

TITLE 20 - EDUCATION
CHAPTER 33 - EDUCATION OF INDIVIDUALS WITH DISABILITIES
SUBCHAPTER I - GENERAL PROVISIONS

§ 1400. Short title; findings; purposes

(a) Short title

This chapter may be cited as the “Individuals with Disabilities Education Act”.

(b) Omitted

(c) Findings

Congress finds the following:

(1) Disability is a natural part of the human experience and in no way diminishes the right of individuals to participate in or contribute to society. Improving educational results for children with disabilities is an essential element of our national policy of ensuring equality of opportunity, full participation, independent living, and economic self-sufficiency for individuals with disabilities.

(2) Before the date of enactment of the Education for All Handicapped Children Act of 1975 (Public Law 94–142), the educational needs of millions of children with disabilities were not being fully met because—

(A) the children did not receive appropriate educational services;

(B) the children were excluded entirely from the public school system and from being educated with their peers;

(C) undiagnosed disabilities prevented the children from having a successful educational experience; or

(D) a lack of adequate resources within the public school system forced families to find services outside the public school system.

(3) Since the enactment and implementation of the Education for All Handicapped Children Act of 1975, this chapter has been successful in ensuring children with disabilities and the families of such children access to a free appropriate public education and in improving educational results for children with disabilities.

(4) However, the implementation of this chapter has been impeded by low expectations, and an insufficient focus on applying replicable research on proven methods of teaching and learning for children with disabilities.

(5) Almost 30 years of research and experience has demonstrated that the education of children with disabilities can be made more effective by—

(A) having high expectations for such children and ensuring their access to the general education curriculum in the regular classroom, to the maximum extent possible, in order to—

(i) meet developmental goals and, to the maximum extent possible, the challenging expectations that have been established for all children; and

(ii) be prepared to lead productive and independent adult lives, to the maximum extent possible;

(B) strengthening the role and responsibility of parents and ensuring that families of such children have meaningful opportunities to participate in the education of their children at school and at home;

(C) coordinating this chapter with other local, educational service agency, State, and Federal school improvement efforts, including improvement efforts under the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 [20 U.S.C. 6301 et seq.], in order to ensure that such children benefit from such efforts and that special education can become a service for such children rather than a place where such children are sent;

- (D) providing appropriate special education and related services, and aids and supports in the regular classroom, to such children, whenever appropriate;
 - (E) supporting high-quality, intensive preservice preparation and professional development for all personnel who work with children with disabilities in order to ensure that such personnel have the skills and knowledge necessary to improve the academic achievement and functional performance of children with disabilities, including the use of scientifically based instructional practices, to the maximum extent possible;
 - (F) providing incentives for whole-school approaches, scientifically based early reading programs, positive behavioral interventions and supports, and early intervening services to reduce the need to label children as disabled in order to address the learning and behavioral needs of such children;
 - (G) focusing resources on teaching and learning while reducing paperwork and requirements that do not assist in improving educational results; and
 - (H) supporting the development and use of technology, including assistive technology devices and assistive technology services, to maximize accessibility for children with disabilities.
- (6) While States, local educational agencies, and educational service agencies are primarily responsible for providing an education for all children with disabilities, it is in the national interest that the Federal Government have a supporting role in assisting State and local efforts to educate children with disabilities in order to improve results for such children and to ensure equal protection of the law.
- (7) A more equitable allocation of resources is essential for the Federal Government to meet its responsibility to provide an equal educational opportunity for all individuals.
- (8) Parents and schools should be given expanded opportunities to resolve their disagreements in positive and constructive ways.
- (9) Teachers, schools, local educational agencies, and States should be relieved of irrelevant and unnecessary paperwork burdens that do not lead to improved educational outcomes.
- (10) (A) The Federal Government must be responsive to the growing needs of an increasingly diverse society.
- (B) America's ethnic profile is rapidly changing. In 2000, 1 of every 3 persons in the United States was a member of a minority group or was limited English proficient.
- (C) Minority children comprise an increasing percentage of public school students.
- (D) With such changing demographics, recruitment efforts for special education personnel should focus on increasing the participation of minorities in the teaching profession in order to provide appropriate role models with sufficient knowledge to address the special education needs of these students.
- (11) (A) The limited English proficient population is the fastest growing in our Nation, and the growth is occurring in many parts of our Nation.
- (B) Studies have documented apparent discrepancies in the levels of referral and placement of limited English proficient children in special education.
- (C) Such discrepancies pose a special challenge for special education in the referral of, assessment of, and provision of services for, our Nation's students from non-English language backgrounds.
- (12) (A) Greater efforts are needed to prevent the intensification of problems connected with mislabeling and high dropout rates among minority children with disabilities.
- (B) More minority children continue to be served in special education than would be expected from the percentage of minority students in the general school population.

- (C) African-American children are identified as having intellectual disabilities and emotional disturbance at rates greater than their White counterparts.
- (D) In the 1998–1999 school year, African-American children represented just 14.8 percent of the population aged 6 through 21, but comprised 20.2 percent of all children with disabilities.
- (E) Studies have found that schools with predominately White students and teachers have placed disproportionately high numbers of their minority students into special education.
- (13) (A) As the number of minority students in special education increases, the number of minority teachers and related services personnel produced in colleges and universities continues to decrease.
- (B) The opportunity for full participation by minority individuals, minority organizations, and Historically Black Colleges and Universities in awards for grants and contracts, boards of organizations receiving assistance under this chapter, peer review panels, and training of professionals in the area of special education is essential to obtain greater success in the education of minority children with disabilities.
- (14) As the graduation rates for children with disabilities continue to climb, providing effective transition services to promote successful post-school employment or education is an important measure of accountability for children with disabilities.

(d) Purposes

The purposes of this chapter are—

- (1) (A) to ensure that all children with disabilities have available to them a free appropriate public education that emphasizes special education and related services designed to meet their unique needs and prepare them for further education, employment, and independent living;
- (B) to ensure that the rights of children with disabilities and parents of such children are protected; and
- (C) to assist States, localities, educational service agencies, and Federal agencies to provide for the education of all children with disabilities;
- (2) to assist States in the implementation of a statewide, comprehensive, coordinated, multidisciplinary, interagency system of early intervention services for infants and toddlers with disabilities and their families;
- (3) to ensure that educators and parents have the necessary tools to improve educational results for children with disabilities by supporting system improvement activities; coordinated research and personnel preparation; coordinated technical assistance, dissemination, and support; and technology development and media services; and
- (4) to assess, and ensure the effectiveness of, efforts to educate children with disabilities.

(Pub. L. 91–230, title VI, § 601, as added Pub. L. 108–446, title I, § 101, Dec. 3, 2004, 118 Stat. 2647; amended Pub. L. 111–256, § 2(b)(1), Oct. 5, 2010, 124 Stat. 2643.)

References in Text

The Education for All Handicapped Children Act of 1975, referred to in subsec. (c)(2), (3), is Pub. L. 94–142, Nov. 29, 1975, 89 Stat. 773. For complete classification of this Act to the Code, see Short Title of 1975 Amendment note set out below and Tables.

The Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965, referred to in subsec. (c)(5)(C), is Pub. L. 89–10, Apr. 11, 1965, 79 Stat. 27, which is classified generally to chapter 70 (§ 6301 et seq.) of this title. For complete classification of this Act to the Code, see Short Title note set out under section 6301 of this title and Tables.

Codification

Section is comprised of section 601 of Pub. L. 91–230. Subsec. (b) of section 601 of Pub. L. 91–230 set out the table of contents for the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act.

Prior Provisions

A prior section 1400, Pub. L. 91–230, title VI, § 601, as added Pub. L. 105–17, title I, § 101, June 4, 1997, 111 Stat. 37, contained short title for this chapter and related to congressional findings and purposes, prior to the general amendment of subchapters I to IV of this chapter by Pub. L. 108–446.

Another prior section 1400, Pub. L. 91–230, title VI, § 601, Apr. 13, 1970, 84 Stat. 175; Pub. L. 94–142, § 3, Nov. 29, 1975, 89 Stat. 774; Pub. L. 101–476, title IX, § 901(a)(1), (b)(1)–(9), Oct. 30, 1990, 104 Stat. 1141, 1142; Pub. L. 102–119, § 25(b), Oct. 7, 1991, 105 Stat. 607, contained short title for this chapter and related to congressional statements and declarations, prior to the general amendment of subchapters I to IV of this chapter by Pub. L. 105–17. This section had been classified as a note under former section 1401 of this title prior to being amended by Pub. L. 94–142.

Amendments

2010—Subsec. (c)(12)(C). Pub. L. 111–256 substituted “having intellectual disabilities” for “having mental retardation”.

Effective Date

Pub. L. 108–446, title III, § 302(a), (b), Dec. 3, 2004, 118 Stat. 2803, provided that:

“(a) Parts A, B, and C, and subpart 1 of part D.—

“(1) In general.—Except as provided in paragraph (2), parts A, B, and C, and subpart 1 of part D, of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act [subchapters I, II, and III and part A of subchapter IV of this chapter], as amended by title I, shall take effect on July 1, 2005.

“(2) Highly qualified definition.—Subparagraph (A), and subparagraphs (C) through (F), of section 602(10) of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act [20 U.S.C. 1401 (10)], as amended by title I, shall take effect on the date of enactment of this Act [Dec. 3, 2004] for purposes of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 [20 U.S.C. 6301 et seq.].

“(b) Subparts 2, 3, and 4 of part D.—Subparts 2, 3, and 4 of part D of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act [parts B, C, and D of subchapter IV of this chapter], as amended by title I, shall take effect on the date of enactment of this Act [Dec. 3, 2004].”

Short Title of 2010 Amendment

Pub. L. 111–256, § 1, Oct. 5, 2010, 124 Stat. 2643, provided that: “This Act [amending this section, sections 1140, 1401, and 7512 of this title, sections 705, 764, and 791 of Title 29, Labor, and sections 217a–1, 247b–4, 285g, 285g–2, 291k, 294c, and 300d–52 of Title 42, The Public Health and Welfare, enacting provisions set out as notes under this section, and amending provisions set out as notes under sections 280f, 285g, 300b–1, and 2000ff of Title 42] may be cited as ‘Rosa’s Law’.”

Short Title of 2004 Amendment

Pub. L. 108–446, § 1, Dec. 3, 2004, 118 Stat. 2647, provided that: “This Act [enacting subchapters I to IV of this chapter, part E of subchapter I of chapter 76 of this title, and sections 9567 to 9567b of this title, amending sections 927, 1087ee, 1087ii, 4304, 5802, 6103, 6311, 6317, 7221g, 7273b, 9511, 9515, 9516, and 9605 of this title, section 2164 of Title 10, Armed Forces, section 121 of Title 17, Copyrights, sections 721, 725, 772, and 773 of Title 29, Labor, and sections 280c–6, 290bb–25, 290ff–1, 290ff–2, 1396b, 1396n, 5011, 9835, 9836, 9837, 12511, 15025, and 15064 of Title 42, The Public Health and Welfare, repealing section 1444 of this title, redesignating former part E of subchapter I of chapter 76 of this title as part F, omitting sections 1445, 1456, and 1483 to 1487 of this title, enacting provisions set out as notes under this section and section 9567b of this title, and amending provisions set out as a note under section 285g of Title 42] may be cited as the ‘Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act of 2004’.”

Short Title of 1997 Amendment

Pub. L. 105–17, § 1, June 4, 1997, 111 Stat. 37, provided that: “This Act [enacting subchapters I to IV of this chapter, repealing former subchapters III and V to IX of this chapter, and enacting provisions set out as notes under this section and sections 1431 and 1451 of this title] may be cited as the ‘Individuals with Disabilities Education Act Amendments of 1997’.”

Short Title of 1991 Amendment

Pub. L. 102–119, § 1, Oct. 7, 1991, 105 Stat. 587, provided that: “This Act [see Tables for classification] may be cited as the ‘Individuals with Disabilities Education Act Amendments of 1991’.”

Short Title of 1990 Amendment

Pub. L. 101–476, § 1(a), Oct. 30, 1990, 104 Stat. 1103, provided that: “This Act [see Tables for classification] may be cited as the ‘Education of the Handicapped Act Amendments of 1990’.”

Short Title of 1988 Amendment

Pub. L. 100–630, § 1, Nov. 7, 1988, 102 Stat. 3289, provided that: “This Act [amending sections 101, 1401, 1404, 1406, 1407, 1411 to 1419, 1421 to 1425, 1431 to 1433, 1441, 1443, 1451, 1452, 1461, 1471, 1472, and 1475 to 1482 of this title, sections 702, 705, 706, 709, 711, 713, 717, 720 to 723, 731, 732, 740, 741, 750, 752, 761 to 762, 770, 772, 774 to 776, 777 to 777b, 777d, 777f, 780, 781 to 783, 791 to 794, 794b, 794d, 795a, 795g to 795i, 795l to 795n, 795q, 796a to 796g, 796i, and 1904 of Title 29, Labor, and section 155 of Title 36, Patriotic Societies and Observances, enacting provisions set out as notes under sections 101, 1419, and 1432 of this title and sections 731 and 777c of Title 29, and repealing provisions set out as a note under section 795m of Title 29] may be cited as the ‘Handicapped Programs Technical Amendments Act of 1988’.”

Short Title of 1986 Amendments

Pub. L. 99–457, § 1(a), Oct. 8, 1986, 100 Stat. 1145, provided that: “This Act [enacting sections 1408, 1461, 1462, and 1471 to 1485 of this title, amending sections 1401, 1406, 1411 to 1413, 1418, 1419, 1421 to 1424, 1424a, 1425, 1427, 1431 to 1433, 1435, 1441, 1443, 1444, 1452, and 1454 of this title, repealing sections 1403 and 1453 of this title, and enacting provisions set out as notes under sections 1419 and 1485 of this title] may be cited as the ‘Education of the Handicapped Act Amendments of 1986’.”

Pub. L. 99–372, § 1, Aug. 5, 1986, 100 Stat. 796, provided that: “This Act [amending section 1415 of this title and enacting provisions set out as notes under section 1415 of this title] may be cited as the ‘Handicapped Children’s Protection Act of 1986’.”

Short Title of 1983 Amendment

Pub. L. 98–199, § 1, Dec. 2, 1983, 97 Stat. 1357, provided: “That this Act [enacting sections 1407 and 1427 of this title, amending sections 1401 to 1404, 1406, 1411 to 1414, 1416 to 1426, 1431 to 1435, 1441 to 1444, 1452, 1454, and 1461 of this title, repealing section 1461 of this title, omitting section 1436 of this title, enacting a provision set out as a note under section 1401 of this title, and amending provisions set out as notes under sections 101, 681, and 1411 of this title] may be cited as the ‘Education of the Handicapped Act Amendments of 1983’.”

Short Title of 1977 Amendment

Pub. L. 95–49, § 1, June 17, 1977, 91 Stat. 230, provided: “That this Act [amending sections 1426, 1436, 1441, 1444, and 1454 of this title, and enacting provisions set out as a note under section 1426 of this title] may be cited as the ‘Education of the Handicapped Amendments of 1977’.”

Short Title of 1975 Amendment

Pub. L. 94–142, § 1, Nov. 29, 1975, 89 Stat. 773, provided: “That this Act [enacting sections 1405, 1406, 1415, 1416, 1417, 1418, 1419, and 1420 of this title, amending this section and sections 1232, 1401, 1411, 1411 notes, 1412, 1412 note, 1413, 1413 note, 1414, and 1453 of this title, and enacting provisions set out as a note under section 1411 of this title] may be cited as the ‘Education for All Handicapped Children Act of 1975’.”

Short Title of 1974 Amendment

Pub. L. 93–380, title VI, § 611, Aug. 21, 1974, 88 Stat. 579, provided that: “This title [enacting section 1424a of this title, amending sections 1402, 1403, 1411 to 1413, 1426, 1436, 1444, 1452, 1454, and 1461 of this title, and enacting provisions set out as notes under sections 1402 and 1411 to 1413 of this title] may be cited as the ‘Education of the Handicapped Amendments of 1974’.”

Regulations

Pub. L. 111–256, § 3, Oct. 5, 2010, 124 Stat. 2645, provided that: “For purposes of regulations issued to carry out a provision amended by this Act [see Short Title of 2010 Amendment note above]—

“(1) before the regulations are amended to carry out this Act—

“(A) a reference in the regulations to mental retardation shall be considered to be a reference to an intellectual disability; and

“(B) a reference in the regulations to the mentally retarded, or individuals who are mentally retarded, shall be considered to be a reference to individuals with intellectual disabilities; and

NB: This unofficial compilation of the U.S. Code is current as of Jan. 4, 2012 (see <http://www.law.cornell.edu/uscode/uscprint.html>).

“(2) in amending the regulations to carry out this Act, a Federal agency shall ensure that the regulations clearly state—

“(A) that an intellectual disability was formerly termed mental retardation; and

“(B) that individuals with intellectual disabilities were formerly termed individuals who are mentally retarded.”

Construction of 2010 Amendment

Pub. L. 111–256, § 4, Oct. 5, 2010, 124 Stat. 2645, provided that: “This Act [see Short Title of 2010 Amendment note above] shall be construed to make amendments to provisions of Federal law to substitute the term ‘an intellectual disability’ for ‘mental retardation’, and ‘individuals with intellectual disabilities’ for ‘the mentally retarded’ or ‘individuals who are mentally retarded’, without any intent to—

“(1) change the coverage, eligibility, rights, responsibilities, or definitions referred to in the amended provisions; or

“(2) compel States to change terminology in State laws for individuals covered by a provision amended by this Act.”

Transition

Pub. L. 108–446, title III, § 303, Dec. 3, 2004, 118 Stat. 2803, provided that:

“(a) Orderly Transition.—

“(1) In general.—The Secretary of Education (in this section referred to as ‘the Secretary’) shall take such steps as are necessary to provide for the orderly transition from the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act [this chapter], as such Act was in effect on the day preceding the date of enactment of this Act [Dec. 3, 2004], to the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act [this chapter] and part E of the Education Sciences Reform Act of 2002 [20 U.S.C. 9567 et seq.], as amended by this Act.

“(2) Limitation.—The Secretary’s authority in paragraph (1) shall terminate 1 year after the date of enactment of this Act.

“(b) Multi-year Awards.—Notwithstanding any other provision of law, the Secretary may use funds appropriated under part D of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act [subchapter IV of this chapter] to make continuation awards for projects that were funded under section 618 [20 U.S.C. 1418], and part D, of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (as such section and part were in effect on September 30, 2004), in accordance with the terms of the original awards.

“(c) Research.—Notwithstanding section 302 (b) [set out as a note above] or any other provision of law, the Secretary may award funds that are appropriated under the Department of Education Appropriations Act, 2005 [Pub. L. 108–447, div. F, title III, 118 Stat. 3142, see Tables for classification] for special education research under either of the headings ‘Special Education’ or ‘Institute of Education Sciences’ in accordance with sections 672 and 674 of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act [20 U.S.C. 1472, 1474], as such sections were in effect on October 1, 2004.”

References to Education of the Handicapped Act

Pub. L. 101–476, title IX, § 901(a)(3), Oct. 30, 1990, 104 Stat. 1142, provided that: “Any other Act and any regulation which refers to the Education of the Handicapped Act shall be considered to refer to the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act.”

Definitions

Pub. L. 111–256, § 2(k), Oct. 5, 2010, 124 Stat. 2644, provided that: “For purposes of each provision amended by this section [amending this section, sections 1140, 1401, and 7512 of this title, sections 705, 764, and 791 of Title 29, Labor, and sections 217a–1, 247b–4, 285g, 285g–2, 291k, 294c, and 300d–52 of Title 42, The Public Health and Welfare, and amending provisions set out as notes under sections 280f, 285g, 300b–1, and 2000ff of Title 42]—

“(1) a reference to ‘an intellectual disability’ shall mean a condition previously referred to as ‘mental retardation’, or a variation of this term, and shall have the same meaning with respect to programs, or qualifications for programs, for individuals with such a condition; and

“(2) a reference to individuals with intellectual disabilities shall mean individuals who were previously referred to as individuals who are ‘individuals with mental retardation’ or ‘the mentally retarded’, or variations of those terms.”