

Talking Points on Chapter 192 (Compensatory Education)

- Compensatory Education, consisting of remediation services for Math and Language Arts, has been provided by statute for nonpublic school students since 1977. The annual per-pupil amount for each service is contained in the language provisions of the annual State Budget.
- Over the past two years, the challenges in providing Compensatory Education services have been exacerbated as a result of the pandemic.
- The current per-pupil amount for each of the two services is \$995.33 for the current school year. That amount has not been increased since the 2008-2009 school year, causing a serious reduction in what can be offered by service providers.
- For the past several years, the qualifying number of students has increased, thus causing the service providers to make adjustments for the per-pupil amount which has remained constant. These adjustments include increasing the class size, reducing the number of minutes per week offered for each service, and eliminating services prior to the end of the school year. Such changes were not contemplated by the Legislature when the law was first introduced in 1977.
- Recently, the nonpublic school community and the New Jersey Department of Education conducted a survey of service providers, including Special Services School Districts, Education Services Commissions and private providers. All providers were asked to list important information including class size, the time for instruction weekly and during the school year, as well as their recommendations for restoring the program to previous levels.
- The increasing costs for such services over the years since the 2008-2009 school year reflect items such as increased cost of materials, salary increases, and other related expenses. It is impossible to show significant remediation for students with the reduction in “time on task.” **The goal of the nonpublic school community is to have these children remediated and not have them become “lifers” in the Compensatory Education programs.**
- This year, an influx in the number of eligible nonpublic school students caused the proration of the statutory amount to 70% of the \$995.33, thus forcing eligible students to lose over 25% of their hours of service from the onset of the program in September. Additional money was added to bring the proration to 90% of the statutory amount, but it never reached \$995.33.
- We are asking for an increase to \$1,300.00 per service for qualifying students. This response is based on the current data obtained from the survey of service providers.