

NATIONAL CENTER FOR SPECIAL EDUCATION



IN CHARTER SCHOOLS



Schools for All: Evaluating Programs for Students with Disabilities

Lauren Morando Rhim & Paul O'Neill

National Center for Special Education in Charter Schools

Azure D.S. Angelov
University of Indianapolis



Key Questions

- How do you determine whether a prospective school operator has a viable plan and the capacity to implement it?
- How do you monitor provision of special education and related services once schools are approved?
- How should provision of special education be evaluated for use in high stakes decisions?
- What if any challenges have you encountered in trying to evaluate capacity?
- What consequences should be leveraged should a charter school not fulfill its responsibilities related to educating students with disabilities?



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.



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



Three Phases:

Application/Replication

Operations/Oversight

Renewal/Reauthorization



Objective:

Provide authorizers with means to assess applicant's capacity to deliver high quality special education program

Infuse an additional layer of transparency into the authorization process

Provide a structure to ensure that operating charter schools are meeting obligations to enroll and support students with disabilities.

Provide a structure for authorizers to examine individual charter school practices over the life of charter



Administration/Governance

Curriculum and instruction

Assessment

Enrollment

Service provision

Specialized personnel

Budget

Discipline

Facility

Transportation

Management company experience and practices (where applicable)

Track record (for schools seeking to replicate)



National Trends





Indianapolis



OEI's Focus on Special Education

- 2011 NACSA Good to Great Grant
- Reviewed Existing Policies
- Interviewed Staff and School Leaders
- Pilot in 4 Schools



Scaffolding Support

- Application Process
- Charter Renewal Process
- Site Visits and Evaluation
- City-Wide Conference, Family Resources



Examples

- Application Handbook: <http://oei.indy.gov/wp-content/uploads/2015/07/Application.Packet.Fall.2015.pdf>
- Evaluation & Performance Framework (4.9): <http://oei.indy.gov/wp-content/uploads/2015/06/2015-2016-Performance-Framework-Handbook.pdf>
- Renewal Process: <http://oei.indy.gov/wp-content/uploads/2015/05/Charter.Renewal.Application.20151.pdf>



Samples

- Sample School Renewal Report (Excel Report):
http://oei.indy.gov/wp-content/uploads/2015/09/Final_Excel-Center-Renewal-Report.pdf
- 2014 NACSA Profile in The Fund



Discussion

- How is special education integrated into your authorization practices?
- What if any challenges are you encountering in evaluating special education program?
- What emerging lessons can you share with peers?
- What resources guide your practice?



Resources

- LEA Authorizer Rubrics
- Part of an LEA Authorizer Rubrics
- Indianapolis Review Tool



Follow-up Questions

- Lauren Morando Rhim: lmrhim@ncsecs.org
- Paul O'Neill: ptoneill@ncsecs.org
- Azure Angelov: angelova@uindy.edu