

## Newly signed Stimulus Package promises extra funding for special ed and other school needs

Special education advocates are rejoicing over the signing of an economic stimulus package that gives a financial shot in the arm to students in need. The law also marks an important shift that makes the federal government a key player once again in educational funding.

A major increase of \$12.2 billion is earmarked for goals and standards of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), the driving force behind programs supporting children with special needs. It includes preschool funding designed to diagnosis and address needs earlier.

Additionally, the added money is intended to ease the overwhelming burden on states that have been

paying more than their share of special education costs.

In a detailed article, the New York Times noted that the stimulus package is a significant turning point for school funding in the U.S.: "The proposed emergency expenditures on nearly every realm of education, including school renovation, special

The [New York Times](#) has a complete review of the bill's expected impact on education.

Start and grants to needy college students, would amount to the largest increase in federal aid since Washington began to spend significantly on education after World War II."

Package supporters include the [Center for Exceptional Children](#) and the [National Association of State Boards of Education](#).

## NJ's Autism Task Force coming to Mount Holly

Parents with children who have autism can offer their opinions to a New Jersey task force that is focusing on ways the state can better serve adults living with the disorder. The group has scheduled a public forum for March 16 in Mount Holly, Burlington County.

New Jersey's Adult Task Force on Autism is part of an initiative launched with Gov. Jon Corzine's signature in September 2007. While the initiative included greater efforts for early diagnoses, uniform screening guidelines for physicians and education of emergency responders, it also set up a task force to consider how people with autism could be helped as adults.

The task force is seeking ideas related to housing, employment and transportation, among other issues that face people with autism who are too old for the public school system. Anyone can attend its next forum from 6 to 8 p.m. Monday, March 16 in Lecture Hall A of the Burlington County Human Services Facility at 795 Woodlane Road in Mount Holly.



Arc offers free showing of inspiring documentary

Bill Sackter began a folk hero among people with disabilities when he left the confines of an institution to lead a fulfilling life. Along the way he influenced major changes in the treatment and perceptions of people with disabilities.

A newly released [documentary](#) of Sackter's life shares his inspiring story to help celebrate the 60<sup>th</sup> anniversary of The Arc New Jersey, which presents a [free showing](#) of the 90-minute film in partnership with The Arc of Middlesex County.

The feature-length documentary will be shown at 7 p.m. Monday, March 9 at the Middlesex County College Performing Arts Center, 2600 Woodbridge Ave. in Edison.

Broder Law Group, P.C. will keep you up to date on legal issues affecting special education.

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