth in the appropriation from the prior year plus 1.5 percent.

These provisions help ensure that every State receives a part of any increase, and that there are no radical shifts in resources among the States. States must distribute the bulk of their grant awards to Local Educational Agencies (LEAs).

This is a forward funded program. Funds become available for obligation on July 1 of the fiscal year in which they are appropriated and remain available for 15 months, through September 30 of the following year.

State-Level Activities

States may retain a portion of funds allocated to them in any given year for State-level activities. More specifically, the amount that may be used for State-level activities is capped at an amount equal to 25 percent of the amount they received for fiscal year 1997 under the Preschool Grants program, adjusted upward by the lesser of the rate of increase in the State's allocation or the rate of inflation. Likewise, the amount that may be used for administration is limited to 20 percent of the funds available to a State for State-level activities. These funds may also be used for the administration of the Grants for Infants and Families program (Part C).

State-level activities include a wide range of activities that are critical to effective administration of the program, including: (1) support services, such as establishing and implementing a mediation process, which may benefit children with disabilities younger than 3 or older than 5, as long as those services also benefit children with disabilities aged 3 through 5; (2) direct services for children eligible under this program; (3) activities at the State and local level to meet the goals established by the State for the performance of children with disabilities in the State; and (4) a supplement for the development and implementation of a statewide coordinated services system designed to improve results for children and families, including children with disabilities and their families. This supplement cannot exceed 1 percent of the amount received by the State under this program for a fiscal year. The State may also use its set-aside funds to provide early intervention services. These services must include an educational component that promotes school readiness and incorporates pre-literacy, language, and numeracy skills. In addition, such services must be provided, in accordance with the Grants for Infants and Families program, to children who are eligible for services under the Preschool Grants program and who previously received services under Part C until such children enter or are eligible to enter kindergarten and, at a State's discretion, to continue service coordination or case management for families who receive services under Part C.

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Numbers of Children Served

The number of children served under this program increased slightly from 752,628 in fiscal year 2015 to 762,802 in fiscal year 2016. The increase is consistent with trends since 2009. The variations in the total number of children served make it difficult to forecast the number of children being served in future fiscal years. In the absence of better information, the Department predicts that the number of children with disabilities aged 3 through 5 will remain at the 2016 level for fiscal years 2017 and 2018.

Funding levels for the past 5 fiscal years were:

Fiscal Year	(dollars in thousands)
2013.....	\$353,238
2014.....	353,238
2015.....	353,238
2016.....	368,238
2017.....	368,238

FY 2018 BUDGET REQUEST

The Administration requests \$367.5 million for the Preschool Grants program. The request would maintain funding for this program at the fiscal year 2017 annualized continuing resolution (CR) level. The Department of Education Appropriations Act, 2017, provided \$368.2 million for this program. The request amount would provide an average of \$482 per child, based on the assumption that the number of children aged 3 through 5 who will be served will remain constant at the 2016 level of 762,802. The Administration believes this request provides an appropriate level of resources to support activities for young children with disabilities given that these funds are paired with those available under the Grants to States program under IDEA, Part B.

The Administration is requesting \$11.9 billion for the Grants to States program for fiscal year 2018, which will provide an average of \$1,742 per child. Funding under Preschool Grants supplements the funds provided to States under the Grants to States program, which serves children with disabilities ages 3 through 21, including all children served under the Preschool Grants program.

PROGRAM OUTPUT MEASURES

<u>Output Measures</u>	<u>2016</u>	<u>2017</u>	<u>2018</u>
Number of Children Served	762,802	762,802	762,802
Share per child (whole dollars)	\$483	\$483	\$482

NOTES: States may, at their discretion, provide free appropriate public education to 2-year olds who will turn 3 during the school year. However, the figures for the number of children served do not include children served by the States who are 2 years old at the time of the count, but will turn 3 during the school year.

The numbers of children served for fiscal years 2017 and 2018 are estimates based on fiscal year 2016.

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History of Children Served and Program Funding

<u>Fiscal Year</u>	<u>Children Served</u> (thousands)	<u>Appropriation</u> (dollars in thousands)	<u>Federal Share per Child</u> (whole dollars)
1988	288	\$201,054	\$698
1989	322	247,000	767
1990	352	251,510	715
1991	367	292,766	798 ¹
1992	398	320,000	804
1993	441	325,773	739
1994	479	339,257	709
1995	522	360,265	689
1996	549	360,409	656
1997	562	360,409	642
1998	572	373,985	654
1999	575	373,985	651
2000	589	390,000	662
2001	599	390,000	652
2002	617	390,000	632
2003	647	387,465	599
2004	680	387,699	571
2005	702	384,597	548
2006	704	380,751	546
2007	714	380,751	533
2008	710	374,099	527
2009	709	774,099 ²	1,092
2010	732	374,099	511
2011	738 ³	373,351	508
2012	745 ³	372,646	500
2013	749 ³	353,238	472
2014	745 ³	353,238	474
2015	753 ³	353,238	469
2016	763 ³	368,238	483
2017	763 ^{3,4}	368,238	483
2018	763 ^{3,4}	367,538	482

¹ Beginning in fiscal year 1991, the IDEA required that services be made available to all eligible children with disabilities aged 3 through 5 as a condition for receiving funding for children in this age range under the Grants to States program.

² These figures include funds provided under the Recovery Act in fiscal year 2009.

³ Beginning in fiscal year 2011, this table reports the number of children served by the 50 States, District of Columbia, and Puerto Rico. Prior fiscal years also include the number of children served in the Outlying Areas, Freely Associated States, and the Bureau of Indian Education, which are not eligible to receive Preschool Grant awards.

⁴ Estimate based on number of children served in fiscal year 2016.

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PROGRAM PERFORMANCE INFORMATION

Performance Measures

This section presents selected program performance information, including, for example, GPRA goals, objectives, measures, and performance targets and data; and an assessment of the progress made toward achieving program results. Achievement of program results is based on the cumulative effect of the resources provided in previous years and those requested in fiscal year 2018 and future years, as well as the resources and efforts invested by those served by this program.

Goal: To help preschool children with disabilities enter school ready to succeed by assisting States in providing special education and related services.

Objective: *Preschool children with disabilities will receive special education and related services that result in increased skills that enable them to succeed in school.*

Measure: The percentage of children who entered the program below age expectations in positive social-emotional skills (including social relationships) who substantially increased their rate of growth by the time they exited the program.

Year	Target	Actual
2013	82%	81%
2014	83	80
2015	84	80
2016	84	
2017	84	
2018	84	

Measure: The percentage of children who entered the program below age expectations in acquisition and use of knowledge and skills (including early language/communication and early literacy) who substantially increased their rate of growth by the time they exited the program.

Year	Target	Actual
2013	82%	80%
2014	83	80
2015	84	80
2016	84	
2017	84	
2018	84	

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Measure: The percentage of children who entered the program below age expectations in the use of appropriate behaviors to meet their needs who substantially increased their rate of growth by the time they exited the program.

Year	Target	Actual
2013	82%	80%
2014	83	79
2015	84	79
2016	84	
2017	84	
2018	84	

Additional information: Through their Annual Performance Reports (APRs), States report on the cognitive, social-emotional, and behavioral development of children with disabilities served through the Preschool Grants program. The Department, with the assistance of the Early Childhood Technical Assistance Center (a grantee competitively funded under the IDEA, Part D Technical Assistance and Dissemination program), uses these data to assess outcomes for children served through this program. Measuring growth in these outcomes, especially for preschool aged children, requires a significant investment of time and technical assistance at both the Federal and State levels to ensure that the data collected are valid, reliable, and meaningful.

The quality of the data States reported in their APRs since February 2011 has demonstrated marked improvement, and the sample of States with the highest quality data increased from 39 to 42 out of 59 States and jurisdictions in 2014. To help determine an appropriate baseline for these three measures, a weighted data set was derived from these 42 States, excluding States that had high proportions of missing data, anomalous outcomes, or were known to have other data quality or collection issues. The targets for these measures were established, in part, based on the outcomes of the sample of States with high quality data. Within this smaller sample of States, nearly 80 percent of preschoolers demonstrated substantially increased rates of growth by the time they exited the program in each measure category: 80 percent in positive social-emotional skills, 80 percent in the acquisition and use of knowledge, and 79 percent in the use of appropriate behavior. While the 2015 results do not meet the targets set for each category, they are consistent with the 2014 results.

States are engaged in implementing strategies to identify and improve the accuracy of local data collections, and have indicated that they believe the data will be useful in their program improvement efforts. The Department acknowledges that some data quality issues still exist, particularly with regard to missing data. The extent of missing data is difficult to determine because States do not currently report on the number of children exiting the program. Furthermore, States may be unable to collect exit data for all children (e.g., due to a move to another State, withdrawal from the program without prior notice, or death). Through its technical assistance investments, the Department continues to work with the States to resolve implementation issues, improve the validity and reliability of reported data, and use these data to inform program improvements.

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Measure: The percentage of children with disabilities (ages 3 through 5) attending a regular early childhood program and receiving the majority of hours of special education and related services in the regular early childhood program.

Year	Target	Actual
2013	Baseline	43.5%
2014	44	44
2015	45	44.8
2016	46	
2017	46	
2018	46	

Additional information: This measure replaced a previous measure that focused on the extent to which children with disabilities receive their special education services in regular education settings. The earlier measure required States to report the percentage of children with disabilities (aged 3 through 5) who receive special education and related services in a regular early learning program at least 80 percent of the time; however, the Department revised the Preschool Educational Environment reporting categories to better assess the inclusive experiences of preschool children with disabilities. In addition, the Department received feedback that the previous Preschool Educational Environments reporting categories were challenging to report on and provided little information regarding the inclusive experiences of children with disabilities in regular early childhood programs.

In the new measure, the Department simplified data collection and reduced the reporting burden by removing the requirement to report the proportion of time that a child spends each week in a regular early childhood program. The revised data collection is designed to obtain information on where children receive the majority (at least 50 percent) of their special education and related services. The first collection of preschool educational environment data using the new form was the 2010-11 school year, with the first data reported in the Annual Performance Reports in February 2013. The Department developed a baseline in 2014 and met the target set for 2014. The actual performance of 44.8 percent in 2015 represents a small increase over the 2013 and 2014 actuals, but is slightly lower than the target of 45 percent.

The Department is using technical assistance providers such as the IDEA Data Center (<https://ideadata.org/>) and the Center for IDEA Early Childhood Data Systems (<http://dasycenter.org/>) to assist States in collecting the preschool educational environments data, and is providing additional technical assistance through mechanisms such as presentations at the annual State data managers' conference and other meetings, along with guidance in the Dear Colleague Letter on Preschool Least Restrictive Environments (<https://www2.ed.gov/policy/speced/guid/idea/memosdcltrs/preschool-lre-dcl-1-10-17.pdf>).

The Center for IDEA Early Childhood Data Systems, which was created in 2012, also provides technical assistance and resources to state agencies to assist with the development or enhancement of data systems for Part C early intervention and Part B preschool special education programs supported through IDEA. The center works intensively with 10-12 States in four main areas of data collection: defining data elements, acquiring data, validating data, and using data to examine validity and program improvement. The center also coordinates with other Department initiatives, including Race To the Top Early Learning Challenge Fund and the Statewide Longitudinal Data System grant program, to help state agencies create and expand

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early childhood cross-agency and longitudinal data systems that include the Part C and Part B preschool data needed to collect, analyze, and report high-quality data required under IDEA.

Measure: The number of States with at least 90 percent of special education teachers of children with disabilities ages 3 to 5 who are fully certified in the areas in which they are teaching.

Year	Target	Actual
2013	42	43
2014	45	44
2015	46	45
2016	47	
2017	47	
2018	47	

Additional information: Although the Department is below its target for fiscal years 2014 and 2015, performance has improved from 2013 to 2015. Forty five States meet the 90 percent requirement ensuring their full time equivalent special education teachers of children ages 3 to 5 are fully certified in the areas in which they are teaching. This measure includes the 50 States, D.C., Puerto Rico, the Outlying Areas and the Bureau of Indian Education.

The Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP) has made a number of investments designed to assist States in preparing a sufficient number of qualified preschool special education personnel. In 2012, the Department established an Early Childhood Personnel Center to improve professional development for personnel working with children with disabilities birth through age 5 and their families. This Center helps to address State-identified needs for highly qualified personnel in special education, related services, early intervention, and regular education to work with infants, toddlers, and children with disabilities and ensure that those personnel have the necessary skills and knowledge, derived from practices that have been determined through scientifically based research and experience, to be successful in serving those children.

Efficiency Measure

The Department previously collected data through its program monitoring files to determine the average number of workdays between the completion of a site visit and the Office of Special Education Program's (OSEP) response to the State. In 2010, the last year the Department collected this data, the Department reduced the number of days to issue responses to 66 days, far exceeding its target of 79 days, by revising its reporting format to remove extraneous descriptions and text that is not relevant to the findings.

The Department did not conduct regular site visits to States from 2011 through 2015. During that time, OSEP continued to meet its statutory monitoring responsibilities through the State Performance Plan /APR process, fiscal monitoring, and its work with State dispute resolution systems. Beginning in 2016, OSEP conducted site visits using a revised, risk-based approach to monitoring. Under this revised system, the Department again plans on establishing a target number of days from completion of the site visit to OSEP's response to the State. However, the Department does not expect data for the 2016 site visits to be available until the end of 2017.

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Other Performance Information

Pre-Elementary Longitudinal Study (PEELS) (<http://www.peels.org>)

The PEELS study involved a nationally representative sample of children, 3 to 5 years of age when they entered the study, with diverse disabilities who are receiving preschool special education services in a variety of settings. The study answered questions such as:

- What are the characteristics of children receiving preschool special education?
- What services do they receive and in what settings? Who provides these services?
- What child, family, community, and system factors are associated with the services children receive and the results they attain?
- What are the transitions like between early intervention (programs for children from birth to 3 years old) and preschool, and between preschool and elementary school?
- To what extent do the children participate in activities with other children their age who are not receiving preschool special education services? To what extent are preschool special education graduates included in general elementary education classes and related activities?
- What short- and long-term results do children achieve in preschool, kindergarten, and early elementary school?

Results from the PEELS Study

In October 2010, the National Center for Special Education Research released the report, "Access to Educational and Community Activities for Young Children with Disabilities." As reported in parent interviews, participation in community activities such as sports, organized clubs, art, and music varied significantly by type of disability and by household income. Children from households with annual incomes greater than \$40,000 participated in sports with greater frequency than children from households with lower incomes. Children of parents who perceived their neighborhood to be unsafe or who reported that their transportation did not meet their families' needs were significantly less likely to participate in extracurricular activities. Parents also reported on educational settings, and 69 percent said they sent their children to full day kindergarten. Children from high-wealth districts and those from suburban settings were less likely to attend full-day kindergarten than their peers.

In a survey of kindergarten teachers, 73 percent of teachers reported that the regular education classroom was the main setting for children receiving special education services. This inclusion rate was significantly higher in very large districts (91 percent) than districts of other sizes, and significantly higher in rural districts (86 percent) than in suburban or urban districts. Children in very low wealth districts were less likely to have regular classrooms as their main setting (59 percent) compared to all other districts. On average, children spent 17.1 hours per week in regular classrooms and 7.1 hours in special education settings.

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Teachers also reported on modifications and accommodations provided to children with disabilities. Overall, teachers reported using unmodified grade-level materials in 44 percent of cases, while 14 percent of children received specialized materials or curricula. There was no significant variation in these data across district size or wealth. The study also found that children who received special education services in a regular classroom were in classrooms in which, on average, 82 percent of students were nondisabled.

In August 2011, the latest report from this study was released, “A Longitudinal View of the Receptive Vocabulary and Math Achievement of Young Children with Disabilities.” This report was designed to address two PEELS specific research questions:

- How do children who received preschool special education services perform over time on assessments of receptive vocabulary and math skills?
- How does their receptive vocabulary and math performance vary over time by primary disability category?

Children who received preschool special education services showed growth each year in vocabulary and mathematics; however, growth slowed in both math and vocabulary as they got older. Children’s performance varied across assessments and across subgroups defined by disability. At age 3, children with a speech or language impairment had higher average scores than those with developmental delays. At age 10, the gap between these subgroups persisted, and there were no statistically significant differences in growth rates between subgroups.

Other Studies

The Department also is investing in the Early Childhood Longitudinal Study program through the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) (<https://nces.ed.gov/ecls>). This program involves two complementary cohort studies, a Birth Cohort (ECLS-B) and a Kindergarten Cohort (ECLS-K), that focus on children’s early school experiences. The ECLS-K has followed the kindergarten class of 1998-99 through eighth grade. The ECLS-K provides descriptive information on children’s status at entry to school and their transition into school, and their progression through middle school. The ECLS-B is designed to follow children from 9 months through kindergarten. It focuses on health, development, early care, and education during the formative years of children born in 2001. These studies also are providing data on outcomes experienced by children with disabilities participating in preschool programs and baseline data on outcomes experienced by nondisabled children.

OSEP, and subsequently the National Center on Special Education Research, have sponsored a special education questionnaire for teachers in the ECLS-K Study and the collection of more extensive data on children with disabilities and their programs, including the identification of, receipt of services for, and use of special equipment for a number of disabling conditions that may interfere with a sampled child’s ability to learn. The children in the ECLS-K cohort were 5 years of age in school year 2006-07, when the first kindergarten data collection was conducted. During this collection, the majority of children in the cohort were age-eligible for kindergarten, although all sample children were evaluated, regardless of kindergarten enrollment status. Since about a quarter of the cohort were not age-eligible for kindergarten until fall 2007, a second kindergarten data collection was fielded in 2007 to measure the

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kindergarten experiences of these children. The first ECLS-K study followed children through the cohort's eighth grade year in school year 2008-09. The final data for the 8th and final year of data collection was released in July 2009. A new study, the Early Childhood Longitudinal Study, Kindergarten Class of 2010-11 (ECLS-K:2011) replaces the original ECLS-K and will be an ongoing study sponsored by NCES. The ECLS-K: 2011 will provide descriptive information on children's status at entry to school, their transition into school, and their progression through the elementary grades.

Data from ECLS-K on demographic and school characteristics indicate that for the cohort of students beginning kindergarten in 1998, specific learning disabilities and speech or language impairments were the most prevalent primary disabilities. The percentage of the student cohort receiving special education grew from 4.1 percent in kindergarten to 11.9 percent of students in fifth grade. The results also indicate that higher percentages of boys than girls, and of poor students than non-poor students, received special education. About 12 percent of students receive special education in at least one of the grades: kindergarten, first, and third grade, including 16 percent of boys, 8 percent of girls, 18 percent of poor children, and 10 percent of non-poor children. One in three students who receive special education in early grades, first receive special education in kindergarten. Half of those who begin special education in kindergarten are no longer receiving special education by third grade. In addition to students' gender and poverty status, results are presented separately for other student and school characteristics, including race/ethnicity, school, urbanicity, region, and poverty concentration.

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(dollars in thousands)

FY 2018 Authorization: To be determined¹

Budget Authority:

<u>2017</u> <u>Annualized CR</u>	<u>2017</u> <u>Appropriation</u>	<u>2018</u>	<u>Change from</u> <u>Annualized CR</u>
\$457,684	\$458,556	\$457,684	0

¹ The GEPA extension expired September 30, 2011; continued funding is proposed for this program in FY 2018 through appropriations language.

PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

The Grants for Infants and Families program (Part C) awards formula grants to the 50 States, District of Columbia, Puerto Rico, the Department of the Interior, and Outlying Areas to assist them in implementing statewide systems of coordinated, comprehensive, multidisciplinary, interagency programs and making early intervention services available to children with disabilities, aged birth through 2, and their families. Under the program, States are responsible for ensuring that appropriate early intervention services are made available to all eligible birth-through-2-year-olds with disabilities and their families, including Indian children and families who reside on reservations geographically located within a State. Infants and toddlers with disabilities are defined as children who: (1) are experiencing developmental delays, as measured by appropriate diagnostic instruments and procedures, in one or more of the following five areas: cognitive development, physical development, communication development, social or emotional development, or adaptive development; or (2) have a diagnosed physical or mental condition that has a high probability of resulting in developmental delay. Within statutory limits, States define “developmental delay” and have the discretion to provide services to infants and toddlers who are at risk of having substantial developmental delays if they do not receive appropriate early intervention services.

Funds allocated under this program can be used to: (1) maintain and implement the statewide system described above; (2) fund direct early intervention services for infants and toddlers with disabilities and their families that are not otherwise provided by other public or private sources; (3) expand and improve services that are otherwise available; (4) provide a free appropriate public education, in accordance with Part B of the IDEA, to children with disabilities from their third birthday to the beginning of the following school year; (5) continue to provide early intervention services to children with disabilities from their third birthday until such children enter or are eligible to enter kindergarten or elementary school; and (6) initiate, expand, or improve collaborative efforts related to identifying, evaluating, referring, and following up on at-risk infants and toddlers in States that do not provide direct services for these children.

The IDEA requires that early intervention services be provided, to the maximum extent appropriate, in natural environments. The natural environment includes the home and

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community settings where children would be participating if they did not have a disability. These services can be provided in another setting only when early intervention cannot be achieved satisfactorily for the infant or toddler in a natural environment. Each child's individualized family service plan (IFSP) must contain a statement of the natural environments in which early intervention services will be provided, including a justification of the extent, if any, to which the services will not be provided in a natural environment.

The statewide system also must comply with additional statutory requirements, including designating a lead agency responsibility for the coordination and administration of funds, and developing and maintaining a State Interagency Coordinating Council to advise and assist the lead agency. One of the purposes of the Part C program is to assist States to coordinate payment for early intervention services from Federal, State, local, and private sources, including public and private insurance coverage. These include Medicaid, the State Children's Health Insurance Program (SCHIP), Social Security Disability Insurance and Supplemental Security Income, and Early Head Start.

The IDEA gives States the discretion to extend eligibility for Part C services to children with disabilities who are eligible for services under section 619 and who previously received services under Part C, until such children enter or are eligible under State law to enter kindergarten or elementary school, as appropriate. The Act further stipulates that any Part C programs serving children aged 3 or older must provide both: a) an educational component that promotes school readiness and incorporates pre-literacy, language, and numeracy skills, and b) a written notification to parents of their rights regarding the continuation of services under Part C and eligibility for services under section 619.

Funding Formula

Allocations are based on the number of children in the general population aged birth through 2 years in each State. The Department of Education (Department) uses data provided by the United States Census Bureau in making this calculation. No State can receive less than 0.5 percent of the funds available to all States, or \$500,000, whichever is greater. The Outlying Areas may receive not more than 1 percent of the funds appropriated. The Department of the Interior, Bureau of Indian Education, receives 1.25 percent of the aggregate of the amount available to all States. Interior must pass through all the funds it receives to Indian tribes, tribal organizations, or consortia for the coordination of early intervention services on reservations with Interior schools. Tribes and tribal organizations can use the funds they receive to provide (1) help to States in identifying Indian infants and toddlers with disabilities, (2) parent training, and (3) early intervention services.

This is a forward funded program. Funds become available for obligation on July 1 of the fiscal year in which they are appropriated and remain available for 15 months, through September 30 of the following year.

State Incentive Grants

In any fiscal year in which the appropriation for Part C exceeds \$460 million, the statute also includes authority for the Department to reserve 15 percent of the amount above \$460 million for a State Incentive Grants program. The purpose of this program is to provide funding to

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assist States that have elected to extend eligibility for Part C services to children with disabilities aged 3 years until entrance into kindergarten or elementary school, or for a portion of this period. No State can receive more than 20 percent of the amount available for State Incentive Grants in a fiscal year. In fiscal year 2009, due to the addition of funds from the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act, the total of funds appropriated for Part C exceeded the \$460 million level. The States that opted to extend their provision of Part C services beyond age 3 received additional funds through this program, and had until September 30, 2011, to expend these funds. The appropriation for fiscal years 2010 through 2017 did not exceed \$460 million, so the Department did not have authority to award State Incentive Grants in any of these fiscal years.

Funding levels for the past 5 fiscal years were as follows:

Fiscal year	(dollars in thousands)
2013	\$419,653
2014	438,498
2015	438,556
2016	458,556
2017	458,556

FY 2018 BUDGET REQUEST

The Administration requests \$457.7 million for the Part C program for fiscal year 2018. The request would maintain funding for this program at the fiscal year 2017 annualized continuing resolution (CR) level. The Department of Education Appropriations Act, 2017, provided \$458.6 million for this program.

These funds would continue to provide support for early intervention programs that provide services to infants and toddlers with disabilities. Such programs are also generally designed to mitigate the need for more extensive services in the future, and ensure that infants and toddlers with disabilities receive the supports and services that they need to prepare them to enter formal education.

These funds would also help States address the growing population of infants and toddlers that are likely to require early intervention services due to the rise in opiate addiction and the Zika virus. Over the past 14 years, the number of babies born addicted to opiates has quadrupled, putting them at a higher risk for developmental delays or disabilities (<https://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/volumes/65/wr/pdfs/mm6531a2.pdf>). In addition, congenital Zika virus infection is associated with a wide range of birth defects, and infants born with these birth defects are likely to exhibit significant delays in cognition, motor, communication, and adaptive development (<http://www.nejm.org/doi/pdf/10.1056/NEJMSr1604338>).

At the requested level, the average State award would be approximately \$8.6 million. These funds will help States maintain their systems for identifying infants and toddlers with disabilities and determining appropriate services, and facilitate coordination with other programs serving young children.

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PROGRAM OUTPUT MEASURES

(dollars in thousands)

<u>Output Measures</u>	<u>2016</u>	<u>2017</u>	<u>2018</u>
Range in size of awards to States:			
Smallest State regular Part C award ^{1 2}	\$2,248	\$2,248	\$2,243
Average State regular Part C award ¹	\$8,645	\$8,645	\$8,628
Largest State regular Part C award ¹	\$54,898	\$54,602	\$54,498
Children served	362,000	362,000	362,000

PROGRAM PERFORMANCE INFORMATION

Performance Measures

This section presents selected program performance information, including, for example, GPRA goals, objectives, measures, and performance targets and data; and an assessment of the progress made toward achieving program results. Achievement of program results is based on the cumulative effect of the resources provided in previous years and those requested in fiscal year 2018 and future years, as well as the resources and efforts invested by those served by this program.

Goal: To enhance the development of infants and toddlers (birth to three) with disabilities and support families in meeting the special needs of their child.

Objective: *The functional development of infants and toddlers will be enhanced by early intervention services.*

Measure: The percentage of infants and toddlers who entered the program below age expectations in positive social-emotional skills (including social relationships) who substantially increased their rate of growth by the time they exited the program.

Year	Target	Actual
2013	69%	66%
2014	69	65
2015	70	66
2016	70	
2017	70	
2018	70	

¹ The calculations exclude funds for the Outlying Areas and the Department of the Interior.

² IDEA, section 643(c)(2) provides for a minimum allocation to States of the greater of \$500,000 or ½ of 1 percent of the amount available to States after the reservations for the Outlying Areas and the Bureau of Indian Education are excluded.

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Measure: The percentage of infants and toddlers who entered the program below age expectations in acquisition and use of knowledge and skills (including early language/communication and early literacy) who substantially increased their rate of growth by the time they exited the program.

Year	Target	Actual
2013	73%	71%
2014	73	71
2015	75	71
2016	76	
2017	76	
2018	76	

Measure: The percentage of infants and toddlers who entered the program below age expectations in the use of appropriate behaviors to meet their needs who substantially increased their rate of growth by the time they exited the program.

Year	Target	Actual
2013	73%	71%
2014	73	72
2015	75	73
2016	77	
2017	77	
2018	77	

Additional information: Through their Annual Performance Reports (APRs), States report on the cognitive, social-emotional, and behavioral development of children with disabilities served through the Part C program. The Department, with the assistance of the Early Childhood Technical Assistance Center (a grantee competitively funded under the IDEA, Part D Technical Assistance and Dissemination program), uses these data to assess outcomes for children served through this program. Measuring growth in these outcomes, especially for infants and toddlers, requires a significant investment of time and technical assistance at both the Federal and State levels to ensure that the data collected are valid, reliable, and meaningful.

The Department has deliberately focused these measures on aspects of performance that take into account the challenges of assessing growth in early childhood outcomes, especially for children with disabilities. While two States have current approval from the Department to collect data for a representative sample of the children they serve through the Part C program, all other States are responsible for reporting data on all children served.

Since States first starting reporting data on this measure in February of 2010 (providing data on program year 2009), there has been a marked improvement in data quality, with 42 States submitting high quality data in 2016 (for program year 2015), up from only 19 States in 2010. The Department acknowledges that some data quality issues persist in a few States, particularly concerning missing data. In some instances, States may be unable to collect exit data for all children (e.g., due to a move to another State, withdrawal from the program without prior notice, or death). However, most States are now producing high-quality data that provide a reliable national estimate of how children are performing when they exit Part C. Through its technical assistance investments, the Department continues to work with States to resolve

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implementation issues, improve the validity and reliability of reported data, and use these data to inform program improvements.

Objective: *All infants and toddlers with disabilities and their families will receive early intervention services in natural environments that meet their individual needs.*

Measure: The number of States that serve at least 1 percent of infants in the general population under age 1 through Part C.

Year	Target	Actual
2013	27	30
2014	28	31
2015	30	33
2016	32	
2017	32	
2018	34	

Additional information: For a number of years, only 24 or 25 States served at least 1 percent of infants in the general population under the age of 1. The program made progress from 2012 through 2015, exceeding its targets. The 1 percent threshold for this measure is based on data collected by the U.S. Census bureau on prevalence rates for 5 conditions: 0.4 percent - severe mental retardation¹; 0.2 percent - hearing impairment; 0.1 percent - visual impairment; 0.2 percent - physical conditions (spina bifida, cerebral palsy, etc.); and 0.1 percent - autism. State lead agencies responsible for the implementation of these programs report data annually to the Department through their APRs on numbers of infants and toddlers with disabilities served under the Grants for Infants and Families program. Through its monitoring and technical assistance efforts, the Department is working with States to ensure that they are appropriately identifying and serving all eligible infants with disabilities and expects the number of States serving at least 1 percent of infants in the general population under age 1 to increase further as a result.

Measure: The number of States that serve at least 2 percent of infants and toddlers in the general population, birth through age 2, through Part C.

Year	Target	Actual
2013	42	41
2014	45	44
2015	45	45
2016	46	
2017	46	
2018	47	

Additional information: The State lead agencies responsible for the implementation of these programs report data on the numbers of infants and toddlers with disabilities served under the Grants for Infants and Families program annually to the Department through their APRs. The

¹ Consistent with P.L. 111-256, the Department uses the term “intellectual disabilities” instead of “mental retardation,” but we have retained the term here to permit verification of the data that were used to set the threshold.

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Department sets the 2 percent threshold for this measure using data from the U.S. Census bureau on the percentage of infants and toddlers with disabilities in the general population. Through its monitoring and technical assistance efforts, the Department helps States enhance their child find systems to ensure that they are appropriately identifying and serving eligible toddlers with disabilities. The Department believes that these efforts are partially responsible for the improved performance of States under this measure over the past 6 years.

Measure: The percentage of children receiving age-appropriate early intervention services in the home or in programs designed for typically developing peers.

Year	Target	Actual
2013	94%	95%
2014	95	96
2015	95	96
2016	95	
2017	95	
2018	95	

Additional information: State lead agencies report annually to the Department on the settings in which children receive services provided under the Part C program. In 2001, States reported that only 76 percent of children receiving early intervention services through the Part C program were served in the home or in programs designed for typically developing peers, so performance on this indicator has improved dramatically in the past 14 years (by 20 percentage points). To assist States to continue to improve their performance in this area, the Department provides technical assistance and disseminates information on effective home visits and other practices related to providing services in natural settings.

Efficiency Measures

The Department previously collected data through its program monitoring files to determine the average number of workdays between the completion of a site visit and the Office of Special Education Program's (OSEP) response to the State. In 2010, the last year the Department collected this data, the Department reduced the number of days to issue responses to 66 days, far exceeding its target of 79 days, by revising its reporting format to remove extraneous descriptions and text that is not relevant to the findings.

The Department did not conduct regular site visits to States from 2011 through 2014. During that time, OSEP continued to meet its statutory monitoring responsibilities through the State Performance Plan (SPP)/APR process, fiscal monitoring, and its work with State dispute resolution systems. In 2016, OSEP began conducting site visits using a revised, risk-based approach to monitoring. Under this revised system, the Department again plans on establishing a target number of days from completion of the site visit to OSEP's response to the State. However, the Department does not expect data for the 2016 site visits to be available until the end of 2017.

Other Performance Information

Through the "Early Childhood Longitudinal Study - Birth Cohort" (ECLS-B), the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) collected longitudinal data on a nationally representative sample

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of 14,000 children from their birth in 2001 through their entry into kindergarten. Approximately 75 percent of the sample entered kindergarten in fall 2006, with the remaining 25 percent entering in the following year. The ECLS-B study provides data on the early development of these children, their preparation for school, and key transitions experienced by these children during the early childhood years. The study includes detailed data on the physical, cognitive, social, and emotional development of these children.

Analyses of the data collected through this study have provided important demographic information on infants and toddlers with disabilities. For example, the ECLS-B data collection over-sampled moderately low and very low birth weight children because low birth weight was believed to be associated with developmental issues, including a variety of disabilities. This relationship was confirmed by the study. The Department anticipates that further analyses associated with the study may provide additional information about children's health and development that is relevant to children with disabilities. More information on this study is available on the NCES Web site at: <http://nces.ed.gov/ECLS/birth.asp>.

In July 2011, IES published the final report for the "IDEA National Assessment Implementation Study." The report from the congressionally mandated study provides a national picture of State agency implementation of early intervention programs for infants and toddlers under Part C of IDEA, and both State and school district implementation of special education programs for preschool- and school-age children under Part B of IDEA.

The study was based on surveys of State agency directors and a nationally representative sample of district special education directors conducted in 2009. The key findings relating to the Part C program include:

- Referral and identification—The most common outreach activity reported by States was the development and/or dissemination of written materials for pediatricians and other health care providers, followed by Web-based dissemination and outreach to child care providers. States reported family members and primary healthcare providers as the most frequent sources of referral to the Part C program.
- Coordination and transition between IDEA programs—At the time the surveys were conducted, States reported supporting the transition of young children with disabilities from the Part C program to preschool services under section 619 of Part B, but no States reported expanding Part C services to serve eligible children with disabilities until they enter kindergarten. Forty-six States reported having different coordinators for the Part C and Preschool programs, but 67 percent of Part C coordinators reported meeting at least monthly with the coordinator for the Preschool program.
- Financing—For the 37 States that provided this information, the average percentage of early intervention services funding that came from the Part C program in fiscal year 2009 was 21 percent. Twenty-three States indicated that State early intervention services funding represented the largest source of funding for early intervention services for infants and toddlers with disabilities. The largest sources of funding in other States were: Part C (8 States), Medicaid/Title XIX (8 States), local municipality or county funds (4 States), and Part B (1 State).

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The final report for the “IDEA National Assessment Implementation Study” is available on the IES Web site at: <http://ies.ed.gov/ncee/pubs/20114026/index.asp>.

SPECIAL EDUCATION

National activities: State personnel development
(Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, Part D, Subpart 1)

(dollars in thousands)

FY 2018 Authorization: To be determined¹

Budget Authority:

<u>2017</u> <u>Annualized CR</u>	<u>2017</u> <u>Appropriation</u>	<u>2018</u>	<u>Change from</u> <u>Annualized CR</u>
\$41,551	\$38,630	\$41,551	0

¹ The GEPA extension expired September 30, 2011; continued funding is proposed for this program in FY 2018 through appropriations language.

PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

The State Personnel Development (SPD) program provides grants to help State educational agencies (SEAs) reform and improve their systems for personnel preparation and professional development of individuals providing early intervention, educational, and transition services to improve results for children with disabilities.

The SPD program focuses on professional development needs. Each State must spend at least 90 percent of its funds on professional development activities, including the recruitment and retention of qualified special education teachers. No more than 10 percent of the State's funds can be spent on State activities, such as reforming special education and regular education teacher certification (including recertification) or licensing requirements and carrying out programs that establish, expand, or improve alternative routes for State certification of special education teachers.

Awards are based on State personnel development plans that identify and address State and local needs for the preparation and professional development of personnel who serve infants, toddlers, preschoolers, or children with disabilities, as well as individuals who provide direct supplementary aids and services to children with disabilities. Plans must be designed to enable the State to meet the personnel requirements in Parts B and C (section 612(a)(14)) and section 635(a)(8) and (9)) of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA). These plans must also be integrated and aligned, to the maximum extent possible, with State plans and activities under the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965, as amended (ESEA), the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, and the Higher Education Act of 1965.

Grants are made on a competitive basis for any fiscal year in which the amount appropriated is less than \$100 million. However, if the amount appropriated is \$100 million or greater, funds would be distributed as formula grants, with allotments based on the relative portion of the funds the State received under Part B of IDEA. Competitive awards are made for periods of 1 to 5 years with minimum awards to States of not less than \$500,000 and not less than \$80,000 for Outlying Areas. The maximum award that can be made to States is \$4 million per fiscal year.

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Factors used to determine the ultimate amount of each competitive award are: the amount of funds available; the relative population of the State or Outlying Area; the types of activities proposed; alignment of proposed activities with the State's personnel standards; alignment of proposed activities with the State's plan and application under sections 1005 and 2101(d) of the ESEA; and as appropriate, the use of evidence-based programs and research.

Funding levels for the past 5 fiscal years were:

Fiscal Year	(dollars in thousands)
2013.....	41,630
2014.....	41,630
2015.....	41,630
2016.....	41,630
2017.....	38,630

FY 2018 BUDGET REQUEST

The Administration requests \$41.6 million for the State Personnel Development (SPD) grants program to help State educational agencies improve results for children with disabilities through the delivery of high quality instruction and the recruitment and retention of effective and qualified personnel. The request, which is the same as the fiscal year 2017 annualized continuing resolution (CR) level, would support continuation awards, and performance evaluation activities. The Department of Education Appropriations Act, 2017, provided \$38.6 million for this program. As in fiscal year 2017, the Administration is requesting appropriations language in the 2018 Budget that would provide authority to use SPD funds under section 655 of IDEA to carry out performance evaluation activities. SPD is the only program within Part D of IDEA that does not have the authority to use funds to evaluate program performance.

Personnel shortages and inadequately trained teachers in special education are among the most pressing and chronic problems facing the field.¹ SPD projects assist in addressing critical State and local needs to improve personnel preparation, induction to the LEA, and ongoing professional development identified in the State's Personnel Development Plan. Projects provide personnel with the knowledge and skills to meet the needs of, and improve the performance and achievement of infants, toddlers, preschoolers, and children with disabilities, and to meet the State's performance goals established in accordance with section 612(a)(15) of the IDEA. Support for special education personnel preparation activities is also provided through the Personnel Preparation program, under which the Administration makes competitive awards, primarily to institutions of higher education, to help States train and employ adequate numbers of fully certified personnel to serve children with disabilities.

Activities funded through the SPD program are intended to support statewide strategies to prepare, recruit, and retain teachers who are qualified under IDEA and the ESEA. Qualified teachers generally: 1) meet the applicable State certification and licensure requirements (including any requirements for certification obtained through alternative routes); 2) are

¹ Teacher Shortage Areas Nationwide Listing, U.S. Department of Education, Office of Postsecondary Education, March 2015: <http://www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ope/pol/tsa.pdf>

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prepared to deliver instruction, supported by evidence; and 3) are effective in improving outcomes for children with disabilities. States must collaborate and seek the input of teachers, principals, parents, administrators, paraprofessionals, and other school personnel when developing SPD activities.

Teacher quality is one of the most important factors in improving student achievement and eliminating achievement gaps between our neediest students and their more advantaged peers. Research shows that effective teaching is integral to improving the academic achievement of students who are at greatest risk of not meeting high academic standards. The SPD program provides funding for professional development to improve the knowledge and skills of special education and regular education teachers serving children with disabilities. Specifically, SPD funds are used to provide training in effective interventions. Examples include positive behavioral interventions and supports to improve student behavior in the classroom, scientifically based reading instruction, early and appropriate interventions to identify and help children with disabilities, effective instruction for children with low incidence disabilities, and strategies for successful transitioning to postsecondary opportunities. Funds also assist States in utilizing classroom-based techniques to assist children prior to referral for special education.

Funding Priorities

To improve the outcomes of children with disabilities, the Administration is focusing the SPD program's resources in on projects that: 1) provide evidence-based professional development, and; 2) provide on-going assistance to personnel who have received SPD-supported professional development, including assisting local educational agencies (LEAs) to build upon systems that support implementation of practices supported by evidence. In addition, the Administration is emphasizing and promoting practices supported by evidence in SPD by awarding competitive preference points to applicants demonstrating that they will use program funds to support practices that meet the evidence of promise standard to improve outcomes for children with disabilities. Such activities will help ensure that personnel receive the necessary support to use the acquired knowledge and skills to implement practices with fidelity.

Personnel Recruitment and Retention

The SPD program supports States in developing and implementing strategies that are effective in promoting the recruitment and retention of qualified special education teachers. These include strategies such as teacher mentoring provided by exemplary special education teachers, principals, or superintendents; induction and support for special education teachers during their first 3 years of employment as teachers; and providing incentives, including financial incentives, to retain special education teachers who have a record of success in helping students with disabilities.

Some examples of how States are using SPD funds to improve the knowledge and skills of teachers serving children with disabilities include:

- Wisconsin SPD funds are used to support the development and sustainment of professional learning communities (PLCs). These PLCs help teachers to examine data, determine effective practices, and develop action plans that will lead to improvement in academic achievement for students with disabilities. Sixty-seven percent of schools participating in this professional development showed a decrease in the proficiency gap on Statewide

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assessments. Sixty-three percent of schools demonstrated growth in the achievement of students with disabilities on reading and math assessments.

- Louisiana SPD funds are used to support family engagement activities that have resulted in a sixty-six percent increase in the number of families with students with disabilities who reported schools facilitate family involvement to improve services (based on the IDEA survey).
- Connecticut SPD funds are used to support improvements in school climate and positive behavior supports. In one year the SPD schools decreased their use of out-of-school suspensions and expulsions by eight percent. Sixty-four percent of the SPD-supported schools were able to decrease their use of out-of-school suspensions and expulsions.
- Oklahoma SPD funds are used to support improved literacy instruction for students with disabilities. Ninety-six percent of students receiving the program with fidelity moved up one grade level. Forty-nine percent of students moved up two grade levels.
- Rhode Island's SPD funds are used to support their Multi-tiered Systems of Support efforts. Seventy-two percent of schools receiving assistance demonstrated increases in the percentage of students meeting academic benchmarks.

PROGRAM OUTPUT MEASURES

(dollars in thousands)

<u>Output Measures</u>	<u>2016</u>	<u>2017</u> <u>Annualized CR</u>	<u>2018</u>
Project funding:			
New SPD awards	\$8,866	\$25,599	0
Continuation SPD awards	32,633	15,890	\$41,498
Performance evaluation	124	53	53
Peer review of new award applications	<u>7</u>	<u>9</u>	<u>0</u>
Total funding	41,630	41,551	41,551
Average award (whole dollars)	1,090	1,012	1,015
Number of awards:			
New	7	25	0
Continuation	<u>31</u>	<u>16</u>	<u>41</u>
Total awards	38	41	41

PROGRAM PERFORMANCE INFORMATION

Performance Measures

This section presents selected program performance information, including, for example, GPRA goals, objectives, measures, and performance targets and data, and an assessment of the progress made toward achieving program results. Achievement of results is based on the

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cumulative effect of the resources provided in previous years and those requested in fiscal year 2018 and future years, as well as the resources and efforts invested by those served by this program.

Goal: To assist State educational agencies in reforming and improving their systems for providing educational, early intervention, and transitional services, including their systems of professional development, technical assistance, and dissemination of knowledge about best practices, to improve results for children with disabilities.

Objective 1: *Provide personnel with the knowledge and skills to meet the needs of, and improve the performance and achievement of, infants, toddlers, preschoolers, and children with disabilities.*

Objective 2: *Improve the quality of professional development available to meet the needs of personnel serving infants, toddlers, children and youth with disabilities.*

Objective 3: *Implement strategies that are effective in meeting the requirements of section 612(a)(14) of IDEA to take measurable steps to retain highly qualified personnel in areas of greatest need to provide special education and related services.*

In fiscal year 2011, the Department revised its measures to better align with the current focus of the professional development provided by the program. The measures are based on the belief that no intervention practice, no matter what its evidence base, is likely to be learned and adopted if the methods and strategies used to teach or train personnel are not themselves effective. The new measures were implemented in the project year that began October 1, 2011, for SPD cohorts funded in fiscal year 2011 and beyond. Performance data and other information reported in 2012 through 2014 were used to refine the measures, methodology, and scoring. The Department used data reported in 2012 through 2014 to develop baseline targets in the fall of 2015. The actual data and targets for these measures reflect the performance in the year the initiative took place, in this case the year the initiative was implemented or delivered.

Measure: The percentage of SPD-funded initiatives that meet the benchmarks for use of evidence-based professional development practices over time.

Year	Target	Actual
2015	Baseline	72%
2016	70%	75
2017	70	
2018	77	

Additional information: This measure is calculated by dividing the number of SPD funded PD initiatives in their 2nd through final year of implementation that meet their respective benchmarks for use of evidence-based PD practices by the total number of SPD PD initiatives in their 2nd through final year of implementation reviewed, times 100.

In 2016, this measure applied to all SPD grants in their 2nd through final year of funding. In 2016, 32 initiatives were subject to the benchmarks defined by the program office. An outside

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National activities: State personnel development

contractor used a random sampling process to select one professional development (PD) initiative for review from each of these 32 eligible SPD grants. The contractor commissioned two reviewers with expertise in special education, PD, and program evaluation to assess the extent to which the SPD grant PD initiatives selected for review utilized evidence-based PD practices. To standardize the review, the program office provided the reviewers with an electronic copy of a worksheet describing each PD initiative in terms of (1) Selection, (2) Training, (3) Coaching, (4) Performance Assessment, and (5) Facilitative Administrative Support/Systems Intervention with an “SPD Evidence-based Professional Development Components Rubric,” which reviewers used to assess the extent to which the SPD PD initiatives implemented evidence-based PD practices.

Of the 32 SPD grants reviewed in 2016, a total of 24 were determined to “meet their respective benchmarks for use of evidence-based PD practices.”

Therefore, in 2016, the number of SPD PD initiatives meeting their respective benchmarks/number of SPD PD initiatives reviewed $\times 100 = (24/32) \times 100 = 75$ percent.

Measure: The percentage of SPD-funded initiatives that meet the benchmark for improvement in implementation over time.

Year	Target	Actual
2015	Baseline	58%
2016	60%	74
2017	60	
2018	65	

Additional information: This measure is calculated by dividing the number of SPD funded PD initiatives in at least their 3rd year of implementation that meet their benchmark for improvement of evidence-based PD practices by the total number of SPD funded PD initiatives, times 100.

An outside contractor used a random sampling process to select one professional development (PD) initiative for review from each of these 32 eligible SPD grants. The contractor then identified PD initiatives that were in at least their 3rd year of implementation during the most recent APR period, when improvements in implementation can be observed. A total of 31 PD initiatives were in at least their 3rd year of implementation, and therefore included in the review.

It is noteworthy that the total number of projects eligible for review under this measure in 2016 was significantly larger than in previous years (31 PD initiatives vs. 12 PD initiatives in 2015).

Of these 31 PD initiatives, a total of 23 were deemed to “meet the benchmark for improvement of evidence-based PD practices.”

Therefore, in 2016, the number of SPD PD initiatives meeting their respective benchmarks/number of SPD PD initiatives reviewed $\times 100 = (23/31) \times 100 = 74$ percent. This actual performance represents a significant increase from previous years, and OSEP raised the target in response to this outcome.

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Measure: The percentage of initiatives that meet targets for their use of funds to sustain SPD-supported practices.

Year	Target	Actual
2015	Baseline	90%
2016	85%	78
2017	85	
2018	85	

Additional information: This measure is calculated by dividing the number of SPD funded PD initiatives in at least their 2nd year of implementation that meet the grantee benchmark for using funds to support sustainability by the total number of SPD PD initiatives in at least their 2nd year of implementation reviewed times 100. Grantee-submitted data describing the cost of the fidelity activities designed to sustain individual initiatives is used to support this measure. Targets for each initiative are set in conjunction with the grantee. Expert panels review the data to determine whether the grantee has met the target for spending on that initiative within 5 percent of the target.

In 2016, this measure applied to all SPD grants in their 2nd through final years of funding. The contractor commissioned two reviewers with expertise in special education, PD, program evaluation, and finance to extract cost data for each PD initiative under review from the APR and calculate the percentage of SPD grants that met their targets for the use of funds to sustain evidence-based practices.

In 2016, 25 of the 32 initiatives included were in at least their 2nd year of implementation and were therefore subject to the benchmark defined by the program office.

Therefore, for 2016, the number of SPD initiatives meeting their respective benchmark/number of SPD initiatives reviewed x 100 = $(25/32) \times 100 = 78$ percent.

Measure: The percentage of SPD grant-funded projects that meet targets for retention of special education teachers.

Additional information: Beginning in the 2016 report, the information for this measure will be provided qualitatively.

Some SPD grantees have special education teacher retention as a goal and are required to report the number of qualified special education teachers who remain as special education teachers two or more years following their initial participation in grant activities and the total number of teachers who participated in grant activities designed for teacher retention at least two years prior to the annual performance reporting period (APR).

In 2016, this measure applied to five SPD grants. An outside contractor commissioned two reviewers with expertise in special education, PD, and program evaluation to assess the extent to which each grantee had met their respective target for retaining special education teachers.

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The program office uses a standardized rubric containing four questions to determine whether or not each grantee met their benchmark for retaining special education teachers after their participation in grant activities. These questions are:

- Did the grantee divide the number of teachers who remain in a teaching position by all teachers who received SPD grant assistance? (Equation = Number of teachers retained for at least two years following participation in a SPD grant teacher retention activity divided by number of teachers participating in a SPD grant activity designed to retain highly qualified special education teachers.) (Response categories = Yes, No)
- Does the grantee set a target for teacher retention for teachers who participated in SPD grant activities at least two years ago? (Response categories = Yes, No)
- Does the grantee have special educators who participated in SPD grant activities at least two years ago? (Response categories = Yes, No, Not Sure)
- Did the grant meet its target for these teachers? (Response categories = Yes, No)

Reviewers extracted data from the APR to answer these questions for each of the five SPD grants with teacher retention as a goal, and the reviewers then discussed their individual assessments until reaching consensus on each grantee's response to each question.

In 2016, of the five SPG grants listing teacher retention as a goal, three met their target for teacher retention.

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National activities: Technical assistance and dissemination
(Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, Part D, Subpart 2, Section 663)

(dollars in thousands)

FY 2018 Authorization: To be determined¹

Budget Authority:

<u>2017</u> <u>Annualized CR</u>	<u>2017</u> <u>Appropriation</u>	<u>2018</u>	<u>Change from</u> <u>Annualized CR</u>
\$44,261	\$44,345	\$44,261	0

¹ The GEPA extension expired September 30, 2011; continued funding is proposed for this program in FY 2018 through appropriations language.

PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

The Technical Assistance and Dissemination (TA&D) program is the Department's primary vehicle under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) for identifying, providing, and disseminating information on effective practices with educators, policymakers, service providers, and parents and families of children with disabilities. The program makes competitive awards to provide technical assistance, support model demonstration projects, disseminate useful information, and implement activities that are supported by scientific research. These awards are intended to improve services provided under IDEA, promote academic achievement, and improve results for children with disabilities.

The majority of TA&D program investments support national and regional technical assistance centers that support the field to implement Parts B and C of IDEA and expand the use of evidence-based or promising practices. Centers focus on a variety of critical topics, such as behavior, assessment, inclusive practices, secondary transition, literacy, and early childhood education. Most centers use a service model that provides three levels of technical assistance: intensive, sustained; targeted, specific; and general, universal. At the intensive, sustained level, a small number of States receive on-site, ongoing planned assistance designed to reach an outcome desired by the recipient. Through targeted, specific services, centers support activities based on the topical or technical needs common to multiple recipients and can be one-time or short-term events such as consultation services or presentations at conferences. The centers also provide general, universal technical assistance services that permit a broader audience to access information and services through presentations, newsletters, or research syntheses that are made available on center websites. Activities supported through this program are designed to address the needs of a variety of audiences, including teachers, related service personnel, early intervention personnel, administrators, parents, and individuals with disabilities.

The TA&D program also funds model demonstration projects that evaluate the implementation of research findings in typical settings. Models that are found to be effective can then be promoted by the network of TA&D centers. In an on-going effort to leverage existing resources and to collaborate with other federally funded TA&D projects more effectively, over the last few years the program has aligned investments to support coordination of efforts without duplication.

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TA&D activities promote the application of knowledge to improve practice by: determining areas where technical assistance and information are needed, ensuring that materials are prepared in formats that are appropriate for a wide variety of audiences, making technical assistance and information accessible to consumers, and promoting communication links among consumers.

The duration of awards varies with the award's purpose, though most individual awards are made for a period of 5 years.

Funding levels for the past 5 fiscal years were:

Fiscal Year	(dollars in thousands)
2013.....	\$44,345 ¹
2014.....	44,345 ¹
2015.....	44,345 ¹
2016.....	44,345 ¹
2017.....	44,345 ¹

¹ The request for the TA&D program does not include funds for the Special Olympics program.

FY 2018 BUDGET REQUEST

For fiscal year 2018, the Administration requests \$44.3 million for the Technical Assistance and Dissemination (TA&D) program, the same as the fiscal year 2017 annualized continuing resolution (CR) level. The Department of Education Appropriations Act, 2017, provided \$44.3 million for this program. Approximately \$29.2 million would be used to support continuation costs and \$14.9 million would be used to fund new competitions.

TA&D activities support the application of knowledge to improve practices among professionals and others involved in providing services that promote academic achievement and improve results for children with disabilities. Through TA&D, the Department focuses on identifying and disseminating evidence-based practices and building capacity at the State and local levels to implement, sustain, and scale-up such practices. These activities have successfully facilitated the adoption and spread of evidence-based practices such as positive behavioral interventions and supports, which have been implemented in more than 23,300 schools nationwide, and Multi-Tiered Systems of Support (MTSS), which have been implemented and widely used throughout the country as a framework for delivering differentiated instruction.

Model Demonstration Projects

As States refine their systems and use data to identify areas for improvement in their State Systemic Improvement Plans (SSIPs), a required component of the Administration's Results Driven Accountability (RDA) framework, there is growing demand for evidence-based interventions that can be implemented in schools to help meet the specific needs of children with disabilities. Unfortunately, there is a dearth of interventions that have demonstrated success in school settings, particularly for students who require intensive individualized attention.

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National activities: Technical assistance and dissemination

The growing field of implementation science suggests that effective implementation—including an understanding of how to accommodate variations inherent in the different contexts in which programs are implemented—can be just as important as identifying evidence-based practices in the first place. Few schools or programs can successfully implement evidence-based practices without detailed implementation strategies. Research studies, however, do not often address what it takes to implement and sustain a practice in typical early intervention, preschool, classroom and school settings.

Model demonstrations are an effective and efficient way to bridge the gap between existing research and the effective implementation of interventions in areas of critical need. The focus areas for model demonstrations will be selected based on emerging areas of research, needs identified by TA&D centers, and input from the special education field. Cohorts would include schools and districts in varied settings ranging from rural to urban in order to identify and address the implementation challenges of students throughout the country. The fiscal year 2018 model demonstration investment will fund 3 new projects (\$1.2 million) and 9 continuations (\$3.5 million) aimed at addressing critical areas of need in special education (e.g., improving mathematics and English language arts outcomes of students with significant cognitive disabilities in inclusive public and charter schools).

Additional Technical Assistance Activities

The Administration's technical assistance investments focus on meeting the needs of States and LEAs that serve children with disabilities and include support in priority areas such as: early learning, post-secondary transition, and support for low incidence disabilities like deaf-blindness. The Administration takes a number of factors into consideration when funding technical assistance centers including: meeting statutory requirements, the needs of the field, and the risk of duplication across programs. Investments in this program are required to coordinate with the Comprehensive Centers, the Regional Educational Laboratories and other relevant Administration investments. This request includes approximately \$13.8 million for new awards in fiscal year 2018 to support State efforts to use evidence-based implementation in building State capacity.

Specifically, the Administration plans to fund a new national technical assistance center on Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS) at \$1.7 million, which will provide technical assistance to States and LEAs. The center will support development, implementation, scaling-up, and sustainability of school-wide frameworks for positive behavioral interventions and supports that will help improve student behavior and school climate and help students with disabilities and their non-disabled peers remain engaged in learning. In addition, the Administration plans to fund a new center for dispute resolution in special education at \$650,000 to provide State Education Agencies (SEAs) and Part C Lead Agencies with resources that can help them effectively implement a range of dispute resolution options, including strategies that other SEAs and Part C Lead Agencies use to address the SSIPs indicators related to dispute resolution. This center will help ensure that parents and families get the information they need about various methods for resolving disputes and helps avoid costly adversarial due process hearings. Finally, the Administration plans to provide \$11.4 million in new funding for awards to support State and multi-State projects providing technical assistance on services for children who are both deaf and blind. This request will also support a coordinating center that provides technical assistance to State and multi-State projects. Overall, this investment represents a

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National activities: Technical assistance and dissemination

significant portion of the minimum annual funding requirement (i.e., \$12.8 million) of IDEA to address the educational, related services, transitional, and early intervention needs of children with deaf-blindness.

Of the remaining fiscal year 2018 continuation funds, \$750,000 of the request would support the Office of Elementary and Secondary Education (OESE) investment in the Comprehensive Centers. Another \$200,000 will be transferred to the Office of Career, Technical, and Adult Education (OCTAE) to support an interagency technical assistance investment to improve academic, employment and behavioral outcomes for justice-involved youth. Approximately \$1.5 million would support contracts for peer review, performance evaluation, reporting, and dissemination. Lastly, \$22.9 million would support continuations for a variety of technical assistance and dissemination projects under this program:

Model Demonstration Projects

- Model Demonstration Projects to Improve Algebraic Reasoning for Students with Disabilities in Middle and High School – assess how models can improve algebraic reasoning for students with disabilities in middle and high schools and be implemented and sustained by educators in general and special education settings.

Behavior

- Technical Assistance Center on Positive Social, Emotional, and Behavioral Outcomes for Young Children with Disabilities – supports States, early childhood programs, and personnel in implementing an early childhood MTSS framework focused on improving social, emotional, and behavioral development.

Early Childhood

- Early Childhood Systems Technical Assistance Center – provides TA to States to increase their capacity to maintain have a high-quality infrastructure in place to implement IDEA, enabling States to provide comprehensive IDEA services for young children with disabilities and their families. Consistent with IDEA requirements, the Center also offers TA to States on effective strategies to work collaboratively with other early childhood systems, to increase young children with disabilities' access to and participation in high-quality inclusive programs.

Assessment

- National TA Center to Increase the Participation and Performance of Students with Disabilities on State and Districtwide Assessments – addresses national, State, and local assessment issues related to students with disabilities.

Inclusive practices

- National TA Center for Inclusive Policies and Practices – assists SEAs and LEAs to successfully implement and sustain inclusive practices and policies, supported by

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evidence and based on individualized determinations, for students with the most significant cognitive disabilities in elementary and middle school (K-8) programs.

- National Center For Students With Disabilities Who Require Intensive Intervention – assists SEAs and LEAs in their efforts to support schools and educators in implementing intensive intervention composed of practices that are evidence-based for students with disabilities who have persistent learning or behavior difficulties and who need intensive intervention to succeed in school and be prepared for postsecondary opportunities.
- National Center to Build State Education Systems' Infrastructure to Improve Services and Results for Children with Disabilities – assists States and other entities in building an infrastructure that supports the full and sustained use of instructional and leadership practices supported by evidence.
- National Center for Systemic Improvement (NCSI) – provides States with technical assistance to support LEAs and local early intervention service providers in improving educational results and functional outcomes for children with disabilities. NCSI is also supporting States in the development of their SSIPs, which are a required component of RDA. NCSI works collaboratively with other OSEP-funded TA centers to focus on areas such as special education fiscal management, early-childhood programs, and postsecondary transition.

Secondary Transition

- The National Technical Assistance Center on Transition (NTACT) – assists SEAs, LEAs, State vocational rehabilitation (VR) agencies, and VR service providers to implement evidence-based and promising practices ensuring students with disabilities, including those with significant disabilities, graduate prepared for success in postsecondary education and employment.

For more information on the OSEP technical assistance centers, visit:

www.OSEPideasthatwork.org.

PROGRAM OUTPUT MEASURES

(dollars in thousands)

<u>Output Measures</u>	<u>2016</u>	<u>2017 Annualized CR</u>	<u>2018</u>
Program Funding:			
Model demonstration centers:			
New	\$986	\$1,200	\$1,200
Continuations	<u>812</u>	<u>2,252</u>	<u>3,504</u>
Subtotal	1,798	3,452	4,704
Behavior:			
New	685	1,100	1,700
Continuations	<u>1,884</u>	<u>1,000</u>	<u>1,100</u>
Subtotal	2,569	2,100	2,800

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<u>Output Measures</u>	<u>2016</u>	<u>2017 Annualized CR</u>	<u>2018</u>
Early childhood:			
New	0	3,400	0
Continuations	<u>4,500</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>3,400</u>
Subtotal	4,500	3,400	3,400
Assessment:			
New	1,000	0	0
Continuations	<u>0</u>	<u>1,000</u>	<u>1,000</u>
Subtotal	1,000	1,000	1,000
Inclusive Practices:			
New	2,100	3,100	650
Continuations	<u>15,421</u>	<u>12,257</u>	<u>14,518</u>
Subtotal	17,521	15,357	15,168
Secondary transition:			
New	1,300	1,400	0
Continuations	<u>2,100</u>	<u>3,400</u>	<u>3,400</u>
Subtotal	3,400	4,800	3,400
Technical assistance for children who are both deaf and blind:			
New	0	0	11,350
Continuations	<u>11,350</u>	<u>11,350</u>	<u>0</u>
Subtotal	11,350	11,350	11,350
Transfers to Elementary and Secondary Education for comprehensive centers:			
New	0	\$750	0
Continuations	<u>\$750</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>\$750</u>
Subtotal	750	750	750
Transfers to Career, Technical, and Adult Education for corrections collaboration:			
New	0	200	0
Continuations	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>200</u>
Subtotal	0	200	200
National Activities			
New	78	1,099	0
Continuations	<u>1,293</u>	<u>623</u>	<u>1,354</u>
Subtotal	1,371	1,722	1,354
Peer review of new award applications	85	130	135
Total program funding:			
New	6,214	12,249	14,900
Continuations	38,046	31,882	29,226
Peer review	<u>85</u>	<u>130</u>	<u>135</u>
Total	44,345	44,261	44,261

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PROGRAM PERFORMANCE INFORMATION

Performance Measures

This section presents selected program performance information, including, for example, GPRA goals, objectives, measures, and performance targets and data; and an assessment of the progress made toward achieving program results. Achievement of program results is based on the cumulative effect of the resources provided in previous years and those requested in FY 2018 and future years, as well as the resources and efforts invested by those served by this program.

Goal: To assist States and their partners in systems improvement through the integration of scientifically-based practices.

Objective 1: *States and other recipients of Special Education Technical Assistance and Dissemination program services will implement scientifically or evidence-based practices for infants, toddlers, children, and youth with disabilities.*

Objective 2: *Improve the quality of Special Education Technical Assistance and Dissemination projects.*

Objective 3: *The Special Education Technical Assistance and Dissemination program will identify, implement, and evaluate evidence-based models to improve outcomes for infants, toddlers, children, and youth with disabilities.*

Five performance measures were developed for the Technical Assistance and Dissemination program. Three of these measures are annual measures, and two are long-term.

Annual Performance Measures

The three annual measures deal with the quality, relevance, and usefulness of products and services provided by the program. These measures were developed as part of an effort to make measures relating to technical assistance and dissemination activities more consistent Department-wide. However, the measures have been adapted to reflect the unique purposes of the TA&D program. Targets for 2016 and beyond were revised in 2015 to reflect reductions in the number of grantees in the program due to consolidations. These targets do not reflect a reduced expectation for program performance; rather they are lower due to the reduced number of products and services available for review. The actual data and targets for these measures reflect the performance in the year that the activity took place; in this case, the year the product or service was developed or delivered.

For each of the three annual performance measures that follow, a contractor collects and analyzes data, based on input from two panels of subject matter experts. Panels review a sample of products and services developed by grantees against a listing of evidence-based practices in key target areas the Department has identified as critical. The sample of grantees included in this measure for each year consists of approximately 13 TA&D centers and 10 State Deaf-Blind programs. Each TA&D center included in the sample submits a list of every new product and service from the previous year, from which one new product and service are

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selected to be reviewed. Each State Deaf-Blind grantee included in the sample is asked to submit a list of every new service from the previous year, from which one service is selected to be reviewed.

Panels of experts review and score all products and services based on an OSEP-designed rubric that is specific to each performance measure, rating the products and services on the extent to which they meet the measure's performance indicators. Data for each indicator are calculated by dividing the number of TA&D center products and services that received an average quality rating of six or better (out of nine possible points), by the total number of TA&D products and services reviewed. The Department performs the same calculation for the services provided by State Deaf-Blind grantees, assigns weights to each of these calculations to correspond to the proportion of total program funds expended in each area, and then adds the figures together to produce an overall quality rating for the program. The specific rubric used to assess products and services for each measure is identified below in the Additional Information section following the Measure.

Measure: The percentage of Technical Assistance and Dissemination products and services deemed to be of high quality by an independent review panel of experts qualified to review the substantive content of the products and services.

Year	Target	Actual
2013	94%	81%
2014	95	91
2015	95	77
2016	90	
2017	90	
2018	90	

Additional information: Expert panels review all products and services and score them based on a rubric that assesses the extent to which the content of these materials is: evidence-based, valid, complete, and up-to-date. Specifically, the panels assess the quality of the materials on the following dimensions: (1) Substance (Does the product reflect the best of current research and theory or policy guidance, as demonstrated by a scientifically- or evidence-based approach, a solid conceptual framework, appropriate citations and other evidence of conceptual soundness?); and (2) Communication (Does the product have clarity in its presentation, as evidenced by being free of editorial errors, appropriately formatted, and well organized?). The total score for any individual product or service reviewed is the sum of the two quality dimension sub-scores. The Department considers any individual product or service that receives a total score of six or higher out of nine possible points to be of high quality.

In fiscal year 2016, due to the change in the number of centers funded, the Department adjusted the targets for this program. Based on the most recent data available for products and services developed with fiscal year 2015 funds, the program fell substantially short of the target with only 23 out of 30 products and services meeting the standard for high quality (i.e., 77 percent). The Department will monitor any individual grantees that receive lower scores more aggressively to improve program performance and ensure that these grantees take steps to improve the quality of their products and services.

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Measure: The percentage of Technical Assistance and Dissemination products and services deemed by an independent review panel of qualified experts to be of high relevance to educational and early intervention policy or practice.

Year	Target	Actual
2013	95%	94%
2014	95	97
2015	95	93
2016	90	
2017	90	
2018	90	

Additional information: Expert panels review the products and services and score them based on a rubric that assesses the extent to which the content of materials is responsive to priority issues, including challenges confronting the target groups. Specifically, the rubric is designed to yield ratings on the basis of the following three dimensions related to relevance: (1) Need (Does the content of the material attempt to solve an important problem or critical issue?); (2) Pertinence (Does the content of the material match the problem or issue facing the target group or groups?); and (3) Reach (To what extent is the content of the material applicable to diverse populations within the target group?). The total score for any individual product or service reviewed is the sum of the three quality dimension sub-scores. High relevance for any individual product or service is defined as a total score of six or higher of nine possible points.

Overall performance under this measure has been strong in every year for which data have been collected. While 28 out of 30 products and services (i.e., 93 percent) from fiscal year 2015 met the standard for high relevance, the percentage still fell short of the target due to the smaller number of products and services reviewed; however, this performance exceeds the targets adjusted for 2016 and beyond. The target percentages for 2016 and beyond were lowered to adjust for a smaller number of projects. The Department seeks to maintain the high levels of performance for this measure and will monitor any individual grantees that receive lower scores more aggressively to improve program performance and ensure that these grantees take steps to improve the relevance of their products and services.

Measure: The percentage of all Special Education Technical Assistance and Dissemination products and services deemed by an independent review panel of qualified experts to be useful to improve educational or early intervention policy or practice.

Year	Target	Actual
2013	95%	84%
2014	95	94
2015	95	93
2016	90	
2017	90	
2018	90	

Additional information: Expert panels review the products and services and score them based on a rubric that assesses the extent to which the content of materials can be easily and

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quickly adopted or adapted by the target group, and the likelihood that the product or service, if adopted, will produce the desired result. Specifically, the rubric is designed to yield ratings on the basis of the following three dimensions related to usefulness: (1) Ease (Does the content of the product or service description address a problem or issue in an easily understood way, with directions or guidance regarding how a problem or issue can be addressed?); (2) Replicability (Is it likely that the information derived from the product or service will eventually be used by the target group to achieve the benefit intended?); and (3) Sustainability (Is it likely that the information derived from the product or service will eventually be used in more than one setting successfully over and over again to achieve the intended benefit?). The total score for any individual product or service reviewed is the sum of the three quality dimension sub-scores. High usefulness for any individual product or service is defined as a total score of six or higher of nine possible points.

In fiscal year 2016, due to the change in the number of centers funded, the Department adjusted the targets for this program to account for the smaller number of total products and services. Based on the most recent data available on products and services from fiscal year 2015, the program fell short of the target with 28 out of 30 products and services meeting the standard for high usefulness; however, this performance exceeds the targets adjusted for 2016 and beyond. To ensure that grantees continue to improve their performance under this indicator, the Department will monitor more aggressively any individual grantees that receive relatively lower scores to improve program performance and ensure that they take steps to improve over time.

Long-term Performance Measures

The Department established two long-term measures for this program. Data for the long-term measures are collected every 2 years.

Measure: The percentage of effective evidence-based program models developed by model demonstration projects that are promoted to States and their partners through the TA&D Network.

In 2010, the Department developed this new long-term pilot measure because the previous measure did not provide meaningful data for program improvement. This new measure will provide the Department valuable data on how well model demonstration projects are disseminating effective practices, a key component of this program. In November 2012, the Department began collecting the new data using a revised methodology, and will use the results to continue to refine the measure and set performance targets for future years.

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Measure: The percentage of school districts and service agencies receiving technical assistance and dissemination services regarding scientifically or evidence-based practices for infants, toddlers, children, and youth with disabilities that implement those practices.

Year	Target	Actual
2011		86%
2013	86%	83
2015	86	100
2017	86	

Additional information: Experts review data from States that have received intensive technical assistance from OSEP TA&D Centers in six focus areas. These areas include assessment, literacy, behavior, instructional strategies, early intervention, secondary transition, and inclusive practices. Scientifically or evidence-based practices are defined as practices that have been demonstrated as effective within multiple settings through rigorous studies that document similar outcomes, and State implementation is defined as having practitioners within some portion of the school district or service agency use the practice. For additional information on the Department's definition of evidence see 34 CFR 77.1.

In 2009, the first year data were collected for this measure, 79 percent of districts and agencies sampled were implementing evidence-based practices for which they received technical assistance. In 2011, this figure increased to 86 percent of districts and agencies sampled. In 2015, the Department exceeded the target with 7 out of 7 States implementing evidence-based practices for which they received technical assistance.

Efficiency Measures

In 2008, the Department developed a common efficiency measure for OSEP programs that provide technical assistance. After collecting multiple years of data and attempting multiple methodologies to examine efficiency, the Department struggled to produce reliable results. Due to the varied technical assistance provided by the Department, data was unstable from year to year. Therefore, the Department has decided to stop using this efficiency measure. While the Department is no longer attempting to measure the efficiency of the technical assistance provided by the TA&D network, the Department will continue to monitor grantees to ensure that they are meeting project goals and milestones on time and on budget.

Other Performance Information

In August 2009, as part of the ongoing National Assessment of IDEA, the Institute of Education Sciences (IES) launched a 5-year evaluation of the IDEA TA&D program and various technical assistance activities that are currently supported under the other IDEA, Part D programs, such as centers that provide technical assistance on specific topical areas. The initial goals of this evaluation were to inform policymakers and practitioners about: (1) the nature of the technical assistance services provided by TA&D grantees; (2) the experiences of SEAs and LEAs that interact with such grantees; (3) the implementation of practices recommended by such grantees, and (d) whether implementation of recommended practices is associated with improved outcomes for children and youth with disabilities.

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Initial data collection and analysis revealed limitations of the data, so the objectives of the evaluation were revised to determine: (1) the needs and uses for TA&D services; (2) what services are seen as most helpful in contributing to the improvement of key student outcomes; (3) the perceived barriers to local level implementation; (4) how TA&D grantees identify their clients, assess their needs, and develop and maintain their relationship with clients; and (5) the extent to which assistance from TA&D grantees relate to implementation of special education policies and practices that support the implementation of IDEA. The evaluation addresses these research questions using data gathered from OSEP, through *EDFacts*, and through new surveys of TA&D grantees, SEA officials responsible for IDEA implementation, and school district special education directors.

In October 2013, IES released an interim report, the “National Evaluation of the IDEA Technical Assistance & Dissemination Program.” Technical assistance providers most commonly reported providing technical assistance on the topics of “parent and family involvement,” and “data systems and use of data for improvement.” Recipients of technical assistance identified General Supervision/Monitoring, early childhood transition, special education finance, and Response to Intervention as the topics for which they had the greatest need for technical assistance in the 2010–11 school year. In addition, this analysis found some potential duplication of services provided by technical assistance providers; however, this analysis was unable to establish whether such cases were indicators of inefficiency or of complementary and coordinated services. The report found that 71 percent of technical assistance recipients had a “very satisfactory” overall experience. On average, customers receiving high intensity technical assistance were significantly more satisfied than those receiving lower intensity technical assistance (i.e., infrequent training and consultation or Web-only support). The final report is expected to publish in June 2017.

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(Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, Part D, Subpart 2, Sections 661 and 662)

(dollars in thousands)

FY 2018 Authorization: 0¹

Budget Authority:

<u>2017</u> <u>Annualized CR</u>	<u>2017</u> <u>Appropriation</u>	<u>2018</u>	<u>Change from</u> <u>Annualized CR</u>
\$83,541	\$83,700	\$83,541	0

¹ The GEPA extension expired September 30, 2011; continued funding is proposed for this program in FY 2018 through appropriations language.

PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

The Personnel Preparation program helps meet State-identified needs for adequate numbers of fully certified personnel to serve children with disabilities by supporting competitive awards to:

- Provide research-based training and professional development to prepare special education, related services, early intervention, and regular education personnel to work with children with disabilities;
- Ensure that those personnel are fully qualified, and possess the skills and knowledge that are needed to serve children with disabilities; and
- Ensure that regular education teachers have the necessary knowledge and skills to provide instruction to students with disabilities in regular education classrooms.
- The Department is required to make competitive grants that support training activities in a few high priority areas, including personnel development, beginning special educators, personnel to serve children with low incidence disabilities, and leadership personnel. These grants are typically 5 years in length.

Personnel Development. This broad authority requires the Department to support at least one of the following activities:

- Promoting partnerships and collaborative personnel preparation and training between institutions of higher education (IHEs) and local educational agencies (LEAs);
- Developing, evaluating, and disseminating innovative models for the recruitment, induction, retention, and assessment of teachers;
- Providing continuous training and professional development to support special education and general education teachers and related services personnel;
- Developing and improving programs for paraprofessionals to become special educators;

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- Promoting instructional leadership and improved collaboration between general and special education;
- Supporting IHEs with minority enrollment of not less than 25 percent; and
- Developing and improving programs to train special educators to develop expertise in autism spectrum disorders.

Beginning Special Educators. The Department is also required to provide support to beginning special educators. Specifically, the Department is required to make at least one award to: (a) enhance and restructure existing teacher education programs or develop teacher education programs that prepare special education teachers by incorporating an extended clinical learning opportunity, field experience, or supervised practicum (e.g., an additional 5th year), or (b) create and support teacher-faculty partnerships between LEAs and IHEs (e.g., professional development schools) that provide high-quality mentoring and induction opportunities with ongoing support for beginning special educators or in-service support and professional development opportunities.

Personnel to Serve Children with Low Incidence Disabilities. Awards to support personnel to serve children with low incidence disabilities are designed to help ensure the availability of quality personnel by providing financial aid as an incentive to the pursuit of careers in special education, related services, and early intervention. Under this authority, the term “low incidence disabilities” primarily refers to visual or hearing impairments and significant intellectual disabilities, however, beginning in fiscal year 2014, the Department expanded the definition to also include persistent and severe learning and behavioral problems that need the most intensive individualized supports. In carrying out this authority, the Department is required to support activities that benefit children with low incidence disabilities, such as: preparing personnel; providing personnel from various disciplines with interdisciplinary training that will contribute to improvements in early intervention and educational outcomes for children with low incidence disabilities; and preparing personnel in the innovative uses of technology to enhance educational outcomes for children with low incidence disabilities, and to improve communication with parents.

Leadership Personnel. Leadership preparation activities focus on improving results for students with disabilities by ensuring that leadership personnel in both regular and special education have the skills and training to help students with disabilities achieve to high standards. Under this authority, leadership personnel may include a variety of different personnel, such as teacher preparation and related service faculty, administrators, researchers, supervisors, and principals. Authorized activities include preparing personnel at the graduate, postgraduate, and doctoral levels, and providing interdisciplinary training for various types of leadership personnel.

All Personnel Preparation competitions emphasize the value of incorporating best practices, as determined through research, evaluations, and experience. These include practices related to personnel training and professional development, as well as the provision of special education, related services, and early intervention services.

While individuals and students are not eligible for awards under the Personnel Preparation program, many grantees are required to use at least 65 percent of their award(s) for student support (e.g. tuition, stipends, and payment of fees). Students who receive financial assistance from projects funded under the program are required to pay back such assistance, either by working for a period of time after they complete their training in the area(s) for which they

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received training, or by making a cash repayment to the Federal Government. In recent years, approximately half of the total funding available under the program has been used to directly support student scholarships.

A significant percentage of the grants awarded through this program go to IHEs to provide scholarships to train additional special education and early intervention personnel. However, the Department also makes awards to centers under this program. Unlike awards that provide support for scholarships, which are designed primarily to increase the supply of personnel, center-based awards tend to focus on enhancing the quality of work in a particular topical area through such activities as professional development, technical assistance, partnerships, or the development and dissemination of materials and best practices.

Additional support for personnel preparation activities is provided through the State Personnel Development Grants program, under which the Department makes competitive awards to help SEAs reform and improve in-service training and professional development activities for teachers, including the recruitment and retention of special education teachers. A variety of other programs administered by the Department also make competitive awards that support training and professional development activities that are designed to improve the effectiveness of teachers, including special education personnel.

Funding levels for the past 5 fiscal years were:

Fiscal Year	(dollars in thousands)
2013.....	83,700
2014.....	83,700
2015.....	83,700
2016.....	83,700
2017.....	83,700

FY 2018 BUDGET REQUEST

For fiscal year 2018, the Administration requests \$83.5 million for the Personnel Preparation program, level with the fiscal year 2017 annualized continuing resolution (CR) level. The Department of Education Appropriations Act, 2017, provided \$83.7 million for this program. Of the request level, approximately \$16.3 million (including peer review costs) would be used for new projects and \$67.2 million would support the continuation of grants made in prior years. Approximately \$10.4 million of the funding for new projects in fiscal year 2018 would be used to support training for special education and early intervention personnel, and approximately \$4.0 million would be used to support the training of special education leadership personnel. The remaining additional funding would be used to support national technical assistance centers focused on improving the professional development of special education personnel.

Program Funding Priorities

The Administration is exploring how funds available to support new activities under this program can be targeted to support human capital systems that prepare, recruit, support, evaluate, compensate and retain effective educators. Administration priorities in this area include partnering with States, LEAs, and grantees under the program to: ensure teachers enter the classroom with the necessary skills to be effective; address inequities in the distribution of

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effective teachers; and alleviate ongoing personnel shortages of teachers and principals who are prepared to provide evidence-based services for children with disabilities.

Since fiscal year 2011, the Department has required preparation programs supported under this program to track the impact that program completers had on students after they completed their training and entered the field. Specifically, grantees are required, during their project periods, to track impacts on student growth and social, emotional, and academic development, as appropriate. These requirements will be continued in new competitions in fiscal year 2018.

The funds available through this program are primarily used to support on-going development of best practices, improvements in the quality of training offered and the training of additional special education, related services, and leadership personnel in high priority areas, including training personnel to provide services to students with low incidence disabilities.

Data on Personnel Shortages

Available data relating to personnel shortages in special education, including State-reported data outlining the percentage of special education teachers fully certified in States and Outlying Areas, strongly support the need for continued Federal investment. Persistent shortages of qualified personnel have been reported since the enactment of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) in 1975. While States and local educational agencies across the country experience personnel shortages, recruiting and retaining special educators is particularly challenging for schools in high-poverty districts. Data from "Teacher Quality Under No Child Left Behind: Final Report," illustrate the challenge. According to this study, completed by the American Institutes for Research (AIR) for the Department in January 2009, approximately half of all districts in the country reported difficulty attracting highly qualified special education teachers in the 2006-2007 school year, while 90 percent of high-poverty districts reported the same difficulty (see <http://www.ed.gov/rschstat/eval/teaching/nclb-final/index.html>).

The National Assessment of IDEA also found that 51 percent of district Part B special education administrators reported that their districts routinely had difficulty finding qualified special education applicants over the past 3 years, and approximately 5 percent of preschool-age and school-age special education teacher full-time positions were left vacant in the 2008-2009 academic year (see <http://ies.ed.gov/ncee/pubs/20114026/pdf/20114026.pdf>).

While the funds available through this program are by no means sufficient to resolve ongoing shortages in special education nationwide, they have played a critical role in increasing the supply of personnel in specific areas where the demand for additional staff are especially critical, such as in the area of low incidence disabilities at both the postsecondary and K-12 levels. Further, in fiscal year 2014, 83 percent of degree/certification recipients supported under this program were employed in a high-need school district.

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PROGRAM OUTPUT MEASURES

(dollars in thousands)

<u>Output Measures</u>	<u>2016</u>	<u>2017</u> <u>Annualized CR</u>	<u>2018</u>
Program Funding:			
Low incidence disabilities grants:			
New	\$1,700	0	\$250
Continuations	<u>4,550</u>	<u>\$3,649</u>	<u>4,681</u>
Subtotal	6,250	3,649	4,931
Leadership training grants:			
New	4,142	3,626	4,000
Continuations	<u>12,640</u>	<u>15,701</u>	<u>14,072</u>
Subtotal	16,782	19,327	18,072
Program improvement grants:			
New	0	5,450	1,200
Continuations	<u>6,250</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>5,450</u>
Subtotal	6,250	5,450	6,650
Early childhood grants:			
New	0	2,000	0
Continuations	<u>1,850</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>2,000</u>
Subtotal	1,850	2,000	2,000
Pre-service training grants			
New	9,323	9,000	10,432
Continuations	<u>41,305</u>	<u>41,453</u>	<u>38,976</u>
Subtotal	50,628	50,453	49,408
National Activities:			
New	43	1,681	100
Continuations	<u>1,541</u>	<u>641</u>	<u>2,065</u>
Subtotal	1,584	2,322	2,165
Peer review of new award applications			
	356	340	316
<u>Total Program Funding:</u>			
New	15,208	21,757	15,982
Continuations	68,136	61,444	67,243
Peer review of new award applications	<u>356</u>	<u>340</u>	<u>316</u>
Total	83,700	83,541	83,541

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PROGRAM PERFORMANCE INFORMATION

Performance Measures

This section presents selected program performance information, including, for example, GPRA goals, objectives, measures, and performance targets and data; and an assessment of the progress made toward achieving program results. Achievement of program results is based on the cumulative effect of the resources provided in previous years and those requested in fiscal year 2018 and future years, as well as the resources and efforts invested by those served by this program.

Goal: To prepare service providers and leadership personnel in areas of critical need who are highly qualified to improve outcomes for children with disabilities.

Objective 1: Improve the curricula of IDEA training programs to ensure that personnel preparing to serve children with disabilities are knowledgeable and skilled in practices that reflect the current knowledge base.

Objective 2: Increase the supply of teachers and service providers who are highly qualified for and serve in positions for which they are trained.

Objective 3: Enhance the efficiency of the expenditure of Federal dollars under the program.

Annual Performance Measures

The program has five annual performance measures. All five of these measures are designed to provide information on various aspects of program quality, including scholars who receive funding through the program. These measures are:

Measure: Percentage of projects that incorporate scientifically- or evidence-based practices in their curricula.

Year	Target	Actual
2013	90%	82%
2014	90	88
2015	90	95
2016	90	
2017	90	
2018	90	

Additional Information: Data are collected and analyzed by a contractor using a panel of five to seven experts, who review a randomly selected sample of grantee course syllabi submitted by funded applicants in the same cohort of grantees. Syllabi, which are taken from grantee applications, are reviewed by expert, content-specific panels for the inclusion of between five and seven scientifically or evidence-based practices in key target areas that have been identified by the Department as critical for all projects – including assessment, behavior, inclusive practices, instructional strategies, literacy, transition, and early childhood, as appropriate. The score for every individual syllabus is the sum of the evidence-based practices

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observable in that syllabus. In order to meet the standard for incorporating evidence-based practices, all evidence-based practice areas reviewed must be identifiable in the syllabus.

In the fiscal year 2015 review, 19 syllabi from fiscal year 2015 personnel development grantees were included from the following types of projects: early childhood (3 syllabi scored), leadership (8 syllabi scored), and low incidence (8 syllabi scored), including 3 syllabi from minority institutions. Only one grant (in the leadership area) did not meet the established standard for incorporating scientifically- or evidence-based practices in their curricula, though that project did support the development of expertise in two of the four research and evaluation domains.

Measure: Percentage of scholars who exit training programs prior to completion due to poor academic performance.

Year	Target	Actual
2013	1.9%	1.3%
2014	1.9	1.0
2015	1.9	
2016	1.9	
2017	1.9	
2018	1.9	

Additional Information: Grantees submit data annually through the Department Personnel Preparation Data Report (PPD) Web-based data collection (see: <http://www.oseppdp.ed.gov>). No calculation is necessary. The data are taken directly from the PPD data collection. Approximately 1.0 percent of scholars exited programs early due to poor academic performance in 2014, continuing a consistent trend since 2009, when 2.0 percent exited early due to poor academic performance, declining to 1.9 percent, 1.7 percent, and 1.6 percent in 2010, 2011, and 2012. This measure is calculated by dividing the total number of scholars exiting their training program due to poor academic performance (n=16 in 2014) and dividing it by the total number of scholars completing a training program (n=1,455 in 2014) and the number of scholars exiting their training program prior to completion for any reason (n=92 in 2014). Data for fiscal year 2015 are expected to be available in fall 2017.

A low number of scholars exiting their training programs early could reflect either a strong recruitment effort by IHEs to ensure high quality students receive Federal scholarship funds or a strong student support network in programs receiving Federal funds. IHEs on average seem to be adequately ensuring that scholars do not exit training programs prior to completion due to poor academic performance. However, despite the reasonably strong performance of grantees on this measure, the Department believes that this measure is essential to maintain to ensure that grantees continue to maintain high standards when recruiting scholars.

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Measure: Percentage of degree/certification recipients who are working in the area(s) for which they are trained upon program completion.

Year	Target	Actual
2013	84%	87%
2014	85	93
2015	85	
2016	85	
2017	85	
2018	85	

Additional Information: In January 2015, the Department changed its data collection for this measure to a new online survey instrument which is intended to increase data reliability and validity. This measure is calculated by dividing the number of degree/certification recipients who are working in the areas for which they were trained upon program completion by the total number of degree/certification recipients who completed their program in that year, including those who were working in the field for which they were trained, those who are not working in the field for which they were trained, and those for whom data are missing.

In 2014, 1,455 scholars completed their programs and 546 were reported as working in the field for which they were trained upon program completion. However, to date, 866 scholars have not yet entered employment records into the system. At this time, the Department is missing data on approximately 60 percent (886 divided by 1,455) of 2014 program completers. Actual data reported above for 2014 do not include these program completers.

The Department is taking proactive steps to resolve the issues with missing data in this measure. The contractor is still in the process of fully implementing its procedures for following up with non-responsive program completers. In addition, the contractor is continuing to work to ensure that all program completers have access to the online survey instrument. Data for fiscal year 2015 will be available in fall 2017.

Measure: Percentage of degree/certification recipients who are working in the area(s) for which they are trained upon program completion and who are fully qualified under IDEA.

Year	Target	Actual
2013	83%	84%
2014	83	88
2015	83	
2016	83	
2017	85	
2018	85	

Additional Information: In January 2015, the Department also changed its data collection for this measure to an online survey instrument. This measure is calculated by dividing the total number of non-leadership degree recipients who were working in the area(s) for which they received training at the completion of the program and who are highly qualified by all degree recipients who were employed, who were not employed, and for whom the employment status

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was not known, minus students working in positions for which the State does not have certification or licensure requirements. Note that the population included in calculations for this measure differs from the population included in the previous measure. While the denominator in the previous measure included all students currently employed, not employed, and those for whom employment status was not known, the denominator for the new measure excludes students working in positions for which the State has no licensure or certification requirements. Additionally, scholars who received only an endorsement, as well as students who received leadership training, are excluded from all calculations because highly qualified status does not apply to these individuals.

In 2014, 1,455 scholars completed their programs and 449 were reported as working in the field for which they were trained upon program completion and were highly qualified. However, the denominator for this measure does not include scholars who have not submitted employment records (866 scholars), scholars funded under leadership projects (58 scholars), and scholars who were employed in States that do not have requirements for certification/licensure for the positions or certification/licensure is not applicable (20 scholars).

As with the preceding measure, the Department continues to seek ways to address issues with missing data, including by implementing procedures to proactively follow-up with non-responsive scholars and ensure that all scholars have timely access to the online survey instrument. Data for fiscal year 2015 will be available in fall 2017.

Long-Term Performance Measures

The program has two long-term measures that are designed to provide information on the quality of the program by looking at the skills of scholars supported using program funds.

Measure: Percentage of degree/certification recipients who maintain employment for 3 or more years in the area(s) for which they were trained and who are fully qualified under IDEA.

Additional Information: In recent years, the Department has found it difficult to accurately and meaningfully calculate and report data on this measure. As such, the Department is currently developing a pilot of a new outcome measure – the percentage of degree/certification recipients who are employed in the field of special education for at least two years. In consulting with grantee focus groups, the Department determined that it would be reasonable to calculate performance on this measure three years after program completion in order to provide adequate time for degree/certification recipients to obtain employment. Further, this measure would provide information on the extent to which those degree/certification recipients maintained at least two continuous years of employment in the field of special education. Among 2012 graduates, 62 percent had maintained employment for at least two years in the field of special education by 2015. As the department is still piloting this measure, we do not expect to establish benchmarks for performance until fall 2019 at the earliest.

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Measure: Percentage of scholars completing Special Education Personnel Preparation funded training programs who are knowledgeable and skilled in evidence-based practices for children with disabilities.

Year	Target	Actual
2013	85%	81%
2014	85	92
2015	90	
2016	90	
2017	90	
2018	90	

Additional Information: Grantees submit data annually through the Department Personnel Preparation Data Report (PPD) Web-based data collection (see: <http://www.oseppdp.ed.gov>). This measure presents information on the percentage of scholars completing programs who passed an independent exam, such as the Praxis II, that is designed to assess the knowledge and skills of special educators. This measure is calculated by dividing the total number of scholars who graduated in a given year and pass an exam demonstrating knowledge and skills in evidence-based practices for children with disabilities (1,337 students in fiscal year 2014) by the total number of students who completed training programs – including students who passed a test (1,337 students), students who did not take a test (53 students), and students who did not pass a test or whose testing status or results are missing or unknown (65 students). Data for fiscal year 2015 are expected to be available in fall 2018.

Efficiency Measures

Measure: The Federal cost per degree or certification program recipient working in the area(s) in which they were trained upon program completion.

Year	Target	Actual
2013	\$25,000	\$35,726
2014	25,000	35,851
2015	25,000	
2016	30,000	
2017	32,500	
2018	32,500	

Additional Information: This measure links directly to the program's annual performance measures, and should enable comparisons across grantees or sub-sets of similar grantees. The Department is currently working with a contractor to analyze grantee-level results to identify high performing institutions that other grantees can look to as examples for improving program performance. Grantee-level data will also be used to compare the relative efficiency of program grantees, both in relation to one another as well as in relation to other Federal programs that provide graduate level scholarships.

The data used to calculate this measure come from the Department's PPD Web-based data collection. The cost per degree/certification program recipient is calculated for individual

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cohorts of grantees by dividing the sum of all project costs supported with Federal funds (across all years of each individual scholar's training) (\$38,540,803 in fiscal year 2014) by the number of degree recipients who successfully completed funded training programs closing in that year and who are fully qualified (1,075 in 2014). Results on this measure have increased over the last four years, but the Department believes these increased costs reflect the increased costs of college attendance, particularly at the graduate level.

Other Performance Information

At the end of fiscal year 2007, the Institute of Education Sciences (IES) awarded a \$2.8 million, 4-year contract for the evaluation of the Personnel Development Program. The evaluation included two separate components. The first was a study of IHEs that have applied for funds to train personnel under the program. This portion of the study was designed to: (1) collect descriptive data from all the funded and non-funded applicants to the fiscal year 2006 and fiscal year 2007 competitions (approximately 185 funded and 265 non-funded), and (2) document changes to the funded applicants' courses of study. The second component of the evaluation was a study of the national centers funded under the program. This component of the evaluation was designed to: (1) document the products and services generated by the national centers; (2) produce a rough estimate of their costs; and (3) rate the quality, relevance, and usefulness of a sample of those products and services. The study of the national centers included all 12 of the centers funded between 2001 and 2008.

The study (see <http://ies.ed.gov/pubsearch/pubsinfo.asp?pubid=NCEE20144007>) determined that, in the fiscal year 2006 and 2007 competitions:

- Certain types of applicants tended to be more successful than other types:
 - Public IHEs were more successful than private IHEs (37 percent versus 32 percent);
 - Doctorate-granting IHEs were more successful than non-doctorate-granting IHEs (38 percent versus 25 percent); and
 - Minority institutions were more successful than non-minority institutions (38 percent versus 34 percent).
- Fifty-three percent of funded applicants proposed new courses of study;
- Seventy-three percent of grant funds were used for monetary support for scholars in funded training programs for which scholar stipends were required, with 88 percent of enrolled students receiving monetary support (averaging \$11,558 per scholar); and
- By the 2008-2009 academic year, on average, 17 scholars per program had completed their training program, with 86 percent receiving State-issued credentials and 46 percent receiving a master's or education specialist degree.

The study also assessed the work of national centers funded under this program between fiscal years 2001 and 2007. They determined that:

- Of the "signature" products/services of these centers:
 - Seventy-seven percent were "high" or "very high" quality;

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- Eighty-two percent were “high” or “very high” relevance/usefulness.
- Of the “non-signature” products/services of these centers:
 - Seventy-three percent were “high” or “very high” quality; and
 - Sixty-eight percent were “high” or “very high” relevance/usefulness.

The study also examined the costs of various products and services provided by the centers, where possible. The largest number of products and services identified were presentations and webinars (47 percent of all identified). Only 10 of 12 centers were able to provide individualized costs for products and services, and they reported them for 51 percent of the total produced by all 12 centers. The largest share of costs reported by the centers was for 69 conferences, institutes, or workshops, totaling 48 percent of the identified costs. These included center-produced events for the purposes of training recipients, providing general TA, or disseminating information to targeted recipients.

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(Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, Part D, Subpart 3, Sections 671-673)

(dollars in thousands)

FY 2018 Authorization: To be determined¹

Budget Authority:

<u>2017</u> <u>Annualized CR</u>	<u>2017</u> <u>Appropriation</u>	<u>2018</u>	<u>Change from</u> <u>Annualized CR</u>
\$27,359	\$27,411	\$27,359	0

¹ The GEPA extension expired September 30, 2011; continued funding is proposed for this program in FY 2018 through appropriations language..

PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

The Parent Information Centers program is one of the primary vehicles under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) for providing information and training to parents of children with disabilities. The program supports competitive awards to help ensure that:

- Children with disabilities and their parents receive training and information designed to assist these children in meeting developmental and functional goals and challenging academic achievement goals, and in being prepared to lead productive independent adult lives;
- Children with disabilities and their parents receive training and information on their rights, responsibilities, and protections under IDEA, in order to develop the skills necessary to cooperatively and effectively participate in planning and decision-making relating to early intervention, educational, and transitional services; and
- Parents receive coordinated and accessible technical assistance and information to assist them in improving early intervention, educational, and transitional services and results for their children and families.

The IDEA authorizes three types of competitive projects: parent training and information centers, community parent resource centers, and technical assistance for parent centers. The award period for these projects is typically 5 years.

Parent training and information centers must serve parents of children of all ages (birth to 26) and all types of disabilities. Awards are made only to parent organizations as defined by IDEA. The training and information provided by the centers must meet the training and information needs of parents of children with disabilities living in areas served by the centers, particularly underserved parents and parents of children who may be inappropriately identified. At least one award for a parent training and information center must be made in each State, subject to the receipt of acceptable applications. Large and heavily populated States typically have multiple centers that serve designated counties.

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The centers also play an important role in dispute resolution by sharing information on the benefits of alternative methods of dispute resolution, such as mediation, which States are required to make available under IDEA. Parent center staff attend or facilitate over 1,300 alternative dispute resolution sessions every year. These alternative methods of dispute resolution can help avoid costly litigation. As part of that role, parent centers are required to meet with parents to explain the IDEA-mandated mediation process. In States where parent centers provide this service, they typically do so through contracts with State educational agencies.

The Department allocates funds to parent centers through a formula based on three weighted indicators of need: State population of ages 0 to 26 (85 percent), child poverty (10 percent), and rural school enrollment (5 percent), with all centers receiving at least \$200,000. No center will receive a reduction of more than 20 percent below the amount of their fiscal year 2007 grant. When the appropriation for the program increases, this formula ensures that centers in States with the greatest need and the lowest per capita funding receive more funds.

Community parent resource centers are parent training and information centers, in smaller geographically defined areas, operated by local parent organizations, that help ensure underserved parents of children with disabilities, including low-income parents, parents of children who are English learners, and parents with disabilities, have the training and information they need to enable them to participate effectively in helping their children. Community parent resource centers are required to establish cooperative partnerships with the parent training and information centers in their States.

Parent technical assistance centers are authorized to assist parent training and information centers and community parent resource centers, in areas such as coordinating parent training efforts, disseminating evidence-based research and information, and the effective use of technology. These technical assistance services enhance the capacity of parent centers to serve parents effectively. The parent technical assistance center network maintains a Web site with a wide variety of information and materials for parents and professionals, as well as a directory of the parent centers (<http://www.parentcenterhub.org/>). Two technical assistance centers provide assistance to parent information centers so that they can better meet the needs of military families and Native American families respectively.

In order to receive an award for a parent center, the IDEA requires that applicants must be a parent organization that has a board of directors, the majority of which must consist of parents of children with disabilities under the age of 26. The board must also include individuals with disabilities and individuals working in the fields of special education, related services, or early intervention. The parent and professional members of the board must be broadly representative of the population to be served, including low-income parents and parents of English learners.

While parent centers serve as direct resources for parents and families, they also act as referral points to other resources such as those available under the Technical Assistance and Dissemination program. Technical Assistance and Dissemination activities are coordinated with Parent Information Centers' program activities to ensure that parents participating in parent training projects, as well as other parents, have access to valid information that is designed to address their needs.

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Funding levels for the past 5 fiscal years were:

Fiscal Year	(dollars in thousands)
2013.....	\$27,411
2014.....	27,411
2015.....	27,411
2016.....	27,411
2017.....	27,411

FY 2018 BUDGET REQUEST

The Administration requests \$27.4 million for fiscal year 2018 for the Parent Information Centers program, the same as the fiscal year 2017 annualized continuing resolution (CR) level. The Department of Education Appropriations Act, 2017, provided \$27.4 million for this program. The request would support awards for a total of 103 Centers, including 64 continuing Parent Training Information Centers (PTIs), 30 continuing Community Parent Resource Centers (CPRCs), and 9 new Technical Assistance Centers. Together, these centers provide training and information to over one million parents and professionals each year. Family involvement in children's learning is critical to achieving high quality education. Decades of research show that positive school-family partnerships can effectively inform families about and involve families in their children's learning. Studies show that all families can take concrete steps that significantly help their children succeed in school, regardless of their income, education, disability status, or knowledge of the English language.

The training and information provided by the PTIs help ensure that parents have the knowledge and skills to help their children with disabilities succeed. In addition to helping parents to better understand the nature of their children's disabilities and their educational and developmental needs, the centers provide training and information on how parents can work with professionals serving their children. For parents of school-aged children, this includes participating with administrators and teachers in the development of their child's individualized education programs (IEPs), as required by the IDEA. For parents of infants and toddlers receiving early intervention services, this means participating with a multidisciplinary team in the development of individualized family service plans (IFSPs). Parent centers also serve as sources of information and training for hundreds of thousands of teachers and other professionals each year.

Parent centers use a variety of mechanisms to share information with parents and professionals. These include Web sites, one-on-one support, telephone call-in numbers, training workshops, and dissemination of written materials. In recent years, the Office of Special Education Programs has worked with parent centers to improve their Web sites and make their resources available in languages other than English, particularly Spanish (see <http://www.neparentcenters.org/glossary/index.html>). Families who receive services, according to data collected by the parent centers, report a high degree of satisfaction with the services they receive and an increase in their capacity to effectively support their children.

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PROGRAM OUTPUT MEASURES

(dollars in thousands)

<u>Output Measures</u>	<u>2016</u>	<u>2017</u> <u>Annualized CR</u>	<u>2018</u>
Program Funding:			
Parent Training & Information Centers:			
New	\$200	0	0
Continuations	<u>20,969</u>	<u>\$21,181</u>	<u>\$21,183</u>
Subtotal	21,169	21,181	21,183
Community Parent Resource Centers:			
New	2,300	700	0
Continuations	<u>0</u>	<u>2,300</u>	<u>3,000</u>
Subtotal	2,300	3,000	3,000
Technical Assistance Centers:			
New	0	0	2,900
Continuations	<u>2,900</u>	<u>2,494</u>	<u>0</u>
Subtotal	2,900	2,494	2,900
Total Program Funding:			
New	2,500	700	2,900
Continuations	23,869	25,975	24,183
Other (contracts, supplements):	975	657	276
Peer Review of new award applications	<u>67</u>	<u>27</u>	<u>0</u>
Total	27,411	27,359	27,359

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PROGRAM OUTPUT MEASURES

<u>Output Measures</u>	<u>2016</u>	2017 <u>Annualized CR</u>	<u>2018</u>
Number of Projects:			
Parent Training & Information Centers:			
New	1	0	0
Continuations	63	64	64
Community Parent Resource Centers:			
New	23	7	0
Continuations	0	23	30
Technical Assistance Centers:			
New	0	0	9
Continuations	9	9	0
Total number of projects:	24	7	9
New	<u>72</u>	<u>96</u>	<u>94</u>
Continuations	96	103	103
Total			

PROGRAM PERFORMANCE INFORMATION

Performance Measures

This section presents selected program performance information, including, for example, GPRA goals, objectives, measures, and performance targets and data; and an assessment of the progress made toward achieving program results. Achievement of program results is based on the cumulative effect of the resources provided in previous years and those requested in fiscal year 2018 and future years, as well as the resources and efforts invested by those served by this program.

Goal: To provide training and information to parents of children with disabilities.

Objective 1: *Improve the quality of parent training and information projects.*

Objective 2: *Parents served by Special Education Parent Information Centers will be knowledgeable about their IDEA rights and responsibilities.*

Objective 3: *Parents served by Special Education Parent Information Centers will be able to advocate for scientifically or evidence-based practices for their child.*

Six performance measures have been developed for the Parent Information Centers program. There are three annual measures, two long-term measures, and one efficiency measure.

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Annual Performance Measures

The three annual measures deal with the quality, relevance, and usefulness of products and services provided by the program. These measures were developed as part of a cross-departmental effort to make measures relating to technical assistance and dissemination activities more consistent Department-wide. However, the measures were adapted to reflect the unique purposes of the Parent Information Centers program. Targets for 2012 through 2018 were established based on performance data from 2007 to 2016. The measures are:

Measure: The percentage of materials used by Parent Information Centers projects that are deemed to be of high quality by an independent review panel of qualified experts or individuals with appropriate expertise to review the substantive content of the products and services.

Year	Target	Actual
2013	80%	100%
2014	97	79
2015	97	93
2016	97	93
2017	93	
2018	93	

Additional Information: Data are collected and analyzed by a contractor, using expert panels of reviewers who assess grant implementation by reviewing a randomly selected sample of materials disseminated by centers for the purpose of training and informing parents.

The expert panel reviews a randomly selected sample of services made available through OSEP-funded Parent Information Centers grants funded during FY2015. The program office defines a “service” as “work performed by an OSEP-funded project to provide information to a specific audience relevant to the improvement of outcomes for children with disabilities.”

The cohort sample design ensures a random selection of a new group of grants annually while avoiding sample replication in any two consecutive years. All Parent Information Center grants funded in fiscal year 2015 that were not included in the previous year’s sample are included in the sampling frame. Fifty percent (50%) of the eligible grants are randomly selected. In 2016, a total of 28 grants are included in the sample.

All services are reviewed and scored on the basis of a rubric, developed by the OSEP, that is designed to yield ratings on the extent to which the content of submitted materials is: evidence-based, valid, complete, and up-to-date. Specifically, the rubric is designed to yield ratings on the basis of the following two quality dimensions: (1) Substance (does the service reflect the best of current research and theory or policy guidance, as demonstrated by a scientifically or evidence-based approach, a solid conceptual framework, appropriate citations, and other evidence of conceptual soundness); and (2) Communication (does the service have clarity in its presentation, as evidenced by being free of errors, appropriately formatted, and well organized). The total score for any individual service reviewed is the sum of the two quality dimension sub-scores. High quality for any individual service is defined as a total score of six or higher of nine possible points.

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The result for fiscal year 2016 equals the total number of grant services with average panel ratings of 6 or higher (26) divided by the total number of grant services (28) reviewed times 100 = $26/28 \times 100 = 93$ percent. The actual data fell short of the target for this year.

Measure: The percentage of Parent Information Centers products and services deemed to be of high relevance to educational and early intervention policy or practice by an independent review panel of qualified members of the Parent Information Centers target audience.

Year	Target	Actual
2013	96%	96%
2014	97	85
2015	97	90
2016	97	93
2017	93	
2018	93	

Additional Information: As with the performance measure above, data are collected and analyzed by a contractor, using panels of special education parent stakeholders to review a randomly selected sample of materials disseminated by centers for the purpose of training and informing parents.

All materials are reviewed and scored on the basis of a rubric, developed by OSEP, which is designed to yield ratings on the materials' responsiveness to priority issues and challenges confronting the target groups. Specifically, the rubric is designed to yield ratings on the basis of the following three dimensions related to relevance: (1) Need (does the content of the material attempt to solve an important problem or critical issue); (2) Pertinence (does the content of the material match the problem or issue facing the target group or groups); and (3) Reach (to what extent is the content of the material applicable to diverse populations within the target group). The total score for any individual service reviewed is the sum of the three relevance dimension sub-scores. High relevance for any individual service is defined as a total score of six or higher of nine possible points.

All grants funded in fiscal year 2015 that were not included in the previous year's sample are included in the sampling frame. Fifty percent (50%) of the eligible grants are randomly selected. In 2016, a total of 28 grants are included in the sample.

In 2016, average panel ratings of the relevance of services ranged between 4.33 and 8.83. Services receiving an average total panel rating of 6 or higher (26) across the three criteria are deemed to be of high relevance.

The calculation is as follows: Total number of grant services with average panel ratings of 6 or higher (26) divided by the total number of grant products (28) and services reviewed times 100 = $26/28 \times 100 = 93$ percent. The actual data fell short of the target for this year.

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Measure: The percentage of all Parent Information Centers products and services deemed to be useful by target audiences to improve educational or early intervention policy or practice.

Year	Target	Actual
2013	96%	93%
2014	97	88
2015	97	93
2016	97	93
2017	93	
2018	93	

Additional Information: Data are collected and analyzed by a contractor, using a panel of six to eight parent stakeholders who assess grant implementation by reviewing a randomly selected sample of materials disseminated by the centers. In an effort to ensure that the sample materials reviewed were representative, 1 service was drawn from a stratified random sample of 28 CPRCs and PTIs, for a total of 28 services reviewed. Prior to 2013, OSEP collected and analyzed data on this measure for both products and services. However, because the primary focus of CPRCs and PTIs is on the provision of services, beginning in 2013, the Department no longer collected information on products in order to more accurately reflect the work of these centers.

All materials are reviewed and scored on the basis of a rubric, developed by OSEP, which is designed to yield ratings on the extent to which the content can be easily and quickly adopted or adapted by the target group, and the likelihood that the product or service, if adopted, will produce the desired result. Specifically, the rubric is designed to yield ratings on the basis of the following dimensions related to usefulness, which were updated in fiscal year 2015: (1) Ease (does the content of the service description address a problem or issue in an easily understood way, with directions or guidance regarding how a problem or issue can be addressed); and (2) Suitability (does the product or service provide the target audience(s) with information or resources that can be used again or in different ways to address the problem or issue). The total score for any individual service reviewed is the sum of the quality dimension sub-scores.

In 2016, a total of 28 were included in the sample, and the average panel ratings of the usefulness of services ranged between 5.17 and 9.00 for the 26 grant services found to be of high usefulness. Services receiving an average total panel rating of 6 or higher across the two criteria are deemed to be of high usefulness.

The total number of grant services (26) found to be of high usefulness/number of grant services reviewed (28) x 100 = 26/28 x 100 = 92.9 percent.

Long-Term Performance Measures

Two long-term measures have been developed for the program. Data are collected every 2 years through an OSEP-supported survey of parents who received services from the parent centers. Data was not collected in fiscal year 2016, but will be in fiscal year 2017.

In 2009, OSEP conducted an independent survey of the same population to test the validity of these measures. The survey found parents' answers to questions were not significantly

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different from the original data and confirmed the accuracy of the data collection methods used for the following long-term measures:

Measure: The percentage of parents receiving Special Education Parent Information Centers services who promote scientifically or evidence-based practices for their infants, toddlers, children and youth.

Year	Target	Actual
2009	74%	79%
2011	75	77
2013	76	80
2015	77	78
2017	Set Baseline	

Additional Information: Data are collected by the parent centers every 2 years using telephone interviews with 25 randomly selected parent stakeholders per center. The National PTI Technical Assistance Center developed the survey. To calculate the measure, a weighted sum of the number of parents whose answers displayed an enhanced knowledge of evidence-based practices is divided by the total number of parents who responded to four relevant survey questions. Baseline data for this measure were first collected in 2007 and on the results of a validation study in 2009. Due to changes in data collection, targets were undefined for 2017.

Based on the most recent years of data, it appears that program grantees do a reasonably good job of ensuring that parents receiving services from parent information centers promote evidence-based practices for their children. The Department uses the results of this measure and the annual quality measure to provide the centers with feedback on how they can better align their products and services with evidence-based practices. Starting in fiscal year 2017, the Department plans to update this measure to report: the percentage of parents receiving Special Education Parent Information Centers services who report enhanced knowledge of IDEA rights and responsibilities.

Measure: The percentage of parents receiving Special Education Parent Information Centers services who report enhanced knowledge of IDEA rights and responsibilities.

Year	Target	Actual
2009	85%	90.5%
2011	87	84.5
2013	89	87.6
2015	91	88
2017	Set Baseline	

Additional Information: Data are collected for this measure by the parent centers every 2 years using telephone interviews with 25 randomly selected parent stakeholders per center. The National PTI Technical Assistance Center developed the survey. To calculate the measure, a weighted sum of the number of parents whose answers displayed an enhanced knowledge of IDEA rights and responsibilities is divided by the total number of parents who responded to three relevant survey questions. The targets were established based on results from the survey in prior years.

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Data for this measure suggest that most of the parents receiving services from the grantees believe they enhanced their understanding of their rights and responsibilities under IDEA. However, while the actual percentage of parents who reported enhanced knowledge increased from last year, performance on this measure still fell below the target level. Starting in fiscal year 2017, the Department plans to update this measure to report: the percentage of parents receiving PTI services who report having enhanced capacity to work with schools and service providers effectively in meeting the needs of their children.

Efficiency Measure

Measure: An index of the Federal cost per unit of output provided by the Special Education Parent Training and Information Centers.

Year	Target	Actual
2013	1.1	1.2
2014	1.1	1.1
2015	1.1	1.6
2016	1.1	0.8
2017	1.1	
2018		

Additional Information: The efficiency measure for the PTIs program is “the index of federal cost per unit of output.” The calculation of the Federal index of cost per unit of technical assistance is the total federal cost of PTI grant funding for a given fiscal year divided by the sum of the numbers of parents and professionals receiving technical assistance across the four categories of technical assistance during that fiscal year. The result is expressed as an index of cost rather than a cost in dollars.

The program office maintains data on the amount of funding provided for Center grants each fiscal year. Data on the number of parents and professionals served by grantees is provided to the program office by the National Parent Information Center, which is funded by the program. The grantee is required to maintain these data and provide them to the program office each fiscal year. For fiscal year 2016, the index of .84 was arrived by dividing the total funding (\$27,411,000) by the total number of parents and professionals served (32,640,860).

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National activities: Educational technology, media, and materials

(Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, Part D, Subpart 3, Section 674)

(dollars in thousands)

FY 2018 Authorization: To be determined¹

Budget Authority:

<u>2017</u> <u>Annualized CR</u>	<u>2017</u> <u>Appropriation</u>	<u>2018</u>	<u>Change from</u> <u>Annualized CR</u>
\$29,990	\$28,047	\$29,990	0

¹ The GEPA extension expired September 30, 2011; continued funding is proposed for this program in FY 2018 through appropriations language.

PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

The Educational Technology, Media, and Materials program is the primary source of support for accessible technology and media-related activities under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA). The program supports two broad categories of activities – *accessible technology* and *educational media and materials*.

Technology activities are generally designed to promote the development, demonstration, and use of accessible technology. The technology component of the program also supports research on using technology to improve outcomes for students with disabilities, and technical assistance and dissemination activities to enhance the use of technology by students, parents, and teachers. Media and materials activities focus on closed captioning, video description, timely provision of books and other educational materials in accessible formats, and other activities to improve access to education for students with disabilities.

The 21st Century Communications and Video Accessibility Act of 2010 expanded the range of media that must be closed captioned and updated accessibility standards to include emerging Internet and mobile technologies. However, significant gaps in captioning coverage remain. The Educational Technology, Media, and Materials program ensures educational media that are not otherwise required to be made accessible are available to students with disabilities. For example, mandatory captioning only applies to broadcast television, not to video broadcast solely over the Internet or video produced for classroom viewing. Funding for this program helps to fill these critical gaps in the accessibility of learning content and materials by supporting the captioning and nationwide distribution of thousands of titles of educational media each year.

Video description is used to make video and other media with visual content accessible for people who are blind or visually impaired. Audio-narrated descriptions of key visual elements in a video or television program are inserted into natural pauses in the spoken dialogue, supplementing the regular audio track of the program by providing additional context. Federal law requires television broadcast stations affiliated with the top four commercial broadcasting corporations (ABC, CBS, FOX and NBC) and licensed to the top 60 Designated Market Areas

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(i.e., unique, county-based geographic areas designated by The Nielsen Company, a television audience measurement service based on television viewership) and the five most watched non-broadcast networks to provide 50 hours of video description per calendar quarter. The video description must be of prime time or children's television programming. All other video programming, including educational materials intended for use in the classroom and increasingly popular Internet media, are not subject to description requirements. The funds available through this program play a critical role in filling these gaps. The IDEA requires that description and captioning funds be used only for programs that are suitable for use in classroom settings, and program funds may not be used to describe or caption news programs, even when they are suitable for use in classrooms.

Educational materials activities include the preparation of electronic files suitable for efficient conversion into specialized accessible formats. The educational materials provided by this program are intended to support students' access to the general curriculum and participation in statewide assessments. The single largest grant in this program provides funding for the production and distribution of textbooks and other educational materials in accessible formats to students with visual impairments and other print disabilities. Due to recent advances in digital technologies, these activities can be accomplished more efficiently than ever before.

The Department makes awards for projects throughout the fiscal year. The duration of awards typically varies from 3 to 5 years.

Funding levels for the past 5 fiscal years were:

Fiscal Year	(dollars in thousands)
2013	\$28,047
2014	28,047
2015	28,047
2016	30,047
2017	28,047

FY 2018 BUDGET REQUEST

The Administration's fiscal year 2018 request for the Educational Technology, Media, and Materials program is \$30.0 million, the same as the fiscal year 2017 annualized continuing resolution (CR) level. The Department of Education Appropriations Act, 2017, provided \$28.0 million for this program. This request would provide approximately \$3 million for 5 new awards and approximately \$27 million for 23 continuation projects.

Projects funded under the program support improved access to, and participation in, the general education curriculum; developmentally appropriate activities for preschool children; and statewide assessments. By supporting research on, and dissemination of, accessible instructional materials and technology, this program helps ensure students with disabilities receive a free appropriate public education guaranteed under the IDEA. This program also funds innovations in accessible technologies and broadens the understanding of how technology can be effectively utilized to increase academic achievement. The Administration believes increased access and participation results in higher expectations and improved outcomes for children with disabilities.

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Educational Technology

The request includes \$13.8 million for Technology activities, which promote the development, demonstration, and use of accessible technology. In fiscal year 2018, at least \$1.5 million will support three new Stepping Up Technology Implementation awards and \$7 million will support 11 continuing Stepping Up projects. These model demonstration grants validate and scale up promising technology-based products or interventions, such as curriculum materials, accessible products, and instructional methodologies.

Of the \$13.8 million requested for technology activities, \$1.5 million will be used to fund a new Center on Technology and Disability to build on previous investments, as the current grant will end in fiscal year 2017. This center will provide technical assistance (TA) to state and local educational agencies (SEAs and LEAs) to help them build capacity in their efforts to support families, students, and providers in acquiring and implementing appropriate assistive and instructional technology practices, devices, and services.

Additionally, the 2018 request would provide \$1.6 million to continue support for an Early Childhood STEM Center (to be awarded in fiscal year 2017) and \$1.2 million for a continuation award to an Assistive Technology Implementation Center (funded in fiscal year 2015). The request would also provide \$1 million for a continuation award to further the support of successful strategies to recruit, enroll, retain, and provide instruction to students who are deaf or hard of hearing in postsecondary settings. This grant, awarded in fiscal year 2016, addresses the varying communication, technology, and learning needs and preferences of individuals who are deaf or hard of hearing, to help ensure students have access to and can be successful in postsecondary settings. This project would be jointly supported with funds from the Personnel Preparation and Technical Assistance and Dissemination programs. Under IDEA section 682(d)(1)(B), the Administration is required to provide at least \$4 million of the funds provided for programs authorized under subparts 2 and 3 of Part D of IDEA “to address the postsecondary, vocational, technical, continuing, and adult education needs of individuals with deafness.”

Educational Media and Materials

Media and materials includes a variety of activities designed to provide educational content, such as textbooks, in accessible formats for individuals with disabilities, particularly deaf or hard-of-hearing individuals and blind or other visually impaired individuals. In fiscal year 2018, \$15.5 million would be allocated to these activities.

The 2018 request for educational media and materials includes a total of \$4 million for captioned and described accessible media. Of that amount, \$2 million will support continuation awards for projects to provide access—through video description and captioning—to television programs appropriate for use in classroom settings and are not otherwise required to be captioned by the Federal Communications Commission. These projects fill in the gaps for an increasing large amount of content that is not currently covered under Federal accessibility policies, to ensure that as much educational programming as possible is accessible to students with visual or hearing impairments. The current grantee, the DIAGRAM Center (<http://www.diagramcenter.org/>), has developed new standards and open-source software for making digital images accessible for students with disabilities. Images and graphics are

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considerably more difficult to make accessible than basic text, but this center's innovative tools make creating and using accessible images easier, faster, and more cost effective.

An additional \$2 million would support a continuation award under the Described and Captioned Media Program (<http://www.dcmp.org>), which makes accessible media (video other than television) available at no cost to students. The support for video description of educational programming is essential for individuals with visual impairments because, unlike closed captioning, there are few Federal requirements for providing video descriptions. This project not only captions and describes educational media, but also efficiently distributes the media to schools via the Internet and other channels. The current media library contains over 4,000 titles. With continuation funding, the DCMP will additionally focus on STEM related media and describing and captioning items in Spanish. More details regarding ongoing work can be found here: https://dcmp.org/press_releases/23-grant-renewal-ensures-equal-educational-opportunity-for-students-who-are-deaf-and-or-blind.

The 2018 request for educational media and materials also includes a total of \$11.5 million for accessible books and other instructional materials. Of that amount, about \$8.5 million of the request would support a new award under the Accessible Materials program to support the development, production, and distribution of educational materials in accessible formats to students with visual impairments and other print disabilities, including those in traditionally underserved areas.

Approximately \$1.2 million of the 2018 request would provide continued support for a project awarded in fiscal year 2014 that provides technical assistance to States and other entities on the provision of books and other educational materials in accessible formats. Activities further support the widespread use of the National Instructional Materials Accessibility Standard (NIMAS), which sets clear guidelines for converting educational media into a variety of accessible formats for use by publishers, educational agencies, and students with disabilities.

The request also includes \$1.2 million for ongoing support of a project devoted to improving the accessibility of educational materials. The new software and hardware used to deliver educational content are often not accessible to students with disabilities, even as a greater portion of classroom materials are published digitally. These activities are designed to address the issues and challenges related to the development, production, and dissemination of accessible educational materials. Activities of the current grant focus on ensuring infants, toddlers, and children who are blind or have print disabilities, as well as those with disabilities not traditionally associated with print disabilities, have full access to educational content, including graphic representations, in accessible formats.

Additionally, the IDEA requires the Administration to support the National Instructional Materials Access Center (NIMAC), which is awarded noncompetitively to the American Printing House for the Blind. The NIMAC (<http://www.nimac.us/>) is a national electronic file repository that makes electronic files that comply with the NIMAS available for the production of print instructional materials in specialized formats. NIMAC receives source files from textbook publishers and provides these files to State and local educational agencies for use in producing materials in accessible media, such as braille, audio, and digital text. NIMAC contained nearly 45,100 books and other items as of March 2017. The request includes \$650,000 for a continuation award for this project in fiscal year 2018.

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PROGRAM OUTPUT MEASURES

(dollars in thousands)

<u>Output Measures</u>	<u>2016</u>	<u>2017 Annualized CR</u>	<u>2018</u>
Program Funding:			
<u>Technology:</u>			
Research:			
New	\$1,470	\$4,100	\$1,500
Continuations	<u>11,393</u>	<u>7,637</u>	<u>9,755</u>
Subtotal	12,863	11,737	11,255
Technical assistance and dissemination:			
New	0	0	1,500
Continuations	<u>1,435</u>	<u>1,435</u>	<u>0</u>
Subtotal	1,435	1,435	1,500
Projects to address the postsecondary, vocational, technical, and adult education needs of individuals with deafness:			
New	1,000	0	0
Continuations	<u>0</u>	<u>1,000</u>	<u>1,000</u>
Subtotal	1,000	1,000	1,000
Subtotal, Technology:			
New	2,470	4,100	3,000
Continuations	<u>12,828</u>	<u>10,072</u> ¹	<u>11,015</u> ²
Subtotal	15,298	14,172	14,015
<u>Media and Materials:</u>			
Captioned and described accessible media:			
New	1,996	0	0
Continuations	<u>2,000</u>	<u>3,995</u>	<u>3,997</u>
Subtotal	3,996	3,995	3,997
Books and other instructional materials in accessible formats:			
New	0	9,500	0
Continuations	<u>9,700</u>	<u>1,200</u>	<u>10,900</u>
Subtotal	9,700	10,700	10,900

¹ About \$8 thousand of FY 2017 funds will be used to support FY 2018 continuations.

² About \$260 thousand of FY 2018 funds will be used to support FY 2019 continuations.

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<u>Output Measures</u>	<u>2016</u>	<u>2017</u> <u>Annualized CR</u>	<u>2018</u>
National Instructional Materials Access Center (NIMAC) – Statutory earmark:			
New	\$650	0	0
Continuations	<u>0</u>	<u>\$650</u>	<u>\$650</u>
Subtotal	650	650	650
Subtotal, Media and Materials:			
New	2,646	9,500	0
Continuations	<u>11,700</u>	<u>5,845</u>	<u>15,547</u>
Subtotal	14,346	15,345	15,547
Other (e.g. program evaluation contracts):			
Continuations	<u>332</u>	<u>380</u>	<u>375</u>
Subtotal, Other	332	380	375
Peer review of new award applications:			
	71	93	53
Total Program Funding:			
New	5,116	13,600	0
Continuations	24,860	16,297	29,937
Peer review	<u>71</u>	<u>93</u>	<u>53</u>
Total	30,047	29,990	29,990

PROGRAM PERFORMANCE INFORMATION

Performance Measures

This section presents selected program performance information, including, for example, GPRA goals, objectives, measures, and performance targets and data; and an assessment of the progress made toward achieving program results. Achievement of program results is based on the cumulative effect of the resources provided in previous years and those requested in FY 2018 and future years, as well as the resources and efforts invested by those served by this program.

Seven performance measures have been developed for the Educational Technology, Media, and Materials program. Three of these measures are annual measures, two are long-term, and the last two are measures of efficiency.

Annual Performance Measures

The three annual measures deal with the relevance, quality, and usefulness of products and services provided by the program.

For each of the three annual performance measures that follow, a contractor collects and analyzes data, based on input from two panels of subject matter experts. Panels review a sample of products and services developed by grantees against a listing of evidence-based

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practices in key target areas the Department has identified as critical. The sample of grantees included in this measure for each year consists of projects from across all areas of this program. Products and services are divided into the categories of policy and practice.

Panels of experts review and score all products and services based on an OSEP-designed rubric that is specific to each performance measure, rating the products and services on the extent to which they meet the measure's performance indicators.

In assessing the performance under each measure, panels of six to eight experts reviewed a sample of products and services from the program's projects. Of the 19 projects to receive funding during the previous fiscal year (but were not in their first year of operation), 18 grantees provided data on new technology products or services. These projects submitted a total of 18 products and 4 new services released during the prior fiscal year for review.

Goal: To promote the development, demonstration, and use of accessible technology and media services to improve results for infants, toddlers, children, and youth with disabilities.

Objective: *Improve the quality of products produced by projects in the Special Education Educational Technology, Media, and Materials program.*

Measure: The percentage of Educational Technology, Media, and Materials projects judged to be of high relevance to improving outcomes of infants, toddlers, children and youth with disabilities.

Year	Target	Actual
2013	94%	93%
2014	94	100
2015	94	91
2016	94	
2017	94	
2018	94	

Additional information: A total of 18 products and 4 services (22 new products and services) were assessed on whether the product content was responsive to priority issues and challenges confronting the target groups and judged on three dimensions of relevance: (1) Need—does the content of the material attempt to solve an important problem or critical issue; (2) Pertinence—does the content of the material match the problem or issue facing the target group or groups; and (3) Reach—is the content of the material applicable to diverse populations within the target group. Products and services receiving an average total panel rating of 6 or higher across the three criteria are deemed to be of high relevance.

The percentage of products judged to be of high relevance for this measure decreased, falling below the target of 94 percent. The panel found 20 of the 22 new products and services in the sample to be highly relevant for the intended users. It is noteworthy that overall performance under this measure has been consistently strong over time, and that variations in actual performance are expected considering the small number of items reviewed in the sample.

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Previously, the Department had reported actual data aligned with the fiscal year in which the review of products and services took place. The table has been revised to reflect alignment with the fiscal year in which the funding was appropriated. This revised reporting for Educational Technology, Media and Materials is now consistent with other performance measures reported within the Special Education account.

Measure: The percentage of Educational Technology, Media, and Materials projects judged to be of high quality.

Year	Target	Actual
2013	94%	89%
2014	94	100
2015	94	86
2016	94	
2017	94	
2018	94	

Additional Information: The quality dimensions measured are (1) Substance—does the product/service description reflect the best of current research and theory or policy guidance, as demonstrated by a scientifically or evidence-based approach, a solid conceptual framework, appropriate citations and other evidence of conceptual soundness; and (2) Communication—does the product/service description have clarity in its presentation, as evidenced by being free of editorial errors, appropriately formatted, and well organized. All of the selected products are reviewed and scored on whether the product content is evidence-based, valid, complete, and up-to-date. Products and services that receive an average total panel rating of 6 or higher across the two criteria are deemed to be of high quality.

The percentage of products judged to be of high quality decreased, falling below the target in fiscal year 2016. Of the 22 products reviewed in the sample, 19 were reported to be of high quality. Not unlike the previous measure, it is noteworthy that overall performance under this measure has been consistently strong over time, and that variations in actual performance are expected considering the small number of items reviewed in the sample.

Previously, the Department had reported actual data aligned with the fiscal year in which the review of products and services took place. The table has been revised to reflect alignment with the fiscal year in which the funding was appropriated. This revised reporting for Educational Technology, Media and Materials is now consistent with other performance measures reported within the Special Education account.

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National activities: Educational Technology, media, and materials

Measure: The percentage of Special Education Educational Technology, Media, and Materials projects and services judged by an independent review panel of qualified experts to be useful in improving results for infants, toddlers, children and youth with disabilities.

Year	Target	Actual
2013	94%	79%
2014	94	91
2015	94	96
2016	94	
2017	94	
2018	94	

Additional information: All selected products were reviewed and scored on whether the product content could be easily and quickly adopted or adapted by the target group and produce the desired result. Specifically, the rubric is designed to yield ratings on the basis of the following dimensions related to usefulness, which were updated in fiscal year 2015: (1) Ease (does the content of the service description address a problem or issue in an easily understood way, with directions or guidance regarding how a problem or issue can be addressed?); and (2) Suitability (does the product or service provide the target audience(s) with information or resources that can be used again or in different ways to address the problem or issue?). The total score for any individual service reviewed is the sum of the quality dimension sub-scores. High usefulness for any individual product or service is defined as a total score of six or higher of nine possible points.

Performance on this measure improved for fiscal year 2015 products and services, exceeding the target. The panel found 21 out of the 22 products in the sample to be highly useful. The Department considers the fiscal year 2013 drop in usefulness to be an outlier, and not indicative of a larger trend.

Previously, the Department had reported actual data aligned with the fiscal year in which the review of products and services took place. The table has been revised to reflect alignment with the fiscal year in which the funding was appropriated. This revised reporting for Educational Technology, Media and Materials is now consistent with other performance measures reported within the Special Education account.

Long-Term Performance Measures

The following two long-term measures have been developed for the program to provide information about the potential impacts of the projects' products and services on the target population. Evidence about outcomes of the target population may take more than 1 year to become available; therefore, in fiscal year 2011, the Administration modified the data collection to every 2 years for both of these measures.

Objective: *Investments in the Educational Technology, Media, and Materials program will develop and validate current and emerging technologies that incorporate scientifically or evidence-based materials and services.*

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National activities: Educational Technology, media, and materials

Measure: The percentage of Special Education Educational Technology, Media, and Materials projects that validate their products and services.

Year	Target	Actual
2012	70%	70%
2014	72	100
2016	72	75
2018	75	

Additional information: Panelists individually assess the strength of the evidence supporting the case that each grantee's products and services have resulted in improving outcomes of interest for children with disabilities on a 4-point scale defined differently for research grants and technology utilization and technical assistance grants. Grants receiving an average panel score of 2 or higher are determined as having validated their products and services.

For research grants, the scale is 3, signifying Superior (one or more well-designed randomized controlled trials, quasi-experiment, or single-subject research studies conducted by the project that support the case that the project's products and services result in improving the outcomes of interest); 2, signifying Acceptable (any of the types of evidence described above with limitations that prevent a rating of 3); 1, signifying Low (any of the types of evidence described above, but with weaknesses of a substantial degree that result in an unconvincing case that the product or service results in improving the outcomes of interest); and 0, signifying Unacceptable (little or no evidence of results in improving the outcomes of interest).

For technical assistance and service grants, to receive a rating of 3, the project must meet one or more of the following standards: (1) a review of high-quality research that clearly applies to the project's products and services and supports its efficacy in improving the outcomes of interest; (2) an evaluation study and/or qualitative study providing evidence that the project's products and services result in improving the outcome of interest; (3) ratings of the project's product and services obtained from users, focus groups, review panel, etc., when used in combination with a type of evidence such as (1) or (2) above; or (4) expert opinion derived from strong findings or theories in related areas and/or expert opinion buttressed by direct evidence. Additionally, the evidence must be of high technical quality and make a convincing case that the project's products and services result in improving the outcomes of interest. For a rating of 2, the project may demonstrate any of the types of evidence described above with limitations that prevent a rating of 3. For a rating of 1, a project may demonstrate any of the types of evidence described above, but with weaknesses of a substantial degree that result in an unconvincing case that the product or service results in improving the outcomes of interest. For a rating of 0, a project demonstrates little or no evidence of results in improving the outcomes of interest.

This measure only includes projects that have entered the dissemination phase of their grants or completed the final year of their grants and submitted a final report. Three of the four projects that were rated in the 2016 data collection submitted acceptable evidence of validity.

Previously, the Department had reported actual data aligned with the fiscal year in which the review of products and services took place. The table has been revised to reflect alignment with the fiscal year in which the funding was appropriated. This revised reporting for Educational Technology, Media and Materials is now consistent with other performance measures reported within the Special Education account.

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Objective: *Investments in the Educational Technology, Media, and Materials program will make validated, evidence-based technologies to improve results for infants, toddlers, children and youth with disabilities available for widespread use.*

Measure: The percentage of Special Education Educational Technology, Media, and Materials projects that make validated technology products and services available for widespread use.

Year	Target	Actual
2013	95%	50%
2015	95	100
2017	95	
2019	95	

Additional information: This measure evaluates the extent to which each project rated in the measure above as “validated” has submitted evidence of the availability of, and customer support for, their technology-based products and services. For fiscal year 2013, the panel reviewed evidence from four centers that entered the dissemination phase of their projects or completed the final year of their grants and submitted a final report. Two centers rated as “validated” submitted sufficient evidence of the availability of their products or services to the target population. For fiscal year 2015, three of the three grants providing data for this measure were found by the panel to have made their products and services widely available. Due to the small number of projects that are eligible for this measure, minor changes in the number of projects that submit acceptable evidence can cause large drops in the reported percentages. As such, the Administration plans to reconsider this measure or develop more appropriate targets for 2019 reporting.

Previously, the Department had reported actual data aligned with the fiscal year in which the review of products and services took place. The table has been revised to reflect alignment with the fiscal year in which the funding was appropriated. This revised reporting for Educational Technology, Media and Materials is now consistent with other performance measures reported within the Special Education account.

Efficiency Measures

The Administration established two efficiency measures for the Educational Technology, Media, and Materials program. The two measures provide data on accessible book distribution and on video captioning and description projects, respectively. The Administration recently eliminated a measure on the efficiency of research projects due to concerns about the transparency and validity of the measure’s calculation methodology.

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Measure: The Federal cost per download from the accessible educational materials production and distribution project funded by the Educational Technology, Media, and Materials program.

Year	Target	Actual
2013	\$5.0	\$4.2
2014	5.0	5.4
2015	5.0	4.2
2016	5.0	
2017	5.0	
2018	4.0	

Additional Information: One of the major activities supported by this program is the development, production, and distribution of educational books and materials in accessible formats to students with visual impairments and other print disabilities. The current grantee performing activities under the Administration’s accessible educational materials priority is Bookshare, Inc. This measure, new in 2011, is calculated as the annual amount of Federal funding for the project divided by the number of files downloaded from the project by eligible students or teachers and sponsors on behalf of eligible students. For example, in fiscal year 2015: $\$6,500,000/1,546,022 = \4.20 . After downloading these files, eligible students can access the content in specialized formats, such as audiobooks or braille. Bookshare is the most widely used accessible book producer and distributor in the country. This project works in conjunction with other Administration-funded projects, such as the National Instructional Materials Access Center, to ensure eligible students have appropriate materials needed to access the general curriculum.

Previously, the Department had reported actual data aligned with the fiscal year in which the review of products and services took place. The table has been revised to reflect alignment with the fiscal year in which the funding was appropriated. This revised reporting for Educational Technology, Media and Materials is now consistent with other performance measures reported within the Special Education account.

Measure: The Federal cost per hour of video description funded by the Educational Technology, Media, and Materials program.

Year	Target	Actual
2013		\$2,548
2014	\$1,669	2,469
2015	1,669	2,336
2016	1,669	
2017	2,000	
2018	2,000	

Additional information: The educational media measure is calculated as the total amount of funding provided for description activities (\$2 million in fiscal year 2015) divided by the total number of hours of accessible described media produced (856.25 hours in 2015). The cost of an hour of media description decreased slightly from fiscal years 2014 to 2015; however, the hourly rate still did not approach the target. No target is shown for 2013, because the target in

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that year was based on incorrectly reported data. Targets in 2014 and subsequent years are based on corrected data.

Previously, the Department had reported actual data aligned with the fiscal year in which the review of products and services took place. The table has been revised to reflect alignment with the fiscal year in which the funding was appropriated. This revised reporting for Educational Technology, Media and Materials is now consistent with other performance measures reported within the Special Education account.

Special Olympics education programs
 (Special Olympics Sport and Empowerment Act of 2004, Section 3(a))

(dollars in thousands)

FY 2018 Authorization: Indefinite

Budget Authority:

<u>2017</u> <u>Annualized CR</u>	<u>2017</u> <u>Appropriation</u>	<u>2018</u>	<u>Change from</u> <u>Annualized CR</u>
\$10,064	\$12,583	0	-\$10,064

PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

The Special Olympics Sport and Empowerment Act of 2004 authorizes the Departments of Education, State, and Health and Human Services to make discretionary grant awards to the Special Olympics to support activities in a number of areas related to the Special Olympics. The Department of Education is authorized to make awards for:

- 1) Activities to promote the expansion of Special Olympics, including activities to increase the participation of individuals with intellectual disabilities within the United States; and
- 2) The design and implementation of Special Olympics education programs, including character education and volunteer programs that support the purposes of the Special Olympics Sport and Empowerment Act of 2004, that can be integrated into classroom instruction and are consistent with academic content standards.

Funding levels for the past 5 fiscal years were:

Fiscal Year	(dollars in thousands)
2013.....	\$7,583
2014.....	7,583
2015.....	7,583
2016.....	10,083
2017.....	12,583

FY 2018 BUDGET REQUEST

For fiscal year 2018, the Administration requests no funds for the Special Olympics education programs. This request is consistent with the Administration's intent to eliminate programs that are more appropriately supported with State, local, or private funds. The Department of Education Appropriations Act, 2017, provided \$12.6 million for this program.

Special Olympics is a well-established non-profit organization with a broad network of program volunteers and supporters. Special Olympics education programs include worthwhile activities, such as the Special Olympics National Youth Activation Demonstration (Unified Champion Schools, previously referred to as Project UNIFY), a national youth sports demonstration and education program. However, the Administration does not believe funding is necessary for the

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successful operation of these programs, given that in fiscal year 2015, Special Olympics reported over \$101 million in revenue from its individual and corporate donors.

PROGRAM OUTPUT MEASURES

<u>Output Measures</u>	<u>2016</u>	<u>2017</u> <u>Annualized CR</u>	<u>2018</u>
Project UNIFY			
Number of funded State programs	47	47	0
Number of schools participating	4,451	4,500	0

PROGRAM PERFORMANCE INFORMATION

Performance Measures

This section presents selected program performance information, including, for example, GPRA goals, objectives, measures, and performance targets and data; and an assessment of the progress made toward achieving program results.

The Department collected data in fiscal years 2012 and 2013 to set targets for fiscal year 2014 and beyond.

Objective: *The Special Olympics will increase the inclusion and awareness of students with intellectual disabilities.*

Measure: The percent of school liaisons who report that Project UNIFY helps raise awareness about students with intellectual disabilities.

Year	Target	Actual
2013		66%
2014	67%	72
2015	67	68
2016	67	71
2017	67	

Additional information: Special Olympics revised its methodology for reporting on this measure beginning in fiscal year 2016. Under the methodology used up to and including fiscal year 2015, only those survey responses that indicated the program “made a big difference” (scores of 4 or 5 on the survey’s Likert scale) were included in the numerator used to calculate the actual performance. Under the revised methodology, Special Olympics also included survey responses in the numerator that indicated the program “made a difference” (scores of 3 on the survey’s Likert scale) in addition to the survey responses that indicated the program “made a big difference.”

Special Olympics provided data for fiscal year 2016 under both methodologies. Under the previous methodology, the data increased to 71 percent. Under the revised methodology, the 2016 performance increased to 93 percent. Special Olympics will continue to report under both methodologies until sufficient data has been collected to establish revised targets.

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The Department has not developed targets for fiscal year 2018 because the Administration's fiscal year 2018 budget request includes no funding for Special Olympics.

Measure: The percent of school liaisons who report that Project UNIFY increases opportunities for students with intellectual disabilities to be involved in school activities.

Year	Target	Actual
2013		60%
2014	61%	64
2015	61	65
2016	61	65
2017	61	

Additional information: Data were reported for these measures starting in 2011. To collect the data, Special Olympics engaged external evaluators to survey school liaisons at the end of the program year. School liaisons are volunteers, typically teachers, who administer Special Olympics programming at the school level. Their perceptions are not direct indicators of programmatic outcomes. However, they are informed by close experience with participating students and the Special Olympics organization. These annual measures provide perspectives on the level of success that the Special Olympics achieves in promoting positive and inclusive learning environments. The data indicate the program is improving the awareness of and opportunities for students with disabilities and has exceeded the targets in fiscal years 2014-2016.

Special Olympics revised its methodology for reporting on this measure beginning in fiscal year 2016. Under the methodology used up to and including fiscal year 2015, only those survey responses that indicated the program "made a big difference" (scores of 4 or 5 on the survey's Likert scale) were included in the numerator used to calculate the actual performance. Under the revised methodology, Special Olympics also included survey responses in the numerator that indicated the program "made a difference" (scores of 3 on the survey's Likert scale) in addition to the survey responses that indicated the program "made a big difference."

Special Olympics provided data for fiscal year 2016 under both methodologies. Under the previous methodology, the data remain level with 2015 data at 65 percent. Under the revised methodology, the 2016 performance increased to 89 percent. Special Olympics will continue to report under both methodologies until sufficient data has been collected to establish revised targets.

The Department has not developed targets for fiscal year 2018 because the Administration's fiscal year 2018 budget request includes no funding for Special Olympics.

Objective: *The Special Olympics will promote the expansion of opportunities provided by Special Olympics programs for students with intellectual disabilities to participate in service learning, character education, and structured interpersonal communication and socialization activities that can be integrated into classroom instruction and are consistent with academic content standards.*

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Measure: The number of schools participating in Project UNIFY.

Year	Target	Actual
2013		2,310
2014	2,400	3,076
2015	2,500	3,686
2016	4,000	4,451
2017	4,500	

Additional information: The Department has not developed targets for fiscal year 2018 because the Administration's fiscal year 2018 budget request includes no funding for Special Olympics.

Measure: The number of schools participating in a Project UNIFY High Activation Program.

Year	Target	Actual
2013		987
2014	1,056	1,413
2015	1,150	1,685
2016	1,725	3,005
2017	1,765	

Additional information: Special Olympics has aggressively expanded the reach of Project UNIFY during recent years to more than 4,451 locations in 47 States. There were 1,329 preschool and elementary schools, 750 middle schools, and 2,084 high schools, 192 post-secondary schools, and 96 other schools participating in Project UNIFY in 2016. The program exceeded the targets for this measure in fiscal years 2014 and 2015; therefore, the Department adjusted targets for 2016 and beyond. Schools typically offer programming at one of two intensity levels: High Activation or Building Bridges. High Activation schools feature a higher intensity and variety of activities, and, therefore, are likely to have a larger impact on participating students. Building Bridges schools offer fewer activities and generally include schools that are new to the program. Schools with High Activation programs also generally require a greater commitment of resources.

In 2016, 67 percent of all participating schools were in the High Activation category, an increase of 21 percent from 2015. Special Olympics attributes much of this growth to clarification it provided schools about what they must implement to be categorized as a High Activation school, as well as the overall growth in the number of participating schools.

The Department has not developed targets for fiscal year 2018 because the Administration's fiscal year 2018 budget request includes no funding for Special Olympics.

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National activities: Educational Technology, media, and materials

Efficiency Measures

Objective: *The Special Olympics will develop efficient programs at the national, State, and school level.*

Measure: The average total Federal cost per school.

Year	Target	Actual
2013		\$3,463
2014	\$3,160	2,465
2015	3,033	2,057
2016	3,033	1,716
2017	3,033	

Additional information: The Department has not developed targets for fiscal year 2018 because the Administration's fiscal year 2018 budget request includes no funding for Special Olympics.

Measure: The percent of Federal funds spent on administration.

Year	Target	Actual
2013		22%
2014	20%	22
2015	20	21.6
2016	20	21.6
2017	20	

Additional information: These two measures provide basic information on the efficiency of the program. The program did not meet the target for the percent of Federal funds spent on administration in 2014-2016; however, the program met the targets for Federal cost per school in each of these years. The measure on administrative costs includes administrative expenses at the State level and national level charged to the Federal grant. These administrative expenses pay for management, oversight, and coordination functions that make possible the ongoing implementation of programming in schools. Administrative costs vary among the Department's grants with respect to the type of entity, activity performed, structure of the grantee, and the efficiency of the project's operations.

The Department has not developed targets for fiscal year 2018 because the Administration's fiscal year 2018 budget request includes no funding for Special Olympics.

Other Performance Information

In 2014, external evaluators from the University of Massachusetts conducted a formative evaluation of Project Unify. Data from surveys of school liaisons in 1,509 schools indicate that Project UNIFY does not demonstrate causal impact on the attitudes and behaviors of participating students toward individuals with intellectual disabilities. The evaluators commented that the effect of Project UNIFY may be limited by the self-selection into the program by students who already have positive attitudes and behaviors. It is difficult to avoid this self-selection effect because participation in Special Olympics activities is voluntary and

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non-random. The project's impact on academic outcomes was not measured, because improving academic achievement is not the primary goal of this program.

The formative evaluation also found that the majority of school staff involved with the project believe that Project UNIFY helped raise awareness about students with intellectual disabilities, increased interaction between students with and without intellectual disabilities, and increased the confidence of students with intellectual disabilities.