

[Bureau of Indian Education Hosting Two-Day Meeting to Discuss Mandates of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act of 2004 for Indian Children with Disabilities](#)

Category: Policy Blog

written by Alexandra Payan | February 23, 2022

On March 9-10, 2022, the Bureau of Indian Education (BIE) Advisory Board for Exceptional Children will host [an online meeting](#) open to the public to discuss the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act of 2004 (IDEA) and its impact on Indian children with disabilities. The Advisory Board will consider agenda items regarding special education topics from the:

- BIE Central Office
- BIE/Division of Performance and Accountability (DPA)/Special Education Program
- BIE Office of Sovereignty in Indian Education
- Four Public Commenting Sessions will be provided during both meeting days.

The meeting will be from 8:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. Mountain Standard Time both days. For more information on the upcoming meeting, please visit: [Federal Register :: Advisory Board of Exceptional Children](#)

Background

The goal of IDEA is to ensure that students with a disability are provided with free appropriate public education that is tailored to their individual needs, with the overall goal to provide children with disabilities the same opportunity for education as those students who do not have a disability. The Advisory Board was established under IDEA to advise the Secretary of the Interior, through the Assistant Secretary of Indian Affairs, on the needs of Indian children with disabilities. According to the [Office of Special Education Programs](#), in school year 2018-2019, “20.1% of American Indian or Alaska Native children with disabilities served under IDEA, Part B were in Oklahoma, 9% in Arizona, 7.6% in BIE, 5.9% in New Mexico, 5.9% in California, 5.5% in Alaska, 3.9% in New York, and 4.1% in Minnesota.”

According to a recent [report by the U.S. Census Bureau](#), American Indian and Alaska Native (AI/AN) children represent the highest rate of disability among U.S. children. In 2019, more than 3 million children in the U.S. had a disability, with 5.9 percent of AI/AN children having a disability. Various social factors impact the disproportionate number of AI/AN children with a disability, including household income, as well as lack of access to high quality-health care services.