

IDEA Federal Regulations: Research Based Definition

On August 14, 2006, the United States Department of Education, Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP) published final federal regulations to implement Part B of the IDEA that was reauthorized on December 3, 2004. The regulations took effect on October 13, 2006. Within the body of the regulations there is a definition of “scientifically based research” which informs districts on defining the standard; 34CFR § 300.035 and adopts the definition contained in No Child Left Behind:

Scientifically based research:

- a.) means research that involves the application of rigorous, systematic, and objective procedures to obtain reliable and valid knowledge relevant to education activities and programs; and
- b.) includes research that:
 - (1) employs systematic, empirical methods that draw on observation or experiment;
 - (2) involves rigorous data analyses that are adequate to test the stated hypotheses and justify the general conclusion drawn;
 - (3) relies on measurements or observational methods that provide reliable and valid data across evaluators and observers, across multiple measurements and observations, and across studies by the same or different investigators;
 - (4) is evaluated using experimental or quasi-experimental designs in which individuals, entities, programs or activities are assigned to different conditions and with appropriate controls to evaluate the effects of the condition of interest, with a preference for random-assignment experiments, or other designs to the extent

that those designs contain within-condition or across condition controls;

- (5) ensures that experimental studies are presented in sufficient detail and clarity to allow for replication or, at a minimum, offer the opportunity to build systematically on their findings; and
- (6) has been accepted by a peer-reviewed journal or approved by a panel of independent experts through a comparably rigorous, objective, and scientific review.