The success of all children is dependent upon the quality of both general and special education and how well schools integrate services that, in the past, have been fragmented or separate. Special education is not a place apart, but an integral part of education.

**Guiding Principles**

- Performance of special education students in the general curriculum is a priority for special education.
- Special education should serve as a critical support structure through delivery of services within general education.
- In recognizing the complexities of children and youth, it is critical that educational supports and services be delivered in a seamless, naturally occurring manner, and be sufficient in scope and effectiveness to address the unique and diverse learning needs of all children.
- States should have the flexibility to implement programs that are sensitive to the diverse cultures of students and families in their states.
- Student improvement should be addressed as a collaborative activity across federal programs with the development of single improvement plans to support educational reform.
- Effective practices identified through research, including, e.g., differentiated instruction in the general curriculum, should be widely disseminated.
- Parents should be full partners in the decision-making process at the individual, school, state and national level.

**Legislative Priorities**

- Federal funding levels for and distribution formulas for IDEA and ESEA should promote a unified system of education.
- Program complexity should be reduced by reducing regulations, consolidating program plans/applications, providing shared performance reports, and developing shared self-assessments to support educational reform.
- Eligibility determination for special education should be based on the proper balance of disability determination and student performance in the general curriculum.
- Remove the requirement that special education provide a continuum of placements, but instead require a “continuum of services” aimed at participation and progress in the general curriculum.