

Special Education Resources for Charter Schools

Presentation at the
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Plan for this Session

- Presenters:
 - Eileen Ahearn, NASDSE
 - Beth Giovannetti, Educational Support Systems
 - Lauren Rhim, LMR Consulting
 - Paul O’Neill, Tugboat Education Enterprises
- Topics:
 - A Little Background
 - Resources for Authorizers, School Leaders and State Officials
 - Q&A

Eileen Ahearn

BACKGROUND

A Little Background

- How special education is part of a charter school:
 - Federal and State legal requirements
 - Current controversy related to special education in charter schools
- Supporting successful inclusion:
 - Resources currently available
 - Additional resources needed

Beth Giovannetti

Developing Resources
for
Charter School Leaders

Support for Charter School Leaders

- Conduct review of current Federally Funded Resources including...
 - NICHCY
 - PBIS
 - Regional Education Centers (21)
 - Center on Instruction
 - PACER Center
 - Social Security

Support for Charter School Leaders

- Identify greatest challenges in field; locate & review existing tools created to lend support in those areas
 - Serving students with behavioral & emotional needs
 - Serving students on the Autism spectrum
 - Discipline for students with disabilities
 - Enrollment of students with disabilities
 - Creating a program for students with disabilities in your start up year
 - Building parent partnerships

Support for Charter School Leaders

- Identify tools, update if needed, re-package & tailor to meet current school level needs
- Identify what is still needed based upon input from charter schools
 - Survey for charter school leaders

Lauren Morando Rhim &
Paul O'Neill

Developing Resources
For
Authorizers

Special Education Technical Assistance

Problem

To date, most technical assistance related to special education has focused on charter school operators but charter school authorizers are uniquely positioned to make certain that:

- new and replication applicants have the capacity to educate children with disabilities and
- existing operators are providing high quality special education and related services to all students with disabilities and are complying with all applicable laws, rules and regulations.

Charter Authorizer Rubric Project (Rhim & O'Neill)

Response

Develop three phase rubric for authorizers that will improve their capacity to support development and maintenance of high quality special education programs thereby ensuring that students with disabilities have equal access to charter schools

Authorizer Rubric

Three Phases:

Application/Replication

Operation

Renewal/

Reauthorization

APPLICATION PHASE

Objective:

Provide authorizers with a tool to assess applicant's capacity to provide a high quality special education program,

Infuse a layer of transparency into the authorization process

Disseminate a blue print for applicants about what they need to do to make certain they are prepared to educate students with disabilities.

Process is different for first time applicants than it is for existing schools looking to replicate. Rubric elements for new applicants will focus on indications of the group's understanding of the challenges and requirements of serving students with disabilities in a charter setting; those for schools seeking to replicate will focus on the track record already established by the organization.

OPERATIONS/OVERSIGHT PHASE

Objective:

Help authorizers to ensure that currently operating charter schools are meeting obligations to include students with disabilities appropriately and serve them compliantly for the purpose of building charter school capacity.

RENEWAL/CLOSURE PHASE

Objective:

Provide a structure for authorizers to examine individual charter school practices over the life of charter such as: Child Find, enrollment procedures, initial evaluations, development of IEPs, provision of related services and transition services for the purpose of informing renewal decisions

PRELIMINARY RUBRIC CATEGORIES

- Administration/Governance
- Curriculum and instruction
- Assessment
- Enrollment
- Service provision
- Specialized personnel (e.g., certified special education teachers, administrators, related services personnel)
- Budget
- Discipline
- Facility
- Transportation
- Management company experience and practices (where applicable)
- Track record (for schools seeking to replicate)

RUBRIC DEVELOPMENT

Data Sources

Existing technical assistance documents produced by the National Association of State Directors of Special Education (NASDSE) and research conducted under the auspices of Project SEARCH, SPEDTACS, Project Intersect, and TA Customizer projects funded by the U.S. Department of Education and recent work commissioned by the Center for Policy Research in Education (CRPE).

Preliminary Time Line

June - August: Draft Rubric

September: Vet rubric with key stakeholders

October: Hold focus group at NACSA to gather feedback regarding content

November: Finalize and distribute rubric via hosted webinars and key organizations (i.e., National Charter Resource Center, National Association of State Directors of Special Education, National Association of Charter School Authorizers)

Questions Suggestions?

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