

Individuals with Disabilities  
Education Act Amendments of 1997

SEC. 674. STUDIES <<NOTE: 20 USC 1474.>> AND EVALUATIONS.

((a) Studies and Evaluations.--

((1) In general.--The <<NOTE: Grants. Contracts.>> Secretary shall, directly or through grants, contracts, or cooperative agreements, assess the progress in the implementation of this Act, including the effectiveness of State and local efforts to provide--

((A) a free appropriate public education to children with disabilities; and

((B) early intervention services to infants and toddlers with disabilities and infants and toddlers who would be at risk of having substantial developmental delays if early intervention services were not provided to them.

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((2) Authorized activities.--In carrying out this subsection, the Secretary may support studies, evaluations, and assessments, including studies that--

((A) analyze measurable impact, outcomes, and results achieved by State educational agencies and local educational agencies through their activities to reform policies, procedures, and practices designed to improve educational and transitional services and results for children with disabilities;

((B) analyze State and local needs for professional development, parent training, and other appropriate activities that can reduce the need for disciplinary actions involving children with disabilities;

((C) assess educational and transitional services and results for children with disabilities from minority backgrounds, including--

((i) data on--

((I) the number of minority children who are referred for special education evaluation;

((II) the number of minority children who are receiving special education and related services and their educational or other service placement; and

((III) the number of minority children who graduated from secondary and postsecondary education programs; and

((ii) the performance of children with disabilities from minority backgrounds on State assessments and other performance indicators established for all students;

((D) measure educational and transitional services and results of children with disabilities under this

Act, including longitudinal studies that--

``(i) examine educational and transitional services and results for children with disabilities who are 3 through 17 years of age and are receiving special education and related services under this Act, using a national, representative sample of distinct age cohorts and disability categories; and

``(ii) examine educational results, postsecondary placement, and employment status of individuals with disabilities, 18 through 21 years of age, who are receiving or have received special education and related services under this Act; and

``(E) identify and report on the placement of children with disabilities by disability category.

``(b) National Assessment.--

``(1) In general.--The Secretary shall carry out a national assessment of activities carried out with Federal funds under this Act in order--

``(A) to determine the effectiveness of this Act in achieving its purposes;

``(B) to provide information to the President, the Congress, the States, local educational agencies, and the public on how to implement the Act more effectively; and

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``(C) to provide the President and the Congress with information that will be useful in developing legislation to achieve the purposes of this Act more effectively.

``(2) Consultation.--The Secretary shall plan, review, and conduct the national assessment under this subsection in consultation with researchers, State practitioners, local practitioners, parents of children with disabilities, individuals with disabilities, and other appropriate individuals.

``(3) Scope of assessment.--The national assessment shall examine how well schools, local educational agencies, States, other recipients of assistance under this Act, and the Secretary are achieving the purposes of this Act, including--

``(A) improving the performance of children with disabilities in general scholastic activities and assessments as compared to nondisabled children;

``(B) providing for the participation of children with disabilities in the general curriculum;

``(C) helping children with disabilities make successful transitions from--

``(i) early intervention services to preschool education;

``(ii) preschool education to elementary school; and

``(iii) secondary school to adult life;

``(D) placing and serving children with

disabilities, including minority children, in the least restrictive environment appropriate;

((E) preventing children with disabilities, especially children with emotional disturbances and specific learning disabilities, from dropping out of school;

((F) addressing behavioral problems of children with disabilities as compared to nondisabled children;

((G) coordinating services provided under this Act with each other, with other educational and pupil services (including preschool services), and with health and social services funded from other sources;

((H) providing for the participation of parents of children with disabilities in the education of their children; and

((I) resolving disagreements between education personnel and parents through activities such as mediation.

((4) Interim and final reports.--The Secretary shall submit to the President and the Congress--

((A) an interim report that summarizes the preliminary findings of the assessment not later than October 1, 1999; and

((B) a final report of the findings of the assessment not later than October 1, 2001.

((c) Annual Report.--The Secretary shall report annually to the Congress on--

((1) an analysis and summary of the data reported by the States and the Secretary of the Interior under section 618;

((2) the results of activities conducted under subsection (a);

((3) the findings and determinations resulting from reviews of State implementation of this Act.

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((d) Technical Assistance to LEAS.--

<<NOTE: Grants. Contracts.>> The Secretary shall provide directly, or through grants, contracts, or cooperative agreements, technical assistance to local educational agencies to assist them in carrying out local capacity-building and improvement projects under section 611(f)(4) and other LEA systemic improvement activities under this Act.

((e) Reservation for Studies and Technical Assistance.--

((1) In general.--Except as provided in paragraph (2) and notwithstanding any other provision of this Act, the Secretary may reserve up to one-half of one percent of the amount appropriated under parts B and C for each fiscal year to carry out this section.

((2) Maximum amount.--For the first fiscal year in which the amount described in paragraph (1) is at least \$20,000,000, the maximum amount the Secretary may reserve under paragraph (1) is \$20,000,000. For each subsequent fiscal year, the maximum amount the Secretary may reserve under paragraph (1) is \$20,000,000, increased by the cumulative rate of inflation since the fiscal year described in the previous sentence.

``(3) Use of maximum amount.--In any fiscal year described in paragraph (2) for which the Secretary reserves the maximum amount described in that paragraph, the Secretary shall use at least half of the reserved amount for activities under subsection (d).