

# FEDERAL MANDATES

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.