

# HECSE Short Course & Winter Summit 2026

## Key Learnings & Takeaways

- **Policy Insights:**

- IDEA authorized up to 40% of excess costs
  - Actual funding remains ~12-15%
- Policy windows require strategic readiness
  - Advocates must maintain messaging and evidence

- **Legislative Process:**

- Legislation can take years or even decades to pass
  - Example: A whole milk in schools policy took 15 years to pass
- Power of numbers: Congressional offices respond to volume
  - Coordinated outreach from multiple constituents increases visibility and urgency

- **Implications for Nevada:**

- Sustained advocacy requires coordinated messaging, local impact framing, and readiness for federal budget opportunities



**This experience reinforced the importance of sustained, research-informed advocacy in advancing special education policy!**