



Exceptional Student Services at ANCS

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What does a charter school have to provide as far as special education service?

*“Children that attend public charter schools and their parents retain all the rights given to them in a public school under IDEA” -
GADOE Special education implementation manual*

What is IDEA?

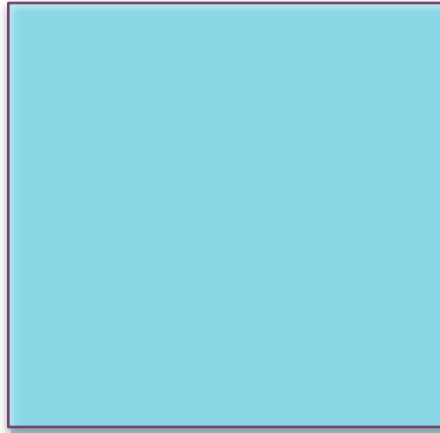
- The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) is a federal law that requires schools to serve the educational needs of eligible students with disabilities.
- Schools must find and evaluate students suspected of having disabilities—at no cost to parents.
- Not every child with learning and attention issues qualifies under IDEA.

What is the purpose of IDEA?

- To provide a free appropriate public education (FAPE) to children with disabilities.
- To give parents a voice in their child's education.



Special Education Partnership between APS and ANCS



The Special Education Department at ANCS works closely with APS to ensure free and appropriate public education for students with disabilities. We follow the special education policies and procedures that APS follows and we are monitored by them to ensure we are in compliance with state and federal guidelines.



District Partnership

There are four general areas of support that APS typically provides to our special education department.

1. Wrap Around Services

2. Trainings

3. Regional Classroom Access

4. Legal Support



Wrap Around Services

■ Therapies

- Speech
- Audiology
- Occupational
- Vision
- Physical

■ District Liaison

- Districts will provide a point person to your school for you to contact if there are issues.

■ Extended School year

-Therapy in ESY such as:

Speech,

OT,

PT,

■ Psychological Services

- APS will provide psychologist to perform testing to Charters
- ANCS has our own psychologist

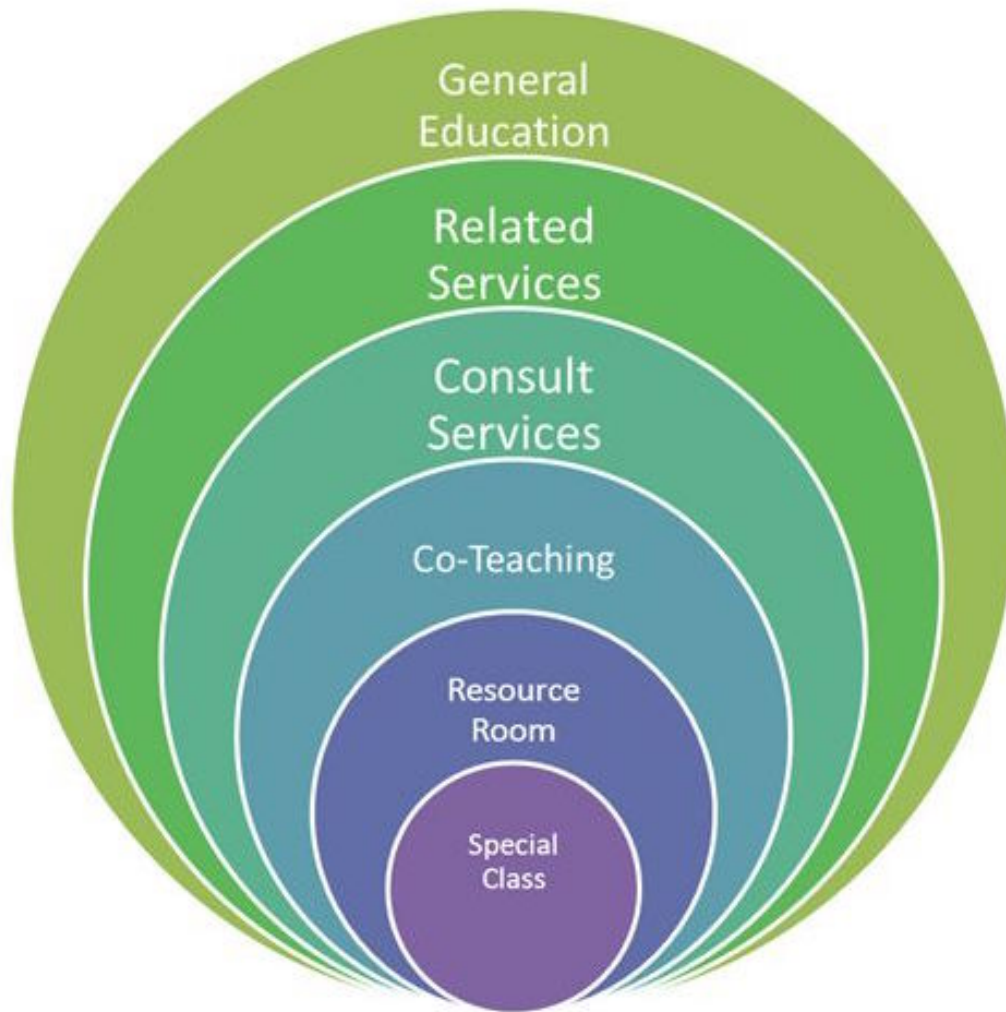


Types of Training that The District May Provide to Charters

- IEP Software Training
- FTE Training
- District Policy Trainings
- Crisis Prevention Trainings
- Programming Trainings i.e. Autism
- Compliance Meetings
- Testing Accommodation Training
- GAA & GNETS training
- Regularly scheduled monthly trainings

Regional Classroom Access

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"The charter that is part of a district has, as part of its resources, the full continuum of services and supports within the district. At times, a student's IEP may determine that a specific setting is needed that may not be available at the charter, but that is available at another school within the district. The charter that is part of the district may not, however, decline to serve students with IEPs." – GADOE Special Education Implementation Manual



Legal Support from the District

Pros

- The District will send in their lawyers to help if a due process complaint is filed against your school.
- The Districts will guide and help Charters respond to legal complaints and will typically attend meetings if a parent brings an attorney.

Cons

- The District's legal team does not necessarily represent the Charter School's best interest.
- Districts can sometimes settle over objections by charter schools—can be costly without control of settlement.



Special-ed teachers attend as many meetings as possible to establish a relationship



Invite District personnel to come visit your school

Sought out opportunities to volunteer to sit on District committees

What have we done to strengthen the relationship between our school and the District?



Programming at ANCS

- A charter school must be prepared for students with diverse needs.
- Students legally must be educated in the least restrictive environment and for many students that means inclusion.
 - Inclusion requires careful scheduling
 - Inclusion requires appropriate staffing to be able to support students.
 - Most Districts will not provide Para-professionals to charters
- Charter also must be prepared to staff a resource setting.
 - Legally, we have to offer all of the settings that neighborhood schools offer.
 - Neighborhood schools typically offer co-taught, inclusion, and resource support.

*Moving students to a more restrictive environment in the district can be challenging and take time. Be prepared to handle students with significant struggles until they are moved to an appropriate classroom.



Staffing at ANCS

How we plan ahead for a strong special education department

- Make sure we are well staffed.
 - We do not let teachers have the maximum caseload they can legally as many other schools do.
 - We have a high number of special education teachers so we can serve as many students as possible in an inclusive model.
 - Staff a full time coordinator to help with compliance and supporting special education teachers.
- **Hire carefully:** Look for a special education lead and teachers that have more than great instructional knowledge and a knowledge of IDEA.
 - An understanding of how to work with students with significant behavior problems
 - A knowledge of research based curriculum that will be used with students as academic and social interventions
 - Legally defensible
 - Good progress monitoring techniques

Special Education Stats at ANCS

Year	2013-2014	2014-2015	2015-2016	2016-2017	2017-2018
Number of students being served at the end of the year	68	67	81	78	72 * Beginning of the year

Middle Campus:

7 lead teachers co-teaching across 3 grade levels.

All core classes have co-taught options as well as resource options

Elementary Campus:

7 teachers working across 6 grade levels.

2 co-taught classes in 4th & 5th grade

1 co-taught class in 3rd grade

2 Lead teachers working in resource with 2 Associate teachers



Parent Partnerships

- Partnerships with parents are very helpful
 - Good parent partnership always benefits students
 - Benefits teachers – support
 - Pressure on the District
 - Parent mentors for families new to special education
 - Can help with finding resources
 - Special Needs Committee – A way that families can share resources.

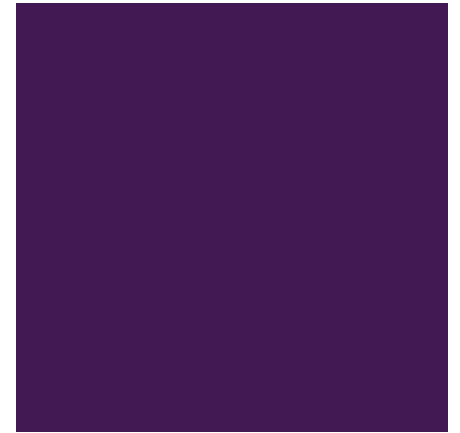
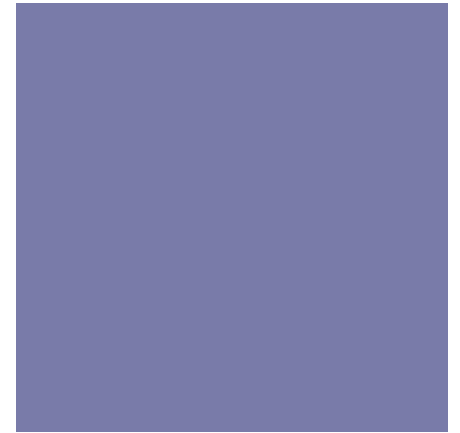


+ Experience with Growing the Special Education Department

- Other special education programs tend to be under staffed.
 - Additional staff does not typically happen until teachers have caseloads that are out of compliance.
 - The argument is always that funding prevents additional teachers.

There is a way to fund additional teachers

- It takes time for funding to catch up
- FTE funding will cover the costs eventually
- Requires special consideration to coding
- Co-taught segments typically fund the highest
- Co-teaching can bring in the money to fund additional teachers



Questions?