A (very) Brief History of Special Education in the U.S.

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What were you doing in 1975?

Who can remember that far back?

And was that really the beginning of special education?
Let’s Step Back a Little Further in Time

- **1958**: P.L. 85–926 focused on training special ed teachers to teach children with cognitive disabilities (not called that then)
- **1961**: P.L. 87–276 provided funding for training teachers in the education of deaf children
- **1963**: P.L. 88–164 expanded training for other disability areas
- **1965**: P.L. 89–10 – first ESEA law
The ‘60s were a busy time

- 1965: P.L. 89–313: amended Title I of ESEA to authorize funding for children with disabilities served in state-operated schools and facilities
Big Breakthrough in 1966

- P.L. 89–750: amended ESEA to provide funds to SEAs to improve and expand programs serving preschoolers and K-12 students with disabilities. Also established the Bureau of Education for the Handicapped
But Wait.. There’s more

- 1968
Handicapped Children’s Early Education Assistance Act

- First specific legislation focusing exclusively on the education of all children with disabilities
- Focus was on infants and children birth to age 8
- Mandated parent involvement
- Gave birth to the field of early childhood special education
And in 1969...

- P.L. 91–230 actually amended ESEA but also consolidated existing laws pertaining to children with disabilities
- Created the Education of the Handicapped Act
- Established a definition of learning disabilities
- Also recognized the needs of gifted and talented students
Established a preschool mandate that not less than 10% of the total number of Head Start placements be reserved for children with disabilities.
And in 1973...

- P.L. 93–112 The Rehabilitation Act of 1973
- Included Section 504, which prohibits discrimination against individuals with disabilities
- It covers both children and adults
- Protects students ineligible for services under IDEA
And in 1974...

- P.L. 380 – more education amendments to ESEA required states to plan for educating all children with disabilities
And Then There Was 1975!!
P.L. 94–142

- Key tenets of special education established
  - Provides FAPE to all children ages 3–21
  - Established pre-school incentive grants to provide services to young children
  - Established IEPs
  - Procedural safeguards
But It Took One More Law...

- P.L. 98–199, the Education of the Handicapped Act Amendments of 1983 to provide funding to states to develop programs and serve children birth to 3
- It also established new programs for transitioning secondary school students to adulthood
1986: established payment of attorney fees
And Then There Is the ADA

- The Americans with Disabilities Act was enacted in 1990 (P.L. 336), the most comprehensive civil rights law
- Extends civil rights protections in private sector employment, public facilities and transportation
- Was amended in 2008 and broadened in some respects
What Happened to P.L. 94–142?

- It was amended in 1990 by P.L. 101–476 and the law became known as the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act.
- The 1990 amendments added autism and traumatic brain injury and transition plans.
- It was amended again in 1991 by P.L. 102–119 to extend Part H.
- It was amended again in 1997 – major retooling addressing discipline, mediation and revised funding formula.
Which Brings Us to the 21st Century!

- 2001: The No Child Left Behind Act (which we are now leaving behind – sort of)
- 2004: IDEA reauthorization added
  - State Performance Plans and Annual Performance Reports
  - Comprehensive Early Intervening Services
  - Changes to transition requirements
  - What else?
And December 2015

- We got the Every Student Succeeds Act
  - Provisions that address students with disabilities
  - It amended IDEA!
Did I Hear Someone Asking About IDEA Reauthorization?
Questions?