

The New York Council of Administrators of Special Education (NYCASE) actively advocates for responsive state/federal policies designed to advance best special education practices. Current advocacy priorities are as follows:

Maintaining and enhancing the role of the U.S. Department of Education

- NYCASE is in alignment with CASE which strongly promotes maintaining and enhancing the role of the U.S. Department of Education. Like CASE, we believe that “the regulations, policies, [funding] and guidance issued by the Department, as well as ongoing evaluation and monitoring of state and local education agencies, are important to ensuring effective implementation of federal laws, including the IDEA.”

Supporting NYSED initiative to increase and improve dispute resolution process

- NYCASE supports collaborative school and parent partnerships, emphasizing that resolving conflicts together prioritizes students' best interests and fosters a supportive learning environment. NYSED should provide ongoing training for special education mediators and stakeholders to equip them with the necessary knowledge, skills, and tools to address complex issues effectively.

Early Childhood Special Education

- NYCASE believes that all children are entitled access to quality early education programming, and for preschool children with disabilities to receive the special education services they require and for which they are entitled. The NYSED needs to make changes to processes and systems currently in place that are contributing to the lack of ample programming and provision of services.

Supports for students

- NYCASE calls for action to combat the concerning surge in chronic absenteeism statewide which contributes to poor academic, social-emotional and ultimately career-based outcomes. A multifaceted approach must be undertaken to include data-driven interventions, family engagement, community partnerships and culturally responsive practices.
- NYCASE supports increased state investments to assist school districts in hiring more mental health professionals. We also support the adoption of policies and funding of programs that promote prevention and interdisciplinary partnerships among all constituents. Finally, we request that investment be made in expanding opportunities in higher education for individuals to seek mental health certifications.

Funding

- NYCASE opposes the halting of funding to educational research, which will disrupt ongoing research and prevent the development of new, effective teaching strategies.
- NYCASE advocates for New York State to allocate training resources to school districts to build capacity for addressing significant behavioral needs. Consideration should be given to provide the training through the Regional Partnership, or by supporting increased funding for districts to obtain the required training for their staff.
- FAPE 22 imposes unfunded mandates on districts, forcing them to extend costly services without additional funding. NYCASE advocates for funding from New York State to support the cost of placements for students who remain in schools until the age of 22.
- School districts (rural, urban, affluent, economically disadvantaged) are mandated to offer services for students with disabilities which involves the allocation of funding to fully cover these requirements. NYCASE advocates for increased State funding to adequately support the cost of special education services.