

Department of Exceptional Student Education
The School District of Palm Beach County

Guidance for Charter School Applicants for Section 6: Exceptional Students

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EVERYTHING YOU
WANT FOR
YOUR CHILD**



PALM BEACH COUNTY SCHOOLS
*Your **BEST** Choice!*

Top-performing urban school district in Florida

Section 6: Exceptional Students

- A. Provide the school's projected population of students with disabilities and describe how the projection was made.
- B. Describe how the school will ensure that students with disabilities will have an equal opportunity of being selected for enrollment in the charter school.
- C. Describe how the school will work with the sponsor and through the Individual Education Plan (IEP) process when necessary to ensure students with disabilities receive a free appropriate education (FAPE) in the least restrictive environment (LRE).
- D. Describe the methods the school will use to identify students with disabilities that have not yet been identified.
- E. Describe the programs, strategies, and supports the school will provide, including supplemental supports and services and modifications and accommodations to ensure the academic success of students with disabilities whose education needs can be met in a regular classroom environment with at least 80% of instruction occurring in a class with non-disabled peers.
- F. Describe how the school will work with the sponsor and through the IEP process to determine whether a student with a disability whose education needs require a regular classroom and resource room combination (between 40-80% of instruction occurring with non-disabled peers) can be provided FAPE by the school.
- G. Describe how the school will work with the sponsor and through the IEP process to determine whether a student with a disability whose education needs require a separate classroom (less than 40% of instruction occurring with non-disabled peers) can be provided FAPE by the school.
- H. Describe the plans for monitoring and evaluating the progress and success of students with disabilities to ensure the attainment of each student's goals as set forth in the IEP or 504 plan, including plans for promoting graduation for students with disabilities (high schools only).
- I. Identify the staffing plan, based on the above projection, for the school's special education program, including the number and qualifications of staff.
- J. Describe how the school's overall effectiveness in serving exceptional education students will be evaluated.
- K. Describe how the school will serve gifted and talented students.

A. Provide the school's projected population of students with disabilities and describe how the projection was made.

- What data sources were used to develop a realistic enrollment projection?
- What data sources were used to develop a realistic enrollment projection?
- How was the calculation completed?
- Were any special factors included in calculation?

B. Describe how the school will ensure that students with disabilities will have an equal opportunity of being selected for enrollment in the charter school.

- Describe HOW this requirement will be ensured
 - Process
 - Procedure
- A reiteration for the law will not suffice
- All public schools must comply with Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 that states that no person with a disability can be excluded from or denied benefits of any program receiving federal financial assistance

C. Describe how the school will work with the sponsor and through the IEP process when necessary.

- Describe how IEPs will be developed and implemented to be in compliance
 - At least annually
 - Utilizing the LEA's Liquid Office IEP eForms
 - Describe re-evaluation process
 - Describe process the school follows if they believe they do not have the resources to meet the student needs as per the IEP
- Describe **how** the school will comply with state and federal requirements for serving students with disabilities
 - Cutting and pasting from district policy, state statute, and/or federal regulation is not a description of how **YOU** will comply with those requirements
- Mandatory LEA training and IEP training is provided by the ESE Department

D. Describe the methods the school will use to identify students with disabilities that have not yet been identified.

- Describe how **YOU** will implement School Based Team (SBT), Multi-tiered Systems of Support(MTSS), Response to Intervention (Rtl), and Child Study Team (CST) Processes/Supports
 - All schools are required to have a multidisciplinary problem solving team
 - MTSS encompasses the entire spectrum of instructional delivery for your school
 - Rtl is the individualized intervention process

D. Describe the methods the school will use to identify students with disabilities that have not yet been identified. (cont.)

- Response to Intervention(RtI)
 - Tier 1 is general core curriculum
 - Tier 2 consists of supplemental interventions usually delivered in a small group format
 - Tier 3 interventions become individualized and intensive; they may be provided 1:1 or in a small group setting
 - It is important to note that the RtI process cannot be used to delay-deny an evaluation for eligibility under IDEA
 - Training offered via the Department of Safe Schools

E. - F. - G. – Service Provision: A clear description of the programs, strategies and supports the school will provide to students with disabilities that will ensure appropriate access for students with disabilities and that the school will not discriminate based on disability.

- E. Describe the programs, strategies, and supports the school will provide, including supplemental supports and services and modifications and accommodations to ensure the academic success of students with disabilities whose education needs can be met in a regular classroom environment with at least **80%** of instruction occurring in a class with non-disabled peers.
- F. Describe how the school will work with the sponsor and through the IEP process to determine whether a student with a disability whose education needs require a regular classroom and resource room combination (between **40-80%** of instruction occurring with non-disabled peers) can be provided FAPE by the school.
- G. Describe how the school will work with the sponsor and through the IEP process to determine whether a student with a disability whose education needs require a separate classroom (**less than 40%** of instruction occurring with non-disabled peers) can be provided FAPE by the school.

E. - F. - G. – Service Provision

- Describe the full range of services that will be made available
- Address the continuum from least restrictive to most restrictive
- Provisions in place to provide for therapies
- Budget line item(s) for expenditures
- Least Restrictive Environment guide:
 - 80/20 - 80% of time spent in general education setting
 - 60/40 - 60% of time spent in general education setting
 - 40/60 - 40% of time spent in general education setting
 - 20/80 - 20% of time spent in general education setting

80 / 20 ≠ Consultation Only

A note on Continuum of Services and LRE:

The school must describe their continuum of services. From consultation to support facilitation to direct instruction, etc. The location of services corresponds to the 80/20 LRE, not the type of service. For example:

- student requires support facilitation for all academic courses with 60 minutes per week pull out Speech and 30 minutes per week pull out OT is removed from the general education setting for 90 minutes per week or 6% of the time so 94% of their time is spent within general ed. **80/20**
- student requires direct instruction in a separate class for math (60 minutes per day) with support facilitation in all other subjects is removed from general education setting for 300 minutes per week or 20% of the time with 80% of their time spent in gen ed. **80/20**
- student requires direct ESE instruction in a separate class for ELA (90 minute block) is removed from the general education setting for 450 minutes per week which is 30% of the time so 70% of their time is spent with general ed. **60/40**

H. Describe the plans for monitoring and evaluating progress and success of students with disabilities to ensure attainment of each student's goals as set forth in the IEP or 504 plan. Schools serving a high school population must also include plans for promoting graduation for SWD.

- What will be your process/procedure for monitoring?
- Who will be responsible?
- How and when will parents be notified of progress?
- Be sure to address graduation for high school students

I. Identify the staffing plan, based on the above projection, for the school's special education program, including the number and qualifications of staff.

- ESE Certification
- Highly Qualified Personnel
- Budget for Expenditures
- Charter and District Responsibilities

Staffing Plan Resource

- Guide for academic services (VE) based on sponsor allocation formula:
 - Primary (K-3) # students / 18
 - Intermediate / Middle (4 – 8) # students / 22
 - High School (9-12) # students / 25
- Guide for Speech/Language services based on sponsor allocation formula:
 - Elementary # students times 1.12 / 50
 - Secondary # students times 1.05 / 65
- Schools offering highly specialized programs for SWD or ESE PK may contact the District ESE Department for additional information on allocation of supports for intensive programs.

J. Describe how the school's overall effectiveness in serving exceptional education students will be evaluated.

- How will you measure these things?
 - Progress on IEP Goals
 - Classroom Performance
 - Results of State and District Assessments
 - Annual Measurable Objectives (AMO)
- Not just a list of measures; how will those measures be used?

K. Describe how the school will serve gifted and talented students.

- Describe the full range of services that will be made available.
- Address the continuum from least restrictive to most restrictive.
- Provisions in place to provide for supplemental supports
- Budget line item(s) for expenditures.

Evaluation Criteria: Section 6 Exceptional Students

- Reviewers will look for:

- A **clear description** of the programs, strategies and supports the school will provide to students with disabilities that will ensure appropriate access for students with disabilities and that the school will not discriminate based on disability.
- A **clear description** of how the school will ensure students with disabilities will have an equal opportunity of being selected for enrollment.
- A **comprehensive and compelling plan** for appropriate identification of students with special needs to ensure they are served in the least restrictive environment possible, have appropriate access to the general education curriculum and schoolwide educational, extra-curricular, and culture-building activities in the same manner as non-disabled students, receive required and appropriate support services as outlined in their Individual Education Plans and 504 plans, and participate in standardized testing.
- An **understanding and commitment to collaborating** with the sponsor to ensure that placement decisions for students with disabilities will be made based on each student's unique needs through the IEP process.
- An **appropriate plan for evaluating** the school's effectiveness in serving exceptional students, including gifted.
- A **realistic enrollment projection** (SWD) and a **staffing plan** that aligns with the projections.

Application Tips

- Answer **all** parts of each question
- Focus on describing **how** you will implement the requirements not just restating the requirements.
- Resources:
 - Local: <http://www.palmbeachschools.org/ese>
 - State: <http://www.fldoe.org/academics/exceptional-student-edu/>
 - Federal: <http://idea.ed.gov>