



2021 Legislative Priorities

HECSE Core Priorities

- Ensure sufficient funds for early intervention, PK-12 education and higher education to recover from the COVID-19 pandemic and re-emerge with more equitable education systems.
- Invest in and strengthen special education and the profession of teaching.
- Keep PK-12 public funds in public education.
- [Increase the federal investment](#) in education from PK-12 through graduate school.

Budget

- HECSE supports FY 2021 and FY 2022 budget resolutions that will enable significant funding for education, and special education in particular.

Next COVID-19 Relief Bill

- Adopt President Biden's recommendation for \$170 billion for education, with additional funding for higher education.
- Include provisions from [S. 4100](#) and [H.R. 8523](#) to ensure targeted funding to IDEA and particularly \$300 million for Personnel Preparation under IDEA to address the critical special education shortage
- Include \$100 million for [Teacher Quality Partnership Grants under](#) Title II of HEA to address the critical special education shortage.
- Include the [Educator Jobs Fund Act](#) or the [Save Education Jobs Act](#) to address the workforce needs caused by the pandemic.
- Double the amount of the [TEACH grants](#) from \$4000 to \$8000 per year to attract teacher candidates in shortage fields.
- Ensure that the accrual of interest rates for TEACH grants begins only when a recipient can no longer complete their service obligation, rather than at the time of the grant award.

FY 2022 Appropriations

- **HECSE recommends the following programmatic funding amounts for the FY 2022 Labor/HHS/Education appropriations bill:**
 - \$100 million for [Personnel Preparation under IDEA](#) (currently \$90 million)

- \$70 million for the [National Center on Special Education Research at IES](#) (currently \$59 million)
- \$80 million for the [Teacher Quality Partnership Grants](#) under the Higher Education Act (currently \$52 million)
- \$15 million for the [Model Demonstration Programs for Students with Intellectual Disabilities](#) under the Higher Education Act (currently \$14 million)
- Full funding for Part B of [IDEA](#)

Strengthening the Higher Education Act

- **HECSE supports robust improvements to the Higher Education Act with multiple provisions to recruit and retain candidates to become skilled educators. This is essential as we grapple with critical shortages across the nation for fully qualified special educators and higher education faculty in special education, and a stark lack of diversity in the field. New provisions should include:**
 - Expansion of Title II, Teacher Quality Enhancement, to include:
 - Grants to institutions of higher education in the areas of Teacher Quality Partnerships, Recruitment and Completion Grants, Retention of Teachers Grants, School Leader Professional Development Grants and Faculty Professional Development and Training Grants: authorized at \$500 million;
 - Formula grants to states to create dual certification programs, develop career ladders for educators, strengthen certification and credentialing, develop equitable state approval systems for alternative providers and higher education, assess workforce needs of PK-12, design and implement statewide pre-service residencies, create initiatives to diversify the workforce: authorized at \$500 million;
 - No funds under Title II may be used to support a program or system that leads to a full teacher or leader credential for participants who have not earned at least a BA degree and have been prepared to be a profession-ready teacher or leader;
 - Streamline data collection.
 - Strengthen three critical loan forgiveness programs utilized by teachers: The Public Service Loan Forgiveness Program, the Teacher Loan Forgiveness Program and the Loan Forgiveness for Service in Areas of National Need program. These loan forgiveness programs, when operated effectively, serve as important incentives for prospective teachers to enter the profession.
 - Double amount of TEACH grant awards from \$4000 to \$8000, as called for in [H.R. 5350](#) and [S. 3158](#), the Diversifying by Investing in Educators and Students to Improve Outcomes for Youth Act -- DIVERSIFY Act. This will make a tremendous difference as an incentive for college students, particularly low-income students of color, to become teachers.

- Ensure that the accrual of interest rates for TEACH grants begins only when a recipient can no longer complete their service obligation, rather than at the time of the grant award.

[The Higher Education Consortium for Special Education](#) is a national organization representing more than 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 P-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.

HECSE supports policies, programs, and funding opportunities that promote research, doctoral preparation, teacher preparation, and strong P-12, college, and career outcomes for students with disabilities.

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