



Testimony of Stacey Tie  
Special Education Equity for Kids in Connecticut (SEEK)  
To Committee on Education  
February 19, 2026

Senator McCrory, Chairwoman Leeper, Senator Berthel, Representative Zupkus,

My name is Stacey Tie. I am a special education advocate in Connecticut and serve as Secretary and a member of the Advocacy Committee for Special Education Equity for Kids. I would like to briefly address three areas: rate setting, the identification of the implementer on the IEP, and the use of SEED grant funds for contractors.

As you know, we are deeply concerned that recent legislative efforts have focused primarily on rate setting and cost containment in special education. We believe this approach targets the wrong problem and risks harming the delivery of services to students. Rather than concentrating energy on limiting costs, we would strongly prefer to see investment in attracting more educators to the field, providing current educators with meaningful, evidence-based training, and ensuring manageable caseloads so staff can effectively meet student needs.

That said, in the spirit of collaboration and in response to what was enacted last year, we respectfully offer the following recommendations as implementation moves forward:

**1. Rate Setting – Section 3 of P.A. 25-67**

We recommend modifications to ensure that any rate-setting system is fair, transparent, and workable. Specifically:

- Ensure meaningful stakeholder involvement in the design of any rate-setting system, including parents, advocates, districts, and providers.
- Clearly delineate the types of organizations to which rate setting applies. Small professional groups that contract with school districts and private schools that are not Approved Private Special Education Placements (APSEPs) should not be subject to these requirements.
- Require at least one full year of a “dry run” prior to any binding implementation, so unintended consequences can be identified and addressed.

**2. IEP Implementer – Section 21(c) of P.A. 25-67**

Section 21(c) required the CSDE to remove from the IEP form the list of individuals responsible - for implementing the IEP. This change has inadvertently deprived parents of critical information about who is delivering their child’s program.

In many cases, students require providers with specific, specialized training beyond general certification. For example, a student with dyslexia may require instruction from a literacy specialist trained in structured literacy. While the special education teacher remains legally responsible for the IEP, the individual implementing a specialized intervention may be someone with distinct credentials or training.

It is essential that the IEP clearly specify the qualifications or training required to implement a student's program. Without this clarity, fidelity of implementation is at risk. We respectfully request that this section be repealed so transparency and accountability can be restored.

### **3. SEED Grants – Section 7(e)(1) of P.A. 25-67**

Section 7(e)(1) prohibits the use of SEED grant funds for special education and related services provided by third-party contractors. This restriction has significantly limited the effectiveness of SEED grants, particularly in smaller districts that rely on contracted providers because student needs do not justify full-time hires.

Eliminating this exclusion would allow districts to use funds more flexibly and responsibly to meet student needs, especially in related services such as OT, PT, speech, and specialized Instruction.

We appreciate your time and consideration. As you know, we have shared our input and concerns with many of you directly, and we remain committed to working collaboratively to improve outcomes for Connecticut students with disabilities. We look forward to continuing to partner with you to ensure that children across Connecticut receive the high-quality education they deserve.

