

**Report to the Board
Federal Programs Director
Kelsie Badger
August 2026**

Overview

Recent work within Federal Programs and Special Education has focused on strengthening compliance, improving systems and service delivery, and building staff capacity. As we begin the 2026–2027 school year, our priorities include ensuring timelines and documentation remain compliant, maximizing available state and federal resources, and providing staff with practical tools and training to better support students.

State Updates — Idaho High-Needs Fund (\$1288)

The Idaho High-Needs Fund provides reimbursement support for districts serving students with significant educational needs. The current reimbursement structure includes:

- Up to 100% reimbursement for eligible costs above \$30,000, capped at \$80,000.
- Up to 80% reimbursement for eligible costs above \$80,000.
- A maximum reimbursement of \$100,000 per student.
- Funds will be distributed 60% to non-rural districts and 40% to rural districts, up to the total annual allocation.
- The FY2027 statewide allocation is \$5 million.
- If applications exceed the available statewide funding, awards will be distributed on a proportionate, pro-rata basis.

The initial phase of the program is expected to use a spreadsheet-based tracking system, with a targeted release in September. A September webinar will provide training on the spreadsheet, review the application process, and provide an opportunity for Special Education Directors to ask questions as the program is implemented.

IEP Compliance & Timelines

The EdPlan calendar has been updated to reflect the new 45-school-day timeline for initial special education eligibility evaluations, effective July 1, 2026.

As we begin the new school year, continued attention will be placed on:

- Meeting all evaluation and eligibility timelines.
- Maintaining accurate and timely documentation in EdPlan.

- Ensuring IEP services, accommodations, and supports are implemented consistently.
- Monitoring compliance and providing support to building teams when needed.

Our goal is to maintain strong compliance while ensuring the process remains focused on identifying student needs and providing appropriate educational supports.

District-Wide Behavior Training & Support

This year, we are taking a more intentional, district-wide approach to behavior support and staff development. Our goal is to establish a common understanding and consistent set of strategies for administrators, teachers, and classified staff across the district.

The focus will be on building staff capacity to:

- Prevent and proactively address challenging behavior.
- Better understand the function and purpose behind student behavior.
- Teach appropriate replacement behaviors and skills.
- Respond to challenging situations in a calm, consistent, and effective manner.
- Increase staff confidence when supporting students with behavioral needs.
- Reduce instructional time lost to challenging behavior.

An important component of this work will be creating consistency across our schools. Students should experience predictable expectations, language, and responses regardless of the classroom, teacher, building, or staff member supporting them.

This work is not about identifying one strategy that works for every student. Instead, we want to equip staff with the knowledge and tools to ask: “What is this student communicating through their behavior, and what skill or support do they need from us?”

Our ultimate goal is to strengthen relationships, increase instructional time, and create learning environments where both students and staff feel supported and successful.