

The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA)¹

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Native American and Alaska Native Children

I. Program Type: Formula Grants

In accordance with Part B of the *Individuals with Disabilities Education Act* (IDEA), the Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP) provides funds to states and the BIA to assist them in providing a free and appropriate public education (FAPE) in the least restrictive environment to children with disabilities who are in need of special education and related services. The Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) received \$83,545,766 during fiscal year (FY) 2005, but these funds were administered during the period from July 1, 2005, to June 30, 2006, to provide special education and related services to approximately 8,000 children with disabilities, aged 5 through 21, enrolled in elementary schools and secondary schools for Indian children operated or funded by the secretary of the interior on 63 reservations in 23 states.

IDEA 2004, signed into law on December 3, 2004, requires that, within one year of that date, states and the BIA have in place a state performance plan (SPP) that evaluates that state's efforts to implement the requirements and purposes of Part B of the *IDEA* and describes how the state will improve such implementation. The SPP must include indicators and targets in three major priority areas: general supervision, free and appropriate public education in the least restrictive environment, and disproportionality. It is the expectation of Congress that these indicators and targets be developed with broad stakeholder input and public dissemination. The SPP will be submitted to the secretary of education for approval. States and the BIA are required to collect valid and reliable data as needed to report annually to the secretary of education on the state's and the BIA's progress against their targets.

OSEP has implemented a Continuous Improvement and Focused Monitoring System (CIFMS) to support states and the BIA in their efforts to improve results for children and youths with disabilities. CIFMS includes continuous improvement activities through the SPP and the Annual Performance Report (APR) as described above, along with focused monitoring in priority areas, technical support and activities with high-risk grantees, designed to support their identification and timely correction of noncompliance. OSEP recently visited the BIA to verify the effectiveness of its systems for general supervision, data

collection under Section 618 of the *IDEA* and large-scale assessments and will provide the results of that visit in a letter to the BIA. In addition, OSEP visited local programs and collected data to verify correction of noncompliance previously identified in a monitoring report issued by OSEP on April 20, 2000.

OSEP continues to work closely with the BIA to ensure improved results for children with disabilities enrolled in elementary schools and secondary schools for Indian children operated or funded by the secretary of the interior.

II. Program Type: Discretionary Competitive

OSEP, through *IDEA*, provides discretionary funds for research, innovation and evaluation programs, personnel training, parent training, outreach, and technical assistance to serve children and youths with disabilities through special education and related services programs. Eligible entities compete for the funds that are available each year. Grants are awarded for a period of one to five years depending on the grant competition program. There are grants that focus exclusively on American Indian programs and others that focus on culturally diverse groups in general, including American Indians.

Over the past five years OSEP has funded four doctoral training programs focusing on American Indians who, after receiving their doctoral degrees, become professors at universities and colleges or administrators of special education programs. Two of the doctoral training programs are at the University of Arizona, one is at Northern Arizona University, and one is at Pennsylvania State University.

In addition to doctoral training programs OSEP funds other graduate and undergraduate personnel training programs for American Indian and Alaska Native students who want to provide direct services to children and youths with disabilities. The following are the graduate and undergraduate training programs that have as their focus or part of their focus the training of American Indian and Alaska Native students:

- University of Arizona—two grant programs, Tucson, AZ
- University of Northern Arizona—two grant programs, Flagstaff, AZ
- University of Montana, Missoula, MT
- University of Alaska, Anchorage, AL
- University of Southern Mississippi, Hattiesburg, MS
- Sitting Bull College, Fort Yates, ND
- United Tribes Technical College, Bismarck, ND
- San Diego State University—three grant programs, San Diego, CA
- University of Texas at El Paso, El Paso, TX
- University of Nebraska—two grant programs, Lincoln, NE
- White Earth Tribal and Community College, Mahanomen, MN
- Alabama State University, Montgomery, AL
- Central Arizona College, Coolidge, AZ
- Oglala Lakota College, Kyle, SD

- Fort Peck Community College, Poplar, MT
- Western Carolina University, Cullowhee, NC
- Vanderbilt University, Nashville, TN

The average grant award was \$200,000 per year for a period of three to five years. Upon graduation the students provide special education and related services to children and youths with disabilities who are American Indians and Alaska Natives.

OSEP also provides for the funding of research and outreach activities related to American Indians and Alaska Natives. Research and outreach activities have been conducted at the following institutions or agencies:

- University of Washington, Seattle, WA
- University of Vermont, Burlington, VT
- University of Minnesota, Minneapolis, MN
- University of Hawaii, Honolulu, HI
- University of Idaho, Moscow, ID
- Minnesota Department of Human Services, St. Paul, MN
- PARENTS, Inc. of Alaska, Anchorage, AK

In addition to the above programs, OSEP provides services to parents of American Indians and Alaska Natives through Parent Training and Information Centers and Community Parent Resource Centers. Grants are given to eligible entities to support Parent Training and Information Centers that provide parents of children and youths with disabilities with the training and information they need to enable them to participate effectively in helping their children with disabilities to: a) meet developmental and functional goals, and challenging academic achievement goals that have been established for all children; and b) be prepared to lead productive, independent adult lives, to the maximum extent possible. One of the purposes of the grants is to ensure that children with disabilities and their parents receive training and information on their rights, responsibilities, and protections under *IDEA* in order to develop the skills necessary to cooperatively and effectively participate in planning and decision making in relation to early intervention, educational, and transitional services. The amount of funds for each grant varies according to the scope of work but the amount ranges from approximately \$100,000 to \$500,000. The following are Parent Centers that are and have been funded over the past five years for the purposes described above.

- Great Lakes Inter Tribal Council, Lac du Flambeau, WI
- Alaskan Parent Training and Information Center, Anchorage, AK
- Montana Parent Endowment Project, Billings, MT
- Team of Advocates for Special Kids, Anaheim, CA
- Parent Training and Information Center Region I, Marion, OH

- LINKS/Mat-Su Parent Resource Center, Wasilla, AK
- PACER Center, Inc., Minneapolis, MN
- South Dakota Parent Connection, Sioux Falls, SD
- Parents Helping Parents of Wyoming, Buffalo, WY
- Raising Special Kids, Phoenix, AZ
- Families Together for People with Disabilities, Moscow, ID
- Abrazos Family Support Services, Bernalillo, NM
- Parents Let's Unite for Kids, Billings, MT
- Southwest Communication Resources, Bernalillo, NM
- Ohio Coalition for Education of Children with Disabilities, Marion, OH

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Endnote

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References

- Discretionary projects supported by the Office of Special Education Programs under the *Individuals with Disabilities Education Act: Research, Innovation, and Evaluation*. Volume 1, Fiscal Year 2004.
- Discretionary projects supported by the Office of Special Education Programs under the *Individuals with Disabilities Education Act: Personnel Preparation*. Volume 2, Fiscal Year 2004.
- Discretionary projects supported by the Office of Special Education Programs under the *Individuals with Disabilities Education Act: Technical Assistance, Dissemination, Parent Information, and State Improvement*. Volume 3, Fiscal Year 2004.
- OSEP Grants and Contracts Database, Office of Special Education and Rehabilitative Services, 2004. [On-line] Available: <http://www.ed.gov/about/offices/list/osers/osep/programs.html>.