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 (Data); Teacher Education Programs; Teacher Shortage;  
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## ABSTRACT

This document presents statistical information on children with special needs, their education, and the professionals who serve them. Graphs, tables, and charts are used to illustrate: (1) the number of children receiving special education services from 1989 to 1999; (2) the incidence of different disabilities; (3) the growth of students in the four most commonly occurring disability areas; (4) the number of children served in general education 40 percent or more of the school day; (5) the number of infants, toddlers, and young children receiving special education services; (6) conditions under which students with disabilities left school; (7) percentage of infants and toddlers served in different environments; (8) percentage of preschool children served in different educational environments; (9) racial and ethnic backgrounds of children served; (10) the cost of special education; (11) the need for certified teachers to fill special education positions; (12) annual attrition from the special education workforce; (13) women and men in special education teaching programs and their ethnic backgrounds; (14) the number and percentage of students in gifted and talented programs; (15) gifted education funding by state; and (16) federal funding of gifted education. Milestones in special education are noted and a list of resources is included. (CR)

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# EDUCATING EXCEPTIONAL CHILDREN

## A STATISTICAL PROFILE

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# Educating Exceptional Children

## A Statistical Profile

### Introduction

Of nearly 50 million preschool and school-aged children in the United States, more than 9 million have disabilities, gifts, or talents, and need educational services tailored to their needs.

This document presents a snapshot—in charts, tables, and graphs—of children with special needs, their education, and the professionals who serve them. It is offered in the hope of contributing to

a more clear and comprehensive national perspective, thus serving as an aid in knowledge building and decision making. The statistics are the best available at the time of publication, April, 2001.

### Educating Students with Disabilities

The year 2000 marked the 25th anniversary of federal legislation mandating a free, appropriate, public education for individuals with disabilities.

Before 1975, 4 million children with disabilities did not receive the help they needed to succeed in school, while another 1 million were simply excluded from school. Few infants, toddlers, or preschoolers received

services. Today, under the *Individuals with Disabilities Education Act Amendments of 1997 (IDEA)*, more than 6 million children from birth through 21 years of age receive a broad range of special education and early intervention services.

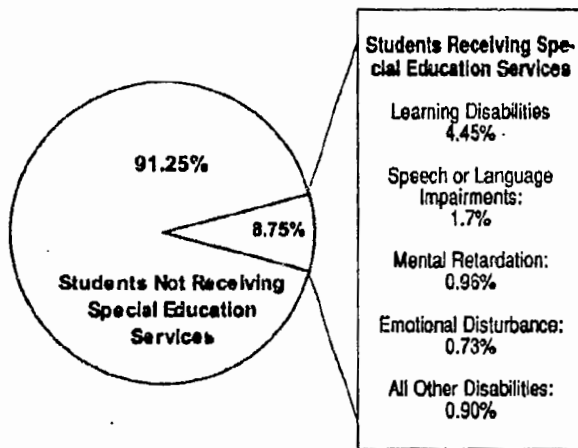
In the 1998-99 school year, special education services benefitted 188,926 infants and toddlers ages 0-2, 573,637 preschool children

ages 3-5, and 5,541,166 students ages 6-21.

As the pie chart below shows, almost 9 percent of students ages 6-21 received special education services in the 1998-99 school year.

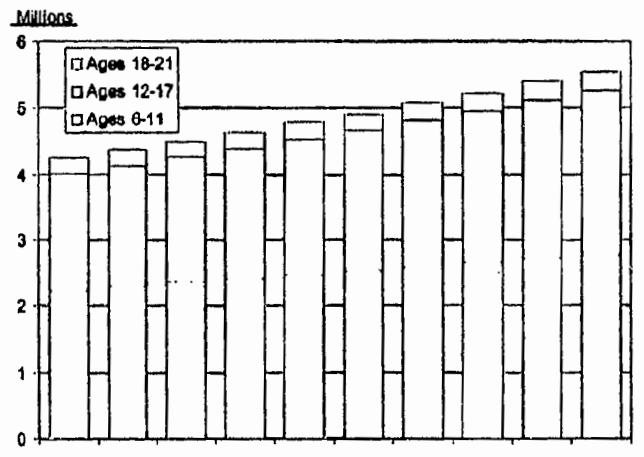
The graph below shows the growth of special education in the last decade of the 20th century. The number of students receiving special education grew by 30 percent, while school enrollment grew by 14 percent.

Percentage of the General Population Ages 6-21 Served by Special Education in 1998-99



Source: 22nd Annual Report to Congress, 2000, Table AA13.

Number of Children and Youth Served in Special Education 1989-90 to 1998-99



Source: 22nd Annual Report to Congress, 2000, Table AA18.

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A Product of the ERIC Clearinghouse on Disabilities and Gifted Education



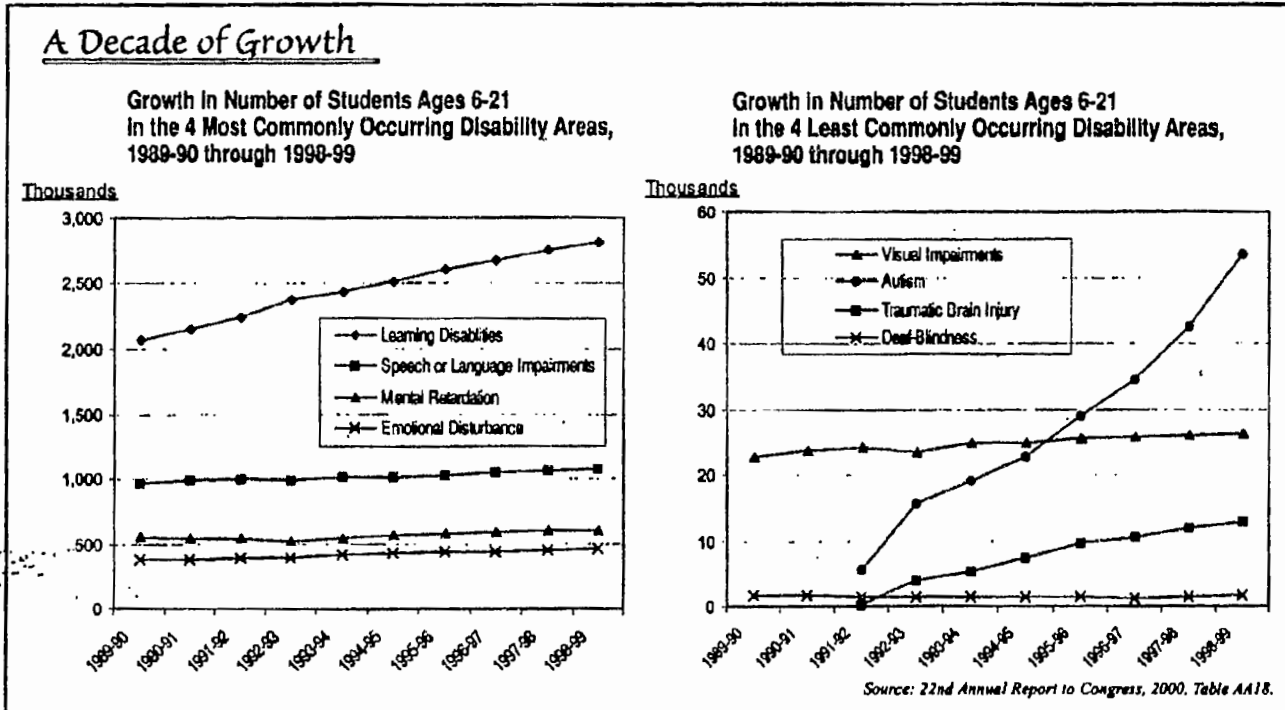
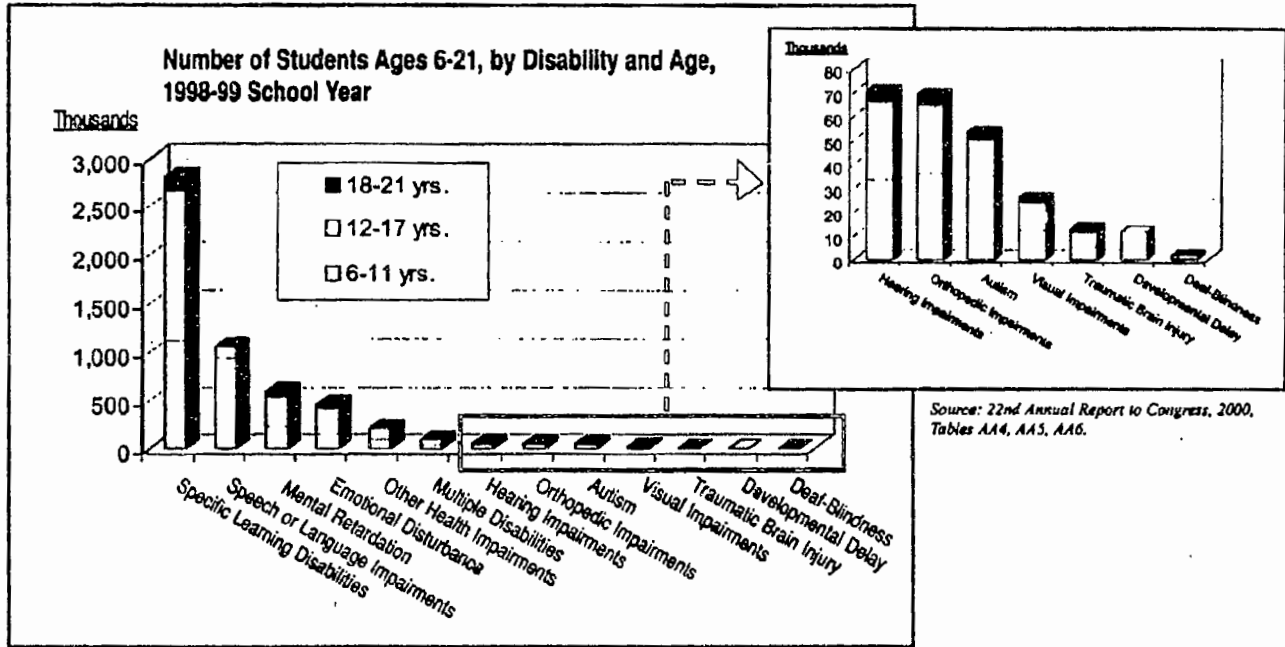
# Disability Areas

IDEA delineates 13 disability categories. The number of students ages 6-21 in each category is shown in the graph below. The "other health impairment" category includes children with attention deficit disorder (ADD) and other

acute health problems. The developmental delay category covers ages 3 through 9, and is used at the discretion of state and local education agencies.

At the bottom of this page are graphs showing

the growth of the four most common ("high incidence") disability areas and the four least common ("low incidence") disability areas. Autism and traumatic brain injury (TBI) were first reported as separate categories in 1991-92.

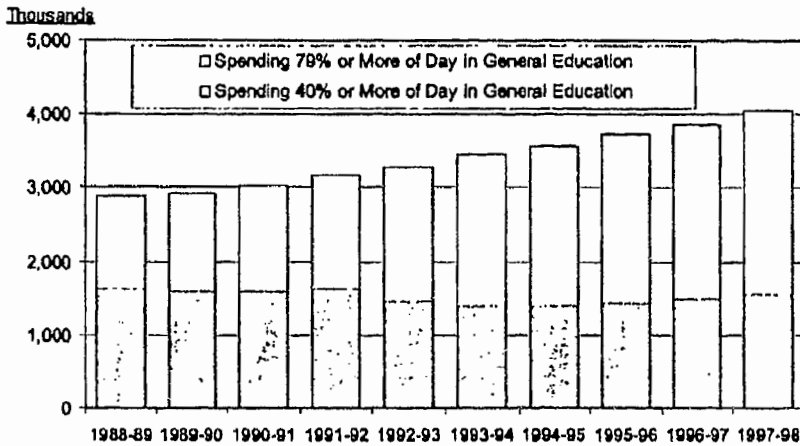


# Educational Environments

Educating students with disabilities in the least restrictive environment (LRE) is a requirement of IDEA. In 1997-98, 75 percent of students with disabilities, ages 6-21, were

educated in general education classrooms. The chart below shows that over the decade of the 1990's the number served in classes with non-disabled peers has increased.

**Number of Children Ages 6-21 Served in General Education Classes 40% or More of the School Day, 1988-89 to 1997-98**

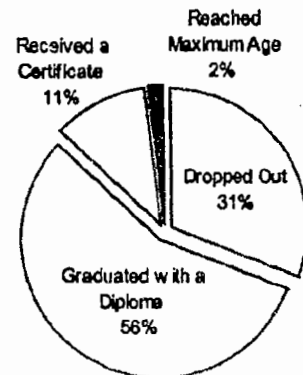


Source: 22nd Annual Report to Congress, Table AB8.

## Student Exit Data

Students with disabilities may leave school with certificates of attendance or with standard, special, or modified diplomas, depending on state rules. The percentage graduating with a standard diploma rose from 23.5 percent in 1995 to 25.5 percent in 1998. Graduation rates vary by disability and state.

**The Conditions Under Which Students with Disabilities, Ages 14-22, Left School in 1997-98**



Source: 22nd Annual Report to Congress, 2000, page IV-18, Tables AD4, AD7.

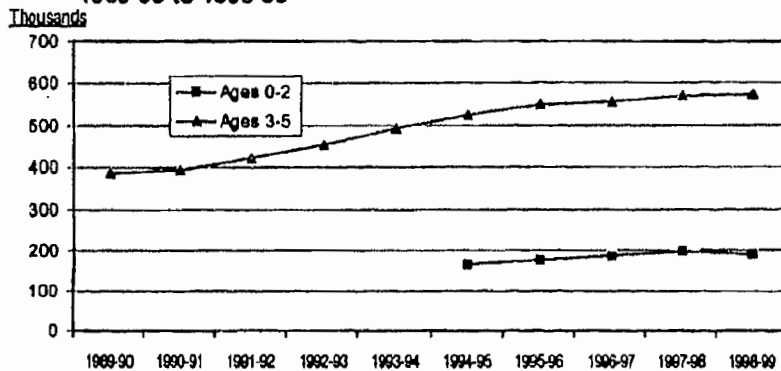
# Serving Infants, Toddlers, Preschool Children with Disabilities

In the 1998-99 school year, special education and early intervention services benefited 188,926 infants and toddlers—1.6 percent of infants and toddlers in the general population—and 573,637 preschool children—4.8 percent of the preschool population. Over the 10-year period shown in the chart below, the number of preschoolers receiving services increased 48.8 percent. The data for infants and toddlers in the chart begin with 1994 when all states had fully implemented Part C of

IDEA. The slight decline in numbers reported in 1998 for this group resulted from changes in data collection in a few states.

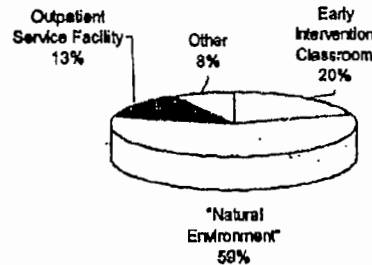
The pie charts on the right show the major locations for delivery of services for each age group. For infants and toddlers, "natural environment" includes family child care or regular nursery school /child care. General education, or "regular class," has been the most common setting for services for preschoolers.

**Number of Infants, Toddlers, and Young Children Served, 1989-90 to 1998-99**

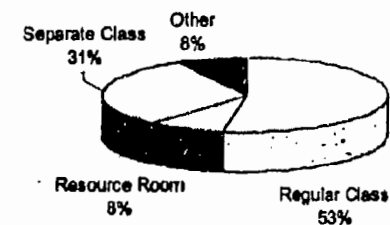


Source: 22nd Annual Report to Congress, 2000, Table AA18.

**Percentage of Infants and Toddlers Served in Different Environments, 1997**



**Percentage of Preschool Children Served in Different Educational Environments, 1997-98**



Source: 22nd Annual Report to Congress, 2000, Table AB3, AH7.

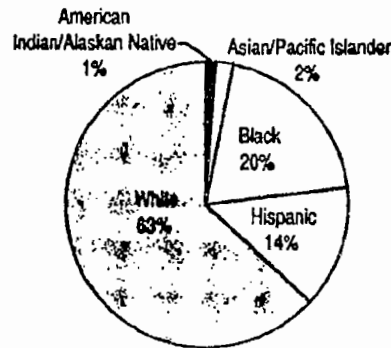
# Racial and Ethnic Backgrounds of Children Served

States were required in 1998-99 to report the race and ethnicity of students in special education. Compared to the resident population (US Census count) a group is *overrepresented* if the percentage of the group in special education is higher than its percentage in the resident population, and *underrepresented* if its percentage in special education is lower than its percentage of the resident population.

Data reported for infants, toddlers, and preschool children showed no significant minority overrepresentation. However, in the 6-

21 year age range, shown in the table below, black and American Indian students were overrepresented in special education. Asian and white students were underrepresented, and Hispanic students were represented at the same rate as in the general population.

**Percentage of Students Ages 6-21 in Special Education by Race/Ethnicity, 1998-99**



Source: 22nd Annual Report to Congress, Table AA3.

**Percentage of Students Ages 6-21 Served in Special Education by Disability and Race/Ethnicity, 1998-99 School Year**

	American Indian	Asian/Pacific Islander	Black	Hispanic	White
<b>Resident Population</b>	<b>1.0</b>	<b>3.8</b>	<b>14.8</b>	<b>14.2</b>	<b>66.2</b>
Specific Learning Disabilities	1.4	1.4	18.2	16.5	62.5
Speech/Language Impairments	1.2	2.3	16.4	12.0	68.0
Mental Retardation	1.0	1.7	33.5	10.9	52.9
Emotional Disturbance	1.1	1.0	26.4	10.0	61.5
Multiple Disabilities	1.4	2.2	19.1	11.9	65.3
Hearing Impairments	1.3	4.5	16.6	17.3	60.2
Orthopedic Impairments	.8	2.9	14.5	15.0	66.8
Other Health Impairments	1.0	1.3	14.0	8.2	75.4
Visual Impairments	1.3	3.0	14.5	12.8	68.4
Autism	.7	4.6	20.7	10.0	63.9
Deaf-Blindness	1.7	11.1	11.3	13.7	62.1
Traumatic Brain Injury	1.6	2.3	15.8	10.3	70.0
Developmental Delay	.5	.8	33.8	4.0	61.0
<b>All Disabilities</b>	<b>1.2</b>	<b>1.7</b>	<b>20.0</b>	<b>13.9</b>	<b>63.1</b>

Source: 22nd Annual Report to Congress, Table AA 3, AF8.

## The Cost of Special Education

The federal government supports the excess cost of educating children with disabilities through IDEA. In the initial legislation, this funding amount was authorized to be up to 40 percent of the national average per pupil expenditure (APPE) multiplied by the number of special education students in each state. This would amount to an appropriation of \$17 billion for the 2001 fiscal year. The actual amount appropriated was \$6.3 billion, or 15 percent of the APPE.

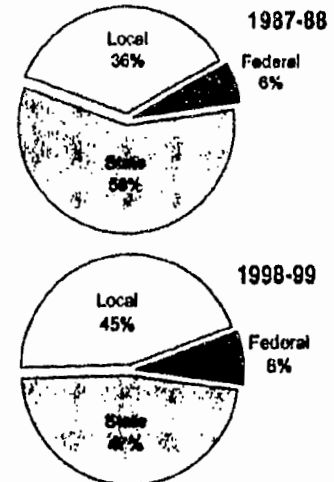
The chart to the right shows that state and local governments share most of the burden for fund-

ing special education, with the greater share shifting to local government over time.

Special education spending varies widely from state to state. The table below shows special education spending of several states as reported by those states.

The data on special education spending are estimates based on information provided by individual states. Nationally representative data for 1999-2000 will be available through the report of the Special Education Expenditure Project. (See page 7.)

**Estimates of Special Education Revenue Shares Over Time**



Source: Parrish (in press).

**1982 to 1999  
Estimated Overall  
Growth in Spending**

Special Education:  
117%

General Education:  
69%

Source: Parrish (in press).

**1998-99 Special Ed. Expenditures, Selected States**

State	Average Special Education Expenditure per Student	Percentage of Support		
		Federal	State	Local
Florida*	\$9,109	6%	55%	38%
Hawaii	\$4,586	14%	86%	0%
Iowa	\$5,314	10%	71%	19%
Maine	\$5,606	8%	51%	41%
Maryland*	\$9,109	8%	26%	66%
Michigan**	\$7,069	6%	34%	60%

\*1997-98 data \*\*1994-95 data

Source: Center for Special Education Finance, 2001.

# Special Education Personnel

Of America's 2.75 million teachers, approximately 340,000 trained teachers fill available special education teaching positions. Along with related services personnel, they form a workforce of approximately 800,000 to provide services to children with disabilities.

As the bar graph below indicates, the shortage of special education teachers is chronic. In fact, 98 percent of school districts report such

shortages. Growing school enrollment and rising rates of teacher retirements will further increase the shortage. At the same time, colleges and universities are not preparing enough trained professionals to fill the gap.

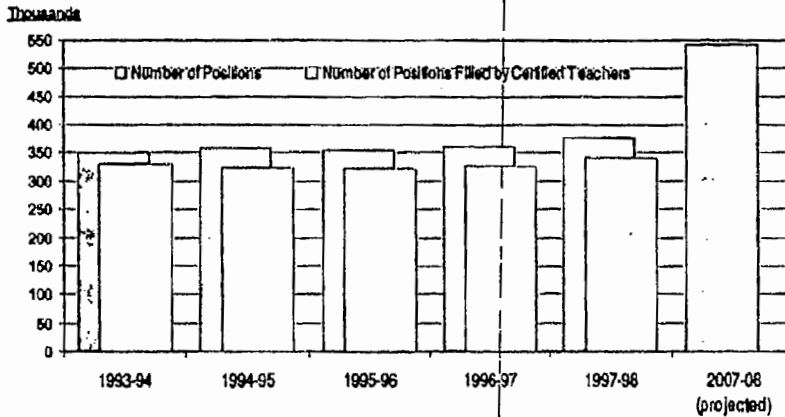
Currently 33,000 special education positions are filled by teachers not fully certified, and 4,000 positions remain vacant. The need for related services personnel (see list at right) is

also great, with over 6,000 vacancies and 27,000 providers not fully certified.

Although the federal government is engaged in many activities to help with this problem, reforms needed to attract, train, and keep qualified professionals must come from the state and local levels.

## The Need for Certified Teachers to Fill Special Education Positions

The chart below shows the number of special education teaching positions (for ages 3-21) reported by states for a 5-year period and the number of positions filled by certified (trained) special education teachers. Non-certified teachers filled the remaining positions, or the positions remained vacant.

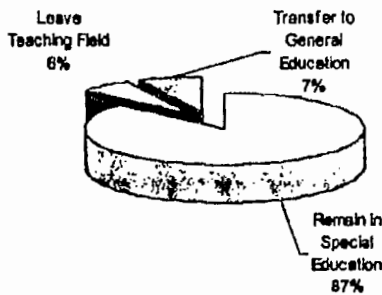


Source: 19th, 20th, 21st, 22nd Annual Reports to Congress, Table AC1, and Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2000.

## Special Education Related Services Personnel

- Adaptive Physical Educators
- Audiologists
- Counselors
- Diagnostic and Evaluation Staff
- Family Therapists
- Interpreters
- Nurses
- Nutritionists
- Occupational Therapists
- Orientation and Mobility Specialists
- Paraprofessionals
- Physical Education Teachers
- Physical Therapists
- Physicians (Specialists, Pediatricians)
- Psychologists
- Recreation and Therapeutic Recreation Specialists
- Rehabilitation Counselors
- Social Workers
- Speech/Language Pathologists
- Supervisors/Administrators
- Vocational Education Teachers
- Work-Study Coordinators

## Annual Attrition from the Special Education Teacher Workforce

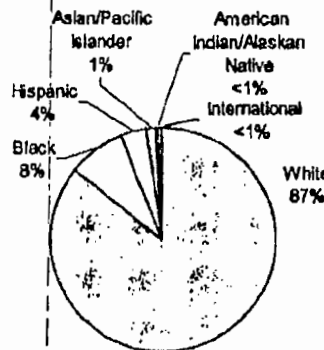


Source: Boe, Bobbitt, Cook, & Barkanic, 1998.

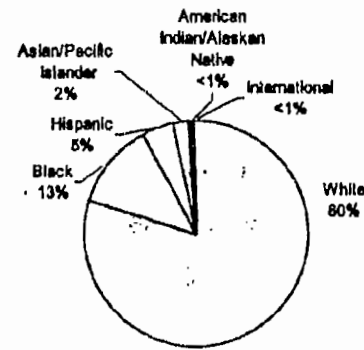
## Teacher Preparation

In 1995 (the last available statistics) 3,357 men and 20,288 women were enrolled in special education teacher preparation programs. The ratio of men to women was about 1:6.

### Women in Special Education Teaching Programs, 1995, by Race/Ethnicity



### Men in Special Education Teaching Programs, 1995, by Race/Ethnicity



Source: American Association of Colleges for Teacher Education, 1995.

# Educating Gifted and Talented Students

Specialized education for students who are gifted and talented is not mandated by federal laws or regulations. Efforts to meet the needs of this population vary from state to state and from year to year, and services range from one hour per week to full time.

Although state governments are not required to count students or report data on gifted and talented education to any agency, the Council of State Directors of Programs for the Gifted has been able to collect data for several years. They caution that "comprehensive information

about gifted education is difficult to produce" and data must be interpreted cautiously. Of the 50 states, 43 supplied data for the report.

Source for all data on this page: *The 1998-99 State of the States Gifted and Talented Education Report, 2000.*

## Teacher Training

The following states reported that they require special training for teachers of the gifted.

AK	CA	IA	LA	NV	TN
AL	DE	ID	MO	OH	TX
AR	FL	KS	MS	OK	WV
AZ	GA	KY	NC	PA	

## Funding

The list below shows Gifted and Talented program funding for the fiscal year 1998 by states reporting.

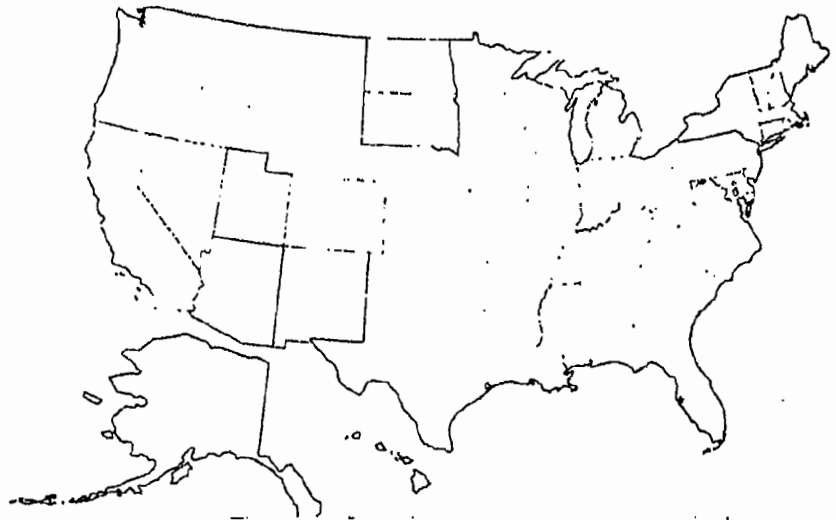
AK	\$8,529,963
AR	8,000,000
AZ	1,294,300
CA	47,584,642
CO	5,000,000
DE	450,000
GA	69,771,250
ID	500,000
IL	19,695,800
IN	6,843,970
KS	8,650,000
KY	6,300,000
MA	437,970
MD	4,434,829
MI	5,000,000
MN	5,000,000
MO	20,664,847
MT	150,000
MS	26,500,000
NE	3,025,500
OH	34,383,349
OR	209,000
RI	20,000
SC	23,900,000
TX	56,000,000
VA	21,338,397

## Federal Gifted and Talented Appropriations

Jacob Javits Gifted and Talented Grants  
(See page 8 for description.)

Fiscal Year 1991	\$9,760,000
Fiscal Year 2000	\$8,500,000
Fiscal Year 2001	\$7,500,000

Council for Exception Children, 1992, 2000.



## Gifted Programs in the United States

States vary in Requirements for Services

- State Requires Both Identification and Programming (27)
- State Requires Only Identification of Gifted Students (3)
- State Has No Mandate for Identification or for Programming (13)
- State Did Not Report (8)

## Number and Percentage of Students in Gifted and Talented Programs, States Reporting September 1998

State	Number of G/T Students	Percent of Total State Student Population	State	Number of G/T Students	Percent of Total State Student Population
AK	5,277	4.00	LA	25,144	3.00
AL	19,951	2.69	MO	27,831	3.00
AR	40,264	8.00	MS	27,120	5.40
AZ	59,672	8.00	NC	94,009	8.00
CA	350,792	6.12	NE	35,190	12.00
CO	95,653	13.90	OH	235,686	13.00
DE	3,100	3.00	OK	88,785	14.27
FL	98,389	4.29	OR	37,004	7.30
GA	67,407	5.00	PA	80,683	5.00
IA	31,945	6.36	SC	57,629	11.40
ID	8,252	3.40	TN	18,526	2.00
IL	159,911	8.00	TX	313,142	8.00
IN	77,024	8.00	VA	129,179	12.03
KS	14,542	3.10	WV	6,301	2.28



# Studies in Special Education

This document contains the latest data available at the time of publication. More data will be available through the following studies. Watch for—

Reports from the *Special Education Expenditure Project (SEEP)*, a national study conducted at the Center for Special Education Finance, <http://csef.air.org>. The study will provide data on national special education expenditure.

Articles and reports from the *National Early Intervention Longitudinal Study (NEILS)*. NEILS is following more than 3,300 children and their families from early intervention to age 5. Conducted by SRI International, <http://www.sri.com/neils/>.

Reports from the *Pre-Elementary Education Longitudinal Study (PEELS)*, will look at children with disabilities from age 3 to age 5 in preschool education. Conducted by SRI International, <http://www.sri.com/peels/>.

Articles and reports from the *Special Education Elementary Longitudinal Study*, which

is studying more than 14,000 students from age 6 through 12. Conducted by SRI International, <http://www.sri.com/seels/>.

Articles and reports from the *National Longitudinal Study-2*, which is the second administration of a study conducted from 1985-1993 to describe the characteristics of secondary school students in special education including school programs, related services, extracurricular activities, and post-school outcomes. The study will identify factors that contribute to more positive outcomes. Conducted by SRI International, <http://www.sri.com/nats2/>.

Reports from SPeNSE, *The Study of Personnel Needs in Special Education (OSEP)*, designed to address concerns about the national teacher and related personnel shortages and quality of the workforce and factors

affecting it. Conducted by Westat, <http://www.spense.org/>.

Results of the *Study of State and Local Implementation and Impact of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (SLIDEA)*. This study will look at student performance, curriculum access, behavior, parental involvement and transition. Conducted by Abt Associates Inc., <http://abt.sli-idea.org>.

The report of *Representation of Minority Children in Special Education*, conducted by the National Research Council of the National Academy of Sciences, <http://www4.nationalacademies.org>. This study will look at how minority representation has changed since 1982, factors that influence health and development, and early intervention services.

## Resources

**Center for Special Education Finance**  
American Institutes for Research  
1791 Arastradero Road  
PO Box 1113  
Palo Alto, CA 94302  
1-650-843-8136  
<http://csef.air.org>

**The Council for Exceptional Children**  
1110 N. Glebe Road  
Arlington, VA 22201  
1-800-224-6830  
<http://www.cec.sped.org>

**ERIC Clearinghouse on Disabilities and Gifted Education**  
The Council for Exceptional Children  
1110 N. Glebe Road  
Arlington, VA 22201  
1-800-328-0272  
<http://ericec.org>

**Federal Resource Center for Special Education**  
Academy for Educational Development  
1875 Connecticut Avenue, NW  
Washington, DC 20009-1202  
1-202-884-8214  
<http://www.dscc.org/frc>

**Higher Education and Adult Training for People with Disabilities (HEATH)**  
American Association of Colleges for Teacher Education  
One DuPont Circle, Suite 800  
Washington, DC 20036-1193  
1-800-544-3284  
<http://heath-resource-center.org>

**National Association of State Directors of Special Education**  
1800 Diagonal Road, Suite 320  
Alexandria, VA 22314  
1-703-519-3800  
<http://www.nasdse.org>

**National Clearinghouse on Professions Related to Early Intervention and Education for Children with Disabilities (NCPSE)**  
The Council for Exceptional Children  
1110 N. Glebe Road  
Arlington, VA 22201  
1-800-641-7824  
<http://special-ed-careers.org>

**National Information Center for Children and Youth with Disabilities (NICHCY)**  
Academy for Educational Development  
PO Box 1492  
Washington, DC 20013-1492  
1-800-695-0285  
<http://www.nichcy.org>

**The Association for the Gifted (TAG)**  
The Council for Exceptional Children  
1110 N. Glebe Road  
Arlington, VA 22201  
<http://education.idbsu.edu/tag/>

**US Department of Education National Center for Education Statistics**  
1990 K Street, NW  
Washington, DC 20006  
1-202-502-7300  
<http://nces.ed.gov>

**US Department of Education Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP)**  
330 D Street, SW  
Mary E. Switzer Building  
Washington, DC 20202  
1-800-872-5327  
<http://www.ed.gov/offices/OSERS/OSEP>

### The IDEA Partnerships:

**Associations of Service Providers Implementing IDEA Reforms in Education (ASPIRE) and/or**

**IDEA Local Implementation by Local Administrators Partnership (ILIAD)**  
The Council for Exceptional Children  
1110 N. Glebe Road  
Arlington, VA 22201  
1-877-232-4332  
<http://www.ideapractices.org>

**Family and Advocates Partnership for Education (FAPE)**  
PACER Center  
4826 Chicago Ave. S.  
Minneapolis, MN 55417-1098  
1-888-248-0822  
<http://www.fape.org>

**The Policymaker Partnership for Implementing IDEA**  
The National Association of State Directors of Special Education  
1800 Diagonal Road Suite 320  
Alexandria, VA 22314  
1-877-433-2463  
<http://www.ideaepolicy.org>

# Milestones in the Education of Exceptional Children

1970

**The Education Amendments of 1970 (PL 91-230)** mandated a study on the gifted resulting in the Marland Report, a document that defined giftedness. States then used the report as a basis for building programs for gifted and talented students.

1973

**The Rehabilitation Act Amendments of 1973 (PL 93-112)**, a civil rights law, was passed containing Section 504, which prohibited discrimination against Americans with disabilities in public and private programs and activities receiving federal financial assistance. This law has had far reaching implications in terms of program accessibility and the guarantee of an appropriate education. Children who may not be eligible for services under IDEA may be eligible under this law.

1975

**The Education for All Handicapped Children Act (PL 94-142)** was passed to provide federal financial assistance to state and local education agencies to guarantee special education and related services to eligible children. This landmark law guaranteed children with disabilities a free, appropriate public education. See page 1.

1978

**Gifted and Talented Children's Act of 1978 (PL 95-561)** provided funds for personnel training, demonstration projects, and research to improve programs to meet the needs of gifted and talented students.

**Carl D. Perkins Vocational Education Act of 1984 (PL 101-392)** focused on participation of persons with disabilities in vocational education programs.

1986

**Education of the Handicapped Act Amendments (PL 99-457)** provided special education for children ages 3 through 5 and early intervention services for infants and toddlers from birth through 2 years of age.

1988

**Jacob K. Javits Gifted and Talented Students Education Act of 1988 (PL 100-297)** authorized funding to build the nationwide capability to meet the needs of gifted and talented students. The act placed emphasis on populations that had been underserved in gifted education.

**Technology-Related Assistance for Individuals with Disabilities Act of 1988 (PL 100-407)** provides for statewide programs of technology-related assistance for persons of all ages with disabilities.

1990

**Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (PL 101-476)** changed the name of the statute to the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act—IDEA—and required transition planning as well as increased emphasis on students from minority backgrounds.

**Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (PL 101-336)** prohibited discrimination solely on the basis of disability in employment, public services, and accommodations.

1997

**Individuals with Disabilities Education Act Amendments of 1997 (PL 105-17)** revised IDEA provisions and extended appropriations through 2002. Amendments were intended to enhance the role of parents in their child's special education programming, provide for safer schools, reduce needless paperwork, and consolidate and target discretionary programs to strengthen the capacity of American schools to effectively serve children and youth with disabilities from birth to age 21.

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