

A TIMELINE OF SPECIAL EDUCATION HISTORY

7.17.07

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YEAR	HISTORICAL EVENT	IMPACT ON PUBLIC SCHOOLS
1965	Congress adds Title VI to the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 creating a Bureau of Education for the Handicapped (this bureau today is called the Office of Special Education Programs or OSEP).	Educating students with disabilities is still NOT mandated by federal or state law. However, creation of the Bureau signified that a change was on the horizon.
1972	Two significant supreme court decisions [PARC v. Pennsylvania (1972) and Mills v. D.C. Board of Education (1972)] apply the equal protection argument to students with disabilities.	The courts take the position that children with disabilities have an equal right to access education as their non-disabled peers. Although there is no existing federal law that mandates this stance, some students begin going to school as a result of these court decisions.
1973	Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 is enacted into statute. This national law protects qualified individuals from discrimination based on their disability.	This national law was enacted with little fanfare. Most educators were not aware that this applied to public schools.
1974	The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) is enacted.	Parents are allowed to have access to all personally identifiable information collected, maintained, or used by a school district regarding their child.
1975	The Education for All Handicapped Children Act (EAHCA) is enacted. This was also known as P.L. 94-142. Today we know this law as the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA).	Before 1975, children with disabilities were mostly denied an education solely on the basis of their disabilities. EAHCA, along with some key supreme court cases, mandated all school districts to educate students with disabilities.
1977	The final federal regulations of EAHCA are released.	The final federal regulations are enacted at the start of the 1977-1978 school year and provide a set of rules in which school districts must adhere to when providing an education to students with disabilities.
1986	The EAHCA is amended with the addition of the Handicapped Children's Protection Act.	This amendment makes clear that students and parents have rights under EAHCA (now IDEA) and Section 504.
1990	The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) is enacted.	ADA adopts the Section 504 regulations as part of the ADA statute. In turn, numerous "504 Plans" for individual students start to become more common place in school districts.
1990	The EAHCA is amended and is now called the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA).	This amendment calls for many changes to the old law. One of the biggest was the addition of transition services for students with disabilities. School Districts were now required to look at outcomes and assisting students with disabilities in transitioning from high school to postsecondary life.
1997	IDEA reauthorized	This amendment calls for students with disabilities to be included in on state and district-wide assessments. Also, Regular Education Teachers are now required to be a member of the IEP team.
2001	No Child Left Behind is enacted.	This law calls for all students, including students with disabilities, to be proficient in math and reading by the year 2010.
2004	IDEA reauthorized	There are several changes from the 1997 reauthorization. The biggest changes call for more accountability at the state and local levels, as more data on outcomes is required. Another notable change involves school districts providing adequate instruction and intervention for students to help keep them out of special education.