

CEC's Response to President Obama's Fiscal Year 2015 Budget Proposal

The following is a statement from Robin D. Brewer, President, The Council for Exceptional Children, on March 5, 2014.

While the President's budget proposal includes investments in important new education initiatives, it fails to directly address the needs of the nation's 6 million infants, toddlers, preschoolers and students with disabilities, their families and the educators who work on their behalf.

Under this proposal, funding for the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) program serving school-aged children would remain stagnant, while programs serving preschool children with disabilities would continue to suffer from the austerity of sequestration, which cut over \$20 million.

Unfortunately, this proposal ignores the nationwide realities of special educators who are clamoring for greater resources to support the needs of children and youth with disabilities. In fact, [over 83% of special educators surveyed said special education services are being reduced due to budget cuts](#). Clearly, our children and youth need more – not less – support.

Furthermore, this budget neglects key programs that are vital to the implementation of high-quality early intervention, special education services. To identify effective interventions, we must invest in special education research. To have a world-class professional workforce we must invest in professional development and growing the special education profession. To ensure that parents understand their special education rights we must invest in centers that focus on engagement and outreach. Regrettably, the President's budget proposal fails to adequately invest in these areas.

At a time when states, school districts and early intervention programs across the country are under significant financial strain, the President's budget had an opportunity to answer the calls for greater federal support in key programs of IDEA. CEC, and its members, look forward to working with Congress to correct this course as the FY 2015 budget process gets underway.

The Council for Exceptional Children (CEC) is an international community of educators who are the voice and vision of special and gifted education. CEC's mission is to improve the quality of life for individuals with exceptionalities and their families through professional excellence and advocacy. Visit us at www.cec.sped.org.

