

Washington Update

ACRES Conference
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Jane West

Last Half of the 108th Congress

- Election Year – slow moving
- Concerns of deficit and economy
- NCLB and politics

President's FY 2005 Budget

- \$823 billion
- 3% increase for education
- \$1 billion IDEA
- \$1 billion NCLB
- 38 programs eliminated

Congressional Response

- Senate passed resolution at \$821 billion
- 51 4party line vote
- IDEA and NCLB full funding amendments failed
- House to act this week

NCLB

- Lack of funds
- Objections by Democrats
- Response by Administration
 - 1% rule
 - LEP rule
 - Highly Qualified rule
- Democrats drafting bills
- Action in state legislatures

NCLB – Highly Qualified

- NCLB requirements
- New flexibility for
 - Rural teachers
 - Science teachers
 - Multi-subject teachers

Highly Qualified and Senate IDEA Bill

- Elementary teachers
- Secondary teachers
- New teachers
- Veteran teachers
- Consultative services
- Teachers of students with significant cognitive disabilities
- Teachers of several subjects
- Special education skill
- Content knowledge
- No private right of action
- Extended timeline

NCLB – Accountability and Assessment

- AYP and special education
- Types of assessments and standards
- Safe harbor provisions
- “N” size
- House hearing last week

IDEA Reauthorization

- House passed bill, H.R. 1350, in April 2003
- Senate floor passage of S. 1248 any day now
- Consent agreement
- Conference and signage before end of year
 - Or not??

H.R. 1350

- Moved in 6 weeks
- Partisan vote; minority report; rejected Dem amendments
- Disability, special education groups oppose
- General education groups, White House favorable

S. 1248

- Two years of bi-partisan deliberation
- Committee support of 24/0
- Disability, special education more favorable
- General education groups not so favorable
- Some parents oppose both bills

Hot Button Issues

- Mandatory full funding
- Discipline
- Attorneys' fees
- Paperwork reduction
- Highly Qualified
- NCLB intersection

Other Key Issues

- Three year IEPs
- Short term objectives
- Learning disabilities definition
- Research for the Institute for Education Sciences
- Professional Development and Personnel Prep – SIGs
- 15% Pre-referral funds

Higher Education Act - House

- House passed 4 bills last year
- Loan forgiveness for special education and math/science teachers
- Graduate Ed priority on special ed faculty
- Students with disabilities Title VII demonstration projects

Higher Education Act - Senate

- No comprehensive Senate reauthorization bill yet
- Democratic Senate reauthorization bill – special ed faculty priority
- Key action next year
- Senator Reed Title II bill new week PRREP Act

Conclusion The Risks

- Too much too fast = backlash
- Exacerbate personnel shortage
- Students with disabilities blamed for failures and out of accountability

Conclusion The Opportunities

- Accountability drives access for students with disabilities
- General education central
- Assessment/accessibility/universal design
- High expectations; improved outcomes