

Ed Department Preparing To Cut Millions In Special Education Funding, Advocates Warn

Disability advocates say that the U.S. Department of Education could cancel hundreds of grants made under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act in the coming weeks.

The awards in question are provided under IDEA Part D and fund everything from technical assistance and parent resource centers to personnel preparation for special educators. Collectively, the grants aimed at improving the education of students with disabilities could be worth hundreds of millions of dollars.

“No Part D grantee has heard for sure, or has seen anything in writing, (but) there is credible information flowing that points to (the Office of Special Education Programs’) plan to cancel hundreds of grants in a few weeks,” said Robyn Linscott, director of education and family policy at The Arc. “We are hearing that these grants likely are those funded directly out of Part D National Activities. We believe they were flagged through an AI scan that pinpoints grants that have the DEI terms this administration is targeting for termination, as well as all/most of the (technical assistance) centers that OSEP funds.”

Many organizations supported under Part D are in the middle of a five-year funding cycle but have not received award notifications for the coming year, including some with a renewal date next month. And advocates say that some grantees have been told by their project officer to prepare to close.

Now advocates are sounding the alarm. Both the Consortium for Constituents with Disabilities, a coalition of national disability organizations, and the Council for Exceptional Children, a professional organization focused on special education, wrote to their members to alert them of the possible cuts.

Meanwhile, more than 150 representatives of federally funded Parent Training and Information Centers, Community Parent Resource Centers and Parent Technical Assistance Centers signed a letter sent to members of Congress urging them to push back on any plans to terminate Part D grants.

“It has come to our attention that the U.S. Department of Education is considering the cancellation of all OSEP grants to CPRCs, PTACs and related Technical Assistance Centers in the coming weeks,” the letter states. “We respectfully urge you to ensure that the administration and the Department of Education uphold

Congress's appropriations and release the designated funding. Eliminating these programs would not only undermine congressional intent but also jeopardize the essential services that families across the nation rely upon."

The Education Department did not respond to a request for comment about the status of the Part D grants.

However, the concerns come as President Donald Trump has been pushing for major changes to IDEA in order to give states more control over education. [In his budget proposal](#), the president sought to fold preschool grants as well as many activities currently overseen by the Office of Special Education Programs under IDEA Part D into grants that are distributed to states under Part B.

But, in its first test before lawmakers, a key Senate panel [soundly rejected](#) Trump's plan for IDEA late last month. The bipartisan vote to keep IDEA as is "stands in direct conflict with what ED is preparing to do," said Denise S. Marshall, CEO of the Council of Parent Attorneys and Advocates, or COPAA, a nonprofit that advocates for the rights of students with disabilities and their families.

"Saving money off the backs of our children and the school personnel who worked hard to educate them is appalling. Parents need to be meaningful partners in their education as required by statute (and) Part D funds allow them to be trained on their rights and receive support," Marshall said. "We've heard from reputable sources that the withdrawal of funds is imminent, and we urge Congress, state legislators and governors to raise their voices to say no."