

A Secondary Analysis of the Civil Rights Data Collection to Inform Policy and Practice

Key Findings and Guiding Questions that Examine the Experiences of Students with Disabilities in Charter and Traditional Public Schools



Specialized Charter Schools

TECHNICAL BRIEF 5



Introduction

The Center for Learner Equity (CLE) is committed to ensuring that students with disabilities, particularly those in under-resourced communities, have the quality educational opportunities and choices they need to thrive and learn. We accomplish this through research, advocacy, coalition formation, and capacity building with national, state, and local partners, and recognize that successful advocacy, coalition formation, and capacity building is built on establishing and communicating the facts about educating students with disabilities in public schools.

The U.S. Civil Rights Data Collection (CRDC), maintained and released biennially by the U.S. Department of Education Office for Civil Rights (OCR) since 1968, publishes data on leading civil rights indicators related to access and barriers to education opportunities from early childhood to grade 12. The purpose of this project is to identify similarities and differences in the student populations and student experiences in public charter and traditional public schools to ensure that advocacy is designed to enable success for students with disabilities without regard to educational setting and placement. This analysis has taken on additional relevance in light of the disruption to education caused by the COVID-19 pandemic.

This brief is part of an ongoing series CLE launched in 2015 that provides insight into the enrollment and experiences of students with disabilities in different school settings. Using the 2017–2018 CRDC data released earlier this year, this brief focuses on specialized charter schools throughout the U.S. and how the student body and student experiences in specialized charter schools may differ from national trends.¹ Specialized charter schools have continued to be an interest to policymakers, parents, and other education stakeholders due to potential unintended consequences for the students they serve, including restrictive settings and limited access to peer students without disabilities.



¹ For a more detailed discussion of the methodology for analysis, please see www.centerforlearnerequity.org/news/crdc17-18/.



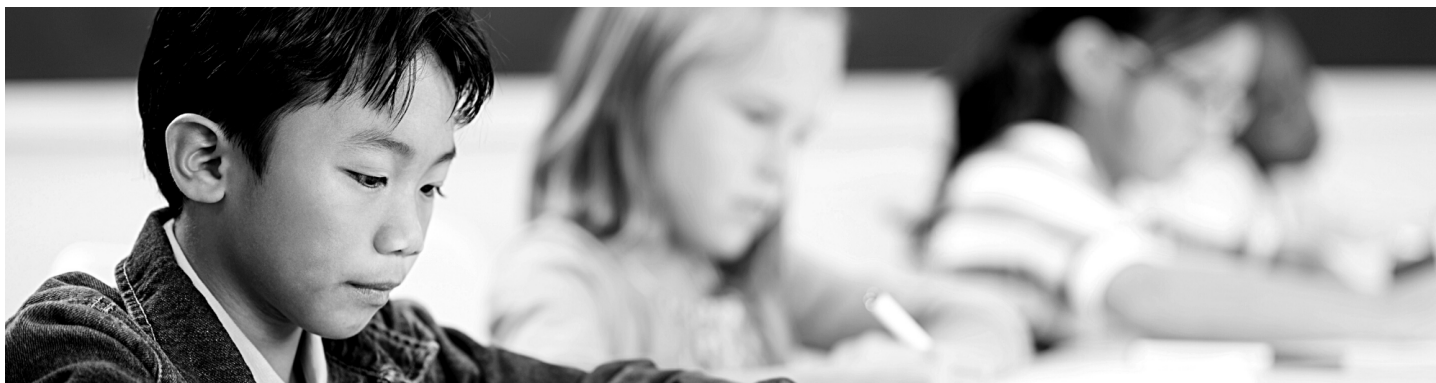
Key Takeaways

The most recent release of the CRDC provides valuable insight into the populations of students with disabilities in specialized charter schools and how this population is served in this setting.

- The number of specialized charter schools increased from 165 in 2015–2016 to 185 in 2017–2018.
- The vast majority of specialized charter schools are in Florida, Ohio, and Texas
- About 68% of specialized charter schools appear to serve students with a variety of disabilities.
- Florida reported the largest number of schools serving students with autism and two or more disabilities, while Texas reported the largest number of schools serving students with emotional disturbance.
- The enrollment of all students and students with disabilities in specialized charter schools increased from 2012 to 2018, while the proportion of students with disabilities decreased in the same timeframe.
- Specialized charters had a larger proportion of White students with disabilities and a smaller proportion of Black and Hispanic students with disabilities enrolled than all charter schools nationally.
- A larger proportion of students with disabilities are identified as having intellectual disabilities, emotional disturbances, and autism in specialized charter schools than national proportions, whereas national figures report a larger proportion of students with disabilities having speech and language impairments and specific learning disabilities than in specialized charter schools.
- The proportion of students with disabilities who spend more than 80% of the day in a regular class was substantially smaller in specialized charter schools than in all charter schools in the nation, a difference of 48.5 percentage points.
- The proportion of students with disabilities who received in-school or out-of-school suspensions in specialized charter schools generally aligned with national figures.

Key Questions for Policymakers and Researchers

- What is driving the enrollment in specialized charter schools given research indicating that students experience greater academic success in more inclusive learning environments?
- What factors have contributed to specialized schools closing?
- For schools that were previously categorized as “specialized” but are no longer due to falling below the 50% threshold, what factors drove shifts in enrollment?
- Is the creation of specialized programs an indication that traditional and charter public schools are failing to develop adequate programs and supports for some students (e.g., students on the autism spectrum)?
- Given that specialized charter schools presumably have developed specific expertise to support students with disabilities, should we expect them to have lower discipline rates than the national averages?



>> Specialized Charter Schools

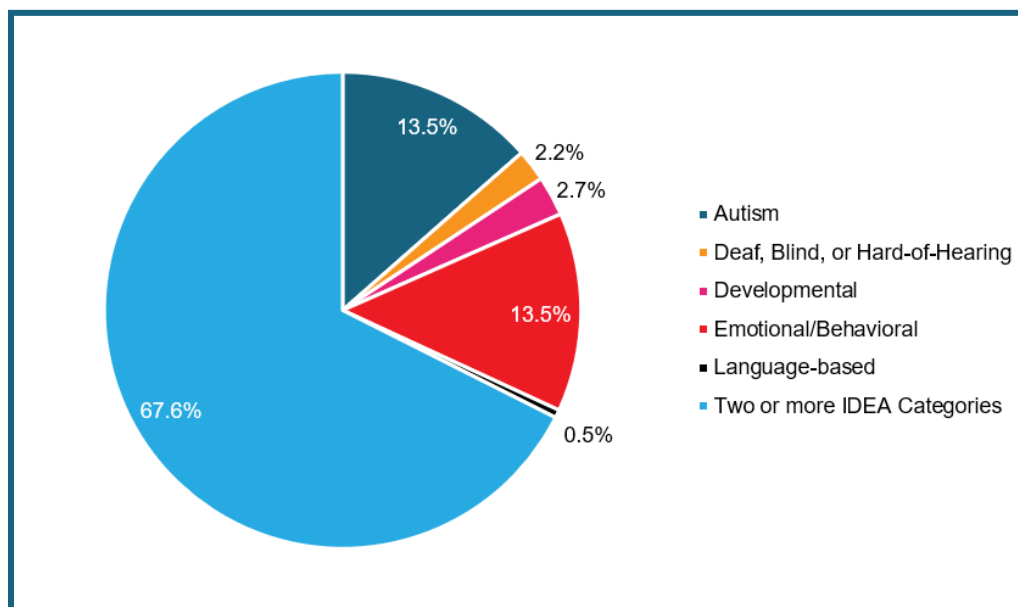
Specialized charter schools are charter schools that primarily or entirely focus on educating students with disabilities. Charter schools by nature are often given the flexibility to tailor their programs to certain populations of students, and this has resulted in charter schools that specialize in educating students with disabilities. These schools provide families access to specialized programs, but there is concern among policymakers and education stakeholders that educating students with disabilities in these settings may be restrictive given that schools may not provide appropriate access to the general education classroom for students with disabilities.² The general education classroom is the presumptive placement in line with the IDEA and Section 504, as it is the civil right of these students in addition to ensuring access to the general education curriculum.

The number of specialized charter schools has increased from 165 in 2015–2016 to 185 in 2017–2018.³ However, it is important to note that not all specialized charter schools were captured in this analysis due to errors in self-reporting to the CRDC and limited information available regarding specialized charter schools in the U.S.

>> Disability Specific Focus

Specialized charter schools typically focus on the education of students with specific disability types. Figure 1 below details the disability focus for all specialized charter schools in 2017–2018. A majority of schools advertised on their websites that they specialize in providing supports and services for students who are diagnosed with a variety of disabilities (e.g., specific learning disability or other health impairment). The second largest group of schools advertised that they specialized in serving students with autism or emotional disturbances.

Figure 1: Disability Focus in Specialized Charter Schools, 2017–18



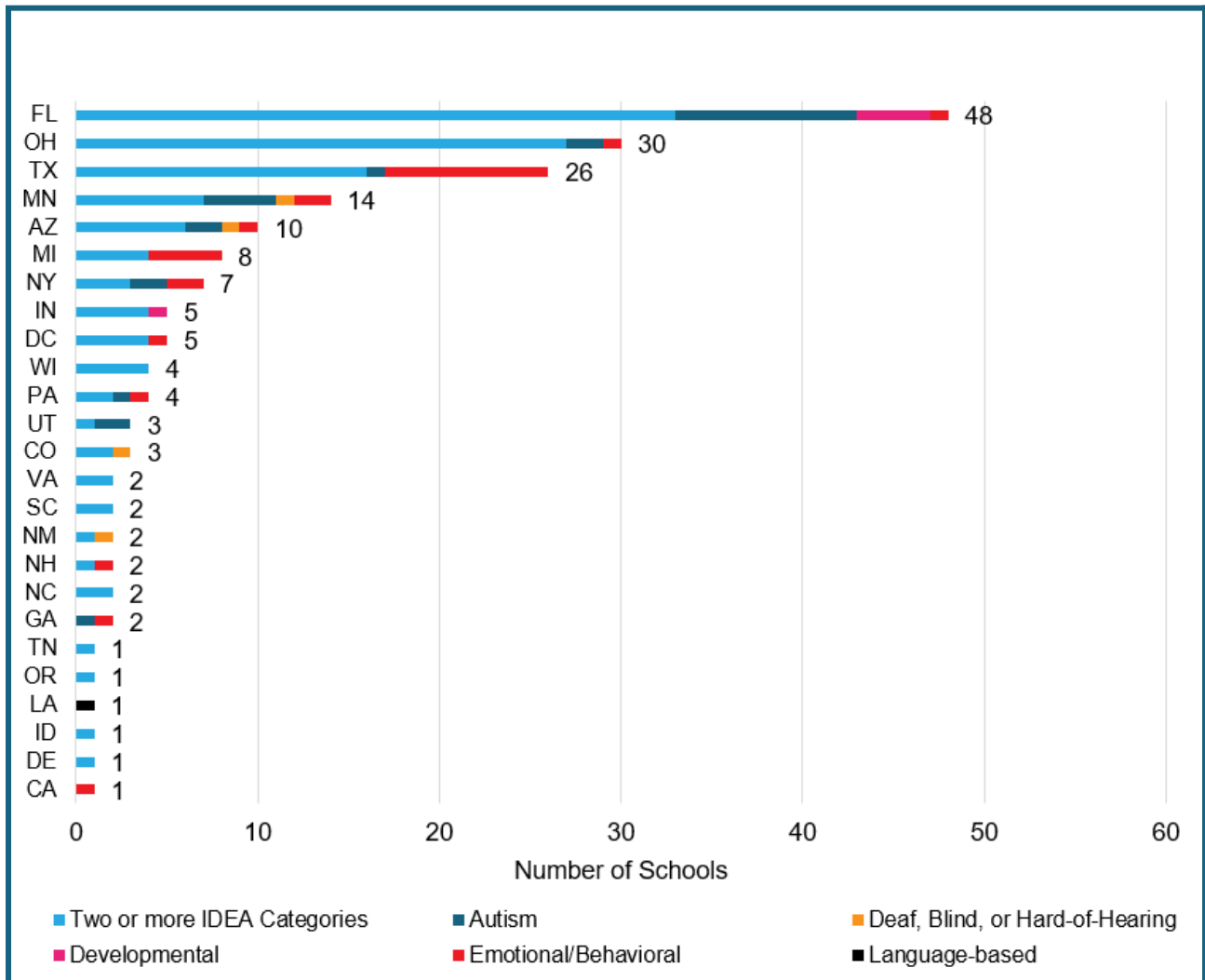
² Rhim, L. M. (n.d.). [Choice and specialization are important levers for parents of students with disabilities](#). Retrieved from Thomas B. Fordman Institute.

³ 159 of the 185 specialized charter schools were identified in the 2017–2018 CRDC data. Schools were considered specialized charter schools if either (1) the school identified itself as a charter and special education school with at least 25% of students being served under IDEA, or (2) the school identified itself as a charter school with at least 50% of students being served under IDEA. Additional schools were included based on prior knowledge or research collected. For a more detailed discussion of the methodology for analysis, please see www.centerforlearnerequity.org/news/crdc17-18/.

>> Geographic Distribution

The geographic distribution of specialized schools is also important to understanding this school type. Figure 2 below shows the number of specialized charter schools by state and disability focus in 2017–2018. Although 44 states had charter schools in the 2017–2018 CRDC, only 25 states had specialized charter schools. Florida, Ohio, and Texas had the largest numbers of specialized charter schools. However, the disability focus of these schools varied between these states. Florida reported the largest number of schools educating students with autism and two or more disabilities, while Texas reported the largest number of schools serving students with emotional disturbance. Of the 26 schools reported in Texas, 62% specialized in two or more IDEA categories. In Ohio, however, 90% of specialized charters focused on serving students with two or more disabilities. It is important to note that, of the 30 specialized charter schools in Ohio, 23 were a part of the Summit Academy network.

Figure 2: Specialized Charter School Locations by State and Disability Focus, 2017–18



Our examination of the websites of specialized charter schools documented the language used on their website as well as the organizations who started these schools. Specialized charter schools in Florida often used language regarding “open enrollment” on their websites, but they clarified the target audience of the school. Additionally, many specialized charters in Florida started from large non-profit organizations but eventually branched off and started their own group. In Texas, many of the specialized charter schools are in partnership with foster care agencies, rehabilitation centers, and residential facilities. However, there was very limited information available regarding the schools in these organizations.

Deeper Dive

>> Enrollment Variances for Specialized Charter Schools

The enrollment of students with disabilities has increased over time, so it is important to understand the setting that these students are in and the composition of these students. Variances can exist among students with disabilities in terms of race/ethnicity and the type of primary disability that is reported, and this can greatly impact the experiences of these students. Identifying students eligible for special education services can allow the provision of necessary intervention and support, but it is crucial that Black and Indigenous People of Color (BIPOC) students are not inappropriately identified since this can lead to limited access to general education. Additionally, observing the type of primary disability provides insight into the type of programming that students with disabilities receive and how student needs may differ.

Specialized charter schools reported an increasing total enrollment from 2012 to 2018. Specifically, the total enrollment of students in specialized charter schools more than doubled from 2012 to 2018. Additionally, in 2018, about 6.5% of all charter students attended a specialized charter school. Figure 3 details the enrollment of all students and students with disabilities from 2012 to 2018 for all specialized charter schools.

Figure 3: Enrollment of Students with Disabilities in Specialized Charter Schools

| | 2012 | 2014 | 2016 | 2018 |
|-------------------------|------------------|-------------------|-------------------|---------------------------------|
| Total Enrollment | 9,009 (4.7%) | 19,662 (8.0%) | 23,248 (7.9%) | 21,551 (6.5%) |
| IDEA Enrollment | 6,940 (77.0%) | 11,313 (57.5%) | 12,672 (54.5%) | 12,907 (59.9%) |
| 504 Enrollment | 114 (1.3%) | 407 (2.1%) | 611 (2.6%) | 494 (2.3%) |

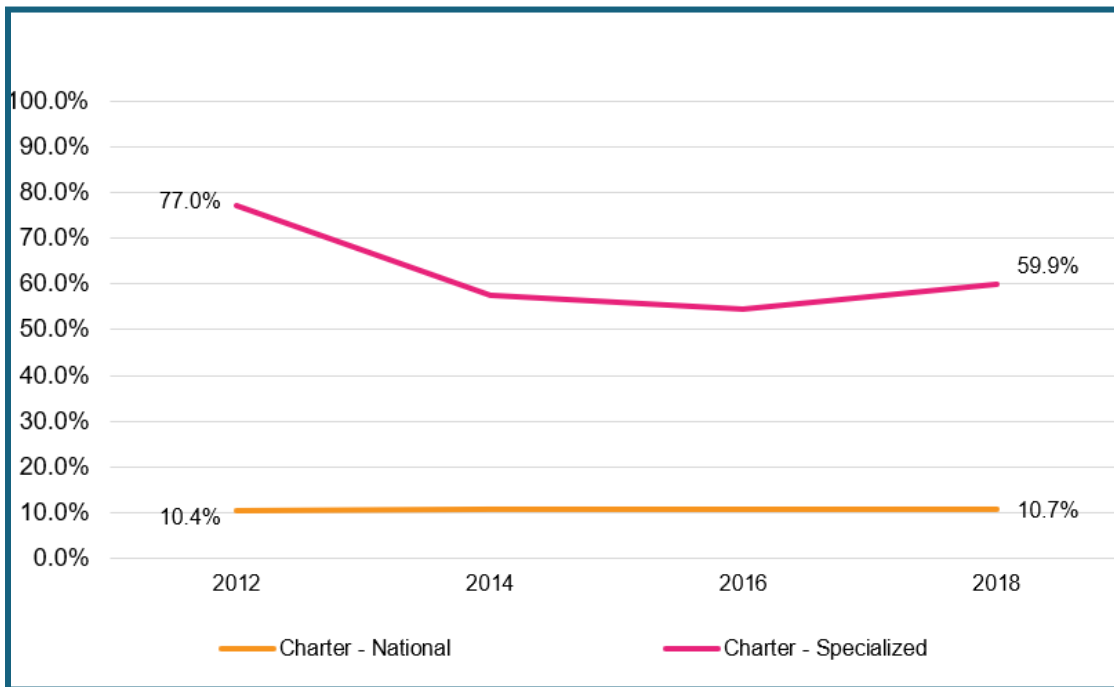
The enrollment of students with disabilities also increased with each iteration of the CRDC. From 2012 to 2018, the enrollment of students with disabilities nearly doubled in specialized charter schools. In addition to the reported differences in the enrollment of students with disabilities served in specialized charter schools, the proportions of students with disabilities varied as well. The number of students with disabilities enrolled in specialized charter schools decreased by 17.1% from 2012 to 2018.



⁴ Only the 159 specialized charter schools identified in the 2017–2018 CRDC were analyzed in this section.

Figure 4 compares the national percentage of students with disabilities served in charter schools to the percentage in specialized charter schools. In comparison to national proportions, specialized charter schools had the highest percentages of students with disabilities from 2012 to 2018. Although this may appear obvious, as specialized charter schools focus primarily or entirely on serving students with disabilities, the variation in the reported percentages over time is not observed at the national level.

Figure 4: Enrollment of Students with Disabilities in Charter Schools, 2012–2018



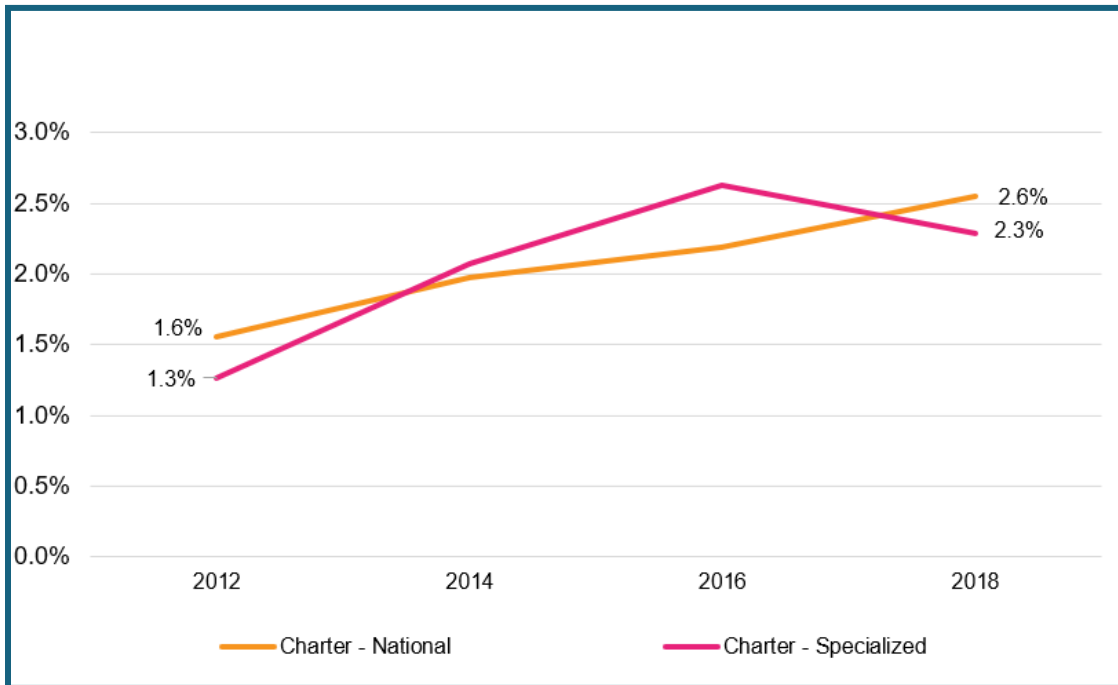
Additionally, the enrollment and proportion of students identified under Section 504 differed over time in specialized charter schools. The enrollment of students identified under Section 504 in specialized charters increased by about 500 students (436.0%) from 2012 to 2016 but experienced a decrease in 2018 of about 100 students.⁵ The proportion of students identified under Section 504 in specialized charter schools also increased from 2012 to 2016, and ultimately, decreased in 2018.



⁵ The significant increase in the enrollment of students identified under Section 504 may indicate data quality issues. It is important to acknowledge that the CRDC is self-reported, which leaves it open to error, and the sample of schools varies with each iteration of the CRDC, which can cause fluctuations in student enrollment.

Figure 5 compares the percentages of students identified under Section 504 in specialized charter schools and nationally from 2012 to 2018. It appears that the proportions of students identified under Section 504 for all charters and specialized charters were relatively similar from 2012 to 2018.

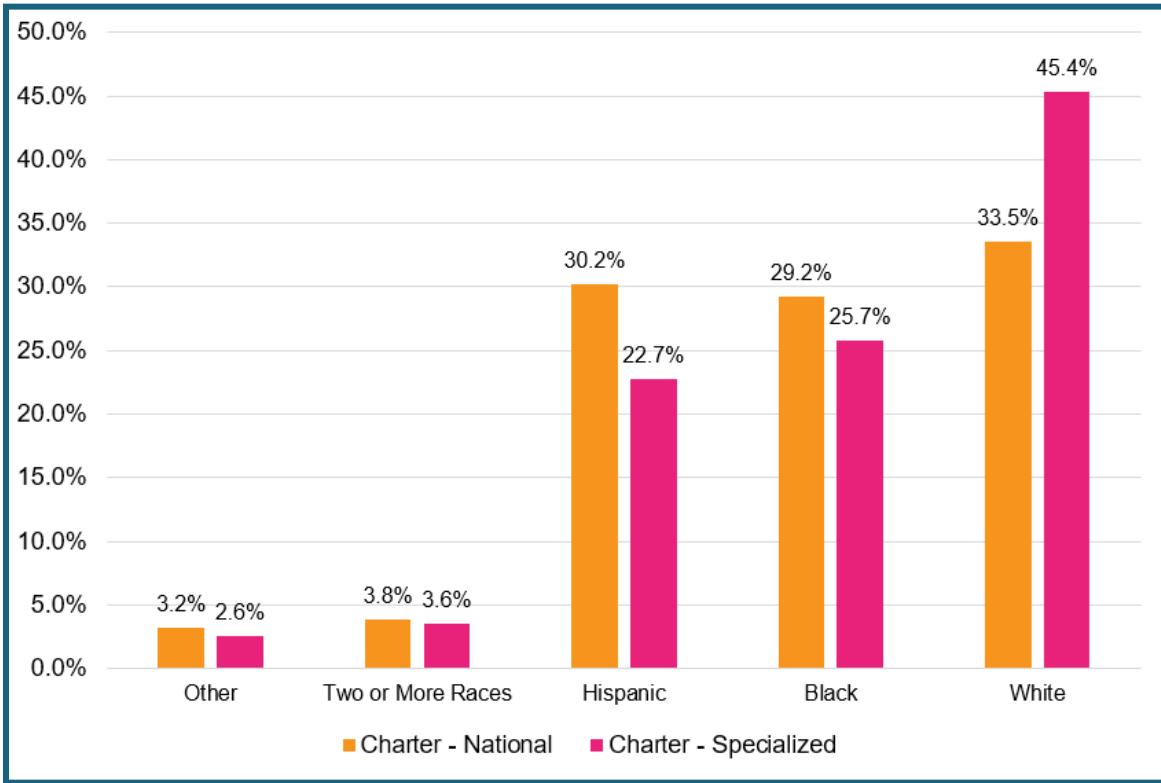
Figure 5: Enrollment of Students Identified Under Section 504 in Charter Schools, 2012–2018



Noticeable differences also exist between specialized charter schools and all charter schools in the nation in regard to student demographics. As shown in Figure 6, the demographics of students with disabilities vary depending on which group of charter schools are being observed. Specialized charters enrolled a larger proportion of White students with disabilities than all charter schools nationally based on the 2017–18 CRDC. Conversely, the national proportions of Black and Hispanic students with disabilities attending a charter school were greater than the proportions reported for specialized charter schools.



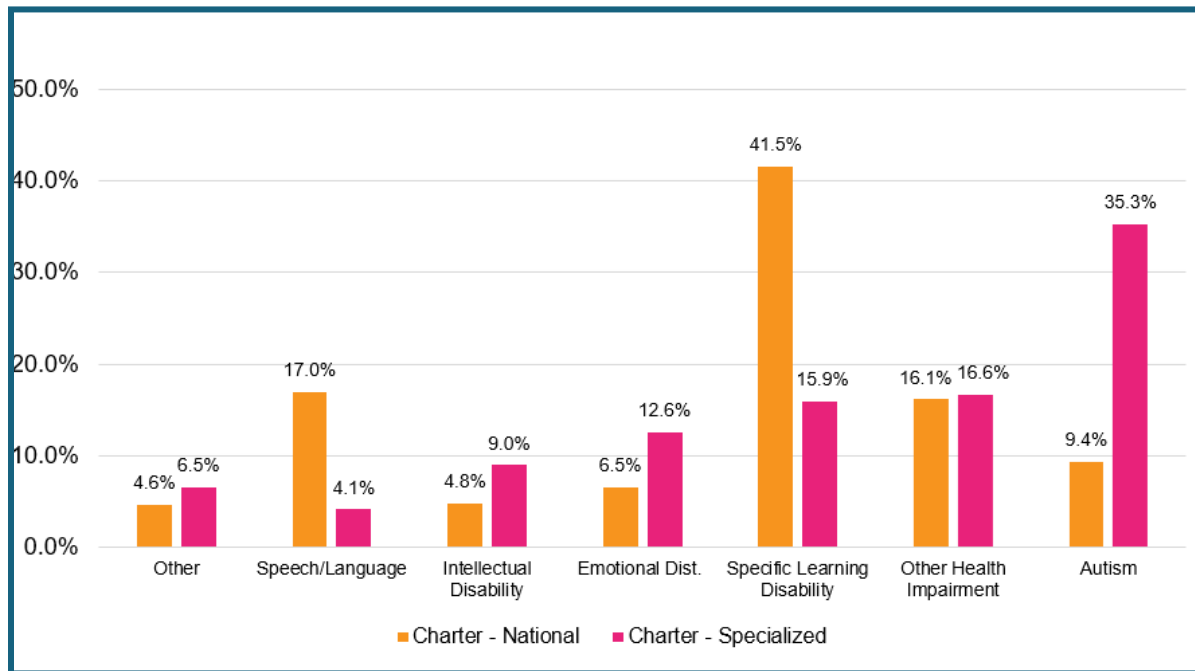
Figure 6: Students with Disabilities by Race/Ethnicity and Charter Type, 2017–18⁶



⁶ The “other” category was created to aggregate counts of student groups that each contain less than 2% of the total and includes American Indian/Alaska Native, Asian, and Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander students.

There are also differences in the composition of student enrollment between these specialized schools and all charters when analyzing the primary disability of students. Figure 7 highlights the proportion of students with disabilities by primary disability type enrolled in specialized charters and all charters in the nation for the 2017–2018 school year. A larger proportion of students with disabilities are identified as having intellectual disabilities, emotional disturbances, and autism in specialized charter schools than national proportions. However, when observing all charter schools in the U.S., a larger proportion of students with disabilities are identified as having speech and language impairments and specific learning disabilities than students with disabilities attending a specialized charter school. This finding is aligned to the research noted previously in this brief on the disability focus of specialized charter schools.

Figure 7: Enrollment of Students with Disabilities by Primary Disability, 2017–18⁷



>> Student Experiences

Placement of Students with Disabilities in Specialized Charter Schools

An important aspect of understanding how students with disabilities are served in a specific area is analyzing how much time students in different school types spend in general education classrooms. The general education classroom (referred to in the CRDC as “regular class”) is the presumptive placement, in line with federal statutes for students with disabilities, as it is the civil right of these students in addition to ensuring access to the general education curriculum. In addition, foundational education legislation in the form of IDEA and Section 504 includes requirements that support providing these students a free appropriate public education in what is referred to as the “least restrictive environment.” Along this line, it is important to understand that student experiences in specialized charter schools differ from national findings.

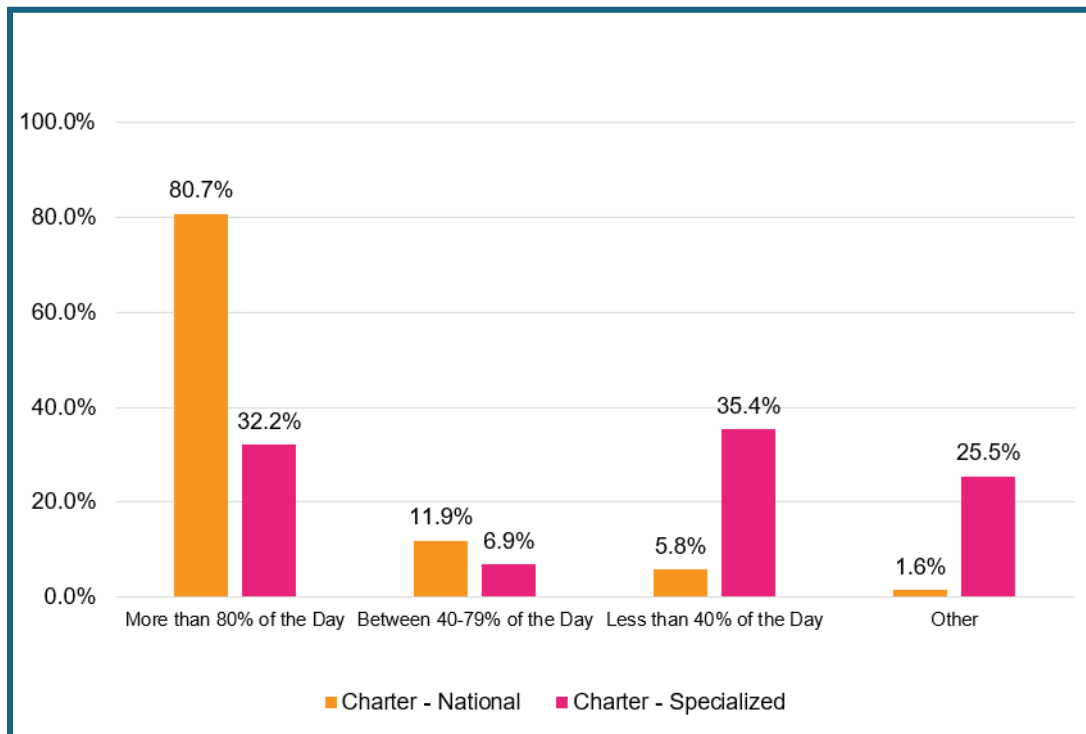
Figure 8 compares the proportion of students with disabilities in specialized and all charter schools by the amount of time spent in a “regular class” or a general education setting. Overall, the proportions of students with disabilities attending a specialized charter school by regular class time were quite different from the proportions found at the national level.

⁷ The “other” category was created to aggregate counts of student groups that each contain less than 3% of the total, and includes students with disabilities identified with visual impairments, deaf/blindness, traumatic brain injuries, orthopedic impairments, developmental delays, hearing impairments, multiple disabilities, and missing identifications.

A larger proportion of students with disabilities in specialized charter schools spent less than 40% of the day in a regular class or were educated in “other” settings in comparison to national proportions. Additionally, the percentage of students with disabilities who spend more than 80% of the day in a regular class was substantially greater when observing all charter schools rather than just specialized charter schools, a 48.5% difference.

It should be noted that there are important reasons why differences in general education class time exist, such as student identification, student needs, and student outcomes. Without data regarding how students with similar needs are experiencing the general education classroom, it is difficult to determine the precise reasons why these differences between school types exist.

Figure 8: Proportion of Students with Disabilities by Regular Class Time and Charter Type, 2017–18⁸



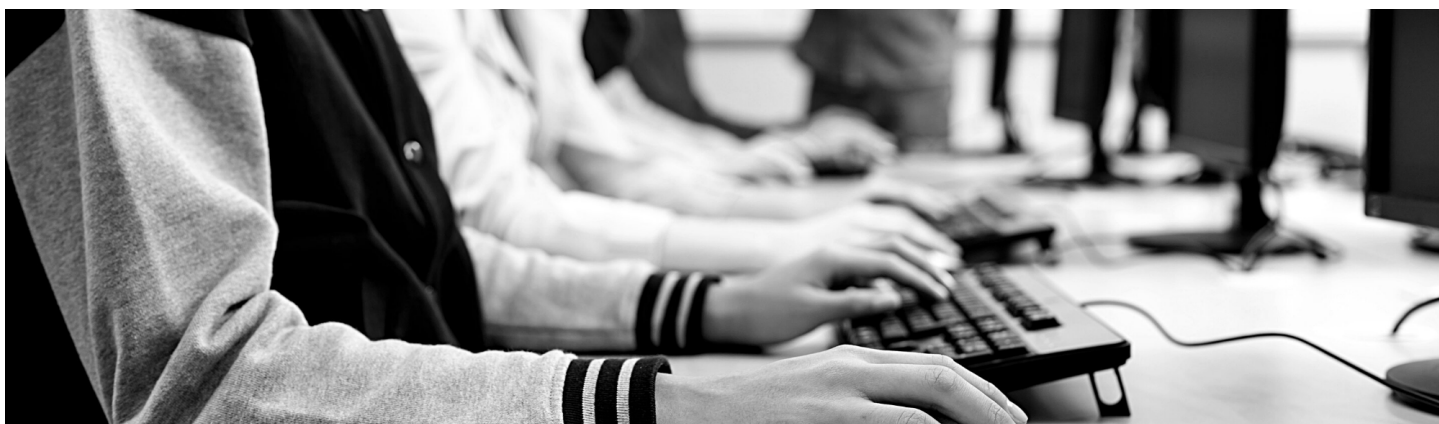
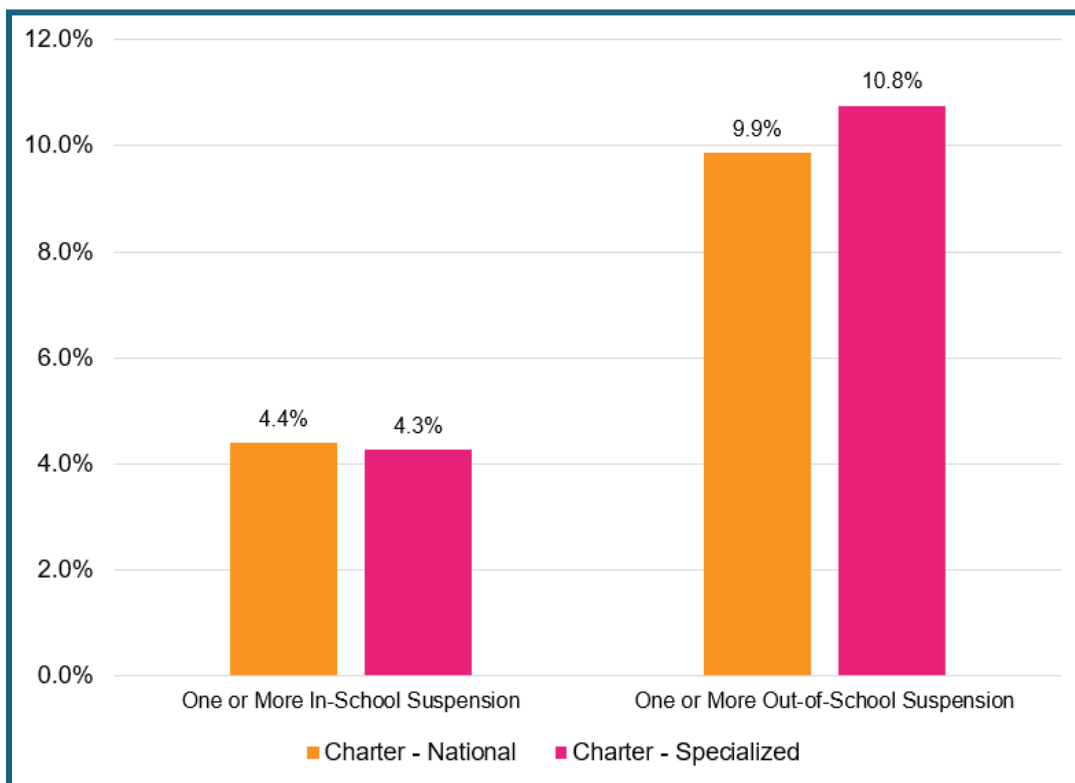
⁸ The “other” category was created for the purposes of this analysis and contains students placed in correctional facilities, homebound/hospital placements, parental placements in private schools, residential facility placements, and separate school placements per EdFacts documentation.

Suspension of Students with Disabilities in Specialized Charter Schools

Historically, students with disabilities have faced greater rates of discipline than students without disabilities. This often leads to students with disabilities losing more instruction time than their peers. The CRDC reports the number of students who receive suspension by type and student group, and this provides insight into the discipline experienced by students with disabilities in different school settings, such as specialized charter schools.

Figure 9 details the different suspension rates for students with disabilities by charter type for the 2017–2018 school year. As shown in the figure, the percentages of students with disabilities who received in-school or out-of-school suspensions in specialized charter schools were generally aligned with national figures. Specialized charter schools only reported a greater proportion than the national figure when observing students with disabilities who received out-of-school suspension.

Figure 9: Suspension Rates of Students with Disabilities by Charter Type, 2017–18



Appendix

>> 2017–2018 List of Specialized Charter Schools⁹

| School Name | City | State | Focus | Grades Served | Enrollment | Enrollment of SWD |
|---|-----------------|-------|--------|---------------|------------|-------------------|
| Arizona Autism Charter | Phoenix | AZ | Autism | K–4 | 109 | 96% |
| Arizona Autism Charter School Upper School Campus | Phoenix | AZ | Autism | 5–8 | 69 | 100% |
| Access Charter | Orlando | FL | Autism | 6–12 | 137 | 99% |
| Connections Education Center of the Palm Beaches | West Palm Beach | FL | Autism | PK–8 | 52 | 100% |
| Florida Autism Charter School of Excellence | Tampa | FL | Autism | PK–12 | 129 | 99% |
| Palm Beach School for Autism | Lake Worth | FL | Autism | PK–12 | 325 | 99% |
| Princeton House Charter | Orlando | FL | Autism | PK–5 | 141 | 100% |
| South Florida Autism Charter School Inc. | Hialeah | FL | Autism | K–12 | 220 | 100% |
| The Hope Academy for Autism | Stuart | FL | Autism | Unknown | N/A | N/A |
| The Hope Charter Center for Autism | Stuart | FL | Autism | Unknown | N/A | N/A |
| The Learning Academy | Jupiter | FL | Autism | 9–12 | 105 | 98% |
| The Learning Center | Jupiter | FL | Autism | PK–8 | 136 | 100% |
| Tapestry Public Charter School | Doraville | GA | Autism | 6–11 | 206 | 55% |

⁹ The grades served, total enrollment, and enrollment of students with disabilities are not reported for all schools because not all schools were included in the 2017–2018 CRDC. For more information regarding the methodology, please see www.centerforlearnerequity.org/news/crdc17-18/.

| School Name | City | State | Focus | Grades Served | Enrollment | Enrollment of SWD |
|---|-----------------|-------|---------------------------------|---------------|------------|-------------------|
| Lionsgate Academy - Lynx Program | Minnetonka | MN | Autism | 8-12 | 5 | 100% |
| Lionsgate Academy - Minnetonka | Minnetonka | MN | Autism | 7-12 | 147 | 95% |
| Lionsgate Academy AIM | North St. Paul | MN | Autism | 12 | 39 | 100% |
| Rochester Beacon Academy | Rochester | MN | Autism | 6-12 | 172 | 60% |
| New York Center For Autism Charter School | Bronx | NY | Autism | UG | 12 | 100% |
| New York City Autism Charter School | New York | NY | Autism | UG | 37 | 100% |
| Autism Model School | Toledo | OH | Autism | K-12 | 115 | 100% |
| Oakstone Community School | Columbus | OH | Autism | Unknown | N/A | N/A |
| Spectrum Charter School | Monroeville | PA | Autism | UG | 33 | 94% |
| The Foundation School For Autism | San Antonio | TX | Autism | PK-1 | 40 | 98% |
| Spectrum Academy - NSL | North Salt Lake | UT | Autism | K-12 | 608 | 86% |
| Spectrum Academy - Pleasant Grove | Pleasant Grove | UT | Autism | K-11 | 550 | 87% |
| Sequoia Deaf School | Mesa | AZ | Deaf, Blind, or Hard-of-Hearing | K-12 | 74 | 97% |
| Rocky Mountain Deaf School | Denver | CO | Deaf, Blind, or Hard-of-Hearing | PK-12 | 69 | 99% |
| Metro Deaf School | St. Paul | MN | Deaf, Blind, or Hard-of-Hearing | PK-11 | 102 | 100% |
| Albuquerque Sign Language Academy | Albuquerque | NM | Deaf, Blind, or Hard-of-Hearing | K-12 | 95 | 55% |



| School Name | City | State | Focus | Grades Served | Enrollment | Enrollment of SWD |
|--|------------------|-------|----------------------|---------------|------------|-------------------|
| Capstone Academy | Pensacola | FL | Developmental | Unknown | N/A | N/A |
| Capstone Academy - Milton | Milton | FL | Developmental | PK | 9 | 100% |
| Early Beginnings Academy Civic Center | Miami | FL | Developmental | PK-2 | 124 | 98% |
| Seagull Academy | Riviera Beach | FL | Developmental | Unknown | N/A | N/A |
| Damar Charter Academy | Indianapolis | IN | Developmental | K-12 | 198 | 96% |
| Northern Arizona Academy for Career Development - Taylor | Taylor | AZ | Emotional/Behavioral | 9-12 | 48 | 29% |
| Rite of Passage | Placerville | CA | Emotional/Behavioral | 9-12 | 151 | 26% |
| Kingsman Academy Public Charter School | Washington, D.C. | DC | Emotional/Behavioral | 6-12 | 249 | 45% |
| Ed Venture Charter School | Lantana | FL | Emotional/Behavioral | Unknown | N/A | N/A |
| Devereux Ackerman Academy | Kennesaw | GA | Emotional/Behavioral | 5-11 | 78 | 60% |
| Clara B. Ford Academy (SDA) | Dearborn Heights | MI | Emotional/Behavioral | 5-12 | 135 | 26% |
| Lakeside Charter School | Kalamazoo | MI | Emotional/Behavioral | 6-12 | 122 | 37% |
| Lighthouse Academy - Eagle Village | Grand Rapids | MI | Emotional/Behavioral | 4-12 | 75 | 35% |
| Lighthouse Academy - St. Johns | Grand Rapids | MI | Emotional/Behavioral | 2-12 | 15 | 47% |
| Minnesota Internship Center - Rondo Campus | Minneapolis | MN | Emotional/Behavioral | 9-12 | 168 | 29% |
| Rosa Parks Charter High School | Rochester | MN | Emotional/Behavioral | 9-12 | 72 | 42% |



| School Name | City | State | Focus | Grades Served | Enrollment | Enrollment of SWD |
|--|---------------|-------|----------------------|---------------|------------|-------------------|
| Making Community Connections Charter School - Monadnock | Amherst | NH | Emotional/Behavioral | 9-12 | 89 | 33% |
| John V. Lindsay Wildcat Academy Charter School | New York | NY | Emotional/Behavioral | 9-12 | 480 | 43% |
| John W. Lavelle Preparatory Charter School | Staten Island | NY | Emotional/Behavioral | 3-12 | 697 | 38% |
| Tomorrow Center | Cardington | OH | Emotional/Behavioral | 7-12 | 133 | 46% |
| Dr. Robert Ketterer Charter School Inc. | Latrobe | PA | Emotional/Behavioral | 6-12 | 168 | 58% |
| Depelchin - Richmond | Richmond | TX | Emotional/Behavioral | K-8 | 14 | 64% |
| Helping Hand | Austin | TX | Emotional/Behavioral | K-6 | 23 | 78% |
| John H. Wood Jr. Charter School at Afton Oaks | Fort Myers | TX | Emotional/Behavioral | Unknown | N/A | N/A |
| John H. Wood Jr. Charter School at San Marcos | San Marcos | TX | Emotional/Behavioral | Unknown | N/A | N/A |
| Ki Charter Academy | San Marcos | TX | Emotional/Behavioral | 2-12 | 179 | 56% |
| Laurel Ridge | Austin | TX | Emotional/Behavioral | K-12 | 38 | 55% |
| Trinity Charter School | Canyon Lake | TX | Emotional/Behavioral | Unknown | N/A | N/A |
| Trinity Charter School | Katy | TX | Emotional/Behavioral | Unknown | N/A | N/A |
| University of Texas University Charter School - Pathways 3H Campus | Austin | TX | Emotional/Behavioral | 6-12 | 28 | 46% |
| Louisiana Key Academy | Baton Rouge | LA | Language-based | 1-6 | 320 | 36% |



| School Name | City | State | Focus | Grades Served | Enrollment | Enrollment of SWD |
|--|------------------|-------|-----------------------------|---------------|------------|-------------------|
| Akimel O'Otham Pee Posh (3-5) | Coolidge | AZ | Two or more IDEA Categories | 4-5 | 11 | 100% |
| Akimel O'Otham Pee Posh (K-2) | Coolidge | AZ | Two or more IDEA Categories | K-2 | 8 | 100% |
| Arroyo Elementary School | Glendale | AZ | Two or more IDEA Categories | K-8 | 577 | 27% |
| Envision High School | Tucson | AZ | Two or more IDEA Categories | 10-12 | 7 | 57% |
| Lifelong Learning Academy | Tucson | AZ | Two or more IDEA Categories | 2-8 | 9 | 89% |
| Sweetwater School | Glendale | AZ | Two or more IDEA Categories | K-8, UG | 549 | 33% |
| Justice High Charter School | Boulder | CO | Two or more IDEA Categories | 7-12 | 79 | 27% |
| Reach Charter School | Denver | CO | Two or more IDEA Categories | PK-4 | 129 | 31% |
| Monument Academy | Washington, D.C. | DC | Two or more IDEA Categories | 5-7 | 118 | 60% |
| Positive Outcomes Charter School | Washington, D.C. | DC | Two or more IDEA Categories | 7-12 | 128 | 69% |
| St. Coletta of Greater Washington | Washington, D.C. | DC | Two or more IDEA Categories | UG | 247 | 100% |
| The Children's Guild Public Charter School | Washington, D.C. | DC | Two or more IDEA Categories | K-8 | 361 | 49% |
| Gateway Lab School | Wilmington | DE | Two or more IDEA Categories | 3-8 | 191 | 57% |



| School Name | City | State | Focus | Grades Served | Enrollment | Enrollment of SWD |
|--|-----------------|-------|-----------------------------|---------------|------------|-------------------|
| Achievement Academy | Lakeland | FL | Two or more IDEA Categories | PK | 157 | 80% |
| Aspire Academy Charter | Orlando | FL | Two or more IDEA Categories | K-5 | 112 | 37% |
| Believers Academy | West Palm Beach | FL | Two or more IDEA Categories | Unknown | N/A | N/A |
| Chautauqua Charter School | Panama City | FL | Two or more IDEA Categories | 12 | 48 | 94% |
| Crossroads Hope Academy | Port Charlotte | FL | Two or more IDEA Categories | 6-11 | 21 | 29% |
| Easter Seals Charter School, Deland | Deland | FL | Two or more IDEA Categories | Unknown | N/A | N/A |
| Easter Seals Child Charter School, Daytona Beach | Daytona Beach | FL | Two or more IDEA Categories | PK | 75 | 100% |
| Focus Academy | Temple Terrace | FL | Two or more IDEA Categories | 9-12 | 96 | 99% |
| Gulfstream L.I.F.E. Academy | Boynton Beach | FL | Two or more IDEA Categories | 10-12 | 75 | 92% |
| Language And Literacy Academy For Learning | Winter Haven | FL | Two or more IDEA Categories | Unknown | N/A | N/A |
| Montessori Academy of Early Enrichment Inc. | West Palm Beach | FL | Two or more IDEA Categories | PK-5 | 171 | 30% |
| Pepin Academies | Tampa | FL | Two or more IDEA Categories | 3-12 | 765 | 100% |
| Pepin Academies Pasco | New Port Richey | FL | Two or more IDEA Categories | Unknown | N/A | N/A |



| School Name | City | State | Focus | Grades Served | Enrollment | Enrollment of SWD |
|--|---------------|-------|-----------------------------|---------------|------------|-------------------|
| Pepin Academies Riverview | Riverview | FL | Two or more IDEA Categories | Unknown | N/A | N/A |
| Pepin Academies Tampa | Tampa | FL | Two or more IDEA Categories | Unknown | N/A | N/A |
| Pepin Transitional School | Tampa | FL | Two or more IDEA Categories | Unknown | N/A | N/A |
| Potentials Charter School | Boca Raton | FL | Two or more IDEA Categories | PK-7 | 29 | 97% |
| South Tech Success Center, Inc (Southtech Academy) | Boynton Beach | FL | Two or more IDEA Categories | Unknown | N/A | N/A |
| St. Johns Community Campus | St. Augustine | FL | Two or more IDEA Categories | 11-12 | 32 | 100% |
| The Einstein School Inc. | Gainesville | FL | Two or more IDEA Categories | 2-8 | 100 | 67% |
| Therapeutic Learning Center | St. Augustine | FL | Two or more IDEA Categories | PK | 11 | 100% |
| UCP Bailes Community Academy | Orlando | FL | Two or more IDEA Categories | Unknown | N/A | N/A |
| UCP Downtown/Beta Charter School | Orlando | FL | Two or more IDEA Categories | Unknown | N/A | N/A |
| UCP East Charter | Orlando | FL | Two or more IDEA Categories | PK-5 | 281 | 60% |
| UCP East Orange/Bailes Early Childhood Academy | Orlando | FL | Two or more IDEA Categories | Unknown | N/A | N/A |
| UCP Middle & High School Transitional Learning Academy | Orlando | FL | Two or more IDEA Categories | Unknown | N/A | N/A |



| School Name | City | State | Focus | Grades Served | Enrollment | Enrollment of SWD |
|--|---------------|-------|-----------------------------|---------------|------------|-------------------|
| UCP Orange Charter | Orlando | FL | Two or more IDEA Categories | PK-5 | 167 | 72% |
| UCP Osceola Charter School | Kissimmee | FL | Two or more IDEA Categories | PK-3 | 175 | 60% |
| UCP Pine Hills Charter | Orlando | FL | Two or more IDEA Categories | PK-5 | 153 | 58% |
| UCP Seminole Child Development | Lake Mary | FL | Two or more IDEA Categories | PK-3 | 129 | 69% |
| UCP Transitional Learning Academy High Charter | Orlando | FL | Two or more IDEA Categories | 6-12 | 84 | 99% |
| UCP West Orange Charter | Winter Garden | FL | Two or more IDEA Categories | PK-5 | 171 | 71% |
| Victory Ridge Academy | Lake Wales | FL | Two or more IDEA Categories | PK-12 | 230 | 98% |
| Another Choice Virtual Charter | Nampa | ID | Two or more IDEA Categories | K-12 | 517 | 31% |
| Canaan Community Academy | Canaan | IN | Two or more IDEA Categories | K-6 | 103 | 47% |
| Options Charter School - Carmel | Carmel | IN | Two or more IDEA Categories | 9-12 | 138 | 28% |
| Options Charter School - Noblesville | Noblesville | IN | Two or more IDEA Categories | 6-12 | 200 | 52% |
| Rural Community Academy | Graysville | IN | Two or more IDEA Categories | K-8 | 177 | 32% |
| Lighthouse Academy | Grand Rapids | MI | Two or more IDEA Categories | 4-12 | 126 | 49% |



| School Name | City | State | Focus | Grades Served | Enrollment | Enrollment of SWD |
|---|--------------|-------|-----------------------------|---------------|------------|-------------------|
| Lighthouse Academy - South | Grand Rapids | MI | Two or more IDEA Categories | Unknown | N/A | N/A |
| St. Clair County Intervention Academy | Port Huron | MI | Two or more IDEA Categories | 6-12 | 68 | 44% |
| Virtual Learning Academy of St. Clair County | Port Huron | MI | Two or more IDEA Categories | 6-12 | 140 | 26% |
| Dream Technical Academy | Willmar | MN | Two or more IDEA Categories | 7-12 | 61 | 59% |
| Minnesota Internship Center - Downtown Campus | Minneapolis | MN | Two or more IDEA Categories | 9-12 | 107 | 25% |
| Minnesota New Country School | Henderson | MN | Two or more IDEA Categories | 7-12, UG | 129 | 26% |
| Northern Lights Community School | Warba | MN | Two or more IDEA Categories | 6-12 | 103 | 37% |
| Schoolcraft Learning Community Charter | Bemidji | MN | Two or more IDEA Categories | K-8 | 200 | 28% |
| Spero Academy | Minneapolis | MN | Two or more IDEA Categories | K-6 | 112 | 85% |
| Vermilion Country School | Tower | MN | Two or more IDEA Categories | 7-12 | 37 | 32% |
| Grandfather Academy | Banner Elk | NC | Two or more IDEA Categories | 7-12 | 20 | 60% |
| Williams Academy | Crossnore | NC | Two or more IDEA Categories | K-12 | 118 | 30% |
| Making Community Connections Charter School | Amherst | NH | Two or more IDEA Categories | 6-8 | 31 | 32% |



| School Name | City | State | Focus | Grades Served | Enrollment | Enrollment of SWD |
|---|-------------|-------|-----------------------------|---------------|------------|-------------------|
| La Academia de Esperanza | Albuquerque | NM | Two or more IDEA Categories | 6-12 | 325 | 38% |
| New Dawn Charter High School | Brooklyn | NY | Two or more IDEA Categories | 9-12 | 268 | 60% |
| New Visions AIM Charter High School II | Bronx | NY | Two or more IDEA Categories | 9-12 | 186 | 52% |
| Opportunity Charter School | New York | NY | Two or more IDEA Categories | 6-12 | 399 | 66% |
| Foxfire Intermediate School | Zanesville | OH | Two or more IDEA Categories | K-3 | 29 | 52% |
| Hope Learning Academy of Toledo | Toledo | OH | Two or more IDEA Categories | K-8 | 66 | 67% |
| Steel Academy | Akron | OH | Two or more IDEA Categories | 7-12 | 90 | 63% |
| Summit Academy - Youngstown | Youngstown | OH | Two or more IDEA Categories | K-7 | 210 | 57% |
| Summit Academy Akron Elementary School | Akron | OH | Two or more IDEA Categories | K-5 | 144 | 51% |
| Summit Academy Akron Middle School | Akron | OH | Two or more IDEA Categories | 6-8 | 70 | 67% |
| Summit Academy Alternative Learners Warren Middle & Secondary | Warren | OH | Two or more IDEA Categories | 8-12 | 90 | 80% |
| Summit Academy Community School - Cincinnati | Cincinnati | OH | Two or more IDEA Categories | K-8 | 146 | 61% |
| Summit Academy Community School - Columbus | Columbus | OH | Two or more IDEA Categories | K-5 | 80 | 36% |



| School Name | City | State | Focus | Grades Served | Enrollment | Enrollment of SWD |
|--|-------------|-------|-----------------------------|---------------|------------|-------------------|
| Summit Academy Community School - Dayton | Dayton | OH | Two or more IDEA Categories | K-8 | 134 | 56% |
| Summit Academy Community School - Painesville | Painesville | OH | Two or more IDEA Categories | K-8 | 87 | 46% |
| Summit Academy Community School - Parma | Parma | OH | Two or more IDEA Categories | K--2 | 185 | 66% |
| Summit Academy Community School - Warren | Warren | OH | Two or more IDEA Categories | K-7 | 119 | 65% |
| Summit Academy Community School Alternative Learners - Lorain | Lorain | OH | Two or more IDEA Categories | K-5 | 125 | 57% |
| Summit Academy Community School Alternative Learners - Xenia | Xenia | OH | Two or more IDEA Categories | K-10 | 194 | 70% |
| Summit Academy Community School For Alternative Learn - Canton | Canton | OH | Two or more IDEA Categories | K-8 | 143 | 47% |
| Summit Academy Middle And Secondary School - Lorain | Lorain | OH | Two or more IDEA Categories | 6-12 | 149 | 70% |
| Summit Academy Middle School - Columbus | Columbus | OH | Two or more IDEA Categories | 6-8 | 68 | 57% |
| Summit Academy Secondary - Akron | Akron | OH | Two or more IDEA Categories | 9-12 | 81 | 83% |
| Summit Academy Secondary - Canton | Canton | OH | Two or more IDEA Categories | 9-12 | 83 | 70% |
| Summit Academy Secondary - Youngstown | Youngstown | OH | Two or more IDEA Categories | 8-12 | 235 | 64% |



| School Name | City | State | Focus | Grades Served | Enrollment | Enrollment of SWD |
|--|------------|-------|-----------------------------|---------------|------------|-------------------|
| Summit Academy Secondary School - Middletown | Middletown | OH | Two or more IDEA Categories | 7-12 | 139 | 68% |
| Summit Academy Transition High School - Cincinnati | Cincinnati | OH | Two or more IDEA Categories | 9-12 | 81 | 53% |
| Summit Academy Transition High School - Columbus | Columbus | OH | Two or more IDEA Categories | 9-12 | 65 | 71% |
| Summit Academy Transition High School Dayton | Dayton | OH | Two or more IDEA Categories | 9-12 | 174 | 62% |
| Summit Acdy Comm Schl for Alternative Learners of Middletown | Middletown | OH | Two or more IDEA Categories | K-6 | 90 | 48% |
| The Autism Academy of Learning | Toledo | OH | Two or more IDEA Categories | 1-12, UG | 55 | 100% |
| Eola Hills Charter School | Amity | OR | Two or more IDEA Categories | 4-12 | 38 | 26% |
| New Academy Charter School | Pittsburgh | PA | Two or more IDEA Categories | 8-12 | 96 | 53% |
| Provident Charter School | Pittsburgh | PA | Two or more IDEA Categories | 3-5 | 131 | 73% |
| Meyer Center For Special Children | Greenville | SC | Two or more IDEA Categories | Unknown | N/A | N/A |
| Pattison's Academy for Comprehensive Education | Charleston | SC | Two or more IDEA Categories | Unknown | N/A | N/A |
| Humes Preparatory Upper Academy | Memphis | TN | Two or more IDEA Categories | Unknown | N/A | N/A |
| Annunciation Maternity Home | Austin | TX | Two or more IDEA Categories | 6-12 | 9 | 56% |



| School Name | City | State | Focus | Grades Served | Enrollment | Enrollment of SWD |
|--|-------------|-------|-----------------------------|---------------|------------|-------------------|
| Azleway - Chapel Hill | Austin | TX | Two or more IDEA Categories | 3-12 | 39 | 64% |
| Azleway - Willow Bend | Austin | TX | Two or more IDEA Categories | 2-12 | 65 | 57% |
| Big Springs Charter School | Leakey | TX | Two or more IDEA Categories | K-12 | 130 | 28% |
| Hill Country Youth Ranch | Ingram | TX | Two or more IDEA Categories | K-12 | 105 | 58% |
| Lakes Academy | Boerne | TX | Two or more IDEA Categories | 2-11 | 54 | 70% |
| New Horizons | Goldthwaite | TX | Two or more IDEA Categories | 1-11 | 63 | 51% |
| Pegasus School | Austin | TX | Two or more IDEA Categories | 5-12 | 146 | 36% |
| TNC Campus (Texas Neurorehabilitation Center) | Austin | TX | Two or more IDEA Categories | K-12 | 54 | 85% |
| Trinity Charter School - Krause | Austin | TX | Two or more IDEA Categories | 6-12 | 57 | 32% |
| Trinity Charter School - New Life | Austin | TX | Two or more IDEA Categories | 5-12 | 58 | 28% |
| University of Texas University Charter School - Austin Oaks | Austin | TX | Two or more IDEA Categories | 6-12 | 16 | 31% |
| University of Texas University Charter School - Georgetown Behavioral Health Institute | Austin | TX | Two or more IDEA Categories | 6-12 | 27 | 26% |



| School Name | City | State | Focus | Grades Served | Enrollment | Enrollment of SWD |
|---|-----------------|-------|-----------------------------|---------------|------------|-------------------|
| University of Texas University Charter School - High Point | Austin | TX | Two or more IDEA Categories | K-12 | 22 | 36% |
| University of Texas University Charter School - Pathfinder Camp | Driftwood | TX | Two or more IDEA Categories | K-12 | 19 | 74% |
| University of Texas University Charter School - Settlement Home | Austin | TX | Two or more IDEA Categories | 6-12 | 37 | 65% |
| Pinnacle Canyon Academy | Price | UT | Two or more IDEA Categories | K-12 | 448 | 31% |
| Albemarle County Community Public Charter School | Charlottesville | VA | Two or more IDEA Categories | 6-8 | 40 | 43% |
| Richmond Career Education & Employment (Charter School) | Richmond | VA | Two or more IDEA Categories | 9-12 | 34 | 100% |
| Birchwood Blue Hills Charter School | Birchwood | WI | Two or more IDEA Categories | 7-12 | 9 | 56% |
| Central High | Sheboygan | WI | Two or more IDEA Categories | 9-12 | 217 | 28% |
| New Horizons for Learning | Shorewood | WI | Two or more IDEA Categories | 9-12 | 23 | 57% |
| School for Early Development and Achievement (SEDA) | Milwaukee | WI | Two or more IDEA Categories | PK-2 | 81 | 49% |



>> Endnotes

The findings shared in this brief are based on the data reported in the 2017–2018 CRDC. The 2017–2018 CRDC collected information from 97,632 schools; however, the findings in this report rely on a data cleaning methodology that selected a sample of schools from the CRDC. The methodology is outlined in an accompanying file and details the decisions made regarding data cleaning, the variables used for each calculation, manual classifications, and how the findings were reported.¹⁰

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Our Mission: We are committed to ensuring that students with disabilities, particularly those in under-resourced communities, have the quality educational opportunities and choices they need to thrive and learn. We accomplish this through research, advocacy, coalition formation, and capacity building with national, state, and local partners.

Our Vision: Students with disabilities will have the same opportunities for success as their peers.

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¹⁰ For more information, please see www.centerforlearnerequity.org/news/crdc17-18/.