

State Department of Education
165 Capitol Avenue
Hartford, Connecticut 06106

**IDEA (Part B) Children with Disabilities age 3-21
IDEA (Part B) Preschool Grants**

State Allocation: Ages 3-21 Funds- \$132,971,000 **Grant Period:** April 2009 to September 30, 2011
Preschool Funds- \$5,200,000

Federal Goals (specific to this grant):

- Ensure children with disabilities including children aged three through five, have access to a free appropriate public education to meet each child's unique needs.
- Prepare children with disabilities for further education, employment and independent living.

Use of Funds Per Federal Guidelines:

The American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA)-IDEA funds must be used consistently with the current IDEA, Part B statutory and regulatory requirements and applicable requirements in the General Education Provisions Act (GEPA) and the Education Department General Administrative Regulations (EDGAR). These funds must be used only for the excess costs of providing special education and related services to children with disabilities, except where IDEA specifically provides otherwise. For any student receiving special education services under an Individualized Education Program (IEP), the district must first meet its excess cost requirement. A local education agency (LEA) meets this excess cost requirement (defined under 34 CFR Section 300.212 (2)(i)) when it has spent "at least a minimum average amount for the education of its children with disabilities before funds under Part B of this Act are used."

An LEA may (or in some cases must) use up to 15 percent of its total IDEA, Part B Grants to States and Preschool Grants, including the ARRA-IDEA funds, for early intervening services for children in grades K through 12, with an emphasis on students in kindergarten through grade 3, who are not currently identified as children with disabilities, but who need additional academic and behavioral support to succeed in a general education environment. However, an LEA may use only up to 15 percent of its allocation minus any amount (on a dollar-for-dollar basis) by which the LEA reduced its required state and local expenditures under section 613(a)(2)(C).

State Board of Education Goals:

- High quality preschool education for all.
- High academic achievement for all students in reading, writing, mathematics, and science.
- High school reform, so all students graduate and are prepared for lifelong learning and career in a competitive, global economy.

State Department of Education Recommendation for Use of Funds:

Expanded Learning Time:

- Provide full day kindergarten options to students with disabilities.

Professional Development/Technical Assistance:

- Provide intensive district-wide professional development for special education and regular education teachers that focuses on scaling-up, through replication, proven and innovative evidence-based school-wide strategies in reading, math, writing and science, and positive behavioral supports to improve outcomes for students with disabilities and support the appropriate identification of students with learning disabilities.

Increase Capacity:

- Purchase the necessary software and other material resources to support scientific-research based interventions and progress monitoring tools to assist in the appropriate identification of students with learning disabilities.
- Develop the capacity of staff to provide student supports at the secondary level that support graduation and reduces drop-out (e.g.; literacy instruction in the content areas, master degree level interns from school psychology, counseling and social work to implement model student support designs, assistive technology to enhance access to the general curriculum).
- Develop or expand the capacity to collect and use data to improve teaching and learning (e.g.; progress monitoring tools to aide identification of students with learning disabilities and inform instruction to maximum learning of students with disabilities).

Direct Services to Students and Families:

- Expand the availability and range of inclusive placement options for preschoolers with disabilities by developing the capacity of public and private preschool programs to serve these children.
- Implement family literacy initiatives that include adult literacy programs for parents, quality early childhood education for children and parent and child training on child development issues.
- Implement evidence based practices to curb high rates of in- and out-of-school suspensions that lead to significant loss of school time.
- Obtain state-of-the art assistive technology devices and provide training in their use to enhance access to the general curriculum for students with disabilities (e.g.; aides to literacy instruction, communication devices).
- Hire transition coordinators to work with employers in the community to develop job placements for youths with disabilities.
- Provide staff and parent training to increase parental involvement and collaboration between home and school.
- Implement parent involvement policies including parent compacts.
- Provide for the education of high cost students.

Application Process:

The Connecticut State Department of Education anticipates awarding 50 percent of the ARRA- IDEA, Part B grants (both 611 and 619 funds) to LEAs by the end of April 2009. The other 50 percent will be awarded by Oct. 1, 2009. These awards will be in addition to the regular Fiscal Year (FY) 2009-10 Part B grant awards that will be made on July 1, and Oct. 1, 2009. Together, the ARRA and regular fiscal year awards will constitute a state's total FY 2009 Part B Grant allocations.

The option of using up to 15% of the LEA's IDEA/ARRA funds will not be available until after submission of the LEA's amendment that is due on September 18, 2009. Some LEAs may be required to set-aside the 15% for coordinated early intervening services (CEIS) purposes due to disproportionate representation of students due to race in special education. In order to receive the remaining 50 percent of ARRA-IDEA, Part B funds, an LEA must submit by September 18, 2009, for review and approval by the Connecticut State Department of Education, an amendment to its IDEA 2009-10 application to address the recordkeeping and reporting requirements under the ARRA.

Evaluation and Reporting Requirement:

Information will be forthcoming based on federal requirements.

Next Steps:

- Calculate LEA grants
- Develop application guidance
- Present on March 25 and 26 to ConnCASE membership

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