

A Year in Review | COVID-19 Timeline

The National Center for Learning Disabilities (NCLD)

Parents, educators, and students continue to deal with the impacts of the COVID-19 crisis as they navigate hybrid and remote schooling models, working jobs from home, and managing their children's virtual education environments.

NCLD believes that every student deserves equal access to educational opportunities, and we continue to respond to the pandemic's impact on the 1 in 5 students with learning disabilities and attention issues. We strive to ensure that educators and parents feel supported as they innovate during this time, which is why we have provided the following resources and information that schools and districts so desperately need.

2020

March

Schools and Universities Shut Down Across America

The COVID-19 pandemic unfolds and forces educational institutions to close for the safety of their students and staff.

Secy. DeVos Waives Assessment & Accountability Requirements

The U.S. Department of Education [authorizes states](#) to forgo statewide assessments for the 2019-2020 school year.

Congress Passes CARES Act

President Trump signs the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security Act into law, providing \$30.75 billion to support public schools and institutions of higher education.

#MyIDEAMatters Campaign Targets Policymakers

NCLD [launches video advocacy campaign](#) in support of the civil rights protections afforded to students with disabilities under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA).

April

Educating All Learners Alliance (EALA) Coalition Launches

NCLD forms an [alliance](#) of national education organizations to help ensure educators have high-quality resources to support students with disabilities during remote instruction and to spotlight best practices.

DeVos Maintains Core IDEA Requirements

U.S. Secretary of Education Betsy DeVos issues a [report](#) to Congress recommending very limited waivers under IDEA. NCLD applauds the Secretary's intent to preserve the core tenets of IDEA and reduce barriers to learning.

NCLD and Eye to Eye Host a Virtual Day of Action

Organizations [hold an event](#) for young leaders to connect with Members of Congress, tell their stories, and build community. NCLD advocacy efforts shift focus to Congress during the height of the crisis to protect the civil rights of students with disabilities under IDEA.

June

Report: COVID-19 Instructional Loss Likely Worse in Marginalized Communities

[New study](#) suggests that learning loss will probably be greatest among low-income, Black, and Hispanic students.

NCLD Offers Help to Parents of Students

[Parent Advocacy Toolkit](#) provides guidance on how to advocate on behalf of students with disabilities during the transition to distance learning.

2020

July

NCLD Develops Plan for Reopening Schools

The [Planning for Equity and Inclusion: A Guide to Reopening Schools](#) toolkit outlines principles that school and district leaders should embrace as they rethink their approach to public education in the COVID-19 world.

September

LD Checklist: Recognize and Respond Tool Helps Amid COVID-19

NCLD creates the [LD Checklist](#) in collaboration with neuroscientists, psychologists, pediatricians, researchers, educators, and parents. The tool helps users understand potential signs of learning disabilities, and it becomes vitally helpful for parents and educators now operating in a virtual learning world.

October

Report Highlights Impact to Education Since Pandemic Start

[Bellwether Education Partners report](#) states that for approximately 3 million of the most educationally marginalized students in the country, March might have been the last time they experienced any formal education—either virtual or in-person.

November

NCLD Issues Guidance to Support the Social & Emotional Needs of Marginalized Students

[Report](#) provides tangible actions that families and district leaders can take to affirm students' identities while recognizing the impact of the COVID-19 crisis on their social, emotional, cognitive, and academic development.

December

Congress Passes More Relief for Students, Families, Educators

With hours to spare before a potential government shutdown, Congress passes a bill to fund the government for the remainder of the fiscal year, which ends in September 2021 and includes additional COVID relief funds. Members of Congress agree to modest increases in critical education programs such as Title I of the Every Student Succeeds Act and Part B Grants to States under the IDEA.

2021

January

Research Pinpoints Instructional Loss In Reading And Math

[Report](#) finds that on average, students have lost the equivalent of 3 months of learning in mathematics and 1.5 months of learning in reading and this has been especially acute in schools that predominantly serve students of color.

NCLD Announces Federal Policy Agenda For New Admin, Congress

NCLD releases its [2021 federal policy agenda](#), focusing on students with disabilities and detailing the most critical issues the Biden Administration and 117th Congress should focus on due to persistent inequities within the U.S. education system.

February

NCLD and Understood Create Distance Learning Toolkit

The COVID-19 pandemic continues to lead to widespread virtual and hybrid learning, challenging educators, families, and students to adapt to distance learning, particularly for students with learning and attention issues.

NCLD Shares Best Practices to Accelerate Learning for Students with Disabilities

NCLD releases a [resource highlighting the issue of instructional loss](#) that provides recommendations for how to accelerate learning and help students make greater academic progress in light of growing opportunity gaps.

March

President Joe Biden Signs The American Rescue Plan Act of 2021

The \$1.9 trillion COVID-19 relief package provides much-needed support for families, schools, small businesses, state and local governments. The law includes \$3 billion in additional funding for special education programs. Additional funding will assist schools addressing other pandemic-related challenges.

For more information, visit www.nclد.org or contact NCLD via email at info@nclد.org