

Charter Schools and Other Choice Options



Charter schools and other choice options are increasing in number and impact as state and local flexibility options that promote parental choice opportunities in education proliferate.

Guiding Principles

- Charter schools and other choice options operating as part of the public education system must implement special education under the provisions of Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) within the context of their legal authority as defined by the state's charter school law and practice.
- Charter schools should collaborate with the State Education Agency (SEA) and, when appropriate, a local education agency (LEA) to ensure compliance with the IDEA.
- Federal programs that support charter schools and schools of choice should be coordinated to ensure consistency across state and local programs in implementing federal requirements.
- Federal law and regulations should allow states sufficient flexibility to implement charter schools and other choice options that are sensitive to the needs, cultures and reform efforts unique to each state.
- Families should be fully informed of the implications of choice options available to them.
- States should have in place procedures leading to successful cooperation between SEAs, LEAs, charter schools and other choice options.
- State and/or LEA special education personnel should be involved in the application and renewal process for charter schools and other schools of choice.
- Federal education research should evaluate the effectiveness of instructional delivery models in charter schools and other schools of choice.
- SEAs and/or LEAs, the charter community and parents should collaborate to improve access to, and accountability for, students with disabilities in charter schools and schools of choice.

Legislative Priorities

- Fund research efforts to identify effective instructional delivery models in charter schools and other schools of choice.

NASDSE is not making any further legislative recommendations at this time. We want to emphasize that children with disabilities in charter schools or other choice options should have access to special education services as defined by the IDEA. We believe that other rules pertaining to charter schools and other school choice options not addressed by current federal law and/or regulation should be left to the states.