

Special Education
Legislative Taskforce
Charter Schools

Taskforce Matrix

N) Review Special education services and programs currently in Arkansas public charter schools and public charter schools outside of Arkansas

Introductions

- Tripp Walter and Barbara Hunter Cox – Arkansas Public School Resource Center
- Sarah McKenzie and Sivan Tuchman – Office for Education Policy
- John Bacon – eStem Charter School
- Luanne Baroni and Angela Larrison – Lisa Academy
- Scott Shirey – KIPP

**Arkansas Charter
Survey Results**

Barbara Hunter Cox - Arkansas Public School Resource Center

Arkansas Charter School Survey

- Survey of all 22 Open Enrollment Charter Schools was completed in May
- Charter Schools reported that they provide all required services and shared specific examples of the use of "Wrap Around" Services
- The following data contains current data for the 2015-16 school year
- Specific questions established the current operating status of Special Education in Charter schools across the state

Increases in Special Education Services

- 91% of the Open Enrollment Charter schools reported that in the last 3 years there has been an increase in special education students
- 100% reported an increase in 504 students

Trend Data

- Newly established Charter schools have the lowest percentage of special education students served
- Reason – Lack of awareness about the Charter and its special education services but as awareness increases so does the number of students identified and served
- After the first 3 years of operations, the special education numbers increase steadily but are usually lower than local district averages
- Formal establishment of administrative support on the campus sites

Trend Data

- Trend focusing on integration into the regular classroom based on small class sizes evidenced in service delivery at Charters
- Expansion of special education options have been discussed with a parent/service provider group wanting to establish a charter school focusing on special education similar to those established in other states
- Significant move to community-based "wrap-around" and contractual services
- Focus on expanded transition services provided by Charters

Compliance Issues

- Charter schools report no current compliance issues as a result of Compliance Audits by ADE
- Only two Charters reported past "due process" hearings that resulted in parental settlement or mandated training
- So in terms of meeting state and federal requirements Charters are very similar to traditional schools

APSRC Survey – Design of Services

- Examined the differences in special education service delivery based on unique design of Charter schools with some examples:
 - **Rockbridge and Ozark Montessori Charters** – Grounded in the Montessori model, students are served in small groups with “hands on” highly engaged Montessori curricular materials utilizing a “push-in” instructional model
 - **SIA Tech** – A dropout recovery program focusing on re-engaging and motivating students to complete high school and earn their diplomas
 - **Imboden Charter** – All students are mainstreamed with a sequential personalized educational plan based on their small class size and inclusion service delivery

APSRC Survey – Design of Services

- Examined the differences in special education service delivery based on unique design of Charter schools with some examples:
 - **Arkansas Arts Academy** – Where Art focused Fridays allow special education students to develop their artistic talents while providing extra time for instructional support
 - **Arkansas Virtual Academy** – Online therapy options, virtual RTI interventions and co-teaching is done within a digital platform
 - **KIPP** – Utilization of a rotation model with self-contained students to provide an opportunity to switch classes but providing the intensive interventions needed

Strategies and Innovations

- Establishing a sequential personalized learning plan for every student in the Charter which supports and enhances IEPs for the mainstreamed students
- Systematic use of pre-reading with newly enrolled students to expose them to the content before it is introduced in the regular classroom
- A specialized schedule for self-contained students which allows them to rotate among the special education staff so they have the opportunity to switch classes and prepares them for transition

Strategies and Innovations

- Use of technology - Each student is issued an iPad which has special education programs tailored to the student
- Implementation of Incentive pay for special education teachers - \$2,000 stipend
- Utilization of online interventions within a virtual school environment
- Homework HELP and after school tutoring
- One of 2 pilot sites for CIRCLES

Issues Identified

- Paperwork Reduction
- Recruitment and Retention of highly qualified Special Education staff
- More training for regular education teachers
- Request for more collaboration with other schools including sharing of resources

Special Education in Charter Schools – OEP Research

Sarah McKenzie, Executive Director, Office for Education Policy
Sivan Tuchman – Office for Educational Policy

Practitioner
Presentations

Angela Larison & Luanne Burton - Lisa Academy
John Bacon - eSitem

Special Education In Charter Schools

Joint Legislative Task Force on Special Education
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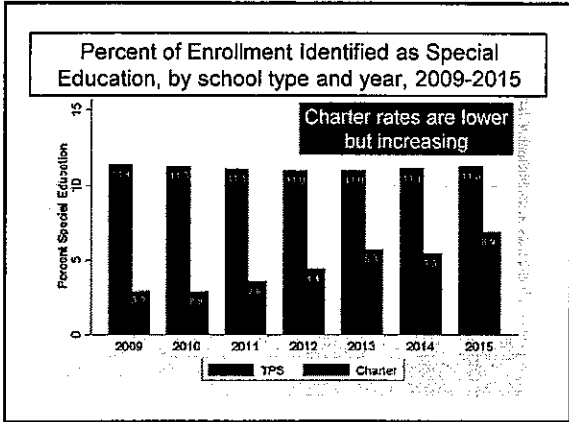
Context

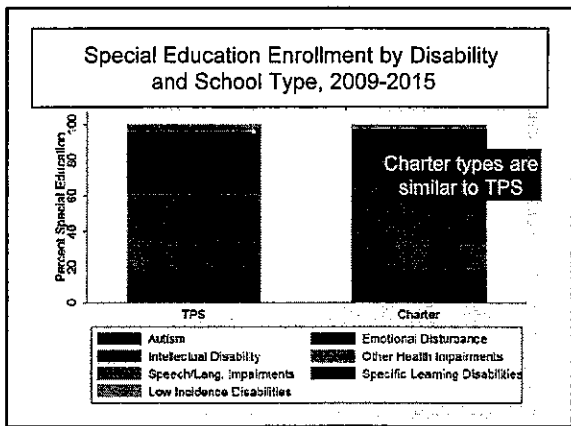
- Charter schools are required to accept all students until oversubscribed, then lottery winners must be accepted
- Disproportionate charter enrollment of students with disabilities raises concerns
- "Counseling out" and "pushing out" may be issues
- Competing mission of charters

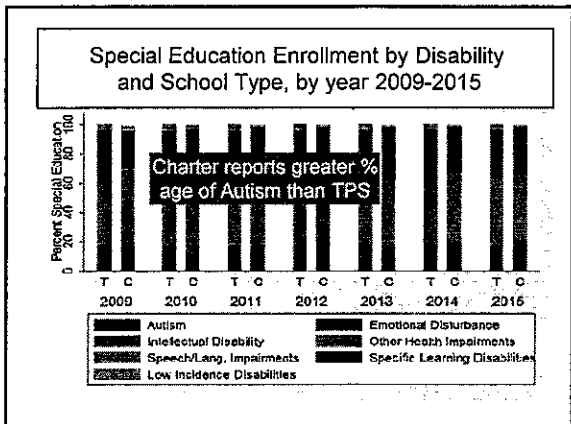
Arkansas K-12 Public School Enrollment 2009 and 2015

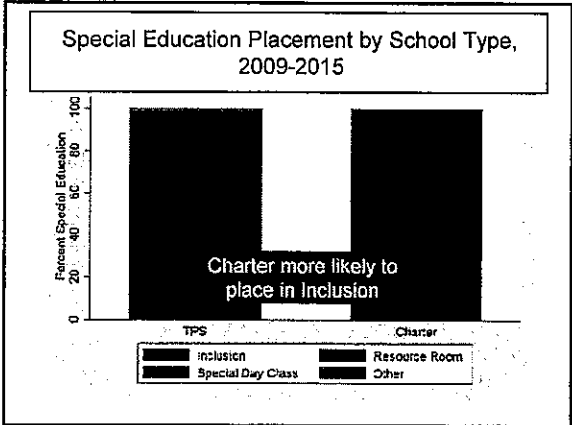
Traditional Public Schools (TPS)	Open-Enrollment Charter Schools (Charter)
• 2009: 460,323	• 2009: 4,300
• 2015: 465,455	• 2015: 10,271

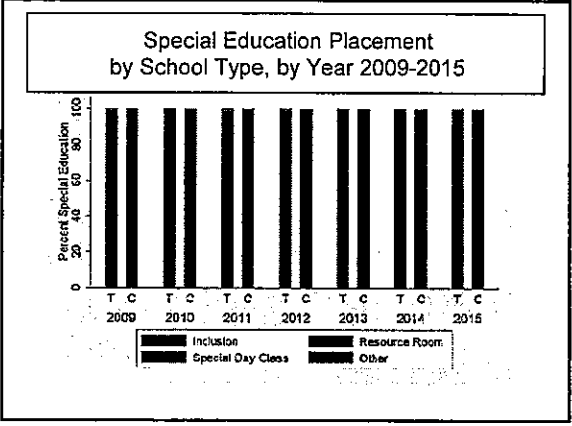
Charter is small percentage of state-wide K-12 enrollment (2.2% in 2015)











- Suggested Research**
- Mobility and de-identification trends in charters
 - Revenues and expenditures in special education
 - Student recruiting strategies used by charters
 - District/charter collaboration practices
 - Special education expertise and training needs

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LISA Academy
Public Charter
Schools

Angela Larrison
Director of Federal Programs

Mission / Vision

Our Mission
The mission of LISA Academy is to provide an academically rigorous and challenging program, which begins with academic, behavior, and the necessary support of students to gain knowledge, skills, and the character necessary to direct their lives, to pursue a career, and to contribute to a changing world by providing dynamic, research-based learning environments.


Our Vision
Our vision is to enable students to succeed in school and in the workplace, and to provide an option for students to enter middle, science, and engineering careers. This is achieved by providing a challenging and rigorous learning environment for all students.

Enrollment

“Charters are increasing the enrollment of special education students over time”
Special Education in Michigan Charter Schools

Lottery Procedures and Date when a grade or class is over-subscribed
A lottery is conducted if the number of students enrolling in a grade or class exceeds the capacity of the classroom. The lottery is held for all students who are eligible for enrollment in the appropriate grade or class. The lottery is held on the first day of the school year. The lottery is held for all students who are eligible for enrollment in the appropriate grade or class. The lottery is held on the first day of the school year.

2004 – 5 students
to
2015 – 100 students




Student Data

Category: Orthopedic Impairment (Other)
 Ethnicity: White
 Gender: Female
 Least Restrictive Environment: Indirect Services

Student Reality

- One-on-one paraprofessional
 - Rare bone and muscle disorder
- Specialized desks for each classroom
 - Uses wheelchair on occasions
- Assistive Technology
 - Needed to assist with writing due to poor motor control of hands
- Specialized Training for Staff and Nursing Care
 - Trained for procedure how to pick up student if she ever fell
 - Frequent surgeries required nursing care and home instruction



Disabilities


☞

☞ "Types of disabilities of students enrolled in charter schools almost perfectly mirrors the enrollment in the traditional public schools." *Special Education in Arkansas: Charter Schools*
 USA Academy Public Charter School - District

Disability	# of Students	SPED				
		Autism	Emotional Disturbance	Intellectual Disability	Physical Impairment	Other
Intellectual Disability	5	0	0	2	3	
Speech & Language Impairment	19	0	15	4	0	
Specific Learning Disabilities	14	0	11	3	0	
Autism	15	2	7	6	0	
Emotional Disturbance	7	0	1	3	0	
Other Health Impairment	19	1	0	9	0	
Other	4	0	2	2	0	
Total	105	3	35	25	16	26
		2.9%	3.2%	2.4%	1.5%	24.6%

District: 3303

Sample Size: 34,444, 34,444
 Special Education Program: 3303, 3303




Student Data

Category: SLD
 Ethnicity: White
 Gender: Male
 Least Restrictive Environment: Some Direct Instruction
 More than 80% of time in General Education

Student Reality

- Assistive Technology
 - Writing Expression software
- Occupational Therapy
 - Fine motor to increase stamina to write
 - Refused to participate in therapy at school; school paid for therapy to be held at therapy off-campus site
- ABA Therapist and counseling services
 - Extreme Anger Issues (inappropriate actions and property damage)
 - Social Issues (inappropriate topics of conversation / hate words / cursing)
- Professional Development for Staff
 - Rage to Reason
 - Anger management techniques



Services



ca "special education students enrolled in charters have lower needs than those of traditional public schools" *Special Education in Arkansas Charter Schools*

- Speech Therapy
- Occupational Therapy
- Physical Therapy
- Mental Health Counseling
- State Vision Consultant
- Children's Hospital EARS Program (Hearing Consultant and Audiologist)
- Arkansas Rehabilitation Services
- Arkansas Transition Services
- Easter Seals Arkansas Technology & curriculum Access Center
- Behavior Analysis Support – Board Certified Behavior Analyst



Student Data

Category: AU
Ethnicity: White
Gender: Male
Least Restrictive Environment: 40% to 79% of the Instructional Day in General Education

Student Reality

- One-on-one Paraprofessional
- Speech Therapy
- Occupational Therapy
- Physical Therapy
- Assistive Technology

- Requested Catastrophic funds for this student



Least Restrictive Environment



ca "Inclusion of students with disabilities into the general education classrooms potentially provides them with the least restrictive environment possible, which all public schools have been legally required to ensure since the Education for All Handicapped Children Act of 1975." *Special Education in Arkansas Charter Schools*

- LISA Academy provides all environments
 - Inclusion (push-in services)
 - Pull-out services
 - Indirect
 - Resource classes
 - Transition electives
 - Co-teaching
 - Self-contained

LISA Family



- Collaborative efforts of the student, parents, special education staff, and general education staff to meet the need of each student individually
- The student with his / her family is the center of the team
 - Student led their annual Individual Educational Plan meetings beginning in 6th grade
 - Students are encouraged to advocate for themselves
 - Students learn to talk to teachers asking for help
- Homework system
 - Organization is key to helping students with disabilities
 - System helps students learn to keep up with assignments with parent and teachers actively participating.
- Homework HELP program / subject specific tutoring
 - After school four days a week helping student to work on assignments
 - Allows for special education teachers to make sure that modifications / accommodations are in place
 - Gives the student the ability to get needed help in subjects that the parent may not have knowledge
 - Allows to get an accurate picture of students ability versus ability to turn in work



Student Transfer Data

Category: AU
 Ethnicity: Black
 Gender: Male
 Least Restrictive Environment: Day Treatment Facility
 Team changed placement to: 40% to 79% of the Instructional Day in General Education

Student Reality

- Day 1 at LISA Academy:
 - Father recently passed away; mother jailed for drugs
 - Adopted by aunt and uncle, who wanted better for him
 - Student did not speak
 - Fantasy world of Sonk the Hedgehog
 - Difficulties with peer interactions; sometimes inappropriate
 - Testing indicated average IQ and only deficit was in mathematics
- Services / Growth at LISA Academy:
 - Mental health counseling
 - Speech Therapy
 - Behavior plan that everyone followed
 - Progressed and no longer needed
 - Remedial Mathematics
 - Teachers understanding and worked with student
 - English assignment / Sonk the Hedgehog graphic novel
 - After school tutoring
- Day student graduated from LISA Academy:
 - Graduated with regular diploma
 - Attends ACTI



Programs



- ☞ CIRCLES (Transition Pilot Program) (one out of two school districts)
- ☞ Transition Fair
- ☞ Parent Nights
- ☞ Homework HELP
- ☞ Home visits

Trainings



- ☞ Whole staff Special Education training
- ☞ Referral process
- ☞ Modifications / Accommodations
- ☞ Disability Awareness
- ☞ Behavior Management
- ☞ Rage to Reason

Technology



- ☞ Google Drive
- ☞ Survey teacher
 - ☞ Referral
 - ☞ Annual Conference
 - ☞ Training needs
 - ☞ Material needs
- ☞ Survey Parents
 - ☞ Referral
 - ☞ Annual Conference
- ☞ Documentation
 - ☞ Modification / Accommodation pages
 - ☞ Chart behavior

Upcoming



- ☞ Parents nights with guest speakers
- ☞ Adobe Sign
- ☞ Partnership with local university or school to provide life skill classes for our students
