



2020 Legislative Priorities

Budget and Appropriations

- **HECSE supports 2021 budget allocations that include a generous proportion for the Labor/HHS/Education bill.**
- **HECSE recommends the following programmatic funding amounts for the FY 2021 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 \$57 million)
 - \$60 million for the Teacher Quality Partnership Grants under the Higher Education Act (currently \$50 million)
 - \$15 million for the Model Demonstration Programs for Students with Intellectual Disabilities under the Higher Education Act (currently \$12 million)
 - Full funding for Part B of IDEA
- **HECSE is pleased to see the GAO report on the teacher shortage required in the FY 2020 appropriations bill and is eager to monitor its progress.**

“GAO Report on Teacher Shortages.—The agreement requests GAO provide a report to the Committees on trends and factors contributing to school districts challenges with teacher recruitment and retention. The report should include a review and analysis of challenges recruiting and retaining special education teachers, paraprofessionals and teacher aides; the extent to which licensure requirements are waived or modified to address shortages; and geographic and demographic characteristics of districts facing the greatest challenges or shortages, including rural and urban areas. The report shall examine ways to improve the effectiveness of current Federal policy in preventing and responding to teacher shortages as well as make recommendations on potential Federal interventions to improve teacher recruitment and retention.”

Higher Education Act Reauthorization

- **HECSE supports a robust reauthorization of 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 teachers and higher education faculty in special education, and a stark lack of diversity in the field.**
- **HECSE is pleased to see the following provisions in House bill H.R. 4674, The College Affordability Act, which will address the special education shortages, lack of diversity in the field and access to higher education for students with disabilities:**
 - A strong reauthorization of the Teacher Quality Partnership Grant (TQP) program under Title II clarifying that funds may be used for principal preparation and increasing the authorization level to \$500 million. This program is targeted to high need field and high need schools and is much needed to increase the pipeline of special educators.
 - Inclusion of much needed programs in Part B of Title II, particularly the Well-Rounded Teaching Grants, the Graduate Fellowships to Prepare Faculty in High-Need Areas at Colleges of Education and the Honorable Augustus F. Hawkins Centers of Excellence. These programs will be an important contribution to addressing the shortages and lack of diversity noted above.

- Multiple provisions, particularly in Title VII, to expand access to higher education for students with disabilities.
- Continuation of the critically needed TEACH grants which are important incentives to attract and retain prospective teachers into teacher education programs in high need fields. These grants serve as essential incentives for prospective special education teachers to enroll in preparation programs and serve in the field.
- Retention and in some cases strengthening of 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.
- **HECSE would like to see the following provisions in H.R. 4674 modified:**
 - TEACH grants are no longer available for Freshmen and Sophomores; this change will limit the impact of the TEACH program as a recruitment incentive; eligibility for all four years of college should be restored.
 - TEACH grants are made available to students pursuing terminal AA degrees in early childhood; TEACH grants should only be available to fully prepare educators, which means at least a BA degree; current law should be retained in terms of TEACH eligibility.
 - Expanded data collection for TEACH grants, Title II and the Teacher Quality Partnership Program are excessive and, in some cases, duplicative; such requirements divert critical resources from the provision of program components.
- **HECSE supports H.R. 5350 and S. 3185, the Diversifying by Investing in Educators and Students to Improve Outcomes for Youth Act -- DIVERSIFY Act.**
 - This bill doubles the amount of the TEACH grant awards to \$8000 per year. This will make a tremendous difference as an incentive for college students, particularly low-income students, to become teachers.
- **HECSE supports the reauthorization of Title II of the Higher Education Act along the lines of The Educator Preparation Reform Act, S. 969.**
 - This bill strengthens the Teacher Quality Partnership Grants, updates accountability measures and streamlines data collection for teacher preparation programs.

The Higher Education Consortium for Special Education (<http://hecse.net/>) 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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