

Review of Arizona Special Education Programs and Cost

Project Overview



**ARIZONA DEPARTMENT
OF EDUCATION**



Purpose

- Provide a comprehensive picture of the funding needs for all children with disabilities who receive special education and related services under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act in the Arizona public education system
- Provide ADE and stakeholders with the necessary data to propose policy changes in the special education funding.

Task One: Special Education Statewide Demographic and Staffing Trend Analysis

Objective/Task: Identify the change in the student population since 2010 to include total change in percentage of student population, age of identification, diagnosis/IDEA designation and geographic shifts.

Methodology: Evaluate the student level demographic data for 2020 compared to 2010.

Data Source: ADE student demographic data

Population Sample: State-wide to include School Districts and Charter Schools

Objective/Task: Identify the impact of the teacher shortage on special education.

Methodology: Evaluate the teacher and related service provider vacancies as of October 2019. Determine the number and cost for filling these vacancies with vendor/contractors.

Data Source: District survey/data

Population Sample: Representative sample of LEAs

Task Two: Analysis of Transportation Trend Data and Direct Costs

Objective/Task: Identify the change in special education versus regular education transportation route miles from 2010 to 2020. Compare this trend data to total student enrollment trend data.

Methodology: Evaluate the submitted route mileage data for 2020 compared to 2010.

Data Source: ADE Trans55-1 data; total student enrollment data and special education designation data for same period

Population Sample: State-wide to include School Districts and Charter Schools

Objective/Task: Evaluate the actual cost of special education transportation compared to the state funded transportation formula.

Methodology: Identify the route costs compared to the per mileage funding model.

Data Source: District survey/data

Population Sample: Representative sample of LEAs

Task Three: Analysis of Out of State and Private Placement

Objective/Task: Identify the cost for out of state and private placement options.

Methodology: Evaluate the out of state and private placement costs and compare to the state funding formula.

Data Source: District survey/data

Population Sample: Representative sample of LEAs

Task Four: Analysis of ESA Costs as a Component of Statewide SPED Costs

Objective/Task: Determine state-wide ESA cost as a component of the overall SPED costs.

Methodology: Aggregate statewide data for ESAs provided for those designated SPED to provide an overall look at how much the ESAs cost for SPED as a component of overall SPED costs.

Data Source: Statewide ESA data

Population Sample: Statewide to include ESA specific data

Task Five: Analysis of Special Education Direct Program Costs

Objective/Task: Identify the actual additional costs related to state and locally funded special education services. Determine the total cost for providing public education to special education students in comparison to the funding provided.

Methodology: Evaluate the actual costs for both instructional and related service providers to deliver the instructional program to SPED program. Identify expenditures for students with multiple disabilities. Identify funding formula in comparison to actual costs. Funding sources will include the state funding formula, the federal IDEA funding and any health care system reimbursements (Medicaid in Public Schools program). Financial costs will include the additional salaries, benefits, non-payroll expenditures beyond what would have been expended by the LEA for non-special education programs.

Data Source: District survey/data

Population Sample: Representative sample of LEAs

Objective/Task: Identify additional costs associated with special education staffing models.

Methodology: Identify average teacher pay, related service provider pay, additional stipends and outsourced instruction costs compared to non-special education classroom teacher costs.

Data Source: District survey/data

Population Sample: Representative sample of LEAs

Task Six: Program Design Evaluation and Financial Analysis

Objective/Task: Identify the cost for certain program models.

Methodology: Calculate the total cost for delivering identified program models based on the staffing model for each program.

Data Source: District survey/data

Population Sample: Program Sample of LEAs

** Note – HeinfeldMeech will only be responsible for the financial aspect of the program design and financial analysis of this phase.

Timeline

Engagement Segment	Dates
Task 1 – Special Education Statewide Demographic and Staffing Trend Analysis	Phase 1 - Fall/Winter 2021
Task 2 – Analysis of Transportation Trend Data and Direct Costs	Phase 1 - Fall/Winter 2021
Task 3 – Analysis of Out of State and Private Placement	Phase 1 - Fall/Winter 2021
Task 4 – Analysis of Student Evaluation Costs	Phase 1 - Fall/Winter 2021
Task 5 – Analysis of Special Education Direct Program Costs	Phase 2 - Spring 2022
Task 6 – Program Design Evaluation and Financial Analysis	Phase 3 - Summer 2022

Proposed Criteria for LEA Cohort

- Intended to represent a minimum of 20% of the public school special education population
- Inclusive of traditional public school districts and charter schools
- Inclusive of single site charters and LEAs, and charter networks and larger LEAs
- Representative of urban and rural LEAs
- Representative of Impact Aid students
- Representative of K-8 and K-12 LEAs
- Considerations of LEAs with new Finance and/or SPED leadership staff

Next Steps for SEAP

- Welcome additional feedback – Callie.Kozlak@azed.gov
- Standing agenda item for SEAP meetings
 - Updates on data and findings
 - Additional inputs needed

Questions / Discussion



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