

**School Board Meeting/Workshop Date:**

**January 22, 2018**

**Subject:**

Special Education  
Funding Resolution  
(State and Federal)

**Presenter:**

**Scott Thielman,  
Superintendent**

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**SUGGESTED SCHOOL BOARD ACTION:**

Pass Board Resolution supporting the Minnesota School Boards Association recommendation to increase funding for Special Education.

**DESCRIPTION:**

In 1975, Congress enacted the Education for All Handicapped Children Act (P.L. 94-142) now known as The Individuals with Disabilities Act (IDEA) to: improve access to education for children with disabilities by guaranteeing a Free Appropriate Public Education (FAPE) in the least restrictive environment; assure that the rights of children with disabilities and their parents are protected; assist States and school systems to provide for the education of all children with disabilities; and to assess and assure the effectiveness of efforts to educate all children with disabilities.

When IDEA became law in 1975, the federal government promised to fund 40 percent of the additional cost of educating children with disabilities; and yet the federal government has failed to adequately fund the mandated programs and services arising under IDEA, never providing more than 15 percent of the additional cost.

Sufficient federal funding for IDEA would significantly enhance the ability of local school systems to provide an excellent education for all students and the special education cross-subsidy continues to be a major obstacle for Minnesota School Districts to address due to the growing number of students receiving special education, more specialized services and rising costs associated with those services and inadequate funding.

The state special education funding system has not kept pace with the rising cost of mandated services and supports for students with special needs. The cross-subsidy for school districts for FY2016 is \$679 million, a 5.6 percent increase from FY2015, and between rising need and insufficient state and federal aid, the amount of funding school districts as a whole in Minnesota will be forced to pay for special education costs will reach an average of \$815 per student in FY17.

**ATTACHMENT(S):**

**State Resolution for Special Education Funding  
Federal Resolution for Special Education Funding**