The two largest Federal Mandates involve disadvantaged (Title I - No Child Left Behind) and special needs (IDEA) students. Regulations for both are now being finalized and interpreted by the State Department of Education.

1. **ESEA Title I (No Child Left Behind)**
   The new law is a blend of new requirements, incentives and resources. Deadlines are established to expand the scope and frequency of student testing; to revamp accountability standards; to require that each classroom is staffed by a qualified teacher; to raise student scores in math and reading (and eventually in science); to narrow the gap between advantaged and disadvantaged students, and to utilize research-based practice.

   Mandates are spelled out in the five sections of the law:
   - Accountability and assessment (AYP, NAEP, Consequences)
   - Reading/Literacy (Reading First and Early Reading First)
   - Teaching Quality (Teachers and Aides)
   - School Choice and Innovative Programs (Chase, Charters, Magnets)
   - Flexibility (for SEA’s and LEA’s)

2. **Special Education (IDEA)**
   Since its implementation in 1975, the Individuals with Disabilities Act (IDEA) has mandated that state departments and school districts provide services to special needs students.

   Specifically, IDEA mandates that schools:
   - Meet the needs of special needs students
   - Provide for them within the mainstream environment to the greatest degree possible
   - Provide IEP’s (Individualized Education Plans) for each student
   - Inform parents of all aspects of their education and provide for their role in the definition of their programs

3. **Title VI (Civil Rights Act of 1964)**
   Title VI requires school districts that educate children with limited English proficiency to provide programs that are:
   - Educationally sound
   - Supported by education staff and resources
   - Periodically evaluated

4. **Title VII (Race Discrimination)**
   Title VII protects all programs that receive federal assistance in schools – including academics, extracurricular activities and athletics.

5. **Title IX (Sex Discrimination)**
   Title IX protects all participants – staff, parents, and students – from discrimination if the school receives federal assistance.