



The Higher Education Consortium for Special Education (HECSE) is a national organization representing about 70 university programs that prepare doctoral level personnel for leadership roles in special education. HECSE member institutions work to ensure that preparation is informed by research and evidence based practice which has demonstrated positive outcomes for K-12 students. HECSE institutions collaborate to support general education personnel in developing needed skills to teach students with disabilities and to encourage the full participation of people with disabilities in all aspects of society.

We support policies, programs, and funding opportunities that promote:



Specifically, we support:

Research Funding	Doctoral Preparation	Teacher Preparation
<p>Funding to increase and support high quality research in special education</p> <p>HECSE recommends \$75 million for the National Center on Special Education Research.</p>	<p>Funding to ameliorate shortages of special education faculty, researchers and leaders:</p> <p>HECSE recommends \$93 million for Personnel Preparation under IDEA, which includes funding to prepare doctoral level personnel.</p>	<p>Funding to address the nation’s shortage of special education teachers and ensure that all teachers are skilled in teaching students with disabilities.</p> <p>HECSE recommends \$50 million for the Teacher Quality Partnership Grants under the Higher Education Act.</p>
<p>Funding for all programs that support college and career readiness for all students</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • HECSE recommends \$15 million for Model Demonstration Programs for Students with Intellectual Disabilities under the Higher Education Act. • HECSE recommends full funding for Part B of IDEA. 		

HECSE takes the following positions on key issues and bills:

- **HECSE supports reauthorization of ESEA to ensure well prepared effective teachers in every class and inclusion of students with disabilities in assessment and accountability.**
 - The law should establish a threshold for new teachers who have demonstrated “profession-readiness” – completion of a preparation program with strong clinical experience and demonstrated proficient knowledge and skills.
 - The “highly qualified” loophole which allows teachers in training to be called “highly qualified” is set to expire in 2016 and we advocate letting it expire.
 - Annual assessments should be maintained and disaggregated and reported by subgroup, including students with disabilities, and appropriate accommodations should be provided.
 - IEP’s should not be used to measure academic achievement; alternate assessments based on alternative standards should be available only to students with the most significant cognitive disabilities – up to 1% of all students; assessments based on modified achievement standards should be eliminated.

- **HECSE has grave concerns about the Department of Education’s proposed teacher preparation regulations and believes the Department should work with Congress to develop changes in the Higher Education Act.**
 - States do not have the capacity to implement the proposed regulations.
 - They would likely result in an unfair impact on special education preparation programs, an exacerbation of the special education teacher shortage and a negative impact on the performance of students with disabilities.

- **HECSE supports the Educator Preparation Reform Act (S. 1062/HR 2172 in the 113th Congress) to reauthorize Title II of the Higher Education Act.**
 - This bill strengthens the Teacher Quality Partnership Grants and streamlines data collection for teacher preparation programs.

- **HECSE supports disability specific provisions in the reauthorization of the Higher Education Act that will increase access and retention in higher education for students with disabilities.**
 - Students with disabilities participate in higher education and complete their higher education at far lower rates than other students. Higher education is critical to increased employment outcomes for students with disabilities.

- **HECSE supports continuation and expansion of the TEACH grants, scholarships for high achieving aspiring new special education teachers.**

- TEACH grants offer up to \$16,000 in scholarships to prospective teachers in high need fields, including special education. A four year service commitment is required. They are a great incentive to address the critical special education shortage.
- **HECSE opposes the GREAT Act (S. 1052/HR 2196 in the 113th Congress).**
 - This bill lowers standards for preparation and creates double standards for higher education and alternate providers. Further, by requiring states to consider this training as equivalent to a Masters degree, it overextends the reach of the federal government beyond its purview.

For more information, contact:

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