

## **STUDY ON THE USE OF FEDERAL, STATE, AND LOCAL FUNDS FOR PRIVATE EDUCATIONAL PLACEMENTS OF STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES – YEAR TWO**

### *Draft Study Recommendations – Revised by Advisory Group*

**FINDING #1 – THERE ARE CHALLENGES WITH USING CSA WRAP-AROUND SERVICES TO MAINTAIN STUDENTS IN THE LEAST RESTRICTIVE ENVIRONMENT (LRE).**

#### **Recommendation Approved by Advisory Group**

1. *Request the State Executive Council (SEC) revisit existing policy restrictions and budgetary constraints with Children’s Services Act (CSA) state pool funds for wrap around services for students with disabilities. This review will include whether the community match rate could be utilized, existing parental co-payment policies, and the prohibition on using funds for non-educational services provided by school employees, and make recommendations to improve both utilization and access to these funds to the Commission on Youth by the 2017 General Assembly Session.*

**FINDING #2 – VIRGINIA’S EXISTING SPECIAL EDUCATION STATE FUNDING STRUCTURE DOES NOT ADEQUATELY MEET THE NEEDS AND INCREASING NUMBERS OF HARD-TO-SERVE, SPECIAL EDUCATION STUDENTS.**

#### **Recommendation Approved by Advisory Group**

1. *Request the Virginia Department of Education (VDOE) include in its analysis of regional special education programs other states’ funding formulas and policies identified during the course of their study that may be employed in the Commonwealth. VDOE shall also determine the efficacy of Virginia’s regional special education programs and assess whether provisions are needed to revise these programs and if these programs should be expanded to other regions of the Commonwealth. VDOE shall report findings and recommendations to the Commission on Youth prior to the 2016 General Assembly Session.*

**FINDING #3 – THE UTILIZATION AND COSTS OF PRIVATE PLACEMENTS FOR SPECIAL EDUCATION STUDENTS IN VIRGINIA HAS INCREASED SIGNIFICANTLY.**

#### **Recommendations Approved by Advisory Group**

1. *Introduce a language-only budget amendment stating that localities may require the local share of the Special Education Private Day Home Placements come from the localities’ school boards’ budget, rather than the localities’ general government budget. (The Advisory Group was split on this recommendation.)*
2. *Introduce a budget amendment convening an interagency workgroup to assess the barriers to serving students with disabilities in the home school. The workgroup shall assess existing policies and funding formulas including school division’s program requirements, localities’ composite indices, local CSA match rate allocations, local CSA rate setting practices, the impact of caps on support positions, policies for transitioning students back to the public school, and funding for local educational programming based on models which are collaborative and create savings for both local and state government while providing youth an educational option within their home communities. Membership shall include a balance of local and state representative, all impacted state agencies, local education agency (LEA) representatives, local CSA representatives, local government officials, local special education administrators, stakeholder organizations, parent representatives, the Arc of Virginia, and members of the Virginia General Assembly. The*

## **STUDY ON THE USE OF FEDERAL, STATE, AND LOCAL FUNDS FOR PRIVATE EDUCATIONAL PLACEMENTS OF STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES – YEAR TWO**

### *Draft Study Recommendations – Revised by Advisory Group*

*workgroup shall make recommendations to the Virginia Commission on Youth prior to the 2017 General Assembly Session.*

- 3. Request the Office of Children’s Services (OCS) collaborate with VDOE and include a track in their annual conference on best practices and effective strategies for serving children with disabilities in the least restrictive environments and increase knowledge and understanding on working with students with disabilities, as well as improving coordination between schools and CSA.*
- 4. Request the OCS include in its annual training plan strategies best practices and effective strategies for serving children with disabilities in the least restrictive environment and increase knowledge and understanding on working with students with disabilities, as well as improving coordination between schools and CSA.*

**FINDING #4 – VIRGINIA’S REGIONAL SPECIAL EDUCATION PROGRAMS ALLOW SELECT SCHOOL DIVISIONS TO SERVE STUDENTS IN AN ADDITIONAL OPTION ON THE CONTINUUM OF PLACEMENTS BUT THE EXISTING STRUCTURE NEEDS TO BE RE-EVALUATED.**

#### **Recommendation Approved by Advisory Group**

- 1. Request the VDOE to conduct a study on Virginia’s regional special education programs and report findings and recommendations to the Commission on Youth prior to the 2016 General Assembly Session.*

**FINDING #5 – THERE IS NO AVAILABLE DATA ABOUT THE EFFECTIVENESS OF CSA-FUNDED PRIVATE DAY AND RESIDENTIAL PROGRAMS.**

#### **Recommendation Approved by Advisory Group**

- 1. Direct/Request that VDOE work with private providers including the Virginia Association of Independent Specialized Education Facilities, the Virginia Council for Private Education, the Virginia Association of Independent Schools, the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools, the Virginia Coalition of Private Provider Associations, stakeholder groups, and parent representatives to identify and define outcome measures to assess students’ progress such as assessment scores, attendance, graduation rates, transition statistics, and return to the students’ home schools.*
- 2. Direct/Request VDOE establish a procedure requiring all assessment scores for private day students tagged as ‘Special Situation’ be included in the student’s “home” school scores.*
- 3. Direct/Request OCS to report annually CANS and CANVaS scores that measure educational outcomes by service placement name and type for all students being served in CSA-funded educational placements.*

**FINDING #6 – VIRGINIA’S PARENT CONSENT PROVISIONS EXCEED FEDERAL REGULATIONS AND MAY HINDER SERVING STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES IN THE LEAST RESTRICTIVE ENVIRONMENT.**

#### **Recommendation Approved by Advisory Group**

- 1. Request VDOE include in the development of the statewide model IEP, an ongoing planning*

## **STUDY ON THE USE OF FEDERAL, STATE, AND LOCAL FUNDS FOR PRIVATE EDUCATIONAL PLACEMENTS OF STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES – YEAR TWO**

### *Draft Study Recommendations – Revised by Advisory Group*

*process which facilitates returning students with disabilities served in private placements to the public school setting. The IEP will establish an ongoing process which should commence when a student with a disability is first placed in a private day or residential school. This process should involve the parents, home school officials, CSA officials, the child's teachers, and other involved stakeholders. VDOE shall also include in its guidance to schools best practices for transitioning students from private residential and private day schools such as employing gradual transition strategies and utilization of available community-based programs.*

DRAFT