

One Minute Video Scripts

Superintendent or other District Administrator

Tone: Clear, steady, authoritative, relatable

Audience: Congressional offices, community members, statewide networks

Script:

Hello, I'm [insert name], Superintendent of [insert school district].

I want to talk with you about a promise Congress made 50 years ago.

When the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act - IDEA - was passed in 1975, Congress committed to funding 40 percent of the cost to educate students to help cover the excess costs of special education services.

Today, schools receive just 10 percent. That means our district must cover the rest. Here in [insert state], our special education federal funding shortfall is [insert amount]. These are dollars we must take from general education - class sizes, mental health supports, curriculum, and staffing - to ensure we meet the needs of our students with disabilities.

We are proud of the services we provide. Our students deserve them. But Congress needs to honor its commitment.

Fully funding IDEA would stabilize our budget, strengthen services for every student, and keep a decades-old promise.

We're asking Congress to adopt a glide path to 40 percent and fully fund IDEA.

It's time to keep the promise.

Thank you.

Parent/Guardian

Tone: Emotional but steady; human-centered; respectful

Audience: Congress, media, community advocates

Script:

Hello, my name is [insert], and I'm a parent in [insert district].

My child receives special education services. These services aren't optional—they're essential to my child's success in school. IDEA guarantees these supports, but Congress has never fully funded what it promised. When IDEA passed in 1975, Congress pledged to fund 40 percent of the cost. Today, schools receive just 10 percent.

That shortfall doesn't disappear. It becomes a cost our local school district must cover—pulling money away from classrooms, teachers, mental health support, and academic programs for all students.

Our schools are doing everything they can. But it's time for Congress to do its part.

Fully funding IDEA would strengthen support for my child—and for every student in our district.

We urge Congress to fulfill the 40 percent IDEA promise.

Thank you.

One Minute Video Scripts

School Board Member

Tone: Governance-centered; emphasizes fiscal responsibility and support for all students.

Audience: Congressional staff, state education advocates, community leaders

Script:

I'm [insert name], Chair of the [insert school district] School Board.

Our board is responsible for ensuring that every student—every single one—receives the education they deserve. Special education services are legally required, and more importantly, they reflect our values as a community.

When Congress enacted legislation to require these services, they knew it would be costly for local districts and so they promised to help shoulder the excess costs. But Congress has never met its obligation to fund IDEA. The promise was 40 percent. Today, districts receive just 10 percent.

In [insert state], that creates a federal funding shortfall of [insert amount], meaning we must use local general education dollars to pay for federally mandated services. This forces difficult decisions affecting every student we serve.

We're asking Congress to fulfill the commitment made in 1975. A glide path to full 40 percent funding would stabilize district budgets and strengthen opportunities for all students.

Please support full IDEA funding. Let's keep the promise.

Thank you.

Potential Text for Social Media Posts

Superintendent:

Congress promised to fund 40 percent of special education costs. Today, we get just 10 percent. Our district fills the gap with local dollars. It's time for Congress to fund IDEA and keep the promise.

Parent:

My child depends on special education services. Our district provides them, but Congress has never funded what it promised. Fund IDEA. Support our students.

[insert]-branded:

IDEA promised 40 percent. Schools receive just 10 percent. [insert state] districts subsidize hundreds of millions every year. Congress must fully fund IDEA.