

Fellow members of the MASE Federal Advocacy Committee,

As you may know I had the privilege of being a part of the MASA/MASE fall advocacy trip to Washington D.C. During this trip we met with Minnesota's senators and representatives, and/or their aides. One of those meetings was with Representative John Kline, Chair of the Education & Workforce Committee in the House of Representatives. During the meeting Representative Kline asked what provisions we would like in the reauthorization of IDEA. We were able to share some ideas on this topic. Representative Kline asked us to work with Brad Thomas, Senior Education Policy Advisor for the House of Representatives, to share our wishes for the reauthorization of IDEA. Brad was present at the meeting and provided us with his contact information. I believe this is a great opportunity for MASE to influence federal legislation in a positive way. The following list contains my thoughts on what to include in a letter from MASE to Brad Thomas regarding changes to IDEA. I welcome your feedback.

Remove the provision for 100% compliance in monitoring of the due process requirements.

The current provision is burdensome and does very little to promote positive outcomes for students.

As we move toward Results Driven Accountability less emphasis should be placed on due process requirements.

Individual teams should have the autonomy to decide whether a multiple year IEP is appropriate. IEP's should be written with a life-span of three years, with a requirement for review at least annually.

With the use of data collected in an on-going basis, shared with parents at least as often as nondisabled peers, the necessity for an annual IEP becomes less important.

Educational teams should also be allowed to decide whether a three-year re-evaluation is necessary.

With the use of data collected in an on-going basis, shared with parents at least as often as nondisabled peers, the necessity for any type of formal evaluation becomes less important.

The staff time saved by doing necessary re-evaluations could be better used in provision of services to students. IEPs are developed based on student need and supporting data gathered during instruction and programing, making the process of a three year evaluation unnecessary.

The maintenance of effort provision needs to be modified to allow greater flexibility and should look more like the maintenance of effort provision in Title 1.

The maintenance needs to be more flexible and allow school districts to be more efficient in the provision of services; not penalized.

The maintenance of effort provision needs to focus on equivalent services for students from year to year; not dollars spent.

The provisions regarding disproportionately identifying students of color and special education need to be revised.

At present districts can be identified as having disproportionality through no fault of their own.

This can occur if the district has a number of foster homes or group home facilities that may focus on serving particular groups of people.

This provision should have a waiver process that could allow an individual district to make a case if they qualify for this provision because of situations beyond their control.

Continue to support Response to Intervention/Multi-tiered Systems of Support through the provision of Early Intervening Service funding.

Early Intervening Service funding should be increased but not at the cost of providing services to students with disabilities. Currently the Early Intervening Service funds are subtracted from the federal funding received for the provision of service to students with disabilities.

The flexibility for spending Early Intervening Services funds should also be increased.

Aligning ESEA and IDEA will help make both laws more efficient and effective.

Having common language in both laws will help allow school districts to move from silos to a more unified systematic approach to meeting student's needs.

Ensure IDEA and ESEA work together to build a Response to Intervention (RtI)/ Multi-Tiered Systems of Support (MTSS) model that will allow all children to receive the most efficient and effect instruction to meet their individual learning needs.

Continue to protect public schools and the integrity of Federal IDEA funding.

Continue protections in IDEA by not allowing vouchers or scholarships which would divert funds from their intended purpose by allowing funding of private programing without the due process protections for students.

Finally Congress should fulfill its promise to students with disabilities by fully funding IDEA.

These additional funds would not only help to ensure appropriate provision of services to students with disabilities but also remove funding burdens from states.

Again I welcome your feedback.

I would like to have something to share estimates board meeting on December 4, 2014.

Please get your responses to me in advance of the board meeting.

Thank you

Todd Travis

MASE President Elect

Co-Chair Federal Advocacy Committee