



Legislative Guide

CURRENT FUNDING

Pattison's Academy must currently fundraise **\$10,654** per pupil to offset the deficit in revenues and expenses associated with providing our Best Practices Programs.

THE PROBLEMS Our funding gap stems from four primary areas:

County Isolation

Challenges: Students in Berkeley and Dorchester Counties deserve access to our program. Charter Law allows children to attend school in another district but the "receiving" district must accept the student. CCSD will only accept out-of-district students provided the child owns property with property tax value >\$300. If the student is accepted, the child/family is required to pay the local portion of tuition, as the county district's portion of funding will not transfer. This effectively rules out "cross district" attendance for children with disabilities because of the undue financial burden on the family.

Solution (Local): Governor and SCDOE encourage school districts to allow local funds to follow students across counties to alternative and choice school programs.



Medicaid Match

Challenges: While Charter Schools absorb 100% of the cost of providing IEP based therapy to our children, according to Medicaid Match guidelines, all schools are required to return 25–30% of revenues received from IEP therapy services to the State Department of Education. For special education charter schools, this causes our therapy programs to run at a deficit, compromising our ability to provide best practice intervention to our students.

Solution: Waive the Medicaid Match requirement for Charter Schools, allowing Charter Schools to retain 100% of therapy reimbursements.



THE PROBLEMS (CONT'D.)

Transportation

Challenges: State EFA does not recognize the higher cost of transport of children with disabilities (\$3000 vs. 700 in USDOE study) in two grant categories; funds for a bus aide (1/5 buses) and subsidizing cost of district-owned special needs buses (\$1.24/mile) driven by lower density seating, special equipment, longer pick-up times. However, these funds do not flow to charter schools, who are required to provide their own student transportation.

Solution (Local): Permit state EFA Transportation subsidies intended for public (non-charter schools) to flow to charter schools.



No Multiple Disabilities Weighting

Challenges: Lack of a weighting for multiple disabilities: State Department of Education weightings determine the degree of funding our students receive in comparison to a “standard” pupil. Federal IDEA law recognizes Multiple Disabilities as “The simultaneous presence of two or more impairments, the combination of which causes such severe educational needs that they cannot be accommodated in a special education program solely for one of the impairments”. SCDOE does not have an equitable weighting for this disability category, forcing our students to instead receive revenue equivalent to a single disability. While IDEA standards explicitly state that educating students with multiple disabilities requires accommodations above a single disability, the current state weighting standards require our students to instead receive the funding equivalent to a single disability.

Solution: Conduct a cost study and create a “Multiple Disabilities” category that reflects the IDEA recognized degree of cost associated educating children with multiple disabilities or an “add on” weighting that reflects the additional expense of educating secondary and tertiary diagnoses.

IDEA Disability Category	South Carolina State Department of Education Weighting
Autism	2.57
Developmental Delay	1.74
Emotional Disturbance	2.04
Hearing Impairment	2.57
Learning Disability	1.74
Mental Handicap	2.04
Multiple Disabilities	
Orthopedic Handicap	2.04
Other Health Impairment	2.04
Traumatic Brain Injury	2.04
Visual Impairment	2.57

Acronym Guide

IEP: Individualized Education Plan **LEA:** Local Education Agency

IDEA: Individuals with Disabilities Education Act **EFA:** Education Finance Act

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