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THE PRIVATIZATION OF SPECIAL EDUCATION

A dissertation submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy at Virginia Commonwealth University.

by

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List of Abbreviations

ABA	Applied Behavior Analysis
CPMT	Community Planning and Management Team
CSA	Comprehensive Services Act
CSB	Community Services Board
CSU	Court Services Unit
DOE	Department of Education
DSS	Department of Social Services
FAPE	Free Appropriate Public Education
FAPT	Family Assessment and Planning Team
FOIA	Freedom of Information Act
IDEA	Individuals with Disabilities Education Act
IDEIA	Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act of 2004
IEP	Individualized Education Program
LEA	Local Educational Agency
LRE	Least Restrictive Environment
OCS	Office of Comprehensive Services
SEA	State Educational Agency
VAAP	Virginia Alternate Assessment Program
VDOE	Virginia Department of Education
VGLA	Virginia Grade Level Alternative
VSEP	Virginia Substitute Evaluation Program

Abstract

THE PRIVATIZATION OF SPECIAL EDUCATION

By Judith A. McKinney, Ph.D.

A dissertation submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy at Virginia Commonwealth University.

Virginia Commonwealth University, 2011

Major Director: Cheryl C. Magill, Ph.D., Assistant Professor
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This study, *The Privatization of Special Education*, addresses a shift in the provision of special education and related services to students with disabilities in the Commonwealth of Virginia. Students with disabilities are being publicly placed in private day and residential schools at public expense. In Virginia, 125 private schools are licensed by the Virginia Department of Education to serve students with Disabilities. The purpose of this study was to develop a profile of programs, services, and interventions offered in private education schools. This nonexperimental design study focused on a secondary data source: the Virginia Department of Education, Private Schools for Students With Disabilities 2010 Annual Survey. Completed surveys were returned by all 125 schools. Results indicated that the majority of private schools licensed to serve students with disabilities are day schools. Students with an Emotional Disability, Other Health Impairment, Specific Learning Disability, and Autism are the most

frequently reported disability classifications. Schools tend to be run by corporations and report being accredited by the Virginia Association of Special Education Facilities. Schools offer varying curricula, programs, and services in a variety of settings. This comprehensive profile adds to the body of knowledge on private schools serving students with disabilities in the Commonwealth of Virginia.

CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

Overview

This study, *The Privatization of Special Education*, addresses a shift in the provision of special education and related services to students with disabilities in the Commonwealth of Virginia. Students with disabilities are being publicly placed in private day and residential schools at public expense. This study addresses this issue by developing a comprehensive profile of private day and residential schools licensed to serve students with disabilities in the Commonwealth of Virginia.

When looking at the privatization of special education, as in this study, it is important to begin with a basic overview of Special Education processes and regulations that guide services. The delivery of special education and related services to students found eligible for special education is guided by federal law, state regulations, and local policy and practice. The federal regulations of Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act (IDEA) of 2004 and the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 (NCLB), the Regulations for Governing Special Education Programs for Children with Disabilities in Virginia (see Appendix A), as well as numerous guidance documents and policy handbooks, provide guidance for school districts on special education processes and policies.

Special education is described by Mathur, Rutherford, Umbreit, and Cocchiarella (2004) as a continuum of services that ensures that every student with a disability has access to quality, effective instruction that results in positive student outcomes. Special education services are

determined by Individualized Education Program (IEP) teams. The members of an IEP team include individuals responsible for developing, reviewing, or revising an IEP for a child with a disability, including the student, parent, regular and special education classroom teachers; the school administrator or designee; related service providers; and staff of participating agencies. The local educational agencies (LEA) determine the school personnel to fill the roles of the required IEP team members. Parents may invite other participants to the meeting, including family members, friends of the family, advocates and consultants, or legal counsel (8 VAC 20-81-110). Each IEP team must ensure that a continuum of placement options is reviewed to determine the level of service required to meet the needs of students with disabilities. Levels of service available to students typically follow a hierarchy from least to most restrictive, including general education classes, special classes, special schools, home instruction, and instruction in hospitals and institutions (8 VAC 20-81-130). The majority of students with disabilities are educated in the public school system of the locality of residence. However, students with significant disabilities, or those requiring specialized services, supports, or environments may be served in alternative settings. Alternative settings include public alternative or regional schools, day treatment programs, private nonsectarian schools, and private special education day and residential schools established and governed by private boards and administration. For certain students with significant disabilities, a private day or residential program may be considered as an option for placement. If a private special education school is determined to be the least restrictive environment in which the student can receive appropriate services and supports to access their education, their services are becoming privatized, out of the venue of public school services. The issue of the privatization of special education is addressed by Fox (1999) who proposed that instead of abandoning the needs of special education, the private sector is

supplying what the public school has failed to provide. The significance of least restrictive environment (LRE) as a factor for determining placement options for students with disabilities has been noted in research (Audette, 1982; Hu, 2008; Putman, Luiselli, Sennett, & Malonsom, 2002).

Rationale for Study of the Problem

In 2008, a collaborative workgroup was led by representatives of the Virginia Office of Comprehensive Services (OCS) and the Virginia Department of Education (VDOE). Representatives of private special education schools and LEA representatives from a sampling of school divisions were also included. This group was charged with the task of reviewing data on the status of publicly placed students receiving special education services in private special education private day schools. The group focused on a number of factors, including census, LRE, disability classification, and reasons for placing students in private facilities. In addition, the workgroup examined issues contributing to increased use of these programs at the day and residential levels, making recommendations for strategies for strengthening the program.

Members of the workgroup designed a survey instrument that was distributed to special education directors, Comprehensive Services Act (CSA) coordinators, and private day program managers. The survey targeted factors influencing placement decisions resulting in private special education services. Results of the survey were reported to the State Executive Council in September, 2008 by Nichols, Cumbia, and Ruffin. Nichols et al. (2008) noted increases in the number of private day schools, student enrollment, and costs.

Results of this survey indicated the perceptions of the respondents in relation to their decision to make private day placements. When combining the *often* and *almost always* categories, respondents reported that the top three reasons for making a private placement would

be (a) behavior needs cannot be met in public school (87%); (b) level of student need(s) (81.1%); and (c) highly specialized services (65.3%) (Schools and CSA Survey, 2008) (see Table 1).

Table 1

Virginia Department of Education and Office of Comprehensive Services:

Schools and CSA Survey (Part One)

Factor	Never %	Sometimes %	Often %	Always %
Low incidence disability	25.5	51.6	20.3	2.6
Highly specialized services in private day	4.6	30.1	41.3	24.0
Behavioral needs that cannot be met in public school	0.5	12.5	45.5	41.5
Level of need(s)	2.6	16.3	42.3	38.8
Need for mental health intervention	8.5	39.0	37.5	15.0
Transition from residential programs	5.1	49.0	35.7	10.2
Student behavior impedes learning of others	4.5	37.2	44.2	14.1

Note. Schools and CSA Survey (2008).

In addition, survey results reported the degree to which a number of factors influenced decision making regarding placement into a private day school. When combining the scores of *often* and *always* results indicated the following top three factors influencing student placement in a publicly funded, private program: (a) availability of appropriate services in the public schools (84.9%); (b) limitations on LEA staff in serving children (50.2%); and (c) parent preference (28.4%) (Schools and CSA Survey, 2008) (see Table 2).

Table 2

Virginia Department of Education and Office of Comprehensive Services:

Schools and CSA Survey (Part Two)

Factor	Never %	Sometimes %	Often %	Always %
Availability of appropriate services in the public school	2.0	13.1	28.6	56.3
Parent preference	7.6	64.0	22.3	6.1
Limitations on LEA staff in serving children	11.8	37.9	40.5	9.7
Impact of No Child Left Behind	40.4	31.9	19.7	8.0
Zero tolerance policies	26.3	46.9	20.1	6.7
Philosophy (local practice, culture, belief systems)	18.1	49.2	27.5	5.2
Inadvertent fiscal incentives	55.8	34.7	7.4	2.1
Prevention/response to mediation or due process	24.9	59.4	13.7	2.0
Impact of federal reporting (annual performance report)	58.8	32.6	7.5	1.1

Increases in the size, scope, and role of private special education services prompts the need for formal research related to a number of factors related to both public school systems and private school offerings. Since public schools are charged with ensuring FAPE for students with disabilities, it is essential for school systems to review programs and supports offered at the local level. If school systems are unable to serve all students with disabilities and placements are made in private special education schools, and in line with making sound educational and fiscal decisions, it is important that public school staff have information available to make responsible decisions, thus ensuring that students are offered appropriate programs and services to meet their needs.

Focusing on the legal requirements of IDEA 2004 for implementation and monitoring of student special education services, it is essential that each LEA is provided with as much data as possible to assist in monitoring options and making informed decisions about student placement, programming and services. In addition, with budget expenditures exceeding \$120,000,000 to educate students with disabilities in private special education schools, there are a number of factors related to programming and accountability of private schools serving students with disabilities that should be reviewed by participating agencies involved with student services, placement, monitoring, and funding.

The first factor is school accountability for student progress. Public schools are accountable for Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) standards defined by the federal No Child Left Behind Act. In Virginia, test scores from the Virginia Standards of Learning Assessments are used to determine AYP. The scores for students who participate in special education services in a private placement are reported back to the LEA. Private schools are not held to the same standards or formally held accountable for student progress. This is a concern because the

privatization and shift in standards lead to a question of whether a child is accessing appropriate services. The ultimate responsibility for student progress and achievement is held by the LEA.

The second factor is related to licensure and accreditation of private special education schools. Per requirements of the Code of Virginia, standards for accreditation of public schools divisions in the Commonwealth of Virginia are guided by Regulations Establishing Standards for Accrediting Public Schools in Virginia (8 VAC 20-131). These regulations govern public schools providing instruction to students as outlined in 8 VAC 20-131-5. These regulations do not apply to private schools. Although private schools must be licensed to operate by the Commonwealth of Virginia, accreditation is not required. This may impact LEA decisions to accept or deny student credits toward completion of graduation requirements.

A third issue relates to school programming and services. In public schools, all components of educational services including Curriculum and Instruction, Student Support Services, Nonacademic Services, and Transportation and Food Services are overseen by the superintendent and other senior staff who are, in turn, held accountable by local school boards and county administrators. Private special education schools may be overseen by principals, directors, owners, and boards of directors who are afforded the opportunity to develop programs and services as student census and population change. This can allow for creative and innovative programming that addresses the unique needs of students with disabilities. This can become problematic, however, if checks and balances are not in place to hold administrators and staff accountable for factors such as: (a) program development that is aligned with state standards; (b) following all state and federal regulations; and (c) ensuring the proper implementation and monitoring of student progress on IEPs and achievement through state and district-wide assessments.

A final factor relates to the development of collaborative working relationships within localities and between public and private school entities. This refers to the school-based IEP team which makes recommendations for a level of service or placement, which could be a more restrictive level of service in a day or residential placement, or student placement in residential facilities for non-educational reasons made by community agencies (i.e., Department of Social Services [DSS], Community Service Boards [CSB], Court Services Units [CSU], and Family Assessment and Planning Teams [FAPT]). Clarification of the roles and responsibilities of the LEA and SEA, collaborating agencies, and private school staff may help strengthen collaborative working relationships to better support students with disabilities participating in special education services in out-of-district placements, ensuring FAPE as required through IDEA 2004.

As can be seen by the scope of the issues outlined above, a number of factors related to programming and services offered in private special education schools can be considered by participating agencies assessing the quality and appropriateness of services available to students with disabilities educated in private day and residential schools. If the trend of public schools and participating agency referrals of students to privatized educational programs for students with disabilities continues, it is essential that public agencies work with private schools and vendors to monitor student progress and achievement, according to local, state and federal regulations.

Taylor (2005a, 2005b) challenged educators to develop a more systematic method to study private schools, noting that it is essential to develop a clear picture of what special education services are provided, and the quality of such services in private schools nationwide.

To address this, the research recognized the importance of gathering information about aforementioned issues related to private special education schools. Identifying this information has been instrumental in developing a comprehensive profile of private special education schools

in the Commonwealth of Virginia, thus ensuring that all parties have access to current information related to characteristics of programs available along the continuum, especially those in private schools as described in this study.

Literature/Research Background

The phenomenon of nonpublic education and related services has been the subject of scholarly research from a variety of perspectives. The first theme found in the literature concerns mental health services and placements. Student participation, programming and outcomes of placement in residential treatment centers are addressed in research related to mental health services and child rights. The second theme addressed in the literature is that of special education services offered in private nonsectarian and religious schools. Katsiyannis and Maag (1998) addressed the challenges of serving children with disabilities in private and parochial schools and found that public schools should closely follow the availability, scope, and location of services given to privately placed students. Katsiyannis and Maag suggested that these factors may have a significant impact on the responsibility of the public school to serve all students with disabilities in their jurisdiction.

The third broad theme indicated in the research is related to the inclusion of students with disabilities in alternative education programs. Bullock (2006) related that the current philosophy of alternative education is relatively new and expanding to various forms, to include magnet schools, charter schools, alternative learning centers, schools-without-walls, second-chance schools, day treatment and education centers, and residential schools. A great deal of literature addresses the broad topic of alternative education. However, limited research focuses on programs and services that address the needs of students with disabilities.

One example of a research study that included data on serving students with disabilities in alternative schools was conducted in Oregon by Unruh, Bullis, Todis, Waintrup, and Atkins (2007). Unruh et al. (2007) noted that although alternative education settings that include services for students with disabilities has grown, little empirical evidence is available to document outcomes for alternative programs and the students they serve. It is important to increase awareness of student outcomes because public agencies are ultimately responsible for provision of a free appropriate public education, which includes linking students to postsecondary education, training, employment, community, and independent living options.

Reporting the results of a statewide study of the status of special education in Tennessee, Taylor (2005b) outlined information related to both alternative and private schools in the data reported. When reporting her data, Taylor proposed that, despite the knowledge that some private schools are enrolling students with special needs, little research literature is available to document the nature of services provided to these students. Taylor identified the need for a systematic method for studying the issues related to services provided in private schools nationwide.

The fourth theme is that of demographics, programming and services in nonpublic, private special education schools which were the focus of this research study. Findings from a number of studies acknowledge the paucity of data related to nonpublic educational services (Audette, 1982; Gagnon & Leone, 2005; Taylor, 2005a, 2005b). When evaluating available data, Mathur et al. (2004) and Gagnon and Leone (2005) noted gaps of information with respect to types of students served, staffing credentials, and the relative degrees of success of different types of placements; additional research was proposed to gain information on these factors. Since these data are more readily available through public school reporting process at the local,

state, and federal levels, it makes sense to increase public knowledge of factors related to private schools educating students with disabilities, especially publicly funded placements.

Another gap in data is related to the relationship of staff charged with program implementation and monitoring. Little research is available that outlines the roles of a collaborative relationship between public and private school staff. One key piece of literature was written by Audette (1982) in which he focused on the issues of accountability and program monitoring by private and public school staff. Audette supported the collaborative efforts of private school staff and representatives of local and state educational agencies to meet the needs of students with disabilities receiving services in private special education facilities. Based on the results of his study, Audette proposed further research related to the collaboration of public and private agencies as key to adding to the knowledge base of educators and interagency personnel who work with students in out-of-district placements. This is important in today's climate as placements and expenditures in programs increase, as well as increasing accountability for student progress in state-wide assessments and student progress toward achieving goals and objectives of their IEPs.

Student Census, Membership and Placement

To build a foundation for this study, it is essential to review available data related to student disabilities, services, placements, and expenditures. In this chapter, data reported are those data that are most currently available.

At the national level, statistical information is available through the U.S. Department of Education and the National Center for Educational Statistics (NCES). Published annually, the *Digest of Education Statistics* and the *Condition of Education* present information related to

disability classifications and school placement by category. In 2008, the NCES data showed numbers of students for a 3-year period served under IDEA. These are reported in Table 3.

Table 3

*Students Served Under Individuals With Disabilities
Education Act (IDEA Census)*

School Year	National	Virginia
2004-2005	6,718,619	174,417
2005-2006	6,712,605	174,640
2006-2007	6,686,361	170,794

Note. Digest of Education Statistics (2008).

In a reporting period of 3 school years (2004-2007), an annual decline of <1% decrease in census was reported at the national level (Table 3). For the same period, Virginia showed a decrease of 2% (Table 3). During this period, the number of students served in Virginia was relatively flat.

In addition to census data, other information is collected at the national level regularly. In 1989, a Private School Universe Study was initiated by the U.S. Bureau of the Census and it has been conducted on a biennial basis since that time. This survey reported the total number of private schools, students, and teachers in order to build a profile of private schools in all 50 states and the District of Columbia (NCES, 2009).

National data for the 2007-2008 school year shows that 33,740 private elementary and secondary schools served 5,072,451 students. Of that total number, 1,748 (5.2%) of nonsectarian private schools were targeted as schools that have a special education focus. Those schools

served a total of 116,953 students, 2.3% of the private school population. The majority of the schools ($n = 774$, 6.1% of the population) were in suburban areas; the majority of the students in special education schools ($n = 53,922$, 2.7% of the population) lived in suburban areas.

At the state level, the Virginia Department of Education reports on a number of specific categories, including enrollment, placement, and per-pupil expenditure. Data collected from all local school divisions in Virginia are reported annually in the following forms: (a) the Superintendent's Annual Reports, (b) The December 1 Child Count, and (C) Special Education Performance Reports.

The Superintendent's Annual Report publishes information in a number of reporting categories, including membership, age/grade distribution, and placement. Data for this report are submitted by all school divisions in the state during three required reporting time periods, September, March, and End of Year.

Table 4

*Superintendent's Annual Report: Table 1. Average Daily Membership
of Students Enrolled in Virginia Public Schools*

School Year	September 30	March 31	End of Year
2007-2008	1,202,550	1,192,377	1,188,321
2008-2009	1,205,414	1,195,844	1,194,819
2009-2010	1,214,409	1,204,422	1,202,542

Note. Virginia School Division Submitted Reports (statewide totals). This number is for statewide totals, excluding census counts for Department of Correctional Education and Virginia School for the Deaf/Blind.

When measured throughout the year, daily membership declines as the year progresses (Table 4). In the reporting year, average daily membership decreased by 11, 867 (<1%). However, it should be noted that statewide totals for three consecutive school years show an increase in membership across all three reporting time periods (see Table 4). The increase in End of Year Membership was 14, 221 (1%) from 2007- 2008 to 2009-2010.

In addition to public school membership, the cost of educating students in the public school setting will be included, thus building a framework from which to compare these same factors related to private schools highlighted in this study. Public school information is published annually by the Virginia Department of Education in the Superintendent's Annual Report for Virginia (see Table 5).

Table 5

Superintendent's Annual Report for Virginia:

Statewide Totals for Disbursements (Table 13)

Year	Per-Pupil Expenditure
2007	9,983
2008	10,505
2009	10,778

Note. Table 13. Virginia Disbursements by School Division.

The figures in Table 5 above, obtained from Table 13 of the Superintendent's Annual Report for Virginia, reflect disbursements by school divisions in the following categories: End of Year Average Daily Membership (ADM), Administration, Instruction, Attendance and Health Services, Pupil Transportation Services, Operations and Maintenance Services, Total Cost of

Operation of Regular Day School, and Per-Pupil Expenditure for Operation of Regular Day School. The per pupil expenditures increased from 2007 to 2009 by 7% (see Table 5).

It is also important to look further to address the cost of educating students with disabilities in Virginia's public schools. School divisions in Virginia have access to state funds to assist in the cost of meeting required standards to educate students with disabilities. For each student counted in the school division's average daily membership (ADM), an amount is paid to the school division to meet the special education requirements. This per-child amount is referred to the special education add-on (VDOE, 2010). Costs of educating students with disabilities vary by placement, service and staffing needs.

Another set of data is collected annually per the requirements of IDEA, Part B. School divisions are required to report an unduplicated count of students with disabilities participating in special education services on December 1 of each school year (Superintendent's Memo #282-09, 2009). Student disability classification, census and placement in private special education day and residential schools can be pulled from December 1 Child Count tabulated results. When looking at these data, it is important to note that the December 1 Child Count is a snapshot of enrollment and services in a "moment in time," recording student data for one day of the year (see Table 6).

Data trends for the years 2006-2009 document the following: (a) decrease in Total Special Education Population (-2%); increase in Day School Placement (4%); and a decrease in Residential school placement (-25%).

In addition to the December 1 Child Count Report, other specially designed tables and reports are created to publish specific information by request. One example shown in Table 7 was developed for the 2008 Office of Comprehensive Services/Virginia Department of

Table 6

December 1 Child Count: Virginia Totals for Students With Disabilities by

Division-Statewide Totals

Year	<u>Special Education Census and Private Special Education Schools</u>		
	Total Special Education *	Day	Residential
2006-2007	169,538	1,832	664
2007-2008	167,925	1,825	642
2008-2009	165,874	1,906	498

*Includes public school, regional programs, parental placements, and private special education school placements.

Note. Virginia School Division Submitted Reports (statewide totals).

Table 7

*December 1 Child Count: Virginia Private Day Placements**by Disability Classification*

Primary Disability	2005	2006	2007
Intellectual disability*	97	108	124
Severe disabilities	13	10	11
Hearing impaired	5	1	3
Speech and language	39	17	4
Visual impairment	1	1	0
Emotional disability	722	795	848
Orthopedically impaired	3	2	1
Other health impaired	250	246	299
Special learning disability	154	163	153
Deaf/blind	0	0	0
Multiple disabilities	79	98	111
Autism	136	189	243
Traumatic brain injury	10	9	8
Developmental delay	30	22	26
Totals	1,539	1,661	1,831

* Intellectual disability replaced the term mental retardation as a disability classification.

Note. This information is reported annually by local school divisions to the state through the Virginia Department of Education December 1 Child Count Report.

Education workgroup mentioned above. This table sorts student placement in private day school settings by disability category. This information is not currently available for the 2008 or 2009 reporting periods.

According to data reported in Table 7, the disability classifications showing the greatest amount of growth related to placement in out of district private placements are as follows: (a) Autism (79%); (b) Multiple Disabilities (41%); (c) Other Health Impaired (22%); and (d) Emotional Disability (17%). Decreases were noted for Traumatic Brain Injury, Developmental Delay, and Hearing Impaired. A sizeable decrease in placements was noted for Speech and Language as the primary disability with a decrease from 39 to 4 (-89%) in a 3-year period.

Data obtained from the December 1 Child Count are used to identify locality progress on meeting state targets known as indicators. Per requirements of IDEA 2004, the Virginia Department of Education annually reports statewide progress on 13 indicators in the Special Education Performance Report. Indicator 5, Least Restrictive Environment (LRE), reports the percentages of students spending time inside of regular classroom settings and percentages of students served in separate public or private schools, residential placements, hospitals, or through home-based or homebound education. School systems in Virginia are working to increase participation of students with disabilities in regular classroom settings, decreasing time in a self-contained setting, and reducing out-of-school placements. Progress towards that goal is noted in Table 8.

As can be seen in Table 8, the state target for Indicator 5 was not met for the most recent reporting period. It should be noted, that the 3.6% state performance rate on students placed outside of regular school programming is not split into subcategories. Therefore data specifically related to private day or residential school placement must be obtained from another source.

Table 8

*Virginia Special Education Performance Report - Indicator 5 Least**Restrictive Environment (2008-2009)*

Placement	State Performance (%) 2008-2009	State Target (%) 2008-2009	Target Met (%) 2008-2009
80% or more of time inside regular classroom	56	64	No
40% or less of time inside regular classroom	16	10	No
Served in separate public or private school, residential, home-based or hospital facility	3.6	< 1	No

Note. Date of publication, June 2010.

In addition to the data reports from the three sources noted above, detailed information is available from Virginia Department of Education staff through special interest tables, reports, and data sets. For example, the following information provides specific data related to funding sources for private day school placements. Results of the Annual Survey of Private Schools distributed to administrators of private special education schools were used to provide this information. It is important to stress that the Annual Survey is completed by administrators of private special education schools licensed to operate in the Commonwealth of Virginia.

One key element of the Annual Survey is a section that addresses funding sources that support student placement in a nonpublic school programs. Listed in Table 9 is a summary of information from the last five reporting years (VDOE, 2010).

Table 9

*Students in Virginia Private Day Schools: Three-year Statistical Summary
by School Type and Funding Category*

Funding	2007	2008	2009
Virginia LEA/FAPT	2,186	2,017	1,992
Other states	169	416	345
Private pay	933	835	790
Court ordered	0	0	1
Residential school	Inc.*	Inc.*	62
Totals	3,288	3,268	3,128

*The count for residential students was included for 2007-2008.

Note. Virginia Department of Education Tables and Data Set (July, 2010) compiled from Annual Surveys of Private Special Education Schools, 2007-2008.

The trend, according to self-report of schools, showed a 4% decline in private day school placement (Table 9).

In Virginia, public funding for private special education services in private day and residential schools, for students placed by community agencies, is appropriated by the Virginia General Assembly through the Comprehensive Services Act (§2.2-5211) and distributed through the Office of Comprehensive Services. This 1993 Virginia Law established the pooling of eight specific funding streams used to purchase services for high-risk youth. These funds are distributed to the localities with a required state/local match and are managed by local interagency teams. The purpose of the act is to provide high quality, child centered, family focused, cost-effective services to high risk youth and their families (OCS, 2010). Services are determined and approved by local Family Assessment and Planning Teams, working in conjunction with the Community Planning and Management Team, to provide services for at-risk youth and those with significant disabilities. Services fees, such as tuition and related costs, are available through the *CSA Service Fee Directory*, which provides links to private service providers. The OCS provides technical assistance and data reporting for five regions as outlined in the following tables. This information allows for comparison of students, services, and expenditures across the state. Appendix B is a breakdown of localities by region.

The OCS collects data from local CSA offices regarding services and expenditures. Data sets that highlight services, expenditures, and census are published quarterly in the form of local, regional, and statewide categories (OCS, FY10 Data Set, 2010). Virginia data for fiscal year 2009, fourth quarter, reported that \$376,353,749 was spent on total services for students involved in the specialized services. Of this total, \$80,325,586 was spent on special education private day

programs. The average expenditure per child was \$27,257 (Nichols, 2009). Data are indicated in Table 10.

Table 10

Fiscal Year 2007-2010: Special Education Day and Residential Placements in Virginia-Census and Expenditures

Fiscal Year Descriptor	Day Placement	Residential Placements
2007 census	2,603	692
2007 expenditures	\$63,223,682	\$37,818,938
2008 census	2,864	635
2008 expenditures	\$71,558,671	\$37,813,265
2009 census	2,945	Unavailable*
2009 expenditures	\$80,344,239	\$33,933,903
2010 census**	2,824	-
2010 expenditures**	\$80,979,569	-

* Due to change in reimbursement reporting categories, unduplicated census unavailable.

Note. Data reported from the Office of Comprehensive Services (Nichols, 2010).

Review of census in day placements shows an increase of 13% from 2007 to 2009. Associated costs rose 27%. In this same time period, census in residential placement declined at the rate of -8% from 2007 to 2008. Unduplicated census data is unavailable for 2009. However, it should be noted that costs declined -10% in a 3-year period (Table 10).

In addition to state-wide data, the OCS reports regional data, as seen in Tables 11, 12, and 13.

Table 11

Virginia Regional Special Education Day Placement Reports for Fiscal Year 2008

Area	Region	Students	Actual Expenditures	<u>Expenditures</u>
				Average Expenditure/Student
1	Central	754	18,217,372	24,161
2	Eastern	477	9,432,145	19,774
3	Northern	790	26,492,230	33,534
4	Piedmont	768	16,064,042	20,917
5	Western	75	1,352,882	18,038
Statewide total		2,864	71,558,671	24,986

Note. Office of Comprehensive Services (Nichols, 2009).

Table 12

Virginia Regional Special Education Day Placement Reports for Fiscal Year 2009

Area	Region	Students	Actual Expenditures	<u>Expenditures</u>
				Average Expenditure/Student
1	Central	867	22,154,350	25,553
2	Eastern	406	9,068,248	22,336
3	Northern	792	28,865,280	36,446
4	Piedmont	791	18,633,660	23,557
5	Western	84	1,513,975	18,024
Statewide total		2,940	80,235,513	27,291

Note. Office of Comprehensive Services (Nichols, 2009).

Table 13

Virginia Regional Special Education Day Placement Reports for Fiscal Year 2010

Area	Region	Students	Actual Expenditures	<u>Expenditures</u>
				Average Expenditure/Student
1	Central	680	19,244,486	28,301
2	Eastern	364	8,787,006	24,140
3	Northern	800	29,711,902	37,140
4	Piedmont	877	21,264,745	24,247
5	Western	103	1,971,430	19,140
Statewide total		2,824	80,979,569	28,675

Note. Office of Comprehensive Services (Nichols, 2010).

A review of Tables 11, 12, and 13 shows that statewide day placement census rose less than 3% between 2008 and 2009 and then in 2010 declined to within 1% of the 2008 level. On the regional level, different trends over this time period were observed. In the central and eastern regions day placements have declined. They remain flat in the Northern region. In the more rural Western and Piedmont regions, the day placement utilization is increasing (see Figure 1, special education day census 2008-2010). Statewide unit costs for day placement services increased by 9% between 2008 and 2009. Costs rose a further 5% between 2009 and 2010. Statewide expenditures increased 12% between 2008 and 2009. Growth was flat between 2009 and 2010 with less than a 1% increase. Regional expenditures followed the same trends as the regional census reports (see Tables 14, 15, 16).

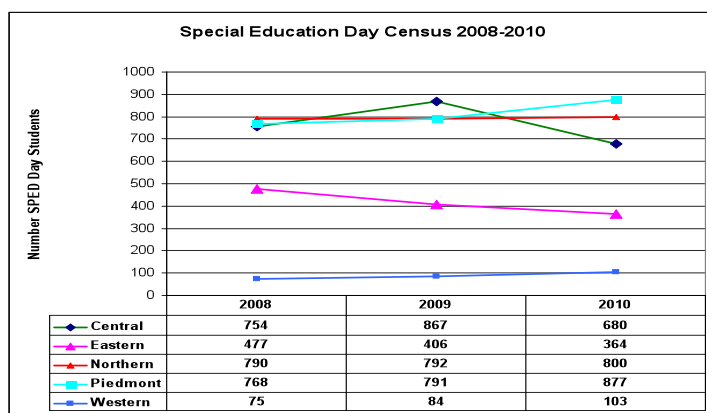


Figure 1. Special education day student census data (2008-2010).

Note: Office of Comprehensive Services (Nichols, 2010).

Virginia Statewide CSA Data for Fiscal Years 2008, 2009, and 2010 are reported in Tables 14, 15, and 16.

Table 14

Virginia Statewide CSA Data for Fiscal Year 2008, Fourth Quarter

Placement Type	Census	Expenditures	Average Cost per Child
Day	2,864	71,558,671	24,986
Congregate (non-Medicaid)	Not Available*	-	-
Congregate (Medicaid)	Not Available*	-	-

*Some data categories and data collection sources changed between fiscal years 2008 and 2009. Data comparisons of special education residential utilization are not available for this time period.

Table 15

Virginia Statewide CSA Data for Fiscal Year 2009, Fourth Quarter

Placement Type	Census	Expenditures	Average Cost per Child
Day	2,943	80,235,513	27,263
Congregate (non-Medicaid)	873	22,384,217	25,640
Congregate (Medicaid)	1,300	21,831,430	16,793
Total	5,116	124,451,168	24,327

Note. Educational costs connected to residential facility placements are broken out separately to capture Medicaid and non-Medicaid. CSA pays for the educational costs for non-Medicaid and Medicaid placements.

Table 16

Virginia Statewide CSA Data for Fiscal Year 2010, Fourth Quarter

Placement Type	Census	Expenditures	Average Cost per Child
Day	2,824	80,979,569	28,675
Congregate (non-Medicaid)	670	16,989,672	25,358
Congregate (Medicaid)	1,288	22,010,786	17,089
Total	4,782	119,980,027	25,090

Note. Educational costs connected to residential facility placements are broken out separately to capture Medicaid and non-Medicaid. CSA pays for the educational costs for non-Medicaid and Medicaid placements.

Some CSA data categories and data collection sources changed between fiscal years 2008 and 2009. Data comparisons of special education residential facility utilization are not available for this time period. Between 2009 and 2010, the total census for congregate and day placement utilization declined by over 6%. This corresponded to a decline in overall expenditures of 3%. The most prominent change occurred in the census reported for non-Medicaid congregate services, which declined by 23%. Medicaid congregate services, which are driven by parental placements, remained flat over this period. In 2010, day placement services represent 68% of these expenditures. Congregate Medicaid costs represent 18%. Congregate non-Medicaid costs represent 14% (see Figure 2).

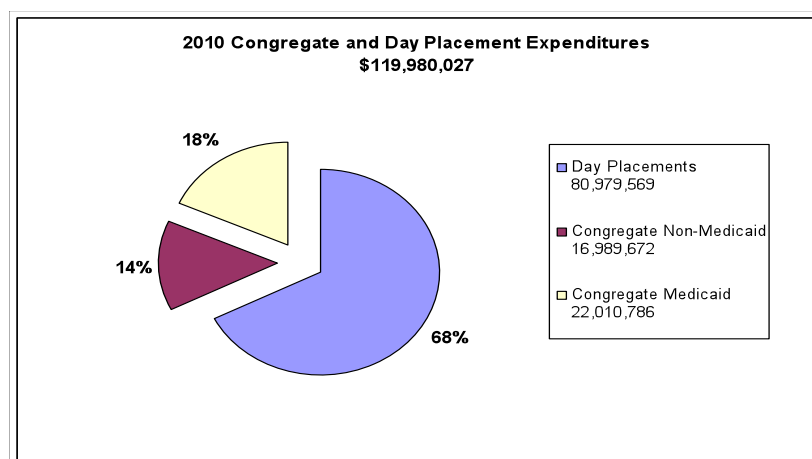


Figure 2. Congregate and day placement expenditures funded by the Virginia Comprehensive Services Act.

Note. Office of Comprehensive Services (Nichols, 2010).

A search for statistical information related to private school placement uncovered a number of research studies that identify student and services demographics by state and geographic region (Fox, 1999; Mathur et al., 2004; Taylor, 2005b; Unruh et al., 2007). This

information, paired with that found in other data sources, presents a basic framework of programs and services for students in nonpublic schools at the state and national levels.

Statement of Purpose

The purpose of this study was to describe programs and services offered in private special education schools serving publically placed students with disabilities in the Commonwealth of Virginia. Results of this descriptive study add to the body of knowledge currently available to LEA and interagency representatives who determine level of service requirements and need to consider placement options for students with disabilities outside of the public school setting.

Research Questions

1. What is the total census and disability classification of students served in private special education schools?
2. What types of programs are offered in private special education schools to address the unique academic, behavior, and social skills of students with disabilities requiring a private school placement?
3. What types of services are offered in private special education schools to address the unique academic, behavior, and social skills of students with disabilities requiring a private school placement?
4. What types of interventions are offered in private special education schools to address the unique academic, behavior, and social skills of students with disabilities requiring a private school placement?
5. What are the similarities and differences when private day schools and residential schools are compared, as related to: (a) programs, (b) services, and (c) interventions in place to address the needs of students with disabilities requiring a private school placement?

Methodology

The study was a quantitative nonexperimental research study conducted to describe the programs, interventions, and services offered by private special education schools licensed to serve students with disabilities in the Commonwealth of Virginia. The Virginia Department of Education, Department of Federal Program Monitoring, annually distributes a survey seeking information from private special education day and residential schools. A Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) request was submitted to the VDOE, requesting copies of the completed surveys. In response, VDOE staff indicated that copies of the 2010 Annual Survey would be available upon receipt of the completed surveys in the VDOE office of Federal Program Monitoring.

Upon receipt of the completed surveys, the researcher entered data into a spreadsheet of a statistical software program. Statistical software, PASW17.0 was used to enter, process, and analyze the data. Data were analyzed through descriptive statistics.

Summary

The authorization of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA, 1997), as well as the reauthorization in the Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act of 2004 (IDEIA, IDEA 2004), guarantee access to an appropriate education for all children with disabilities. Students with disabilities receive special education services as outlined in their IEP. Each IEP team must review the placement options and determine the appropriate least restrictive environment (LRE) for the provision of services, ensuring that requirements for LRE are met (8 VAC 20-81-130). Costs associated to educating students with disabilities are higher than those of regular education students for staffing, smaller teacher to student ratio, and specialized

programming. Those costs are significantly higher when the least restrictive environment for the student is considered to be a private day or residential school.

In the Commonwealth of Virginia, 125 private special education schools are currently licensed to serve student with disabilities. Programs vary by a number of characteristics, including: (a) population and disability, (b) staffing and services, and (c) programs and interventions. With the costs of such placements exceeding \$120 million in 2009, there is an interest publicly in ensuring that the funds result in appropriate services and student success. Therefore, a comprehensive study of the existing programs currently serving students with disabilities in the Commonwealth of Virginia, was needed, as none existed prior to this time.

Results of this study provided previously unreported statewide data for private special education schools licensed to operate in the Commonwealth of Virginia. The research questions were based on gaps found in relevant literature as well as information available to practitioners working within the spectrum of public and private special education schools. The researcher presents this description of private special education schools, along with aforementioned data and statistics, as a basic foundation of the state of private special education schools licensed to operate in the Commonwealth of Virginia. It is hoped that this descriptive information will lay the foundation for future research and provide a bank of information to professionals, families, and schools impacted by this.

Definition of Terms

For the purpose of this research study, the terms private and nonpublic were used interchangeably throughout the document. Terms found in this study are defined below as found in various sources, including the Virginia Department of Education's Regulations Governing

Special Education Programs for Children with Disabilities in Virginia (8VAC20-81), the Office of Comprehensive Services, and the Department of Medical Assistance Services.

- *Accreditation*: means a process used by the VDOE to evaluate the educational performance of public schools and in accordance with these regulations and in private schools through the regulations of accrediting bodies, such as the Virginia Association of Independent Special Education Facilities and the Virginia Association of Independent Schools.
- *Applied behavior analysis*: means a time tested and data based strategy for teaching children with disabilities. Although used with typically developing children, it is most often used with children with autistic spectrum disorders, but is an effective tool for children with behavioral disorders, multiple disabilities, and severe intellectual handicaps.
- *Assistive technology service*: means any service that directly assists a child with a disability in the selection, acquisition, or use of an assistive technology device.
- *Autism*: means a developmental disability significantly affecting verbal and nonverbal communication and social interaction, generally evident before age 3, that adversely affects a child's educational performance.
- *Behavioral intervention plan*: means a plan that utilizes positive behavioral interventions and supports to address behaviors that interfere with the learning of students with disabilities or with the learning of others or behaviors that require disciplinary action.
- *Behavior management system*: means a systematic program that tracks behaviors through charted data and includes components of rewards and/or consequences.

- *Behavioral support*: means those principles and methods employed by a school to help a student achieve positive behavior and to address and correct a student's behavior in a constructive and safe manner in accordance with written policies and procedures governing program expectations, educational and treatment goals, safety and security, and the student's Individualized Education Program (IEP) or Individual Instruction Plan (IIP).
- *Census*: means the population count of students in an educational placement or setting (i.e., public school, private day school).
- *Change in placement*: means when the LEA places the child in a setting that is distinguishable from the educational environment to which the child was previously assigned.
- *Child*: means any person who shall not have reached his 22nd birthday by September 30 of the current year.
- *Child with a disability*: means a child evaluated in accordance with provisions of the guidelines as having an identified disability, who needs special education and related services.
- *Collaboration*: means interaction among professionals as they work toward a common goal.
- *Comprehensive Services Act*: means the Comprehensive Services Act for At-Risk Youth and Families that establishes the collaborative administration and funding system for certain at-risk youths and their families.
- *Congregate*: means a residential setting, such as a group home or residential treatment facility.

- *Continuum of services*: means the range of possible educational placements available for students with a disability according to the level of restrictiveness, ranging from a public school classroom to a hospital setting.
- *Core academic subjects*: means English, reading, or language arts, mathematics, science, foreign languages, civics, and government, economics, arts, history, and geography.
- *Counseling services*: means services provided by qualified visiting teachers, social workers, psychologists, guidance counselors, or other qualified personnel.
- *Day treatment*: Medicaid regulations require that the child or adolescent participate in a program of therapeutic activities in addition to being monitored in the classroom. This includes two hours of direct service per day: before, during, or after school; a minimum of two or more therapeutic activities per day; and family counseling.
- *Deaf-blindness*: means simultaneous hearing and visual impairments, the combination of which causes such severe communication and other developmental and educational needs that they cannot be accommodated in special education programs solely for children with deafness or children with blindness.
- *Deafness*: means a hearing impairment that is so severe that the child is impaired in processing linguistic information through hearing, with or without amplification, that adversely affects the child's educational performance.
- *Department*: means the Virginia Department of Education
- *Developmental delay*: means a disability affecting a child age two by September 30 through six, inclusive.
- *Direct service*: means services provided to a child with a disability directly by the VDOE, by contract or other arrangements.

- *Disability category*: means a listing of special education eligibility classifications for students served including: autism, deaf-blindness, developmental delay, emotional disability, hearing impairment (including deafness), intellectual disability, multiple disabilities, orthopedic impairment, other health impairment, specific learning disability, speech or language impairment, traumatic brain injury, and visual impairment (including blindness).
- *Educational placement*: means the overall instructional setting in which the student receives his education including the special education and related services provided.
- *Eligible student*: means a child with a disability who reaches the age of majority and to whom the procedural safeguards and other rights afforded to the parents are transferred.
- *Emotional/behavior disorder (EBD)*: means students displaying difficulty managing emotions and behaviors. In Virginia, this is described as an emotional disability.
- *Emotional disability*: means a condition exhibiting one or more characteristics defined by the VDOE for a long period of time and to a marked degree that adversely affects a child's educational performance.
- *Extended school year services*: means special education services that are provided to a student with a disability beyond the normal school year of the local educational agency, in accordance with the child's IEP, at no cost, meeting the standards established by the VDOE.
- *Free appropriate public education or FAPE*: means special education and related services that are provided at public expense or under public supervision and direction, and are without charge.

- *Functional behavioral assessment:* means a process to determine the underlying cause or functions of a child's behavior that impede the learning of the child with a disability or the learning of the child's peers. A functional behavioral assessment may include a review of existing data or new testing data or evaluation as determined by the IEP team.
- *Functional core academics:* means English, reading, or language arts, mathematics, science, foreign language (languages other than English), civics and government, economics, arts, history, and geography.
- *General curriculum:* means the same curriculum used with children without disabilities adopted by a local educational agency, schools within the local educational agency, or, where applicable, the VDOE for all children from preschool through secondary school. The term is related to content of the curriculum and not to the setting in which it is taught.
- *Hearing impairment:* means an impairment in hearing in one or both ears, with or without amplification, whether permanent or fluctuating, that adversely affects a child's educational performance but that is not included under the definition of deafness.
- *Individualized education program or IEP:* means a written statement for a child with a disability that is developed, reviewed, and revised in a team meeting in accordance with special education regulations. The IEP specifies the individual educational needs of the child and what special education and related services are necessary to meet the child's educational needs.
- *Individualized education program team:* The LEA determines the school personnel to fill the roles of the required IEP team members, including: student, parent, special education

teacher, general education teacher, administrator, related service provider, staff of participating agencies, and transition resources.

- *Individualized instruction plan or IIP*: means a written statement (plan) for a child who is privately placed or for a child that has not been determined eligible for special education services that is developed, reviewed, and revised at least annually in a team meeting that includes the parent.
- *Intellectual disability*: means the definition formerly known as “mental retardation” and means significantly sub-average general intellectual functioning, existing concurrently with deficits in adaptive behavior and manifested during the developmental period that adversely affects a child’s educational performance.
- *Least restrictive environment or LRE*: means that to the maximum extent appropriate, children with disabilities, including children in public or private institutions or other care facilities, are educated with children who are not disabled, and that special classes, separate schooling or other removal of children with disabilities from the regular educational environment occurs only when the nature and severity of the disability is such that education in regular classes with the use of supplementary aids and services cannot be achieved satisfactorily.
- *Licensee*: means person, partnership, corporation, or association to whom a license is issued and who is legally responsible for compliance with the chapter.
- *License to operate*: means a document issued by the State Superintendent of Public Instruction, verifying approval to operate a school for students with disabilities and that indicates the status of the school regarding compliance with applicable regulations.
- *Licensing agency*: means the Virginia Department of Education

- *Local educational agency (LEA)*: means a local school division governed by a local school board.
- *Multiple disabilities*: means simultaneous impairments (such as intellectual disability with blindness, intellectual disability with orthopedic impairment), the combination of which causes such severe educational needs that they cannot be accommodated in special education programs solely for one of the impairments.
- *Nonacademic services and extracurricular services*: may include counseling services, athletics, transportation, health services, recreational activities, special interest groups or clubs sponsored by local educational agency, referrals to agencies to provide assistance with disabilities, employment of students, including both employment by the local educational agency and assistance in making outside employment available.
- *Nonpublic*: means a private school placement. For the purpose of this paper, it is used interchangeably with private school placement or private special education school.
- *Orthopedic impairment*: means a severe orthopedic impairment that adversely affects a child's educational performance.
- *Other health impairment*: means having limited strength, vitality or alertness, including a heightened alertness to environmental stimuli, that results in limited alertness with respect to the educational environment, that is due to chronic or acute health problems that adversely affects a child's educational performance (i.e., asthma, attention deficit hyperactivity disorder, diabetes, heart disorder, leukemia, or rheumatic fever).
- *Participating agency*: means a state or local agency, other than the local educational agency responsible for a student's education that is financially and legally responsible for providing transition services to the student. The term also means any agency or institution

that collects, maintains, or uses personally identifiable information, or from which information is obtained.

- *Physical restraint*: means the use of approved physical interventions or hands-on holds by trained staff to prevent a student from moving his/her body to engage in a behavior that places him/her at risk of physical harm.
- *Private special education school*: means a private school placement. For the purpose of this paper, it is used interchangeable with the term Non-Public.
- *Private school for children with disabilities*: means children with disabilities enrolled by their parent(s) in private, including religious, schools or facilities that meet the definition of elementary or secondary school as defined, other than children with disabilities who are placed in a private school by a local school division or Comprehensive Services Act team.
- *Privately-placed student*: means a student placed in a private school for students with disabilities by their parent or parents.
- *Program*: means the special education and related services, including accommodations, modifications, supplementary aids and services, as determined by a child's individualized education program.
- *Programs*: for the purposes of this study, the term program refers to factors related to private special education schools, such as census, disability served, tuition, length of school day, week and year. In addition, it refers to licensure, accreditation, and ownership. School course offerings and vocational programs falls under this category.

- *Public expense*: means that the local educational agency either pays for the full cost of the service or evaluation or ensures that the service or evaluation is otherwise provided at no cost to the parents.
- *Publicly-placed student*: means a student placed in a private school for students with disabilities by a local school division, Comprehensive Services Act team, or by Court Order.
- *Related services*: means transportation and such developmental, corrective, and other supportive services as are required to assist a child with a disability to benefit from special education and includes speech-language pathology and audiology services; interpreting services; psychological services; physical and occupational therapy; recreation, including therapeutic recreation; early identification and assessment of disabilities in children; counseling services, including rehabilitation counseling, orientation and mobility services; and medical services for diagnostic or evaluation purposes. Related services also include school health services and school nurse services; social work services in schools; and parent counseling and training.
- *School day*: means any day, including a partial day, that children are in attendance at school for instructional purposes.
- *School for students with disabilities or “school” or “schools”*: means a privately-owned and operated preschool, school, or educational organization, no matter how titled, maintained, or conducting classes for the purpose of offering instruction, for a consideration, profit or tuition, to persons determined to have a disability.
- *Seclusion*: means the confinement of a student alone in a room from which the student is physically prevented from leaving.

- *Serious incident*: means incident, illness, runaway, or other event that affects the health, safety, or welfare of any student being served at the school or school-related activity.
- *Services*: for the purpose of this study, this term refers to interventions, supports, such as tutoring, counseling, and behavior management. This also refers to student support services such as academic tutoring, athletics, food services, and transportation.
- *Special education*: means specifically designed instruction, at no cost to the parent(s), to meet the unique needs of a child with a disability, including instruction conducted in a classroom, in the home, in hospitals, and in institutions.
- *Specially designed instruction*: means adapting, as appropriate to the needs of an eligible child, the content, methodology, or delivery of instruction.
- *Specific learning disability*: means a disorder in one or more of the basic psychological processes involved in understanding or in using language, spoken or written, that may manifest itself in the imperfect ability to listen, think, speak, read, write, spell, or to do mathematical calculations, including conditions such as perceptual disabilities, brain injury, minimal brain dysfunction, dyslexia, and developmental aphasia.
- *State educational agency (SEA)*: means the Virginia Department of Education.
- *Time-out*: means assisting a student to regain control by removing the student from his immediate environment to a different open location until the student is calm or the problematic behavior has subsided.
- *Transition services*: means a coordinated set of activities for a student with a disability that is designed with a results-oriented process.
- *Transportation*: means travel to and from school and between schools.

- *Traumatic brain injury*: means an acquired injury to the brain caused by an external physical force, resulting in total or partial functional disability or psychosocial impairment, or both, that adversely affects a child's educational performance.
- *Visual impairment including blindness*: means an impairment in vision, which, even with correction, adversely affects a child's educational performance.
- *Vocational education*: means organized educational programs that are directly related to the preparation of individuals for paid or unpaid employment or for additional preparation for a career not requiring baccalaureate or advanced degree, and includes career and technical education.
- *Volunteer*: means any individual who of his own free will, and without compensation, provides goods or services to the school.

CHAPTER 2: REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Overview

The format of this literature review was based on a framework suggested by Randolph (2009). The focus of this literature review was to highlight available research related to private day and residential schools, as well as to identify gaps in areas pertinent to this study. This author took a neutral perspective in the presentation of findings. An initial search identified a limited number of research studies directly related to private special education schools; an expanded search yielded additional studies linked to private special education services, including alternative education, services for high risk of not achieving success in school, and services for students with mental health needs. Articles and research studies included in this literature review were limited to those highlighting issues relevant to private special education school programming and services.

Legal Requirements

Federal law, state regulations, and local policy and practice guide the delivery of special education and related services for students eligible for special education services. The federal regulations of Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), the 2004 reauthorization of IDEA as the Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act (IDEIA, IDEA 2004), the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 (NCLB), and the Regulations for Governing Special Education Programs for Children with Disabilities in Virginia (8VAC20-81), as well as

numerous other documents and policy handbooks, provide guidance for school districts on special education processes and policies.

Students with disabilities receive special education services as outlined in their IEP. The IEP addresses specific planning for the student through updated assessment data, a present level of academic and functional performance, goals, objectives, and accommodations. Each IEP team must review the placement options and determine the appropriate least restrictive environment (LRE) for the provision of services, ensuring that requirements for LRE are met (8 VAC 20-81-130). The provision of LRE has been legally mandated in public schools since the passing of the Education for All Handicapped Children Act in 1975. The authorization of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA, 1997), as well as the reauthorization in the Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act of 2004 (IDEIA, IDEA 2004), guarantee access to an appropriate education for all children with disabilities.

Directors of special education and other staff members of local educational agencies (LEA) must address complex issues when potentially placing a student in an out-of-district school placement (Audette, 1982). IEP teams must look closely at the academic, developmental, and functional needs of the child. Each team must carefully consider the presenting needs of the student as well as strengths and weaknesses of services available to them in a private placement. In selecting the level of services and placement, thought must be given to potential harmful effects on the student, the quality of services received, and the extent to which the student will have an opportunity to participate in nonacademic and extracurricular activities with nondisabled peers. These issues relate to whether or not a student is receiving a free appropriate public education (FAPE) in the least restrictive environment.

For certain students with significant disabilities, a private day or residential program may be the least restrictive environment. The issue of the privatization of special education is addressed by Fox (1999) who proposed that instead of abandoning the needs of special education, the private sector is supplying what the public school has failed to provide. Research supports that out-of-district placements in alternative schools, day treatment programs, or private special education programs can be the LRE for certain students with disabilities (Audette, 1982; Hu, 2008; Putman et al., 2002). For these students, a private placement is a viable option. State and local public school staff is responsible for monitoring placement through observation, assessment, and monitoring of student achievement, thus ensuring that students receive the required services and opportunities required by IDEA 2004, NCLB, local, and state regulations.

When considering placement options for students with disabilities, IEP teams must consider LRE. Special education services are offered through a continuum of placement options (Etscheidt, 2006; Rueda, Gallego, & Moll, 2000; Schwart, 2007; White & Weiner, 2004). Programs range from least restrictive to most restrictive and less normalized to most normalized (Taylor, 2004). Levels of service available to students typically follow a hierarchy from least to most restrictive, including general education classes, special classes, special schools, home instruction, and instruction in hospitals and institutions (8 VAC 20-81-130).

Following the regulations of the Code of Virginia, the Board of Education has authorized the Superintendent of Public Instruction to issue licenses to operate schools for students with disabilities. These schools are defined as privately owned and operated preschools, schools, or educational organizations that offer instruction for profit or tuition, to students with disabilities (8 VAC 20-81).

Background of Private Special Education Schools

The first schools in the United States were private schools and currently account for about 24% of all elementary and secondary schools, 11% of all students and 12% of full-time teachers. Seventy-six percent of private schools have a religious affiliation, while the remaining 24% are nonsectarian. (No Child Left Behind Fact Sheet, 2008).

Data related to the history of private special education schools in Virginia is available from the Virginia Department of Education (VDOE). According to a historical outline (VDOE, 2010), 24 private day schools were open for operation prior to 1996. Since that time, the status of a number of schools has changed, to reflect change in name, change in status from residential to day, and program closing and re-openings (see Table 17).

The Virginia Department of Education has separated public school divisions into eight regions. Table 18 is a summary of private day school placement by region.

Day school placements funded through public pay increased in 5 out of 8 regions of the state in a three year reporting period, ranging in growth from 2% in Region 8 to 54.5% in Region 2. Day school placements privately funded increased in 4 out of 8 regions of the state, ranging in growth from 3% in Region 7 to 47% in Region 1. A decrease of 20% was noted in Region 6. State totals note an overall increase in public pay of 7% and private pay of 21%. The overall increase was 11% from 2005 to 2007.

The terms *therapeutic school*, *private day school*, and *day treatment program* are often used interchangeably in the literature. The programs may have parallel components, but are actually quite different. There are distinctions in student qualification, funding and provision of services.

Table 17

Virginia Private Day School Openings and Closings by Region (1996-2010)

Year	Newly Licensed	Now Closed	Residential to Day	Name Change
Prior to 1996	24	17*	0	1
1996	5	3	0	0
1997	8	2	0	1
1998	2	1	0	0
1999	7	2	0	0
2000	6	3	0	0
2001	7	2	1	0
2002	10	3*	1	0
2003	6	2	0	0
2004	6	0	0	0
2005	6	1	3	0
2006	7	0	0	0
2007	11	1	0	0
2008	3	1	0	0
2009	3	0	0	0
Total	111	37	5	2

*Denotes one merge

Table 18

Virginia Private Day School Placements by Region

Region	2005	2006	2007
Region 1 public pay*	633	785	720
Region 1 private pay**	268	274	394
Region 2 public pay	121	142	187
Region 2 private pay	146	159	188
Region 3 public pay	97	78	78
Region 3 private pay	0	0	0
Region 4 public pay	514	608	559
Region 4 DC/Maryland	316	143	169
Region 4 private pay	251	260	257
Region 5 public pay	133	156	180
Region 5 private pay	36	28	30
Region 6 public pay	218	259.5	277
Region 6 private pay	41	28	34
Region 7 public pay	50	58	59
Region 7 private pay	22	25	28
Region 8 public pay	38	46	44
Region 8 private pay	0	0	0
Total public pay	2,120	2275.5	2273
Total private pay	764	774	931
Total of all placements	2,884	3049.5	3204

*Public pay means placements funded by an LEA, Court Ordered, Department of Social Services, or FAPT/CPMT.

**Private pay means placements funded by parent or insurance.

Note. Virginia Department of Education.

In Virginia day treatment programs are licensed and monitored through the Virginia Department of Behavioral Health and Developmental Services. Specific guidelines outline services, staffing, and other supports provided by a Medicaid Day Treatment Program (U.S. Department of Health & Human Services, 2004). Private special education day and residential schools are licensed through the Virginia Department of Education, Office of Federal Programming. Prior to 1996, 24 day schools were licensed to operate by the Commonwealth of Virginia. Between 1996 and 2009, 87 additional programs were licensed to serve students with disabilities.

At the beginning of the study, 125 private special education schools are currently licensed to operate, including 82 day schools and 43 residential schools. Of the 43 residential programs, 11 are residential schools also licensed to serve day school students, according to C. White-Hodgins (personal communication, November 4, 2010). Schools closing and opening that occurred during the course of this study reflect a slight difference in numbers. Currently in the Commonwealth of Virginia, 124 private special education schools are in operation and responded to the survey. For the purpose of this study, it was important to review the status of private special education schools to track trends for a number of factors that may warrant further investigation, including (a) school status, (b) student census (c) disability classifications, and (d) programming and service delivery.

Literature Review

A search for literature targeting private special education services yielded numerous articles and research studies in the areas of mental health and treatment services, private religious schools that offer limited special education services, alternative education, and special education services in both public and private programs. For the purpose of this study, each of the broad

themes mentioned above were addressed, as there are connections between mental health, private education, and alternative education with private special schools and programming, as targeted in this study. However, the main focus of this literature review will be on select articles and more in-depth research studies that have been conducted to investigate the issues related primarily to private special education schools.

The first theme found in the literature is related to mental health services and placements. Student participation, programming and outcomes of placement in residential treatment centers are areas addressed through research related to mental health services and child rights. A number of studies addressed the significant mental health needs of children, but focus almost entirely on treatment and residential living (Fields, Farmer, Apperson, Mustillo, & Simmers, 2006; Shabat, Lyons, & Martinovich, 2008). Although these studies address the needs of children with significant mental health needs and behaviors, they will not be included in the main literature review, as they do not address the issues targeted by this current study.

Another broad area addressed in the literature is that of special education services offered in private nonsectarian and religious schools. Katsiyannis and Maag (1998) addressed the challenges of serving children with disabilities in private and parochial schools. Also recognizing the challenges of serving students with disabilities in nonpublic schools, Drang and McLaughlin (2008) noted that private schools are often limited in their implementation of special education and related services and must seek out support from the local public school system. Taylor (2005a) proposed that although private schools enroll students with special needs, there is little research to show the nature of services provided to students in private schools. Taylor conducted a study that provided a profile of special education in private schools in the state of Tennessee. For the purpose of this project, the studies mentioned above will be excluded due the complexity

of this type of private placement, addressed through legislation as parental placements. Looking at the public school-private school options, Taylor (2005a) noted that private schools and special education systems have coexisted, but typically only in programs that were exclusively for students with special needs, isolating students with special needs in private programs, separated from typically developing peers.

The third broad theme identified in the research is inclusion of students with disabilities in alternative education programs. Bullock (2006) related that the current philosophy of alternative education is relatively new and expanding to various forms, to include magnet schools, charter schools, alternative learning centers, schools-without-walls, second-chance schools, day treatment and education centers, and residential schools. Bullock proposed that the rapid changes may be attributed to a perceived mismatch between a student's academic and behavioral performance and a school's expectations. It is important to understand the role that alternative schools have in providing opportunities for students with disabilities.

It is well documented that students with disabilities are participating in educational services in alternative schools (Foley & Pang, 2008; Hosley, Bergey, Chartas, Eisenhart, Jensen, & Lawless, 2003; Lehr, 2004; Tobin & Sprague, 1999). However, there are questions about how students with disabilities are being educated in an alternative program (Lehr, 2004). Student and program characteristics, issues, and recommendations for best practices in alternative education are offered in a number of articles and studies (Foley & Pang, 2008; Hosley et al., 2003; Tobin & Sprague, 1999). A review of literature related to the field of alternative education located articles and studies that provide information on the state of alternative education in a variety of geographic locations and delivered in various service delivery models. Research in the field of alternative education yielded information relating to the similarities, differences, and the

interconnectedness of public alternative, private alternative, and private special education schools. There is evidence on one side that some alternative schools are designed to serve a low incidence of students with disabilities. Although demonstrating challenging behavior, such as antisocial, aggressive, and violent behaviors, these students have not been identified as having a disability (Van Acker, 2007).

Others report that alternative education programs serve both students with and without disabilities (Foley & Pang, 2008; Lehr, Lange, & Lanners, 2003). The majority of other research weighs in on the inclusion of special education students in alternative education programs. Some research notes that select alternative and correctional settings suggest high proportion of students have disabilities (Guerin & Denti, 1999). In addition, the inclusion of students with disabilities in alternative education programs may show a high percentage of special education students as compared to nonspecial education students. Students with emotional and behavioral disabilities are heavily represented in alternative settings (Gorney & Ysseldyke, 1992).

Data reports of alternative education programs often include information on student enrollment in private schools and programs. In one example, Unruh et al. (2007) noted that although alternative education settings that include services for students with disabilities has grown, “There is little empirical evidence documenting outcomes for alternative schools/programs and the students they serve” (p. 2).

A major study was conducted by Bullis, Unruh, Waintrup, Todis, and Atkins (2004) who reported the results of three separate surveys distributed to all identified alternative education programs in Oregon. Upon completion of the study, results of the three surveys were combined to form a comprehensive study. Bullis et al. (2004) reported the results of this descriptive study, noting the sample from in-district programs ($n = 102$) and private alternative programs ($n = 44$).

The results of this study reported comprehensive data related to student demographics, cost, programming, staffing patterns, qualifications, curriculum, and support services.

A follow-up to this study was conducted by Unruh et al. (2007). Unruh et al. described the governance, academic and support-service structures, and student characteristics of alternative education settings in relation to services provided for youth with disabilities. The results provided a descriptive profile of the number, characteristics, administrative procedures, and instructional practices of alternative education schools/programs in the state of Oregon. Unruh et al. reported that 32% of alternative students were identified with a disability. Therefore, it can be noted above, the philosophy, implementation, and target groups served in alternative programs and settings can be both varied and uniquely developed to meet the needs of students with and without disabilities. This leads to the next theme that is more focused on the research topic.

The fourth broad theme found in the literature, related to this study, is that of nonpublic, private special education schools. The availability of literature related solely to private special education schools is extremely limited. Literature related to private special education schools has been published in the last thirty years and is limited to conceptual articles and a small number of research studies.

A number of national and international research studies are available in peer-reviewed literature that outline programs, interventions, and services for students placed in therapeutic schools, day treatment programs, private special education day and residential schools, and residential treatment centers. Focus on student census, demographics, site-based programs, and services are addressed in that literature.

Private Special Education Schools

Overview. In an early assessment of the public-private connection, Audette (1982) proposed that there is common agreement that the purpose of seeking out a private school placement is to provide an appropriate educational program where such a program cannot reasonably be provided in a student's local school district. Audette also claimed that for certain severely handicapped children, a residential or private day program is the least restrictive environment for providing an appropriate educational program.

Several years later, Rockler (1996) suggested that the privatization of schooling is an alternative option for the provision of specialized services. Supporting this proposal, Beales and Bertonneau (1997) noted that because public schools cannot serve all children with severe disabilities, nonpublic schools tend to enroll and serve some of the most demanding students. Beales and Bertonneau shared that these programs are generally viewed by public agencies as placements of last resort so access to them is limited by the public agency with which they contract.

The issue of the privatization of special education is also addressed by Fox (1999) who claimed that students with the most significant disabilities have attended private schools at partial or even full public expense. Fox proposed that instead of abandoning the needs of special education students, the private sector is actually supplying what the public school has failed to provide. Putnam et al. (2002) proposed that public schools frequently respond to discipline problems by placing students in out-of-district educational programs. However, placement in private special education schools can have negative effects on students. Farrell and Polat (2003) expressed serious concerns about placement in a special school with relation to the labeling and

the possible negative impact on a student; they questioned whether or not the benefits outweighed the drawbacks.

Limited published information addresses the development of nonpublic special education schools (Beales & Bertonneau, 1997; Marver, 1976). Marver (1976) suggested that the rationale for setting up a nonpublic special education school is rarely economic. Looking at the nonpublic form of alternative education, Beales and Bertonneau (1997) stated that nonpublic schools are privately owned nonsectarian schools, which are registered or licensed with the state to provide special education, and related services under contract with government agencies. Beales and Bertonneau suggest that such schools are started as alternatives to other nonpublic or public schools because no other alternatives exist.

Nonpublic schools offer a variety of placement options for public school systems unable to offer programs for all students with disabilities residing within the home school geographic region. Private schools may specialize by student age, disability classification, services offered, and environment. Private special education programs may offer a variety of interventions and options through diagnostic evaluations, core curricula, electives, vocational training, service learning, and related services designed to meet the academic, behavior, and social skills of students with disabilities.

Guarino (1982) identified that the selection process for determining the most appropriate placement is complex and involves collective decision making of IEP committees and/or school disciplinary teams. Guarino noted that teams must consider the strengths and weaknesses of available programs to identify one that will best address the unique needs of the student.

In order to do so, it is essential to know the specific educational and related services, nonacademic supports, and interventions available in private schools. The purpose of this study

is to describe programs and services available in private day and residential schools serving publically placed students with disabilities, licensed to operate in the Commonwealth of Virginia, as this information is currently unavailable.

Placement and census. Mathur et al. (2004) reported statistical data for the 2002-2003 school year for the state of Arizona, noting that in that year 1,068 students attended a private separate facility and 102 attended a private residential facility.

Additional enrollment data related to private programs was published in an article by Fox (1999) who addressed the outsourcing of special education services to private schools. Fox reported data from 10 states with the highest number of student placements in private special education programs. Placement data noted the range from 10th place, Maryland (2.3%) special education eligible students to first place, Washington, DC (10.9%) of IDEA students in a private special education program.

Descriptions of Programs, Interventions, and Services

Accreditation. In 2005, Gagnon and Leone noted that instruction in day treatment and residential schools is impacted by program philosophy and school-level policies and proposed that accreditation is one method for holding schools accountable for providing appropriate educational services. In Virginia, accreditation status for private special education schools is awarded by governing bodies including the Virginia Association for Independent Special Education Facilities (VAISEF), Virginia Association of Independent Schools (VAIS), and the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools (SACS). These agencies are recognized by the Virginia Board of Education. Although all private special education schools are licensed, not all are accredited. Schools have been made aware that lack of accreditation may have an impact on transfer of student credits (VDOE, 2009).

Special education and related services. Related services including speech pathology and audiology, psychological services, physical/occupational therapy, and counseling services are required for eligible students (Public Law 94-142, IDEA, IDEA 2004). Related therapies also cover music, art, recreation, and others as determined by the unique needs of students with disabilities. These services must be provided for eligible students if the service is outlined in a student's IEP.

A study of a sample of 1,726 special education students was presented by Palfrey, Singer, Raphael, and Walker (1990) that addressed the provision of therapeutic services to children in a variety of special education placements. Palfrey et al. (1990) determined that it is difficult to assess how well schools are complying with this requirement because data on student need and service delivery is limited. Palfrey et al. noted that students in private placements have historically been provided more services than those in regular school, perhaps a result of student placement in sites that have related service providers on staff. Palfrey et al. found it troubling that psychological services were not available to all children classified as having an emotional disability. Palfrey et al. were unable to determine whether the services were made readily available in special settings because of the complex needs of the students or were children with complex needs placed in the private school setting because of the services.

Curriculum and instruction. A review of literature across sources identified concerns about the quality of educational services in specialized placements. Gagnon and Leone (2005) defined this as a critical issue in light of the current legislation of the No Child Left Behind Act (2002) and proposed that schools may place little emphasis on education and that students may not participate in a full day of instruction. A review of literature across sources highlighted concerns about the quality of educational services in specialized placements. It may be

concluded from literature that many authors of studies have noted concerns about the quality of instruction offered in private special education schools (Gagnon, 2010; Gagnon & McLaughlin, 2004; Zetlin, 2006).

In a seminal study, Gagnon and McLaughlin (2004) reported the results of a nationwide survey of private and public day treatment and residential schools for elementary-age children with emotional or behavioral disorders. The results of this national sample of 271 participants indicate that many students are exposed to a curriculum that has little link with what is offered in the general education curriculum.

Following this same theme, Zetlin (2006) expressed concerns related to the following: (a) the lack of certified teachers, (b) the provision of low-level academics, (c) mixed age groupings of students ranging from 11-17 in the same classroom, (d) poor educational facilities, (e) lack of participation in statewide assessment programs, and (f) limited or no extracurricular activities such as team sport. Additional literature noted a number of studies that offered suggestions through issues, discussion, and best practices (Foley & Pang, 2006; Hughes & Adera, 2006; Leone, 2007; Tobin & Sprague, 1999).

Program models. This review uncovered numerous models of school programs and interventions in a variety of settings and geographical regions. Programs and services offered in special education schools can be uniquely designed to fit the needs of target disability classifications, age ranges, or regional standards. Each model highlighted below offers a snapshot of services and programming that were uniquely designed to serve a special population.

Looking at special education programming in general, Lehr (2004) reported a list of school characteristics, identified by directors of special education, that could facilitate a successful experience including: (a) smaller class size, (b) more individual attention, (c)

individualized work pace, (d) focus on career planning or vocational education, (e) provision of work-study experiences, (f) flexible schedule, and (g) provision of counseling services.

Looking at alternative placements that serve both general education students and those with disabilities, Unruh et al. (2007) reported the results of survey data that note factors that result in positive student experiences in alternative placements, including: (a) student-to-staff connections that allow for the development of student-to-staff mentoring relationships; (b) the academic setting is diverse, accommodates multiple levels of student achievement, and accommodates students' IEP goals and objectives; and (c) the staff identifies that they have goals beyond just ensuring student academic progress (e.g. behavioral and social skills, life skills, and successful adult skills).

Day schools and programs. As noted above, the terms therapeutic, day treatment, and private day school are, at times, used interchangeably. To avoid confusion, it is important to look closely at programs, services, staffing and funding available for placement in a specific program. Day treatment programs provide a wide variety of interventions and services (Fecser, 2003; Van Acker, 2007) for students with problematic behaviors. When looking at the specific needs of students who display antisocial, aggressive and violent behavior, Van Acker (2007) noted the strengths of day treatment programs that target prevention and interventions. These include: (a) individual psychotherapy, (b) applied behavior analysis, (c) cognitive-behavioral methods, (d) social development interventions, (e) youth involvement and opportunity initiatives, and (f) social casework intervention. Looking at another model, Fecser (2003) proposed inclusion of the following into a day treatment program: (a) treatment framework of individual, group, and family counseling; (b) teacher/counselor who supports a student in time of crisis and vulnerability; (c) classroom environment that schedules and organizes daily schedules and tasks;

and (d) classroom structure and environment that sets a positive tone and climate and opportunity for group processing.

Therapeutic alternative schools also offer supports to students in need of intensive programming. Looking at one specific program, Long, Page, Hail, Davis, and Mitchell (2003) provided a description of a private, therapeutic alternative school program that includes daily pro-social skills training groups, vocational training opportunities, and a daily character education class. This program employed the use of highly individualized education plans for each student, school-sponsored community service projects, and special interest target groups such as clubs, pet care, community service, peer mediation, and family enrichment (Long, Deem, & Brown, 1973). Another example is the Weems Academy of Clarksville, Tennessee. This private therapeutic alternative school serves 75 children, ages 5 to 19. The programming focuses on skills for successful living: clubs, pets, community service, peer mediation, and family enrichment (Long et al., 2003).

Private day schools serve students with a variety of disabilities and needs. One example of a private day school program is the Easter Seals Therapeutic Day School of Chicago, where students with autism spectrum disorder, ages 3 to 21, receive an education in speech, language and communication therapy, occupational therapy, social work services, health-related services, and recreational services (Leone, 2007).

Residential schools. Callahan (1995) reported data from a study of male students in a residential treatment center. Callahan proposed that a residential treatment program has two tasks: (a) to find the environment best suited to promote positive changes in the behaviors of students labeled as educational disability who are placed in the custody of the state, and (b) to create an inclusive culture that provides opportunities for students to build self-esteem and

self-confidence. To support this, Callahan proposed that programs needed to provide students with an environment that would address their basic needs and support their personal development.

In another example, Pilling, McGill, and Cooper (2007) reported the results of a study of characteristics and experiences of children and young students with severe intellectual disabilities and severe challenging behavior attending 52-week residential special schools. The following results were noted: (a) an intense educational support not typically available in a public school setting was offered, (b) a provision of year-round respite for families who otherwise may not have had supports, and (c) a 24-hour consistent program was offered that facilitated cohesive development and management of the students (Pilling et al., 2007). A third model of a specialized program is the John Dewey Academy, a therapeutic, residential college preparatory program, which focuses on moral education and values (Bratter, Bratter, Coiner, Kaufman, & Steiner, 2006).

Dejong and Holder (2006) outlined components of a therapeutic residential model, which included the following: cultural programming, socialization/life skills, tutoring and study halls, incentive awards program, grades/ career guidance, mental health services, a specialized reading program (Morningside), and individual screening and assessment that were components of the program.

Also reporting results of a study on residential schools, Harriss, Barlow, and Moli (2008) outlined the results of a study of Larchmead, a therapeutic residential school in the United Kingdom, serving students aged 5 to 12. In this program, children lived as a group with adults who assisted them in all aspects of daily functioning in a planned environment, or milieu therapy. Students involved in the study had lived at the school for 3 years and were scheduled to

leave at the end of the 2004-2005 school year. Reported conclusions outlined the difficulties and benefits of attending a therapeutic residential school and provide the reader insights into effective practices for children with severe emotional and behavioral difficulties. Limitations of the study included a low sample of students and families and student selection. However, interpreted cautiously, the results may provide a framework for further study.

Massey and Burnard (2006) shared the impact of *project-based learning* which was reported to be effective in increasing pupil motivation, improved problem-solving skills, and thinking skills. This program called Project Hour allowed for freedom in creativity of a 4-week project, which provided adult assistance and support as children worked on independent projects. Massey and Burnard proposed that children showed improvements in thinking skills, problem-solving skills, creativity, and organization skills. In addition, it was reported that behavior problems in the learning environment were reduced (Massey & Burnard, 2006).

Student support services. Results of a number of studies outline specific recommendations related to services and programs that can be implemented to support student learning. As has been noted above, literature solely targeting private special education schools is limited. For that reason, a number of studies are cited in this review because of the nature of the identified results and possible generalization to other settings, including private special education schools. These include the use of volunteers and mentors as supports and a focus on social skills and service learning.

In one of the earliest studies reported, Cohen and Hirschfeld (1968) described the interventions of the staff at Bellefaire, a residential treatment center for students with an emotional disability. Cohen and Hirschfeld identified that use of volunteers helped students form relationships with adults other than staff. The volunteers listened to student concerns and

anxieties, helped them relax in the learning environment, channel their energies, and work at an individualized pace.

A later study conducted by Welkowitz and Fox (2000) reported on the implementation of a mentor/advisor project for students classified as at risk or with an emotional disorder/behavioral disorder in rural Vermont. Results documented an increase in study skills for students who had mentors. In addition, the students were seen as being better able to work collaboratively, solve problems, and resolve conflicts.

The concept of peer tutoring as an intervention that could be beneficial to assist in student progress was identified in literature. In 2007, Bowman-Perrot, Greenwood, and Tapia reported in one study of interest that outlined the benefits of Classwide Peer Tutoring, which according to reported data netted positive benefits at elementary school level.

Another type of support identified in literature was the need to address social skills in the schools setting. Johns, Crowley, and Guetzloe (2005) reported that many students do not know how to behave or to express themselves appropriately in social situations. They need to be taught socially appropriate social skills, with teacher support, as they learn new skills and function in classroom settings.

Service learning was identified in literature as a program that could be beneficial to regular education students, at-risk students, and to students with disabilities. A number of studies related to alternative and therapeutic schools propose that components of service learning positively impact the development of responsibility and community responsibility for students with disabilities and those who are at risk (Cohen & Hirschfeld, 1968; Fredericks, Kaplan, & Zeisler, 2001; Nelson & Eckstein, 2008).

As can be seen from the summaries above, a number of programs and interventions have been identified in literature as options to support students. Articles and research studies address an array of programs, services, and interventions, but the depth of research to support them is lacking.

Student Behavior

The decision to place students in private special education schools is a difficult one that is faced by public school administrators when considering LRE for students with significant disabilities (Audette, 1982). When looking at the need for a private placement, public school IEP team members look at various student characteristics, including behavior. Students who display behaviors that are disruptive to themselves, other students, or the general academic environment may be seen by public school systems as difficult to serve.

Also focusing on the impact of behavior on school placement, Farrell and Polat (2003) suggested that public schools are reluctant to enroll and serve students with significant emotional and behavioral disabilities. Farrell and Polat proposed that when a student's behaviors become highly dangerous or disruptive, a residential setting may be required. Callahan (1995) described the challenge of serving children when extensive community-based services have been exhausted, especially for children perceived to be a danger to themselves or others. Despite extensive special education, their poor impulse control and acting out behavior continued to interfere with their academic functioning (Callahan, 1995).

There is little found in research to clearly describe the differences and severity of student behaviors across levels of service, such as public school, day school, or residential. Two notable studies examined the behaviors of students in a variety of settings and levels of restrictiveness. Results document a variability of behavior across settings that may imply inappropriate or

inconsistent diagnostic procedures and placement decisions (Bullock, Zagar, Donahue, & Pelton, 1985). In this study, Bullock et al. (1985) examined and compared the characteristics of students with behavioral disorders educated in different settings, such as public school resource rooms and self-contained classes, psychiatric hospitals, and residential treatment centers. Behaviors targeted in the study were aggressive acting out, socially assertive, irresponsible-inattentive, and tranquil-confident. Bullock et al. reported that although some differences exist between public school classes and hospital settings, there is not complete differentiation across levels; similar behaviors were identified across services and restrictiveness of placement.

Similar results were noted by Muscott (1998) who compared characteristics of 473 elementary and secondary students with emotional/behavioral disabilities in four levels of placement, including resource rooms, special classes, special schools and residential schools. Again there was documentation of behavioral variability across placements, with little differentiation by service level. The findings did, however, identify two broad maladaptive factors of aggression/disruption and social withdrawal and two positive factors included work habits and sociability. Less maladaptive behaviors were seen in secondary students as compared to the elementary participants (Muscott, 1998).

Another study assessing specific characteristics of students with emotional disturbance in a variety of settings yielded different results. In this study, Silver et al. (1992) assessed the characteristics of students with serious emotional disturbance in a variety of settings. Silver et al. (1992) reported that students in the residential group demonstrated a higher level of conduct disorder, anxiety, and attention deficit disorder upon enrollment. In addition, Silver et al. shared that results of parent ratings indicated that residential students demonstrated higher levels of both externalizing and internalizing behaviors as compared to those from a group of public school

students. In a later study, Harriss et al. (2008) reported the results of a study of residential education in the United Kingdom, in which students presented with acute withdrawal, extreme aggression, and lack of academic success upon enrollment. As can be seen above, there is no consistent level of reporting that provides clear data of behavior characteristics, severity, or frequency that can be used as a guide to make a determination of placement or level of supports required to address these behaviors.

Behavior Management Interventions and Programs

As can be seen from above, private day and residential schools are faced with addressing a wide variety of negative student behaviors. The implementation of both individualized and school-wide behavior programs are addressed in literature (D'Oosterlinck, Goethals, Boekaert, Schuyten & Maeyer, 2008; Kalke, Glanton, & Cristalli, 2007; Kellner, Colletti, & Bry, 2003; Marr, Audette, White, Ellis, & Algozzine, 2002; Winter & Preston, 2006).

Reporting the results of an investigation of the efficacy of a school-wide behavior program targeting violent and disruptive behavior, Marr et al. (2002) described improvements in classroom ecology (climate and environment) after the implementation of a school-wide discipline program. The students were elementary aged students, with and without disabilities, who displayed emotional and social behavior problems. Marr et al. proposed that the application of a consistent, systematic school-wide discipline model could improve the behavior of students demonstrating disruptive behavior.

Kalke et al. (2007) addressed the school-wide use of Positive Behavioral Intervention Supports in residential treatment centers and day treatment programs. Kalke et al. (2007) outlined positive outcomes of the use of Positive Behavioral Intervention Supports, including a

more positive environment, decreased safety holds (physical restraint) and less need for out-of-classroom supports.

Buggey (2005) presented the results of a unique study designed to analyze the impact of video self-monitoring on behaviors of students with autism in a private school setting. The target behaviors included language, social skills, tantrums, and aggression. Results indicated immediate and significant gains which were maintained after the use of video self-monitoring ended. Buggey proposed that the use of video self-monitoring may produce positive change worthy of consideration as an intervention for students with autism that could serve as a better model than what children could learn from their peers. A significant limitation to this study was the low participant rate of five students.

Suggesting the use of a specific behavioral system, D'Oosterlinck et al. (2008) reported an evaluation of the use of Life Space Crisis Intervention with students referred to special schools with residential treatment due to severe behaviors. D'Oosterlink et al. (2008) proposed that Life Space Crisis Intervention can stimulate positive behavioral changes with students displaying chronic behavior problems. Positive results with lowered direct aggression and hostility, improvements related to anxious coping, harm avoidance, separation/panic, and total anxiety. This study was limited by the self-report of students from one school. This study is one of small group of literature that addresses specific interventions and programs in peer-reviewed literature. Another is listed below.

Use of a classroom-based curriculum, In Control, for middle school students with emotional and behavioral disorders was studied by Kellner et al. (2003). Kellner et al. (2003) studied the effects of In Control on a group of middle school students with disabilities participating in educational services in middle school for students with emotional and behavioral

disorders. According to Kellner et al., results indicate that use of the In Control program noted an increase in student use of anger logs to record anger-provoking episodes. This study was unique due to the target population and specificity of program.

The studies noted above reported on school-wide behavior or classroom-based systems. Others approach this from a different perspective (Biniker & Pindiprolu, 2008; D'Oosterlinck, 2008; Winter & Preston, 2006). A research study by Biniker and Pindiprolu (2008) addressed the efficacy of a school-wide program behavior management system and came up with different results. Biniker and Pindiprolu (2008) presented data collected from a case study of high school students with behavior disorders attending an alternative school. Based on the results, Biniker and Pindiprolu proposed that schools should not solely rely on a school wide behavior or level system; results show that teacher-implemented functional assessment-based intervention plans can help decrease behaviors of students with chronic behavior problems who demonstrated a need for additional individualized supports.

In this same theme, Winter and Preston (2006) documented the use of Functional Behavior Assessments in a New York school for students with emotional and behavioral problems, noting that the process involved in developing a Functional Behavioral Assessment aligns with Circle of Courage philosophy. They proposed that assessments framed in positive character development are meaningful for the student, their families, and staff members, by forming a plan that supports a student's route to responsibility (Winter & Preston, 2006).

Private special education schools that operate in the Commonwealth of Virginia are guided by Regulations Governing the Operation of Private Day Schools for Students with Disabilities (8 VAC 20-670-10). The use of behavior management programs, positive behavioral supports, and techniques such as physical restraint, time-out, and seclusion in both public and

nonpublic schools for students with disabilities are addressed. Section 8 VAC 20-670-130 of this document guides the use of behavior management programs.

The use of physical restraint for students with behavior disorders in day treatment and residential settings is addressed by Fogt, George, Kern, White, and George, 2008. Fogt et al. reported that little school-based research provides data on the use of physical restraint. Fogt et al. proposed that its use varies by program and is determined by the practice, philosophy, and training options supported by the school administration.

The Board of Education regulations provide guidance to private special education schools in Virginia (VAC 20-670-10 et. seq. 8 VAC 20-670-130). Implemented in 2002, this document, currently under revision, outlines procedures for program development, implementation, monitoring and documentation of the use of physical restraints in a school setting. Each school has the flexibility to adopt a program of choice from a wide selection of program models. Results of the 2009 Annual Survey identified the use of a number of program models, including Circle of Courage, Comprehensive Crisis Management, Crisis Wave, Handle with Care, Mandt, Professional Crisis Management, Right Response, Satori Alternatives to Managing Aggression, Therapeutic Crisis Intervention, and Therapeutic Options of Virginia (VDOE, 2009).

As noted above, there is a need to address problematic student behaviors through interventions and programs. Another important component of reviewing programs and services is to look at student progress and achievement.

Student Progress and Achievement

Student academic achievement, behavior modification, and improved social skills may be assessed by a number of informal and formal assessments, such as standardized assessments, surveys, grades, and progress reporting on goals and objectives in a student's IEP. In Virginia,

public school divisions are held accountable for academic achievement by measuring student progress on the Virginia Standards of Learning assessment.

A review of literature identified numerous concerns regarding accountability for programming, services and student outcomes for students in nonpublic schools. These recent studies are outlined below. In 2003, Morris, Abbott, and Ward shared concerns regarding assessment of what occurs in residential schools. Morris et al. (2003) suggested that these types of schools are difficult to assess and it is even more difficult to obtain reliable statistics. Gagnon, McLaughlin, and Leone (2003) expressed the need for vigilance to ensure student participation in assessments, appropriate accommodations are followed, and that data should be reported and used.

In a follow-up study, Gagnon and McLaughlin (2004) reported the results of a nationwide survey of private and public day treatment and residential schools for elementary-age children with emotional or behavioral disorders. Noting the results of this national sample of 271 students, the authors recommended the following: (a) day treatment and residential schools must not be separated from the general education curriculum policies and district and state assessments, (b) they must be accountable for student outcomes, (c) LEA/SEA staff must share responsibility for including day treatment and residential schools in their school improvement efforts, (c) hold them accountable for student learning, and (d) provide the necessary training and support to assure students in those settings receive a quality education.

In a later work, Gagnon and Leone (2005) expressed concern that students with EBD enrolled in private day and residential programs may not be receiving the educational opportunities and support they need to meet demands through educational expectations. In addition, Gagnon and Leone noted systematic deficiencies in school-level policies and practices

with elementary day treatment and residential schools for children with emotional and behavior disorders. Zetlin (2006) voiced concern about the quality of private special education students that are often the placements of children in foster care, specifically low-level academics, mixed-age groupings of students ranging from 11-17 in the same classroom, and poor educational facilities and equipment. Hornby and Witte (2008) observed that a high level of resources was needed and stressed the importance of evaluating the extent to which educational goals are met.

One method of analyzing student programming and services in nonpublic day and residential programs is to review student-reported input. Student self-reported perceptions of their experiences in private special education schools may offer insight into the success of program and interventions from a student perspective. Few research studies have focused on the perceptions of former students enrolled in private special education programs. Those found in current literature offer a rare look at student feedback and self-reporting of their experiences. Farrell and Polat (2003) studied the outcomes of 26 former residential school students classified with an emotional behavioral disorder. Results showed that a great majority were extremely satisfied with the quality of education, care and support they received while enrolled in Oakland School, notably smaller classes, 1:1 instruction, and ongoing support after school hours. They reported being listened to and cared for by the adults charged with their care (Farrell & Polat, 2003).

In a similar study, Hornby and Witte (2008) studied the feedback of students who had participated in programming in Melton, a residential school. The authors reported that nearly all Melton graduates offered positive comments about their experiences at Melton. Former students reported that the school targeted their learning difficulties and increased academic achievement, helped them gain better control of their behavior. They specifically identified specific program

characteristics such as clear disciplinary structure, quality of relationships with staff, and a wide range of activities offered through the program as being helpful. However, the students reported negative experiences once they returned to their home schools (Hornby & Witte, 2008).

Several studies highlight student outcomes and analysis of their experiences in nonpublic school programs (Farrell & Polat, 2003; Harriss et al., 2008; Hornby & Witte, 2008; Nickerson, Brosof, & Shapiro). In 2008, Harriss et al. reported of a study of residential students who reported positive outcomes of their experiences in a residential school, such as increased trust, self-esteem, dealing with difficult feelings, focus to task, class attendance, good relationships with staff, and behavior upon return home. Negative factors included student loss of control, and sense of isolation experienced when they were away.

Nickerson et al. (2004) shared the results of a 1-year longitudinal study of a private special education school. In this study, 84 students classified with an emotional disability showed improved emotional maturity, stronger peer relationships, intrapersonal and affective strengths, school functioning, family environment, and interpersonal strengths. Based on results of the Scales for Predicting Successful Inclusion (SPSI) scale, concern was noted that the success of these students in an inclusive setting would be unlikely as interpreted by Nickerson, et al (2004). Although transition back to public schools is the expectation, the process can be challenging.

Transition to Least Restrictive Environment

As can be seen above, the need for private education placements for students with significant disabilities is documented in research. However, consideration of LRE should be ongoing. The ultimate goal for most children in day treatment, private day or residential programs should be a return to their homes and public schools (Gagnon & McLaughlin, 2004).

A number of concerns surface when a less restrictive environment, such as return to public school, is being considered for a student who has been participating in an out-of-district placement. When initially looking at a change in placement, attention needs to be given to the skills that the student has learned in the private placement as well as student concerns about the transition (Hornby & Witte, 2008). Behavioral expectations of students in different service levels and models may be viewed differently by classroom teachers and school administrators. Receiving teachers may express concern about their ability to serve this type of student.

Conte and McCoy (1980) reported the results of a study designed to examine within group and between group agreements on behavioral expectations of children displaying behavioral problems that could impact the child's ability to work successfully in a public special education classroom. Respondents included teachers and social workers from a day treatment environment whose ratings were compared with teacher ratings from the public school systems. Results indicated different expectations across levels. In addition, concern related to the preparation of students to successfully transition them to less restrictive environments was noted.

Audette (1982) proposed that active parent participation with local and private school staff can enhance a handicapped student's program and accelerate the return of the student to a less restrictive setting, which should be the goal of all parties. Callahan (1995) suggested that developing a broad range of acceptable behaviors for students with challenging behaviors is considered essential to being accepted back into mainstream society. Callahan also noted that individuals removed from his/her home environments may experience varying degrees of difficulty in adjusting to a return to those environments.

With the challenges noted above, the roles and responsibilities of placing agents, service providers, and other participating agencies are the foundation of student support and planning for student services.

Interagency Collaboration

Local education agency representatives. The roles that LEA representatives play in placement, program monitoring, discharge, and transition of students to a different placement or level of service may vary by locality. LEA representatives are guided by the Regulations Governing Special Education Programs for Children with Disabilities in Virginia (8 VAC 20-81-150). Literature related to the roles and responsibilities of LEA representatives is very limited. Although more than two decades old, research reported by Audette (1982) is a timeless piece that focuses solely on the placement of students in private special education schools, and shares perceptions of parents and private school staff on the involvement of LEA staff in placement and monitoring privately placed students. Audette noted positive reactions from parents and most school staff, but interestingly stated that a small but imposing minority of private school staff exists “who behave as if the LEA has no business participating in the private affairs of these schools” (p. 218).

In 2008, two statewide training sessions were conducted by staff of the Virginia Department of Education. At each session, surveys were distributed to administrators of private special education day and residential schools. The surveys focused on the administrators’ perceptions of their working relationships with staff of LEAs enrolling and monitoring services for students in their facilities. Results of the Day Schools Survey (McKinney & Rascoe, 2008; VDOE, 2008) show that in the area of IEPs, results indicate that over one-half (55%) of LEAs work with private day school staff to draft IEPs *most or all* of the time. This percentage is less

for residential schools whose administrators rated that 44% of LEAs work collaboratively with private staff *most or all* of the time to draft IEPs. When looking at collaboration related to the Virginia Standards of Learning Assessments and alternate assessments (VAAP, VGLA, VSEP), nearly 50% of LEAs provide Standards of Learning testing materials, nearly 40% provide alternate assessments resources and guidance. Private day school staff reported that LEAs shared the results of the assessments *most or all* of the time with day schools (26%) and residential schools (6%).

Very few research studies or articles target collaboration of private school staff and public school staff. In 1982, Audette addressed this relationship when he reported on the collaborative efforts of private school staff and representatives of local and state educational agencies. Audette supported the importance of a collaborative relationship as the two parties work together to meet the needs of students with disabilities receiving services in private special education schools. In that same light, Morris et al. (2003) expressed the belief that it is essential for agencies to work together to ensure that service delivery to students in residential programs is on target with student needs.

The roles and responsibilities of LEA representatives who place students in private schools is addressed by Audette (1982), who emphasized the importance of ongoing monitoring of the private school programs by local directors of special education. Audette proposed that monitoring programming was part of a collaborative working relationship with staff from private special education schools, LEA representatives and SEAs to ensure that student services meet minimum expectations and requirements. Also supporting a partnership approach, Guarino (1982) expressed support for a collaborative working relationship between private schools and state level agencies. Following this theme, Gagnon and McLaughlin (2004) proposed that private

schools be held accountable for their students' academic outcomes. Gagnon and McLaughlin proposed that representatives from the LEA and SEA share responsibility for including day treatment and residential schools in their school improvement efforts, holding them accountable for improving student learning, and providing the necessary training and support to assure students in these settings receive a quality education.

Morris et al. (2003) addressed that strained relationships sometimes exist between parents and LEA, suggesting that many parents feel that they have been let down by the process and decision-making of school officials related to placements in specialized schools. Morris et al. (2003) proposed that parents would appreciate assistance in seeking appropriate private special education school placements. In addition, Morris et al. suggested that LEA representatives did not have a developed relationship with students in residential programs, perhaps due to the time factor of traveling a great distance to the schools. In addition, it was noted that the LEA representatives expressed responsibility to see that educational needs were met, not at the overall care (Morris et al., 2003). Further research by Crawford and Simonoff (2007) indicated that parents of students attending schools for emotional and behavioral disorders stressed the value of working in collaboration with professionals to achieve shared goals. Crawford and Simonoff (2007) suggested that because parents often lack the emotional and practical support in coping with children's complex needs, agencies need to improve communication and collaboration to provide effective services for these families.

In Virginia, the Board of Education outlines the responsibilities LEA representatives hold in IEP monitoring and accountability for students participating in special education services in private facilities. According to this regulation (8VAC20-81-110) representatives of an LEA must ensure that an IEP is developed and implemented for each child with a disability, including those

placed in a private special education school by the LEA or the Comprehensive Services Act (CSA) by a local Family Assessment and Planning Team (8VAC 20-81-150).

Each LEA is also responsible for ensuring the following: (a) that the child's IEP is accessible to each regular education teacher, special education teacher, related service provider, and other service provider who is responsible for its implementation; (b) that teachers and providers are informed of their specific responsibilities related to implementing the child's IEP; and (c) that specific accommodations, modifications, and supports are provided for the child's IEP. Each LEA is responsible for the development, review, and revision of an IEP of a child with a disability and for initiating and conducting meetings (8 VAC 20-81-30).

Participating agencies. In addition to collaboration between LEA and private school staff, it is important to look at collaboration of all parties of interest, including parents, private school staff, public school staff, and representatives of other participating agencies. Morris et al. (2003) noted the importance of local schools working in partnership with health and social services by taking a business-like approach to address their responsibilities under special education legislation to question the role of residential schools and provide answers to parents who children may be served in their own communities. Morris et al. called for research on statistics of serving schools.

The importance of interagency collaboration is stressed by Farrell and Polat (2003), who proposed that services providing support and guidance at and after a student's transition to their home locality should be improved in order to fully support students as they pursue postsecondary education or employment. Farrell and Polat recommend that this transition be coordinated by a variety of agencies, including schools, DSS, colleges, and career centers.

In Virginia, Family Assessment and Planning Teams provide an avenue for an interagency team approach to plan for services for students who are at-risk or who have significant disabilities. FAPT teams are comprised of representatives from local agencies, including: (a) local educational agency, (b) The Community Services Board, (c) the Health Department, (d) the Court Services Unit, and (e) the Department of Social Services. When a FAPT meeting is held, representatives of these agencies are provided an avenue to address student strengths and needs. FAPT team recommendations are written into a formal plan, an Individual Family Services Plan which provides families with linkages to services and supports. It outlines services that have been approved for funding and support by the team.

Another level of interagency collaboration is at the state level. In 2010, Gagnon reinforced the role that state directors of special education are charged with as they meet the challenge of adhering to IDEA (2004) and NCLB (2002) while maintaining practical applications for day treatment and residential schools. Gagnon noted that state directors or their designees are faced with competing demands of federal legislative requirements and the policies of individual state curriculum, assessment and accountability practices and policies determined by each state. Gagnon and Leone (2005) outlined the need for state departments of education to improve accreditation and monitoring policies and procedures for day treatment and residential treatment centers. Gagnon and Leone addressed a gap of common policies and allocation of staff to assist with successful reentry of students to their home schools.

In Virginia, licensure and monitoring of private special education day and residential schools is overseen by the Virginia Department of Education, Office of Federal Program Monitoring. The VDOE monitoring specialists in the Division of Special Education and Student Services conduct unannounced reviews of each school at least once every 3 years.

Summary

This literature review provided a collection of articles and studies published in the last 30 years, oftentimes paralleling the implementation of laws, such as Public Law 94-142, NCLB, IDEA and subsequent laws and revisions. These laws have molded special education programs and services in both public and private institutions. The body of research studies targeting nontraditional alternative and private special education services for at-risk and special needs students has grown through the years, growing steadily from 1982 to the present.

This review identified limited student demographic information, school demographics and census, concerns and recommendations for teacher hiring and retention, concerns and recommendations for programming, services, accountability, and processes. A number of studies offered hard data and results, which could be generalized to other populations and situations such as program models, census, and expenditures.

Each broad theme mentioned above was addressed because of its connection to private day and residential schools. The main focus of this literature review was on articles and more in-depth research studies that provide insight into the structure and processes of private special education schools. The works of researchers across interest areas such as mental health and education were included. These studies form the basic framework of available research related to nonpublic education for students with disabilities.

Although the availability of data found in peer-reviewed articles and studies has increased through the years, gaps of information can be identified. These areas include the following: (a) student demographics and disability classifications served; (b) school demographics, including size, years of operation, and statewide reporting of program offerings; (c) programs and services related solely to private special education schools within and across

regions; (d) specific processes for enrollment, placement, discharge and accountability measures through data reporting; (e) administrators' perceptions of their schools; and (f) recommendations for best practices for interagency collaboration. Additionally, a number of recommendations were made across fields for future research in the area of nonpublic education.

The purpose of this study was to describe programs and services offered in private special education schools serving publicly placed students with disabilities in the Commonwealth of Virginia. This study was needed to fill the gaps of information found in literature by reporting a comprehensive profile of programs, services, and interventions available to students with disabilities in private day and residential schools in the Commonwealth of Virginia.

This review highlighted the works of a number of authors who have made significant contributions to the field as it relates to the current study (Audette, 1982; Bullis et al., 2004; Gagnon, 2010; Gagnon & Leone, 2005; Gagnon & McLaughlin, 2004; Gagnon et al., 2003; Taylor, 2003, 2005a, 2005b; Unruh et al., 2007).

Implications

Future Research

The purpose of this study was to provide a description of programs and services offered in private special education schools serving publically placed students with disabilities in the Commonwealth of Virginia. Existing data on disability categories, student census, expenditures, and general program descriptors have now been supplemented with updated data and detailed information. Data reported in this study has added to the body of existing information related to programs, interventions, and services offered in private special education schools licensed to serve students with disabilities in the Commonwealth of Virginia.

Authors of articles and research studies across sources have identified a lack of data related to nonpublic educational services (Audette, 1982; Gagnon & Leone, 2005; Gagnon & McLaughlin, 2004; Taylor, 2005a, 2005b). Specific recommendations were made for future studies. When looking at available data related to student and school demographics, Mathur et al. (2004) and Gagnon and Leone (2005) noted gaps of information with respect to types students served, student outcomes, teachers, and the relative degrees of success of different types of placements.

Looking at collaborative working relationships of public school and private school staff, Audette (1982) proposed that further research related to collaboration between agencies is key to adding to the knowledge base of educators and interagency personnel who work with students in out-of-district placements. Taylor (2003) proposed that there have been no large-scale requirements for private schools to disclose the details of their schools to outside agencies, thus reinforcing the need for data collection and sharing.

A review of research has noted additional concerns related to the services offered in private special education programs. Another concern targets how private special education schools are monitored and held accountable for student progress and achievement (Gagnon & McLaughlin, 2004; Taylor, 2005a, 2005b). Gagnon and McLaughlin (2004) proposed that private schools be held accountable for their students' academic outcomes.

Practice

In 2005, Taylor challenged educators to develop a more systematic method of studying the issue of private schools, as related to educating students with disabilities, noting that it is essential to develop a clear picture of what special education services are provided, and the quality of such services in private schools nationwide. Results of this study may be used by

representatives of various agencies charged with designing, implementing, monitoring, and funding services for students with disabilities in the Commonwealth of Virginia. Results of this study may have practical implications for the collaboration of private school and public school staff.

Policy

Few articles and research studies in the literature address state level policies related to nonpublic education. In a recent work, Gagnon (2010) reported the results of his latest study related to state-level policies, practices, and philosophies related to day treatment and residential schools. Gagnon identified an ongoing need for a comprehensive identification of state-level policies and practices addressing the education of youth in day treatment and residential schools. Results of this current study describing programs and services offered in private special education schools serving publicly placed students with disabilities in the Commonwealth of Virginia may have policy implications related to program development, accreditation, licensure, and regulatory issues for private special education schools operating in the Commonwealth of Virginia.

CHAPTER 3: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Overview

A review of published articles and research studies identified several broad themes related to educating students with disabilities, including mental health and treatment services, nonsectarian and private religious schools that offer limited special education services, local and regional alternative education programs, and special education services in public and private schools. Additional literature focused on the provision of services in the least restrictive environment and legal issues related to special education, such as parental placement.

Findings from a number of studies acknowledged a lack of data related to nonpublic educational services (Audette, 1982; Gagnon & Leone, 2005; Mathur et al. 2004; Taylor, 2005a, 2005b). When looking at available data, Mathur et al. (2004) and Gagnon and Leone (2005) noted gaps of information with respect to types students served, teachers, and the relative degrees of success of different types of placements. Audette (1982) proposed that further research related to the collaboration of public and private agencies is key to adding to the knowledge base of educators and interagency personnel who work with students in out-of-district placements. Limited data specifically related to private special education schools operating in the Commonwealth of Virginia is available through individual private school records and state agencies reports; at present none of this data is published in peer-reviewed literature.

The purpose of this study was to describe programs and services offered in private special education schools serving publically placed students with disabilities in the Commonwealth of Virginia. In preparation for this study, the primary investigator assisted the researcher in exploration of the requirements for approval by the Virginia Commonwealth University Internal Review Board as related to this study of secondary data. It was determined by the School of Education that an internal School of Education process would be followed, informing the Internal Review Board that a study is being conducted that does not require submission to the Internal Review Board. It was determined that this study did not require submission to the Internal Review Board.

Research Questions

1. What is the total census and disability classification of students served in private special education schools?
2. What types of programs are offered in private special education schools to address the unique academic, behavior, and social skills of students with disabilities requiring a private school placement?
3. What types of services are offered in private special education schools to address the unique academic, behavior, and social skills of students with disabilities requiring a private school placement?
4. What types of interventions are offered in private special education schools to address the unique academic, behavior, and social skills of students with disabilities requiring a private school placement?

5. What are the similarities and differences when private day schools and residential schools are compared, as related to: (a) programs, (b) services, and (c) interventions in place to address the needs of students with disabilities requiring a private school placement?

Design

This research plan followed a quantitative, nonexperimental design study model. Data were obtained from a survey administered by the VDOE, the Virginia Department of Education: Private Schools for Students with Disabilities 2010 Annual Survey. This study reviewed the secondary data set of results obtained from this survey. Data were aggregated to create a comprehensive profile of students, programs, services, and interventions offered to these students in private day and residential schools.

Instrument

In the past, the Annual Survey was sent out electronically by VDOE and returned to the department in hard copy. All schools were required to complete and turn in this survey by December 31 of each school year. The 2009 Annual Survey included several sections, including school demographics, student primary disability classification, day treatment programs, program changes and modifications, graduation status, and post-secondary outcomes. In the latter part of 2010, staff members of the VDOE collaborated to develop a comprehensive survey that targeted additional information than was requested in past surveys. According to C. White-Hodgins (personal communication, December 6, 2010), VDOE sought to expand the survey to include information previously obtained in other formats. It was proposed by VDOE staff that the changes in the survey would assist in maintaining the most up-to-date records and provide reflective information about the demographics and operation of private schools.

Methodology

Procedure

The Virginia Department of Education, Department of Federal Program Monitoring annually distributes a survey seeking information from private special education day and residential schools. Copies of the Virginia Department of Education: Private Schools for Students with Disabilities 2010 Annual Survey were distributed electronically on January 13, 2011 with a requested return date set for February 16, 2011. A Freedom of Information Act request was submitted to the VDOE by the researcher, requesting copies of the completed surveys. The researcher made arrangements with staff from the VDOE for the transfer of surveys. In order to develop a profile of the student and school demographics and characteristics, this study reviewed and analyzed data obtained from the results of the Virginia Department of Education: Private Schools for Students with Disabilities 2010 Annual Survey.

Population

The Virginia Department of Education Department of Federal Program Monitoring distributes a survey annually to all private day and residential special education schools licensed to serve students with disabilities in the Commonwealth of Virginia. At the time of distribution, the number of schools licensed to operate was 125, with the following breakdown: (a) 82 day schools, (b) 43 residential schools, 11 of those residential schools also licensed to serve day students. During the course of this study several schools opened and closed. The new schools did not participate in the study. One school that closed was not included in the population.

All schools were required to complete the surveys and return them to the VDOE. Survey results reported in this study are not school-specific and individual schools are not identified.

Data Collection Management and Analysis

The VDOE distributed the survey electronically to all participants. However, since no specific requirements for completion and return were established, surveys were returned in a variety of methods, including electronically, fax, Fed Ex, and the U.S. Postal Service. Some surveys were hand-written and others typed. Typed versions noted responses in a variety of formats, including bold font, underlining, check marks in and near boxes, and color coding. This made for a somewhat difficult interpretation of answers and required rechecking of surveys to ensure that the proper answers were identified.

Following a process for analyzing survey data (Hill, 2009), upon receipt of the completed surveys, the researcher entered data into a spreadsheet format designed to include all schools participating in the survey. Variables were named and given numeric values or labels. Columns represented variables and rows represented schools. Statistical software, PASW17.0.2, was used to input, process, analyze and report data. Responses were analyzed through descriptive statistics. The database was stored on a laptop computer used by the researcher and copied to flash drives and a desk-top computer; data and paper surveys will be retained for 3 years.

According to McMillan and Schumacher (2006), although the descriptive statistics are extremely valuable when a topic is first researched, most nonexperimental studies go beyond description only to examine comparisons and relationships among variables. Since 100% of the distributed surveys were returned, it was determined that inferential statistics were not required; the descriptive analysis noted above would provide a complete picture of the schools as reported by survey respondents. Descriptive statistical analysis reported measures of frequencies and percentages. Crosstabs and Custom Tables were used to identify data results for topic-specific

information. This afforded the researcher the ability to identify information to answer all five research questions as outlined below (see Table 19).

Delimitations of the Study

The purpose of this study was to describe programs and services of private special education schools serving publicly placed students with disabilities in the Commonwealth of Virginia. This study could also have described public separate school programs, state operated programs, day treatment programs, as well as local and regional alternative education programs. Other closely related topics such as parental placements, often cited as unilateral placements, and placements in an Interim Alternative Education Setting will not be covered. It was not the intent of this study to address the full gamut of special education placement and service options, but to focus solely on those offered in private special education facilities.

Limitations of the Study

The first limitation of the study related to the population surveyed. The sample size is limited to the 125 private special education schools licensed to operate in the Commonwealth of Virginia. Thus a picture of one geographic area is provided, which may not be representative of other states or of the nation at large.

Another limitation may be related to use of the self-report technique where staff from private day and residential schools complete the survey with information related to student census and disability classifications, as well as specific programs, interventions, and services. This limitation also extends to consideration of which staff member of the school is completing the survey. Although the survey was sent to school administrators, the surveys were not always completed by the school administrator. Other staff members appeared to have assisted with data

Table 19

The Privatization of Special Education: Research Question Analysis

Research Question	Survey Section	Statistical Analysis
1. What is the total census and disability classification of students served in private special education schools?	1	Descriptive frequencies and/or percentages.
2. What types of programs are offered in private special education schools to address the unique academic, behavior, and social skills of students with disabilities requiring a private school placement?	2	Descriptive frequencies and/or percentages.
3. What types of services are offered in private education schools to address the unique academic, behavior, and social skills of students with disabilities requiring a private school placement?	3	Descriptive frequencies and/or percentages.
4. What types of interventions are offered in private special education schools to address the unique academic, behavior, and social skills of students with disabilities requiring a private school placement?	3	Descriptive frequencies and/or percentages.
5. What are the similarities and differences when private day schools and residential schools are compared, as related to (a) programs, (b) services, and © interventions in place to address the needs of students with disabilities requiring a private school placement?	1, 2, 3, 4	Crosstabs Custom Tables

collection and reporting, as there were a number of surveys completed by school clerical staff. The researcher had to make the assumption that surveys were completed by staff members having access to school records and that data reported were error free.

Although the limitations highlighted above should be recognized, the information gathered by the Virginia Department of Education: Private Schools for Students with Disabilities 2010 Annual Survey reviewed and analyzed in this study provided a wealth of information currently unavailable in peer-reviewed literature.

CHAPTER 4: FINDINGS

Purpose of Study

The purpose of this study was to describe programs and services offered in private special education schools serving publicly placed students with disabilities in the Commonwealth of Virginia. This review of secondary data focused on the results of the Virginia Department of Education, Private Schools for Students with Disabilities 2010 Annual Survey. The surveys were distributed by the Virginia Department of Education (VDOE) to administrators of private special education schools licensed to serve students with disabilities.

The survey was divided into several sections, including: (a) school and student demographic information; (b) academics; (c) nonacademic, extracurricular and student support services; (d) behavior management; (e) discharge, graduation, and postsecondary status, and (f) staffing. For the purpose of this study, the researcher did not report on the outcomes or staffing sections of the survey.

Student Demographic Information

Census

Survey results from 125 private special education day and residential schools revealed conflicting numbers for the total student count. According to census results, 4,674 students were served as of December 1, 2010. Based on census and capacity reported by the schools, private day and residential schools across the state are 64% filled to capacity; however, this does not reflect the status of individual schools. For the purposes of analyses for this study, the researcher

relied on student census and school count to provide a profile of student and school demographics (see Table 20).

Table 20

2010 Census and Capacity of Private Day Schools Licensed to Serve Students With Disabilities

	Private day		Residential		License Residential also licensed to serve day students		All schools	
	Frequency	%	Frequency	%	Frequency	%	Frequency	%
Census	3,126	66.9	1,076	23.0	472	10.1	4,674	100
Capacity	4,927		1,634		720		7,281	

Note. These data are unreported.

Analysis of census by license category revealed that the majority of students in private schools attended day schools (66.9%, $n = 3,126$), followed by residential students (23.0%, $n = 1,076$) and residential schools also licensed to serve day students (10.1%, $n = 472$).

Respondents answered questions related to students with and without disabilities. Results indicated that 17.2 % ($n = 804$) of students in private schools licensed to serve students with disabilities were not identified as students with disabilities, while 83.5% ($n = 3,901$) were. When asked to identify the type of license by which they operated, all schools responded.

Frequency analysis shows that the majority of students with disabilities are educated in private day schools (75.9%, $n = 2,960$) followed by residential (15.56%, $n = 607$) and residential schools also licensed to serve day students (8.6%, $n = 334$). The majority of students without disabilities are educated in residential schools (59.2%, $n = 476$), followed by day schools (27.4%, $n = 220$) and residential schools also licensed to serve day students (13.4%, $n = 108$) (see Table 21).

Table 21

Placements for Students With Disabilities

	Private day		Residential		License Residential also licensed to serve day students		All students	
	Frequency	%	Frequency	%	Frequency	%	Frequency	%
Students with disabilities	2,960	75.87	607	15.56	334	8.56	3,901	100
Students with no disability	220	27.36	476	59.20	108	13.4	804	100

Note. Total enrollment of students with and without disabilities does not match census as highlighted in Table 20.

Disability Classifications

Respondents indicated that a total of 3,925 students with disabilities were enrolled. Although this number differs from the frequency reported in the variable students with disabilities, the base number of 3,925 will be used for analysis of disability classifications. Review of reporting categories of primary disabilities identified the four most frequently reported primary disability classifications served in private special education schools as: (a) Emotional Disability (36.6%, $n = 1,437$); (b) Other Health Impaired (16.3%, $n = 642$); (c) Autism (16.0%, $n = 628$); and (d) Specific Learning Disability (15.6%, $n = 611$). These four classifications make up 84.5% total population of students with disabilities served in private day and residential schools licensed to serve students with disabilities (see Table 22).

Further analysis revealed that the highest frequencies of disability classifications for private day school were: (a) Emotional Disability (66.9%, $n = 962$), (b) Autism (96.7%, $n = 607$), Specific Learning Disability (83.5%, $n = 510$), and Other Health Impairment (70.1%, $n = 450$).

The most frequently reported primary disability categories in residential schools were: (a) Emotional Disability (23.0%, $n = 330$), (b) Other Health Impaired (17.0%, $n = 109$), (c) Specific Learning Disability (10.5%, $n = 64$), and (d) Intellectual Disability (20.6%, $n = 45$). Results show that the highest frequencies of primary disability classifications for residential schools licensed to serve day students were: (a) Emotional disability (10.1%, $n = 145$), (b) Other Health Impaired (13.0%, $n = 83$), (c) Specific Learning Disability (6.1%, $n = 37$), and (d) Multiple Disability (12.2%, $n = 36$).

Students with a primary disability of Emotional Disability were reported to be at the highest frequency across all licensure levels. Results indicated that 66.9% ($n = 962$) of students

Table 22

Disability Classifications of Students in Private Schools Licensed to Serve Students With Disabilities

	License				Disability classification by total disability count %
	Private Day	Residential	Residential also licensed to serve day students	All schools	
	Frequency	Frequency	Frequency	Frequency	
Autism	607	14	7	628	16.0
Deaf-Blind	0	0	0	0	0
Deafness	0	0	0	0	0
Developmental delay	33	0	2	35	.89
Emotional disability	962	330	145	1437	36.6
Hearing impaired	3	0	0	3	.07
Intellectual disability	153	45	20	218	5.5
Multiple disability	243	15	36	294	7.49
Orthopedically impaired	2	0	0	2	.05
Other health impaired	450	109	83	642	16.3
Specific learning disability	510	64	37	611	15.5

Table 22 - continued

	License				Disability classification by total disability count %
	Private day Frequency	Residential Frequency	Residential also licensed to serve day students Frequency	All schools Frequency	
Speech-language impairment	13	12	11	36	.91
Traumatic brain injury	18	0	0	18	.45
Visual disability	1	0	0	1	.02
Total	2995	589	341	3925	100

with an emotional disability are served in a day school, 23.0% ($n = 330$) in a residential school, and 10.1% ($n = 145$) in a residential school also licensed to serve day students.

Students with a primary disability of Autism were reported to be in the second highest reporting group. Results indicated that 96.7% ($n = 607$) of students with autism were served in a day school, followed by 2.2% ($n = 14$) in a residential school, and 1.1% ($n = 7$) in a residential school also licensed to serve day students (see Table 23).

Age

In addition to providing information regarding student census and disability classifications, survey respondents answered questions about the ages of students served in their schools. Because individual student information is not reported in this survey, the only reference to age was the identification of the variables youngest and oldest reported by each school.

Schools indicated the levels of instructional programming offered at the school, including elementary, middle, and secondary levels. Three (2.4%) schools reported serving preschool students beginning with age 2. Results displayed in Figure 3 of “youngest students” show two distinct clusters. Of the schools reporting in the youngest category, 52 (41.6%) schools reported that the youngest students served were between the ages of 5 and 8. Forty-two (33.6%) schools reported that the youngest students served were between the ages of 11 and 13 (see Figure 3).

The oldest students are clustered together from 17 to 19, representing 56% of the population. Results of “oldest” are right-skewed, with a single cluster in the 17 to 19 age group. After a decline of approximately 10% from ages 19 to 20, the number rose again for 21-year old students (see Figure 4).

Table 23

Disability by License

	License						Residential also licensed to serve day students		All schools	
	Private day		Residential							
	Sum	Table sum %	Sum	Table sum %	Sum	Table sum %	Frequency	%		
Autism	607	96.7	14	2.2	7	1.1	628	16.0		
Deaf/Blind	0		0		0		0	0		
Deafness	0		0		0		0	0		
Developmental delay	33	94.3	0	.0	2	5.7	35	.89		
Emotional disability	962	66.9	330	23.0	145	10.1	1437	36.6		
Hearing impaired	3	100.0	0	.0	0	.0	3	.07		
Intellectual disability	153	70.2	45	20.6	20	9.2	218	5.5		
Multiple disability	243	82.7	15	5.1	36	12.2	294	7.49		
Orthopedically impaired	2	100.0	0	.0	0	.0	2	.05		
Other health impaired	450	70.1	109	17.0	83	12.9	642	16.3		
Specific learning disability	510	83.5	64	10.5	37	6.1	611	15.5		

Table 23 - continued

	License							
	Private day		Residential		Residential also licensed to serve day students		All schools	
	Sum	Table sum %	Sum	Table sum %	Sum	Table sum %	Frequency	%
Speech language impairment	13	36.1	12	33.3	11	30.6	36	.91
Traumatic brain injury	18	100.0	0	.0	0	.0	18	.45
Visual disability	1	100.0	0	.0	0	.0	1	.02
Total	2995		589		341		3925	

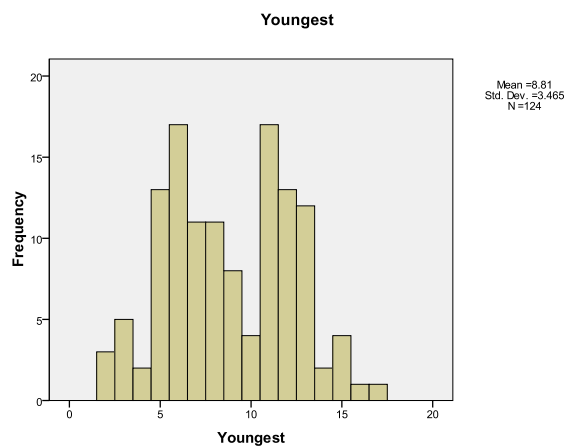


Figure 3. Age category: Youngest students

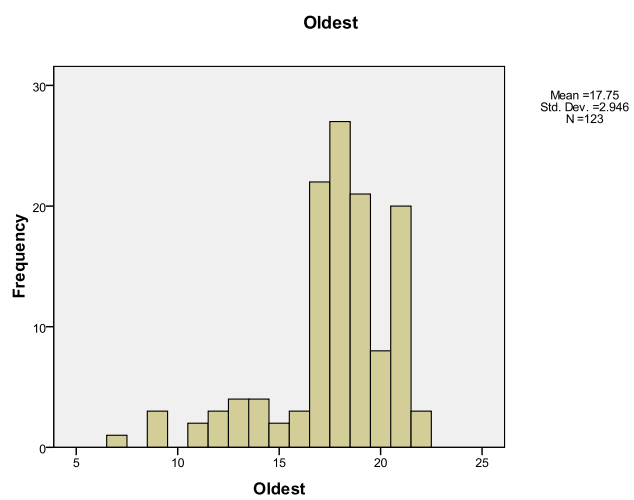


Figure 4. Age category: Oldest students

Results of an analysis of age ranges of youngest and oldest students indicated differences across licensure levels. Day schools reported that mean age of youngest was 8 years old, while residential schools reported that the mean age of youngest was 11. Residential schools licensed to serve day students reported the mean age of youngest as 9 years old.

Both day schools and residential schools reported that the mean age of oldest was 18 years old. Residential schools licensed to serve day students reported the mean age of oldest as 16 years old (see Table 24).

Table 24

Youngest and Oldest Students by School License

		License		Residential also licensed to serve day students
		Private day	Residential	
Youngest				
Mean	8	11	9	
Minimum	2	5	5	
Maximum	17	15	13	
Mode	6	13	12	
Oldest				
Mean	18	18	16	
Minimum	7	11	11	
Maximum	22	21	18	
Mode	19	17	18	

School Profiles

License to Operate

Schools in the Commonwealth of Virginia are currently licensed to operate under one of three categories: (a) day school, b) residential school, and (c) residential with licensure approval to serve day students. Analysis of frequencies and percentages of three operational licensure options showed that the majority of schools self-reported to operate under the following licenses: (a) private day schools (65.6%, $n = 82$), (b) residential schools (22.4%, $n = 28$), and (c) residential schools licensed to serve day students (12.0%, $n = 15$). These data are shown in Figure 5.

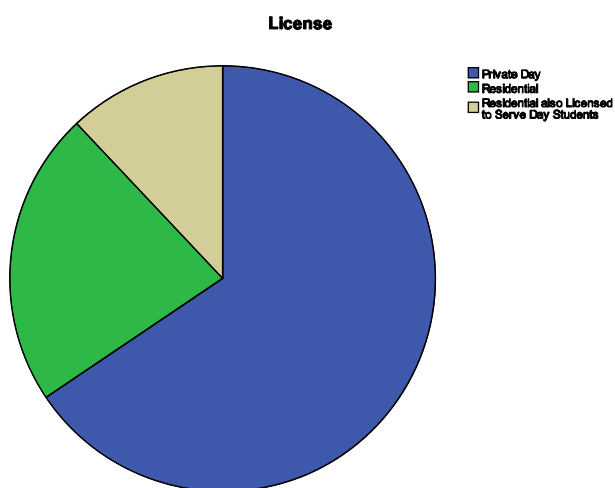


Figure 5. School licensure descriptor of private schools licensed to serve students with disabilities.

School Financial Profile

Funding School Placements

Survey respondents were asked to report student census by primary disability classification, along with funding and agency placing category, including DSS, CSU, and

out-of-state placements. For the purposes of this study, the researcher focused on the funding agent. Results indicated that the greatest number of student placements ($n = 1560$) was funded through local FAPT/CPMT committees. The next highest was private pay ($n = 904$), followed by funded by LEA ($n = 681$). The researcher was unable to report in viable percentages due to inconsistencies in student census and student disability count.

Of students funded by the LEA, approximately 90% ($n = 603$) of students attended day schools, 7% ($n = 49$) residential schools, and 4% ($n = 29$) residential schools licensed to serve day students.

Of the 1,579 student placements funded by local FAPT/CPMT committees, approximately 80% ($n = 1,242$) attended private day schools, 13% ($n = 200$) residential schools, and 9% ($n = 137$) residential schools also licensed to serve day students.

Of students reported to be private pay, approximately 80% ($n = 718$) are reported to be day students, with 15% ($n = 135$) residential schools, and 6% ($n = 51$) residential schools also licensed to serve day students (see Table 25).

Tuition

Survey respondents were asked to specify the daily rate charged for students enrolled in their schools. Of the 125 schools surveyed, 54% ($n = 68$) reported set daily rates and 30.4% ($n = 38$) reported variable rates based on differences in programs, services and disability classifications served. The remaining schools reported tuition rates in monthly, semester, and annual rates (see Table 26).

Table 25

*Funding Agents for Students Placed in Private Schools Licensed
to Serve Students With Disabilities*

	License			
	Private day	Residential	Residential also licensed to serve day students	Identified funding agent census %
Funded by LEA				
Frequency	603	49	29	681
Percentage	88.5	7.2	4.3	100
Funded by FAPT/CPMT				
Frequency	1,242	200	137	1,579
Percentage	78.7	12.7	8.7	100
Private pay				
Frequency	718	135	51	904
Percentage	79.4	14.9	5.6	100

Table 26

Daily Tuition Rate of Private Schools Licensed to Serve Students With Disabilities

		Set daily rate		Variable daily rate	
		Frequency	%	Frequency	%
Valid	Daily rate not reported	57	45.6	-	
	Variable rate not reported	-	-	87	69.6
	\$0 - \$149	15	12.0	10	8.0
	\$150 - \$199	26	20.8	14	11.2
	\$200 - \$249	17	13.6	11	8.8
	\$250 - \$299	5	4.0	1	.8
	\$300 - \$349	3	2.4	2	1.6
	\$350 - \$399	1	.8	-	-
	\$400 and higher	1	.8	-	-
Total		124	100.0	125	100.0

Note. Data are unreported.

Further analysis indicated that the most frequently reported range for schools reporting set and variable daily rates was \$150.00 to \$199.00 (37.73%, $n = 40$), the next was \$200.00 to \$249.00 (26.41%, $n = 28$), followed by \$0-\$149.00 (23.58%, $n = 28$). Six schools (5.66%) reported daily rates in the range of \$250.00 to \$299.00, and five reported daily rates in the \$300.00 to \$349.00 range. One school reported charging in the \$350.00 to \$400.00 range, and another reported a rate above \$400 per school day (see Table 27).

Table 27

Set and Variable Daily Tuition Rates of Private Schools Licensed to Serve Students With Disabilities

		Set daily rate	Variable daily rate	All schools	All schools
		Frequency	Frequency	Frequency	%
Valid	\$0 - \$149	15	10	25	23.58
	\$150 - \$199	26	14	40	37.73
	\$200 - \$249	17	11	28	26.41
	\$250 - \$299		1	6	5.66
	\$300 - \$349	3	2	5	4.71
	\$350 - \$399	1	-	1	0.94
	\$400 and higher		-	1	0.94
Total		68	38	106	100.0

Ownership

Respondents indicated the category of ownership from several options presented in the survey. Twelve schools (9.6%) did not respond to the question related to ownership category. The most frequently reported ownership category was corporation (78.4%, $n = 98$). All other options were reported at a rate of less than 5% of schools (see Table 28).

Table 28

Ownership Status of Schools Licensed to Serve Students With Disabilities

	Private day Frequency	Residential Frequency	License Residential also licensed to serve	All schools Frequency	%
			day students Frequency		
Ownership status not reported	8	3	1	12	9.6
Sole Proprietorship	2	0	1	3	2.4
Partnership	1	1	0	2	1.6
Corporation	65	21	12	98	78.4
LLC	2	2	0	4	3.2
Other	4	1	1	6	4.8
Total	82	28	15	125	100.0

Another factor related to ownership targeted the number of schools that reported being owned and operated by a company that owns additional schools. Results showed that out of 125 schools, 51.2% ($n = 64$) reported that they were not run by a company that owned or operated additional schools, while 48.8% ($n = 61$) of schools reported being owned by a company that owned and operated other schools (see Table 29). Results indicated the same trend across licensure categories.

Table 29

Ownership of Private Schools Licensed to Serve Students With Disabilities

			License				
			Private day	Residential	Residential also licensed to serve day students	All schools	All schools
			Frequency	Frequency	Frequency	Frequency	%
Ownership plus							
No	Count	43	14	7	64	51.2	
Yes	Count	39	14	8	61	48.8	

Another factor that provided information about schools is the question of whether or not a school is reported to be a nonprofit school. Respondents indicated that the majority of schools are nonprofit (57.6%, $n = 72$), with a smaller number (42.4%, $n = 53$) of schools reported to operate as a for profit school. Further analysis indicated that 64.6% ($n = 53$) of day schools, 35.7% ($n = 10$) of residential schools, and 60.0% ($n = 9$) residential schools licensed to serve day students reported being nonprofit (see Table 30).

Table 30

Nonprofit Status of Schools Licensed to Serve Students With Disabilities

		License			Total schools	
		Private day	Residential	Residential also licensed to serve day students	Frequency	%
		Frequency	Frequency	Frequency	Frequency	
Nonprofit						
No	Count	29	18	6	53	42.4
Yes	Count	53	10	9	72	57.6
Total		82	28	15	125	100

School Day and Year

Results of survey responses related to school hours per day and school days per year showed that the school hours varied across licensure levels, with the most school hours being offered by private day schools, followed by residential schools serving day students. Day school hours ranged from 5.50 to 7.25, with the average school day reported to be approximately 6 hours and 20 minutes. Residential schools were reported to offer the shortest school day, with a 5.50-hour school day being the most frequently reported, and the average school day falling short of a 6-hour day. Results indicated that residential schools that also serve day students offer similar hours as residential schools, with a range of 5.50 hours to 6.50 hours, with an average of 5.97 hours per school day (see Table 31).

Table 31

Length of School Day of Private Schools Licensed to Serve Students With Disabilities

		<div>License</div>	Residential also licensed to serve day students
	Private Day	Residential	
Hours per day:			
Mean	6.19	5.87	5.97
Minimum	5.50	4.50	5.50
Maximum	7.25	7.00	6.50
Mode	6.00	5.50	5.50

Further analysis indicated that of 125 schools, 108 (86.4%) reported school hours in the range of 5.50 to 6.50 hours per school day (see Table 32).

Table 32

Daily School Hours of Private Schools Licensed to Serve Students With Disabilities

	License			Residential also licensed to serve day students	All schools frequency
	Private day	Residential			
Hours per day:					
4.50	0	1	0	1	
5.50	15	15	6	36	
5.75	2	1	0	3	
6.00	26	2	4	32	
6.25	6	1	0	7	
6.50	20	5	5	30	
6.75	4	1	0	5	
7.00	7	2	0	9	
7.15	1	0	0	1	

Results of survey data indicated that 122 (96.8%) out of 125 schools reported the number of school days in the school year. The reported number of school days ranged from 165 to 247. All but three schools of this reporting group were above 180 school days. Three reported being below the 180-day mark ($n = 1$ at 165 days, 174 days, and 175 days). The remaining schools that did not report offering year-round programming listed total school days between 180 to 198 school days. Day schools reported offering the shortest length of school year, ranging from 165

to 247 days, with a mean of 190 days. Residential schools reported offering the longest school years, ranging from 180 to 247 days, with an average of 217 days. Residential schools licensed to serve day students fall in the middle, with a range of 180 to 226 days, with an average of 202 days. The most frequently reported length of school year by both day and residential schools was 180 days ($n = 47$ combined day and residential), with residential schools licensed to serve day students reporting in at 226 ($n = 5$). Data are shown in Table 33.

Table 33

Annual School Days for Schools Licensed to Serve Students With Disabilities

	Private day	Residential	Residential also licensed to serve day students
School days per year:			
Mean	190	217	202
Minimum	165	180	180
Maximum	247	257	226
Mode	180	180	226

In addition to the regular school day, many facilities reported offering special programs that expand services beyond the regular school day and year. Program options varied by type of program associated with schools, as well as by operational license. The most frequently offered program was Year-round (40.8%, $n = 51$). Forty-four (35.2%) reported offering Extended School Year (ESY) services, with the highest frequency noted in day schools (30.4%, $n = 38$), followed by residential schools (4%, $n = 5$) and residential schools licensed to serve day student (0.8%,

$n = 1$). Summer enrichment was reported to be offered by 41 schools (32.8%) with the highest frequency in day schools (22.4%, $n = 28$), followed by residential (8%, $n = 10$), and residential schools also licensed to serve day students (2.4%, $n = 3$). Only 6.5% ($n = 8$) of schools reported that they offered extended day programming and those were all day schools. Data are shown in Table 34.

Fifty-one (40.8%) schools reported offering year-round programming, with the number of days ranging from 207 to 257 school days. Nine schools identified themselves as year-round schools, but reported the number of schools days in the 180 to 185 range. Two schools reported both regular school year and year-round numbers. The researcher coded those schools as offering year-round school (see Table 35).

Accreditation

Private schools in Virginia have the option to pursue accreditation through a variety of accrediting bodies. The survey listed a number of options, including the Virginia Association of Independent Special Education Facilities (VAISEF), the Virginia Association of Independent Schools (VAIS), and the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools (SACS).

Sixty percent ($n = 75$) of schools reported that they were accredited schools. The majority of schools reported accreditation through VAISEF (45.6%, $n = 57$), or a combination of VAISEF and another accrediting agency such as VAISEF/SACS (5.6%, $n = 7$) and VAISEF/Other (1.6%, $n = 2$). VAIS and SACS are each reported to accredit 3.2% of schools. Less than 1% of schools identified Other as the accrediting body. According to survey results, 40% of schools are not currently accredited. Of that group, four schools (3.2%) reported not being accredited and 16 (13%) reported to not be pursuing accreditation. However, 30 schools reported being in the process of pursuing accreditation (24%). These data are shown in Table 36.

Table 34

Extended School Day and School Year Programming in Private Schools Licensed to Serve Students With Disabilities

		License			All schools frequency	All schools %
		Private day	Residential	Residential also licensed to serve day students		
Extended day	Yes	8	0	0	8	6.4
Extended school year	Yes	38	5	1	44	35.2
Year-round school	Yes	19	18	13	51	40.8
Summer enrichment	Yes	28	10	3	41	32.8

Table 35

Year-Round School

	Year round	
	No	Yes
School days per year:		
Mean	182	219
Minimum	165	180
Maximum	198	257
Mode	180	180

Table 36

Accreditation Status of Private Schools Licensed to Serve Students With Disabilities

	Private day	License		All schools frequency	All schools %
		Residential	Residential also licensed to serve day students		
Not accredited	1	3	0	4	3.2
VAISEF	38	14	5	57	45.6
VAIS	4	0	0	4	3.2
SACS	4	0	0	4	3.2
Other	1	0	0	1	0.8
Pursuing accreditation	18	5	7	30	24.0
Not pursuing accreditation	10	5	1	16	12.8
VAISEF/SACS	6	0	1	7	5.6
VAISEF and other	0	1	1	2	1.6
Total	82	28	15	125	100.0

Note: VAISEF = Virginia Association of Independent Special Education Facilities;

VAIS = Virginia Association of Independent Schools; SACS = Southern Association of Colleges and Schools

Facility

Respondents selected special use facility variables from a list of several options. Results indicated that the most frequently reported use of space options included: (a) outside play areas (77.6%, $n = 97$); (b) computer lab (66.4%, $n = 83$); (c) library/media centers (63.2%, $n = 79$); (d) multipurpose rooms (61.6%, $n = 77$); and (e) cafeterias (60.8%, $n = 76$). The lowest scored option was cosmetology lab (2.4%, $n = 3$). Seventeen schools (13.6%) indicated their school facility space allocation options not listed in the survey.

Results indicated that day schools offered the highest frequency of all options with the exception of swimming pools and woodworking shops. Residential schools and residential schools licensed to serve day students combined, reported having more swimming pools (9.6%, $n = 12$) than day schools (4.8%, $n = 6$) and more woodworking shops (8.0%, $n = 10$) than day schools (4.0%, $n = 5$). The data are shown in Table 37.

Table 37 also shows a breakdown of facility use by operational license. For example, 31.2% ($n = 39$) of all day and residential schools allocate space for art. Approximately 64% ($n = 25$) of those are found in day schools (see Table 37).

Programs

Core Academics

Results of an analysis of the core academic levels offered in day and residential schools showed that middle school core academics are offered in the most schools (84.0%, $n = 105$), while secondary courses are offered in 92 (73.6%) schools, with elementary school core academics offered in the smallest number of schools (71.2%, $n = 89$).

Results indicated that private day schools reported offering core elementary academics in the majority of schools (80.5%, $n = 66$), followed by middle school core academics (78.0%,

Table 37

Special Use Facility Allocation in Private Schools Licensed to Serve Students With Disabilities

	License							
	Private day		Residential		Residential also licensed to serve day students		All schools	
	Frequency	%	Frequency	%	Frequency	%	Frequency	Percent (%) of schools
Art room	25	64.1	10	25.6	4	10.3	39	31.2
Cafeteria	40	52.6	23	30.3	13	17.1	76	60.8
Computer lab	51	61.4	20	24.1	12	14.5	83	66.4
Cosmetology	1	33.3	1	33.3	1	33.3	3	2.4
Culinary arts-Kitchen	12	52.2	7	30.4	4	17.4	23	18.9
Greenhouse	7	46.7	5	33.3	3	20.0	15	12
Gym	41	61.2	19	28.4	7	10.4	67	53.6
Library media center	46	58.2	22	27.8	11	13.9	79	63.2
Multi-purpose room	55	71.4	10	13.0	12	15.6	77	61.6
Music room	16	66.7	5	20.8	3	12.5	24	19.2

Table 37 - continued

	License							
	Private day		Residential		Residential also licensed to serve day students		All schools	
	Frequency	%	Frequency	%	Frequency	%	Frequency	Percent (%) of schools
Outside play	61	62.9	24	24.7	12	12.4	97	77.6
Playground	39	70.9	8	14.5	8	14.5	55	44.0
Science lab	13	76.5	3	17.6	1	5.9	17	13.6
Swimming pool	6	33.3	8	44.4	4	22.2	18	14.4
Wood shop	5	33.3	7	46.7	3	20.0	15	12.0
Other facility	12	70.6	2	11.8	3	17.6	17	13.6

$n = 64$), and secondary core academics (67.1%, $n = 55$). Residential schools reported offering middle school core academics most frequently (92.9%, $n = 26$), followed by secondary core academics (85.7%, $n = 24$), and elementary core academics (46.4%, $n = 13$) being the least reported. Residential schools licensed to serve day students reported offering middle school core academics with the greatest frequency (100%, $n = 15$), followed by secondary core academics (86.7%, $n = 13$), and core elementary academics (66.7%, $n = 10$). Data are shown in Table 38.

Table 38

Core Academics Offered in Private Schools Licensed to Serve Students With Disabilities

	Private day		Residential		License Residential also licensed to serve day students		All schools	
	Frequency	%	Frequency	%	Frequency	%	Frequency	%
Elementary	66	74.2	13	14.6	10	11.2	89	71.2
Middle	64	61.0	26	24.8	15	14.3	105	84.0
Secondary	55	59.8	24	26.1	13	14.1	92	73.6

Electives

In addition to reporting core academic courses, survey respondents selected elective courses from a list of options. Results indicated that the five most frequently offered elective courses included: (a) health and physical education (84.8%, $n = 105$), (b) social skills (64.8%, $n = 80$), (c) life skills (56.8%, $n = 70$), remedial reading (52.0%, $n = 66$), and remedial math (43.2%, $n = 55$). Data are shown in Table 39.

Table 39

Elective Courses Offered in Private Schools Licensed to Serve Students With Disabilities

	License							
	Private day		Residential		Residential also licensed to serve day students		Total elective classes	
	Frequency	%	Frequency	%	Frequency	%	Frequency	Percent (%) of schools offering electives
Art	41	78.8	10	19.2	1	1.9	52	41.6
Business Ed.	3	37.5	1	12.5	4	50.0	8	6.4
Computer Ed.	39	78.0	3	6.0	8	16.0	50	40.8
Cosmetology	3	75.0	1	25.0	0	.0	4	3.2
Culinary arts	9	64.3	2	14.3	3	21.4	14	11.2
EFE	26	66.7	5	12.8	8	20.5	39	32.0
Family life	19	70.4	2	7.4	6	22.2	27	21.6
Foreign language	18	90.0	0	.0	2	10.0	20	16.0
Health/Physical Education	71	67.6	23	21.9	11	10.5	105	84.8
Horticulture	6	66.7	1	11.1	2	22.2	9	7.2

Table 39 - continued

	License							
	Private day		Residential		Residential also licensed to serve day students		Total elective classes	
	Frequency	%	Frequency	%	Frequency	%	Frequency	Percent (%) of schools offering electives
Life skills	50	71.4	12	17.1	8	11.4	70	56.8
Music	26	81.3	3	9.4	3	9.4	32	25.6
Personal development	24	68.6	4	11.4	7	20.0	35	28.8
Remedial math	37	67.3	11	20.0	7	12.7	55	43.2
Remedial reading	45	68.2	14	21.2	7	10.6	66	52.0
Service learning	9	81.8	2	18.2	0	.0	11	8.8
Social skills	63	78.7	8	10.0	9	11.2	80	64.8
Tutorials	10	55.6	1	5.6	7	38.9	18	14.4
Woodworking	8	50.0	4	25.0	4	25.0	16	12.8
Work experience group	33	73.3	9	20.0	3	6.7	45	36.8
Other	24	66.7	6	16.7	6	16.7	36	28.8

Table 39 also shows a breakdown of elective courses offered in schools by operational license. For example, 41.6% ($n = 52$) of schools offer art as an elective course. Out of those 52 schools, approximately 80% ($n = 41$) are in day schools.

Opportunities for Work and Job Training

In addition to core academics and elective classes offered in private day and residential schools, many schools reported providing on and off campus work and training opportunities. Survey respondents selected programs from a list of options. Results indicated that 92%, ($n = 115$) of all schools responding to the survey reported offering on campus work opportunities. Approximately 82% ($n = 102$) reported offering on campus vocational training opportunities. Off campus opportunities were reported less frequently, with off campus training reported in 45.6% ($n = 57$) schools and off campus work experiences reported at 48.8% ($n = 61$). Forty-two schools (33.6%) reported having volunteer opportunities for students built into the school programming (see Table 40).

The majority of schools (66.4%, $n = 83$) reported that they did not offer volunteer opportunities. However, approximately one third of schools (33.6%, $n = 42$) did offer volunteer service opportunities to students with disabilities (see Table 41).

Nonacademic, Extracurricular, and Student Support Services

Academic Tutoring

The majority of schools (51.2%, $n = 64$) reported that they did not offer any type of academic tutoring service within the school program. Of the schools reporting tutoring opportunities, the most frequently reported method was use of trained staff (28.0%, $n = 35$) and a combination of two or more options, such as staff and peer, staff and volunteer, or volunteer and

Table 40

Opportunities for Work/Job Training in Private Schools Licensed to Serve Students With Disabilities

	License							
	Private day		Residential		Residential also licensed to serve day students		All schools	
	Frequency	%	Frequency	%	Frequency	%	Frequency	%
On-campus/vocational training	63	61.8	20	19.6	19	18.6	102	81.6
On-campus/work	79	68.7	15	13.0	21	18.3	115	92.0
Off-campus/vocational training	48	84.2	3	5.3	6	10.5	57	45.6
Off-campus work	48	78.7	2	3.3	11	18.0	61	48.8

Table 41

Volunteer Opportunities for Students in Private Schools

Licensed to Serve Students With Disabilities

		Frequency	%
Valid	No	83	66.4
	Yes	42	33.6
Total		125q	100.0

peer (15.2%, $n = 19$). Community volunteers provided academic tutoring in 3.2% ($n = 4$) of schools and the use of peer tutors was reported in 2.4% ($n = 3$) of schools.

Further analysis indicated that 42.7% ($n = 35$) day schools reported providing academic tutoring services, followed by 57.1% ($n = 16$) residential schools, and 66.7% ($n = 10$) residential schools licensed to serve day students (see Table 42).

Table 42

Academic Tutoring Services Offered in Schools Licensed to Serve Students With Disabilities

	License			All schools Frequency	All schools %
	Private day	Residential	Residential also licensed to serve day students		
None	47	12	5	64	51.2
Community volunteers	3	1	0	4	3.2
Trained staff	22	10	3	35	28.0
Peer tutoring	1	1	1	3	2.4
Combination of two or more	9	4	6	19	15.2
Total	82	28	15	125	100

Food Services

Survey respondents selected the type of food service offered from a list of options. Results indicated that 11.2% ($n = 14$) of schools did not respond to the survey item. The majority of schools (43.2%, $n = 54$) reported the use of on-campus food services. Approximately 19% of schools ($n = 24$) reported that students provide their own lunch. Other schools (16.8%, $n = 21$) reported that the school contracts with a private vendor for food services. In 8% of schools ($n =$

10), food was provided by the LEA. The smallest reporting group (1.6%, $n = 2$) reported that lunches were available through both a private vendor and the LEA.

Further analysis indicated that day schools provided the most varied methods of providing food services for students, with 28.0% ($n = 23$) of schools showing that students provided their own lunch, 25.6% ($n = 21$) of schools provide on campus food services, and 20.7% ($n = 17$) reported using a private vendor. Ten schools (12.2%) reported that the LEA supplies lunch, and 2.4% ($n = 2$) of schools reported a combination of LEA and student-provided lunch. Seventy-five percent ($n = 21$) residential schools reported that on campus food services were provided, and 7% ($n = 2$) reported that they used the services of a private vendor. Residential schools licensed to serve day students listed that they predominantly used on campus food services (80%, $n = 12$). Two schools (13.3%) reported using a private vendor and 6.7% ($n = 1$) reported that students provide their own lunches (see Table 43).

Athletics

Schools selected the type of athletic programs offered by the school from a list of options. Results indicated that 86 schools (68.8%) reported that they did not offer any type of athletic program. Of the 39 schools that reported offering athletics as a part of the overall school program, 13.6% ($n = 17$), reported that league sports were offered, while 12.8% ($n = 16$) schools identified that intramural sports activities. Approximately 5% of schools ($n = 6$) reported offering both intramural and league sports. Further analysis indicated that of the day schools offering athletic programs, the most frequently reported option was league sports (52.3%, $n = 11$), followed by intramurals (28.6%, $n = 6$). Four day schools (19.0%) reported offering both options. Residential schools most frequently reported offering intramural sports (70.0%, $n = 7$) followed by league sports (20.0%, $n = 2$).

Table 43

Food Services Offered in Schools Licensed to Serve Students With Disabilities

	License			All schools frequency	All schools %
	Private day	Residential	Residential also licensed to serve day students		
No food service reported	9	5	0	14	11.2
On-campus	21	21	12	54	43.2
Private vendor	17	2	2	21	16.8
Students provide lunch	23	0	1	24	19.2
Lunch provided by LEA	10	0	0	10	8
Private vendor and provided by LEA	2	0	0	2	1.6
Total	82	28	15	125	100

One school (10.0%) reported offering both options. Residential schools licensed to serve day students most frequently reported offering league sports (50.0%, $n = 4$), followed by intramurals (37.5%, $n = 3$). One school (12.5%) reported offering both options (see Table 44).

Table 44

Athletic Programs Offered in Private Schools Licensed to Serve Students With Disabilities

	License			All schools frequency	All schools %
	Private day	Residential	Residential also licensed to serve day students		
None	61	18	7	86	68.8
Intramurals	6	7	3	16	12.8
League sports	11	2	4	17	13.6
Intramurals and league sports.	4	1	1	6	4.8
Total	82	28	15	125	100

Transportation Services

Survey respondents were asked to indicate whether or not they provided transportation services between home and school. Results indicated that the majority of schools (84.8% $n = 106$) reported that they did not offer transportation services between home and school.

Approximately 18% ($n = 15$) day schools reported offering this service. Only 10% ($n = 3$) of residential schools offered transportation services, and only one residential school licensed to serve day students (6.7%) reported providing transportation services (see Table 45).

Table 45

Transportation Services Offered by Private Schools Licensed to Serve Students With Disabilities

	License			All schools frequency	All schools %
	Private day	Residential	Residential also licensed to serve day students		
Transportation:					
No	67	25	14	106	84.8
Yes	15	3	1	19	15.2
Total	82	28	15	125	100

Behavior Management

Survey respondents indicated the name of a specific behavior management program/protocol used in the school setting from a list of options. Of 125 schools, approximately 7% ($n = 9$) did not indicate that a specific program was followed. Of the schools that reported a specific program, the most frequently named programs were (a) MANDT (25.6%, $n = 32$); (b) Nonviolent Physical Crisis Intervention (17.6%, $n = 22$); (c) Therapeutic Options of Virginia (14.4%, $n = 18$) and (d) Handle with Care (13.6%, $n = 17$).

Results also indicated that day schools most frequently reported using MANDT techniques (29.3%, $n = 24$), residential schools Handle with Care (28.6%, $n = 8$) and residential schools licensed to serve day students Nonviolent Physical Crisis Intervention (46.7%, $n = 7$). Data are shown in Table 46.

In addition to identifying a specific behavior management program, schools selected behavior management interventions from a list of options. Results indicated that 94.4% ($n = 118$) of schools used verbal de-escalation techniques more frequently than other interventions. Approximately 77% ($n = 96$) of schools reported using time out in a separate space and 74.4% ($n = 93$) reported using time out in the classroom. The least reported option was Saturday School, reported to be used by only 6.4% ($n = 8$) of schools.

Further analysis revealed differences between day and residential schools that reported using specific strategies. For example, 67.1% ($n = 55$) of day schools reported using physical restraints. Approximately 95% ($n = 21$) residential schools reported using physical restraints. Over 93% ($n = 14$) residential schools licensed to serve day students reporting using physical restraints as a behavior management intervention (see Table 47)

Table 46

Behavior Management Programs in Private Schools Licensed to Serve Students With Disabilities

	Private day	Residential	License Residential also licensed to serve day students	All schools frequency	All schools %
No specific program reported	8	1	0	9	7.2
Comprehensive Crisis Management	4	0	0	4	3.2
Crisis Wave	2	0	0	2	1.6
Handle With Care	8	8	1	17	13.6
MANDT	24	4	4	32	25.6
Nonviolent Physical Crisis Intervention	10	5	7	22	17.6
Professional Crisis Management	1	0	0	1	0.8
Rights Respond	2	0	0	2	1.6
Satori Alternatives to Managing Aggression	1	0	0	1	0.8
Therapeutic Crisis Intervention	1	1	1	3	2.4
Therapeutic Options of Virginia (TOVA)	13	3	2	18	14.4

Table 46 - continued

			License		
	Private day	Residential	Residential also licensed to serve day students	All schools frequency	All schools %
Other	8	3	0	11	8.8
Handle With Care and Therapeutic Crisis Intervention	0	2	0	2	1.6
Nonviolent Physical Crisis Intervention and Therapeutic Crisis Intervention	0	1	0	1	0.8
Total	82	28	15	125	100

Table 47

Behavioral Interventions in Private Schools Licensed to Serve Students With Disabilities

	Private day	Residential	License Residential also licensed to serve day students	All schools frequency	All schools %
Verbal de-escalation	77	25	15	118	94.4
Time out classroom	61	19	12	93	74.4
Time out separate space	62	21	13	96	76.8
Seclusion open door	23	4	0	27	21.6
Seclusion closed door	19	3	1	23	18.4
Delayed dismissal	21	1	6	28	22.4
Saturday school	4	0	4	8	6.4
In school suspension	38	6	6	50	40.0
Out of school suspension	46	3	6	55	44.4
Safety holds	37	16	5	58	46.4
Physical restraint	55	20	14	90	72.0

Schools reported offering three levels of core academics. As noted previously in Table 38, 71.2% ($n = 89$) of schools reported offering elementary core academics, 84.0% ($n = 105$) offered middle level core academics, and 73.6% ($n = 92$) offered secondary level core academics.

Results indicated that many interventions such as verbal de-escalation, time out, and delayed dismissal were used with similar frequency across levels of schools offering core academic elementary, middle, and secondary instructional levels. Differences were noted in interventions that involved suspension from school. For example, schools offering core elementary curriculum used in school suspension less frequently (37.1%, $n = 33$) than schools offering middle school core curriculum (45.7%, $n = 48$) and schools offering secondary (50.0%, $n = 46$) core curriculum (see Table 48).

Counseling and Support Services

Survey respondents selected specific counseling and other student support services from a list of options. Results indicated that out of 125 schools, the most frequently reported services offered by schools included: (a) individual counseling (68.0%, $n = 84$) and group counseling (58.4%, $n = 73$). The least reported service offered in schools was mentoring (9.6%, $n = 12$).

Results of Table 49 also highlight services across school operational licensure. For example, 80.0% ($n = 20$) of board certified behavior analysts were reported to serve at the day school level, 16.0% ($n = 4$) at the residential level, and 4.0 ($n = 1$) in residential schools licensed to serve day students.

Further analysis indicated services and supports available in schools reporting elementary, middle, and secondary core curriculum options. Results indicated that when looking at the same variable as above, the use of a board certified behavior analyst was a service offered

Table 48

*Behavior Interventions Reported by Instructional Levels Offered in Private Schools**Licensed to Serve Students With Disabilities*

		Core elementary		Core middle school		Core secondary	
		Frequency	%	Frequency	%	Frequency	%
Verbal de-escalation	No	5	5.6	6	5.7	4	4.3
	Yes	84	94.4	99	94.3	88	95.7
Time out classroom	No	19	21.3	22	21.0	21	22.8
	Yes	70	78.7	83	79.0	71	77.2
Time out separate space	No	20	22.5	20	19.0	13	14.1
	Yes	69	77.5	85	81.0	79	85.9
Seclusion open door	No	67	75.3	80	76.2	67	72.8
	Yes	22	27.7	25	23.8	25	27.2
Seclusion closed door	No	68	76.4	84	80.0	71	77.2
	Yes	21	23.6	21	20.0	21	22.8
Delayed dismissal	No	68	76.4	80	76.2	69	75.0
	Yes	21	23.6	25	23.8	23	25.0
Saturday school	No	83	93.3	97	92.4	84	91.3
	Yes	6	6.7	8	7.6	8	8.7
In school suspension	No	56	62.9	57	54.3	46	50.0
	Yes	33	37.1	48	45.7	46	50.0
Out of school suspension	No	54	60.7	53	50.5	42	45.7
	Yes	35	39.3	52	49.5	50	54.3

Table 48 - continued

		Core elementary		Core middle school		Core secondary	
		Frequency	%	Frequency	%	Frequency	%
Safety holds	No	46	51.7	55	52.4	50	54.3
	Yes	43	48.3	50	47.6	42	45.7
Physical restraint	No	25	28.1	29	27.6	23	25.0
	Yes	64	71.9	76	72.4	69	75.0

Table 49

Counseling and Student Support Services Offered in Private Schools Licensed to Serve Students With Disabilities

	License							
	Private day		Residential		Residential also licensed to serve day students		All schools Reported Services	
	Frequency	%	Frequency	%	Frequency	%	Frequency	%
LRE transition	19	67.9	1	3.6	8	28.6	28	22.4
Board certified behavior analyst	20	80.0	4	16.0	1	4.0	25	20.0
Family counseling	24	43.6	20	36.4	11	20.0	55	44.8
Group counseling	43	58.9	17	23.3	13	17.8	73	58.4
Individual counseling	52	61.9	18	21.4	14	16.7	84	68.0
Mentoring	5	41.7	3	25.0	4	33.3	12	9.6
Social skills training	34	68.0	8	16.0	8	16.0	50	40.0
Substance abuse counseling	9	27.3	15	45.5	9	27.3	33	26.4
Transition specialist	15	78.9	2	10.5	2	10.5	19	15.2

more frequently in schools offering elementary core curriculum ($n = 22$), than middle ($n = 15$) and secondary ($n = 12$). Data are shown in Table 50.

Table 50

Counseling and Student Support Services by Academic Level

		Core elementary	Core middle school	Core secondary
		Frequency	Frequency	Frequency
LRE transition	No	68	79	72
	Yes	21	26	20
Board certified behavior analyst	No	67	90	80
	Yes	22	15	12
Family counseling	No	54	54	46
	Yes	35	51	46
Group counseling	No	42	34	24
	Yes	47	71	68
Individual counseling	No	32	26	20
	Yes	57	79	72
Mentoring	No	81	93	82
	Yes	8	12	10
Social skills training	No	51	59	49
	Yes	38	46	43
Substance abuse counseling	No	75	74	60
	Yes	14	31	32
Transition specialist	No	75	90	79
	Yes	14	15	13

Summary

The purpose of this study was to describe programs and services offered in private special education schools serving publicly placed students with disabilities in the Commonwealth of Virginia. This review of secondary data focused on the results of the Virginia Department of Education, Private Schools for Students with Disabilities 2010 Annual Survey.

The highest percentage of private schools serving students with disabilities is day schools. The most frequently reported primary disability classifications served were Emotional Disability, Other Health Impaired, and Autism. The mean age for youngest students is 8 years old, while the mean age of oldest students served is 17 years old.

The majority of private schools serving students with disabilities tend to be funded by local Family Assessment and Planning Teams. Private schools are most frequently owned and operated by corporations. Day schools reported the longest school days and residential schools reported having the longest school years. The majority of accredited private schools are accredited by the Virginia Association of Special Education Facilities.

Day schools offer a higher percentage of core elementary academics, while residential schools reported higher frequencies of middle and secondary core academic courses being offered. Elective classes most frequently offered in private schools are health/physical education, life skills, and social skills. Vocational opportunities are available in both day and residential schools. Academic tutoring is most frequently available in a residential setting. While residential schools most frequently report to use on-campus food services, day schools provide food services through a variety of methods. The majority of schools do not offer athletic programs; those that do offer an almost equal mix of league sports and intramurals. The majority of schools do not provide transportation services for their students to and from school.

The majority of schools follow specialized behavior management programs, with day schools most frequently using Mandt techniques, residential schools using the Handle with Care program, and residential schools licensed to serve day students using the Nonviolent Physical Crisis Intervention program. The most frequently reported behavior interventions used in schools were Verbal De-escalation, Time Out, and Physical Restraint. Student counseling services most frequently included individual and group counseling. Board certified behavior analysts were most frequently offered in a day school setting. Few schools offer mentoring and substance abuse services.

A comprehensive profile of private schools licensed to serve students with disabilities can be developed from this information. Results of this current study describing programs and services offered in private special education schools serving publicly placed students with disabilities in the Commonwealth of Virginia may have policy implications related to program development, accreditation, licensure, and regulatory issues for private special education schools operating in the Commonwealth of Virginia.

CHAPTER 5: CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The majority of students with disabilities in the Commonwealth of Virginia are served in the public school setting in the school system of residence. However, students with significant disabilities, or those requiring specialized services, supports, or environments may be served in alternative settings. When IEP teams determine that students with disabilities are unable to be served in public school settings or required a more restrictive setting, students may be referred to a private day or residential school for specialized services.

This trend of privatization of special education services in Virginia is documented by state-wide student census of students participating in educational programs in nonpublic schools running well over 4,000. Expenditures related to tuition and service costs exceed \$120,000,000 annually. New schools apply for licensure every year. These factors, along with gaps of information found in literature, supported the need for a comprehensive review of private schools licensed to serve students with disabilities in the Commonwealth of Virginia. If public schools are unable to serve the needs of students with significant disabilities, it is essential that placing and funding agencies have sufficient information to assist in the decision-making process. Detailed information was needed to address where and how publicly placed students with disabilities are served in private day and residential schools in Virginia.

In fall 2010, the Virginia Department of Education Office of Federal Program Monitoring expanded its annual survey, The Virginia Department of Education: Private Schools for Students with Disabilities 2010 Annual Survey, focusing on academic and nonacademic student supports,

as well as increased behavior management and counseling services. The purpose of this study was to describe programs and services offered in private special education schools serving publicly placed students with disabilities in private special education schools in the Commonwealth of Virginia. A quantitative analysis of this secondary data source allowed the researcher to develop a comprehensive profile of private day and residential schools serving students with disabilities. Based on the findings of this study, the body of knowledge available to local and state agencies has increased.

Findings and Interpretations

Student Demographics

Student demographic information was reported by age and disability classification. The most frequently reported primary disability classifications served in private day and residential schools were Emotional Disability, Other Health Impaired, and Autism. However, the predominance of certain disability categories differs across day schools, residential schools, and residential schools licensed to serve day students.

Results indicated that schools serve students age 2 to 22. It is important to note that survey design and possible misunderstanding on the part of the respondents led to inconsistent data reporting. Although attempts were made to cross-check variables such as census and total enrollment, discrepancies were noted.

Knowing the predominance of disability categories of students attending private schools may assist school divisions in the development of specialized programs, thus possibly decreasing a need for out of district placements. This information provides private schools with statewide statistics of disability classifications of students requiring services outside of the public schools setting, thus affording private schools an opportunity to re-evaluate current program offerings.

School Profiles

Funding Source

The majority of private schools reported funding by local Family Assessment and Planning Teams (FAPT). Daily tuition rates ranged from \$0-to over \$400.00. Approximately 88% of schools reported charging in the \$0 to \$249.00 range. The majority of private schools reported being owned by a corporation and being run as nonprofits. Daily tuition cost, organizational make-up, and nonprofit status of schools are important factors that local teams should be aware of. Less than half of schools reported being a for-profit school.

There are implications for various agencies at the local and state levels. Localities working within tight budget constraints may look closely at tuition rates of schools offering similar programs and services. Local and state placing and funding agencies may wish to consider whether or not tax dollars should be used to fund student placements in private schools that are run by for-profit corporations.

School Day and Calendar Year

School days vary across licensure levels, within the 5.50 to 7.25 hour per day range, all within the 5.5 hour minimum school day requirement. Calendar days vary across licensure levels, ranging from 165 to 247, as compared with the 180 required school days, with the higher numbers reflecting year-round programming. Six percent of schools reported offering Extended Day programs, while over 30% of schools reported offering Extended School Year (ESY), Year-Round School, and Summer Enrichment. School day and calendar year information may useful to LEA staff responsible for transportation services, monitoring correct courses and clock hours for students in nonpublic schools.

Results indicated that although all schools are licensed, fifty are not accredited. A number of schools reported being in the process of seeking accreditation. Of the schools reporting to be accredited or pursuing accreditation, the majority cited the Virginia Association of Special Education Facilities (VAISEF) as the accrediting body.

There are several issues related to accreditation status that required further examination. For example, each LEA must consider accepting credits for student coursework completed in a nonaccredited school. This may impact the awarding of credits for high school diplomas. An implication for policy development at the state level may relate to use of tax dollars funding student placements in schools that are not accredited.

Facility

Results indicate that the allocation of space varied by school and level of operational license. Some schools offered computer labs and library media centers, while others offered gyms and greenhouses. Day schools offered options that residential schools did not, and residential schools used space differently than day schools.

Results of this study may have implications for private schools. Schools may wish to review how other schools allocate space and may consider making changes in their own schools. Space may be at a premium, but with creative planning, schools may use an innovative approach to use a space to offer varied programs and services. Allocation of space may also be of interest to VDOE monitoring specialists conducting school licensure reviews and VAISEF accreditation teams conducting site visits.

Programs

Schools reported offering core elementary, middle and secondary courses in English, mathematics, history, and science. Day schools reported offering a higher percentage of core

elementary academics, while residential schools reported higher frequencies of middle and secondary core academic courses. Schools most frequently reported offering the following elective courses: health/physical education, life skills, and social skills options. Day and residential schools reported offering both on campus and off campus work and job training opportunities within the school day. This information may be helpful to LEA and private schools staff when developing course schedules and planning for student participation in state and district wide assessments.

A review of results identified implications for VDOE, LEAs and private schools. VDOE staff may consider redesigning the survey to address factors such as functional academics, pre-school education, and General Educational Development (GED) certificate. This information may assist in providing more fine-tuned data.

Another consideration relates to the length of time students are enrolled in residential treatment centers for noneducational reasons, generally ranging from acute stays of 3 days up to 18 months for full completion of specialized programs. Results indicated limited options of elective courses which may impact students earning high school graduation credits. Private schools may benefit from considering alternative curricula and instruction, such as distance learning, independent study, and creative use of space and staffing resources.

Services

Nonacademic, Extracurricular, and Student Support Services

Results indicated differences across licensure levels in the three nonacademic and student support service targets. Academic tutoring was most frequently available in a residential setting. Day schools reported following the most varied food service models, while the majority of residential schools reported using on campus food services. A minority of schools reported

offering athletic programs. Of those schools, an almost equal mix of league sports and intramurals was identified. The majority of schools did not report offering transportation services for their students to and from school.

Private schools may consider offering academic tutoring services or tutorial classes to assist students in preparation for statewide assessments, such as the Standards of Learning Assessments, especially for students who are either working below grade level or for students who have not successfully passed assessments required for high school graduation.

Behavior Management Programs and Interventions

With over 1400 students with an Emotional Disability served in Virginia private schools, it is essential to take a closer look at the specialized programs and interventions that are used. It is interesting to note that a majority of private schools reported following specialized behavior management programs, with day schools most frequently using MANDT behavior management techniques, residential schools using the Handle with Care program, and residential schools licensed to serve day students using the Nonviolent Physical Crisis Intervention program.

In addition to specialized programs or behavior management protocols, school staff reported using a variety of behavior management interventions. The most frequently reported behavior interventions used in schools were Verbal De-escalation, Time Out, and Physical Restraint. Few schools reported using the interventions of Saturday school, delayed dismissal, or seclusion-closed door.

The use of behavior management programs, protocols, and interventions require training, consistent implementation, documentation and data management. For students placed in private programs because of challenging behaviors, the behavior management program followed and interventions implemented could be key factors in addressing student needs.

Counseling Services

Many schools reported offering specialized services and staff, including counseling, board certified behavior analysts and transition supports. Schools identifying services most frequently indicated offering individual and group counseling. A number of day schools reported that board certified behavior analysts were part of the supports available in the school program. Few schools reported offering mentoring and substance abuse services.

The frequency and type of specialized services offered in private schools have implications for serving, placing, funding and monitoring agencies. If a student is placed in a program because of negative behaviors, it is important to look closely at the resources available in the private school. It is important to look at the characteristics, programs, services, and interventions that schools offer that public schools do not. What can private schools offer that public schools do not or cannot offer? What makes a private school the better option?

Contributions and Implications

The model used in this study, a quantitative study of a secondary data source, contributes to the research community. Results provided a profile of private special education day and residential schools serving publicly placed students with disabilities. This information may be compared with currently available through VDOE, such as student disability census, and OCS, such as census and expenditures for students in private placements. The results of this study are also relevant to practitioners in the field of education and participating agency representatives, such as local DSS and CBS workers. Results indicated that schools reporting to be accredited cited VAISEF as the primary accrediting body. Future research may address this organization and explore its function and role in the development of programs and services in nonpublic schools.

Survey results highlighted above form a basic framework of private schools licensed to serve students with disabilities in the Commonwealth of Virginia. Student demographic information is reported. Programs and services are identified. The literature review in Chapter 2 identified numerous gaps in information that this study attempted to fill. The results presented in this study enhance information that is currently available related to private schools. This framework serves as base from which future research, topics of discussion, and recommendations can be launched.

Recommendations

Results of this secondary data review identified details about the status of private schools, and identified implications for private schools, LEAs, and state and local agencies, as outlined below.

Survey Administration and Results

To increase data accuracy and efficient access to survey data, VDOE may consider using a web-based tool that is programmed with prompts and data-cross checks. This would increase the likelihood that responses are entered and that data are consistently reported, thus increasing accuracy and efficient transfer of responses into data sets. Stressing the importance of accountability in reporting and increasing transparency of data available to the community at large, VDOE may consider informing schools that both aggregate and disaggregate data obtained from future surveys would be published on the website in the form of state-wide and individual school data profiles.

VDOE currently publishes an on-line catalog of private day and residential schools that offers limited information about day and residential schools. VDOE may consider enhancing this

publication by adding a link to each school's annual survey, thus affording any interested parent, LEA, or participating local or state agency an opportunity to review individual school data.

Compilation and Sharing of School Profiles

In order to compile accurate, comprehensive reports of comprehensive state-wide and individual school data related to services for youth in Virginia, it would be helpful to coordinate reporting procedures by using uniform identifiers, such as the Student Test Identification (STI) number, county code numbers, and private school identification numbers. This coordination may allow for easy access to data reports across participating agencies, including the Office of Comprehensive Services, the Department of Social Services, Community Service Boards, and local FAPT/CPMT teams.

The Virginia Commission on Youth periodically reports to the Governor's office on the state of alternative education in the Commonwealth of Virginia. This group may be interested in replicating this practice of gathering and reporting data to address the status of private schools licensed to serve publicly placed students with disabilities in the Commonwealth of Virginia.

Interagency Collaboration

To form a collaborative public-private partnership to serve students with disabilities enrolled in private schools licensed to serve publicly placed students, VAISEF board members may wish to expand their leadership and accreditation teams of private school representatives to include representatives of LEAs and participating agencies. The inclusion of an LEA or agency representative adds depth to the team by adding varied experience, perspective, and knowledge of target populations, programs, and services.

Local school divisions are held responsible for the placement and development of programs and services for students with disabilities when they are publicly placed in a private

school. Local LEA representatives, participating agencies, and inter-agency councils should be encouraged to actively monitor service delivery to ensure that local, state, and federal regulations are followed. For example, special education directors should provide guidance to staff in the identification and monitoring of students placed in residential setting by another agency, such as DSS, ensuring that regulations are followed.

Private schools are held accountable to placing and monitoring agencies for contracted services. Private school staff should work with LEA, SEA and participating agency representatives to document the delivery of services, academic achievement, participation in state-wide assessment, student behavior, and student progress toward achieving goals and objectives outlined in student IEPs.

Use and Importance

Data obtained from this survey can be useful to parents of students with disabilities who are considering placing their child in a private day or residential school setting. For example, a parent of a child with autism can look up nearby private schools and review profiles of schools serving students with autism to see if academic and support services needed by the child are provided at the facility.

Local school districts, including special education directors, administrators, special education advisory councils, and superintendents, may find this data useful for program development. For example, if a school division has identified twenty students with an emotional disability participating in private programs outside of the home community, a school superintendent or special education director may wish to compare programs, costs, and services to determine the viability of developing programs to serve these students within the school division.

Privatization

If the trend of privatizing special education continues, a number of issues are raised that have legislative and regulatory implications, such as the use of tax dollars to fund for-profit and non-accredited schools, school accountability for student achievement and programming, and transparency of data reporting.

Further Research

A review of literature indicated the need for a systematic study of services offered in private schools. This study responded to that request by providing a detailed profile of licensed schools currently serving students in Virginia. Review of results and implications lead to options for further review. For example, further research related to length of stay and student outcomes could provide solid information to assist with transition planning to both the LRE and for postsecondary employment, education, and training options for students graduating from high school. The current study found that schools varied in the type of core academic and elective courses offered. A study that focuses on pre-vocational education and training opportunities may provide information for transition planning for students aging out of services.

Research related to private school accountability and reporting measures is essential. Staff from public school divisions must have the cooperation of private schools staff data collection and reporting, such as school attendance, student progress toward achieving the goals and objectives of the IEP, preparation for state and district wide assessments, and the provision of related services. A study of staffing requirements, staffing practices, professional development and teacher retention in private schools licensed to serve students with disabilities would provide additional data related to private school programming and services.

Conclusions

The phenomenon of private school educational services has been addressed in literature in broad themes related in part to private special education schools, including mental health, private nonsectarian and religious schools, alternative education, and private special education schools. Although research targeting nonpublic education has increased in the last decade, gaps in literature are noted. The goal of this research project was to meet the need for increased information by developing a comprehensive profile of information related to student, school, programming, and services offered in private day and residential schools serving students with disabilities in the Commonwealth of Virginia.

The researcher conducted a quantitative analysis of a secondary data source, the Virginia Department of Education: Private Schools for Students with Disabilities 2010 Annual Survey, which was completed by 125 private day and residential schools. Results of data analysis suggest that all five research questions outlined in Chapter 1 were answered with great detail. Survey results add to the depth of information currently available through the two state level agencies most closely associated with nonpublic schools, the Virginia Department of Education and the Virginia Office of Comprehensive Services.

Chapter 5 concludes this research study. The findings indicated detailed information regarding student demographics, school characteristics, and specific programs and services in schools designed to uniquely serve students with disabilities enrolled in their schools. Frequencies and percentages were reported, and comparisons made across licensure levels of day and residential schools. Results of this study may have policy implications related to program development, accreditation, licensure, and regulatory issues for private special education schools operating in the Commonwealth of Virginia.

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Appendix A

Regulations and Policy Guidance Documents Impacting Virginia Students

Year	Name of Regulation and Policy Document
1965	Congress adds Title VI to the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 creating a Bureau of Education for the Handicapped (this bureau today is called the Office of Special Education Programs – OSEP).
1972	Two significant supreme court decisions (PARC v. Pennsylvania (1972) and Mills V. D.C. (1972) apply the equal protection argument to students with disabilities
1973	Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 is enacted into statute. This national law protects qualified individuals from discrimination based on their disability.
1974	The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) is enacted.
1975	The Education for All Handicapped Children Act (EAHCA) is enacted. This was also known as P.L. 94-142. Today we know this law as the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA).
1977	The final federal regulations of EACHA are released.
1986	The EAHCA is amended with the addition of the Handicapped Children's Protection Act.
1990	P.L. 101-336: The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) is enacted.
1990	The EAHCA is amended and is now called the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA).
1997	IDEA Reauthorized
2001	P.L. 107-110: No Child Left Behind (NCLB) is enacted.
2001	Code of Virginia §22.5211 – The Comprehensive Services Act
2002	Regulations Governing the Operation of Private Day Schools in Virginia (8VAC20-670)
2004	IDEA Reauthorized – The Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act (IDEIA, IDEA'04).
2004	Guidelines for Instruction-Based Assessments
2004	Guidelines for the Management of the Student's Scholastic Record in the Public Schools of Virginia
2006	The U.S. Department of Education (ED) published in the Federal Register on August 14, 2006, the final regulations to implement the IDEA 2004 and became effective on October 13, 2006.
2010	Regulations Governing Special Education Programs for Children with Disabilities in Virginia (8VAC 20-81)

Note. Format and contents revised for this paper from previous work (Peterson, 2007).

Appendix B

Office of Comprehensive Services Technical Assistance Regions

Central Region

Counties: Amelia, Caroline, Charles City, Chesterfield/Colonial Heights, Cumberland, Dinwiddie, Essex, Fluvanna, Goochland, Hanover, Henrico, King & Queen, King William, Louisa, Nottoway, Powhatan, Prince George, Spotsylvania
Cities: Fredericksburg, Hopewell, Petersburg, Richmond

Northern Region

Counties: Arlington City/County, Clarke, Culpeper, Fairfax, Fauquier, Frederick, Greene, King George, Loudon, Madison, New Kent, Orange, Page, Prince William, Rappahannock, Rockingham, Stafford, Shenandoah, Warren
Cities: Alexandria City, Fairfax/Falls Church, Harrisonburg, Manassas City, Manassas Park, Winchester

Southwestern Region

Counties: Bland, Buchanan, Carroll, Craig, Dickenson, Floyd, Franklin, Giles, Grayson, Lee, Martinsville/Henry/Patrick, Montgomery, Pulaski, Roanoke, Russell, Scott, Smyth, Tazewell, Washington, Wise, Wythe
Cities: Bristol, Galax, Norton, Radford, Roanoke, Salem

Tidewater Region

Counties: Accomack, Brunswick, Gloucester, Greenville, Isle of Wight, James City, Lancaster, Matthews, Middlesex, Northampton, Northumberland, Richmond, Southampton, Surry, Sussex, Westmoreland, York
Cities: Chesapeake, Emporia, Franklin, Hampton, Newport News, Norfolk, Poquoson, Portsmouth, Suffolk, Virginia Beach, Williamsburg

Western Region

Counties: Albemarle, Allegheny/Covington, Amherst, Appomattox, Augusta/Staunton/Waynesboro, Bath, Bedford City/County, Botetourt, Buckingham, Buena Vista, Campbell, Charlotte, Halifax, Highland, Lunenburg, Mecklenburg, Nelson, Rockbridge/Lexington, Prince Edward
Cities: Charlottesville, Danville/Pittsylvania, Lynchburg

Appendix C



Virginia Department of Education: Private Schools for Students with Disabilities 2010 Annual Survey

SECTION 1 SCHOOL AND STUDENT DEMOGRAPHIC INFORMATION

School

Name _____

Physical Address (Street

Address) _____

(City) _____ (State) _____ (Zip Code) _____

Telephone Number (area code) _____ Fax (area code) _____

Name of person completing this form: _____ Title _____

E-mail Address _____

Web page address: _____

Licensure

☐ Day School Only ☐ Residential School Only ☐ Residential with licensure approval to serve day students

Ownership (list Name and address of entity, attach list of all members and officers

__Sole Proprietorship __Partnership __Corporation __Other

Is this school nonprofit (501C3)? ☐ Yes ☐ No

Does the owner currently operate other schools for students with disabilities? ☐ Yes ☐ No

If yes, please list name and physical address for each. Attach additional sheet, if needed.

Tuition

The same daily rate is charged for all students Rate _____

Daily rates vary per service or disability classification

(List) _____

School's Census

What was the school's census as of December 1, 2010? _____

Number census increased _____ or number census decreased _____ from December 1, 2009.

Age range of students enrolled in school on December 1, 2010 _____ to _____

School's Capacity

Maximum licensed capacity of the school? _____

Have you applied for an increase in capacity in the last 12 months. ☐ Yes ☐ No

Length of School Day/Year

Number of hours per school day? _____ Average hours per week? _____

Number of school days in the 2010-2011 school year? _____

Please check the programs offered by your school.

☐ Extended Day ☐ Extended Year ☐ Year-Round ☐ Summer Enrichment

Accreditation Status

- ☐ VAISEF ☐ VAIS ☐ SACS ☐ Other, *please list* _____
☐ Not pursuing accreditation ☐ Currently pursuing

Facility

Please check all that apply to your facility/school campus.

- ☐ Art Room ☐ Cafeteria ☐ Computer Lab ☐ Cosmetology Lab
☐ Culinary Arts Kitchen ☐ Greenhouse ☐ Gymnasium ☐ Library/Media Center
☐ Multi-Purpose Room ☐ Music Room ☐ Outside Play Area ☐ Playground
☐ Science Lab ☐ Swimming Pool ☐ Woodworking ☐ Other (list)

Have there been any modifications or expansions to the facility in the last year? ☐ Yes ☐ No

Disability Classifications

Have the categories of students with disabilities served by your school changed in the last 12 months? ☐ Yes ☐ No

Disability categories are those determined by the LEA for Special Education Eligibility

Day Students Only - Using primary disability of students, please complete table(s) as of December 1, 2010.

Disability Category	# of Virginia Public Pay by LEA	# of Virginia Public Pay by FAPT/CPMT	# of Private Pay	# of Court Ordered	# of Social Services Placements	# of Other States	Total for a Disability Category
Autism							
Deaf-Blindness							
Deafness							
Developmental Delay							
Emotional Disability							
Hearing Impairment							
Intellectual Disability							
Multiple Disabilities							
Orthopedic Impairment							
Other Health Impairment							
Specific Learning Disability							
Speech-Language Impairment							
Traumatic Brain Injury							
Visual Impairment Including Blindness							
Sub-Total of Students with Disabilities							
Students without Disabilities							
Total # of Day Students							

Residential Students Only - Using primary disability of students, please complete table(s) as of December 1, 2010.

Disability Category	# of Virginia Public Pay by LEA	# of Virginia Public Pay by FAPT/CPMT	# of Private Pay	# of Court Ordered	# of Social Services Placements	# of Other States	Total for a Disability Category
Autism							
Deaf-Blindness							
Deafness							
Developmental Delay							
Emotional Disability							
Hearing Impairment							
Intellectual Disability							
Multiple Disabilities							
Orthopedic Impairment							
Other Health Impairment							
Specific Learning Disability							
Speech-Language Impairment							
Traumatic Brain Injury							
Visual Impairment Including Blindness							
Sub-Total of Students with Disabilities							
Students without Disabilities							
Total # of Residential Students							

Total Enrollment: This should match the school census as of December 1, 2010 as listed above.

Sub-Total Day Students	#
Sub-Total Residential Students	#
Total Student Enrollment	#

SECTION 2 ACADEMICS

Please check the core academic courses currently offered in your school.

Elementary School

☐ **Language Arts** ☐ Mathematics ☐ Science ☐ History and Social Sciences

Middle School

☐ English 6 ☐ Math 6 ☐ Science 6 ☐ Content Specific VA/US History
☐ English 7 ☐ Math 7 ☐ Life Science ☐ Content Specific: US History to 1877
☐ English 8 ☐ Math 8 ☐ Physical ☐ Content Specific: US History 1877 to Present

Secondary School

☐ English 9 ☐ Algebra I ☐ Biology ☐ World History I
☐ English 10 ☐ Algebra II ☐ Chemistry ☐ World History II
☐ English 11 ☐ Geometry ☐ Earth Science ☐ World Geography
☐ English 12 ☐ Personal Finance ☐ Ecology ☐ US/ VA History
☐ Creative Writing ☐ Calculus ☐ Government

Electives (Please check the courses currently offered in your school.)

- | | | | |
|--|---|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Art | <input type="checkbox"/> Business Education Classes | <input type="checkbox"/> Computer Education | <input type="checkbox"/> Cosmetology |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Culinary Arts | <input type="checkbox"/> Education for Employment | <input type="checkbox"/> Family Life | <input type="checkbox"/> Foreign Language |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Health and Physical Education | | <input type="checkbox"/> Horticulture | <input type="checkbox"/> Life Skills |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Music | <input type="checkbox"/> Personal Development | <input type="checkbox"/> Remedial Math | <input type="checkbox"/> Remedial Reading |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Service Learning | <input type="checkbox"/> Social Skills | <input type="checkbox"/> Tutorials | <input type="checkbox"/> Woodworking |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Work experience/Cooperative Education | | <input type="checkbox"/> Other _____ | |

Opportunities for work/job training	Unpaid	Salaried	Stipend	Gift Card	Savings
--	---------------	-----------------	----------------	------------------	----------------

Account

- | | | | | | |
|--|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> On-campus training | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| <input type="checkbox"/> On-campus work | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Off-campus training | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Off-campus work | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Volunteer | | | | | |

SECTION 3: NON-ACADEMIC, EXTRA-CURRICULAR AND STUDENT SUPPORT SERVICES**Please check all that apply.**

- | | | | |
|---|--|--------------------------------------|-----------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Academic Tutoring: | a. ____ Community volunteers | b. ____ Trained staff | c. ____ Peer Tutoring |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Athletics | a. ____ Intramurals | b. ____ League Sports | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Food Service | a. ____ On-campus food service | b. ____ Contract with private vendor | |
| | c. ____ Students provide their own lunch | d. ____ Lunch provided by LEA | |

Does your school provide transportation services to and from home/school? ☐ Yes ☐ No

Counseling Services:

Service Provider Identification Scale Please refer to the service provider identification scale (Codes 1-6) when completing the next item where you are requested to check the services offered and identify the staff member who provides the service. If the service is not offered, please leave blank.

1 = Guidance Counselor 2 = Bachelor Level Social Worker 3 = Master of Social Work 4 = Psychologist on staff
5 = Psychologist contracted by private school 6 = Substance Abuse Counselor

Type of Counseling and Support Services Offered	1	2	3	4	5	6
<input type="checkbox"/> After Care/Transition to LRE	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/> Board Certified Behavior Analyst	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/> Family Counseling	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/> Group Counseling	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/> Individual Counseling	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/> Mentoring	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/> Social Skills Training	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/> Substance Abuse Counseling	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/> Transition Specialist	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Behavior Management Protocol**Please check the behavior management protocol currently implemented in your school.**

- | | | | | |
|--|---|--|--------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Comprehensive Crisis Management | <input type="checkbox"/> Crisis Wave | <input type="checkbox"/> Handle with Care | <input type="checkbox"/> MANDT | <input type="checkbox"/> None |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Nonviolent Physical Crisis Intervention (CPI) | <input type="checkbox"/> Professional Crisis Management (PCM) | | | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Right Response | <input type="checkbox"/> Satori Alternatives to Managing Aggression | <input type="checkbox"/> Therapeutic Crisis Intervention (CPI) | | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Therapeutic Options of Virginia (TOVA) | <input type="checkbox"/> Other: Please specify _____ | | | |

In this section, please check all behavior interventions used in the school program

- ☐ Verbal de-escalation ☐ Time out – classroom ☐ Time out – separate space* ☐ Seclusion – open door**
☐ Seclusion – closed door ** ☐ Delayed dismissal ☐ Saturday school ☐ In-school suspension
☐ Out-of-school suspension ☐ Safety Holds ☐ Physical Restraint

* Time out means assisting a student to regain control by removing the student from his immediate environment to a different open location until the student is calm or the problem behavior has subsided.

**Seclusion means the confinement of a student alone in a room from which the student is physically prevented from leaving.

How is approval for use of a behavior management protocol secured? Please check all that apply.

Format	Student	Parent	LEA/Placing Agent	CSA/FAPT
<input type="checkbox"/> Individual Contract	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/> Cited in IEP	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/> Other				

(List) _____

Day Treatment (This section refers to Day Treatment Services billed to Medicaid)

Are day treatment services provided under a program licensed by the Virginia Department of Behavioral Health and Developmental Services at your facility? ☐ **Yes** ☐ **No** If yes, who is the vendor?

Are services provided: _____ before school _____ during school hours _____ after school

SECTION 5: DISCHARGE, GRADUATION, AND POST-SECONDARY STATUS

In the following sections, please identify the number of students for 2009-2010 school year.

Returned to public school		Placed in private day schools		Placed in public regional program	
Placed in residential facilities		Incarcerated		Hospitalized	
LEA Advanced Studies Diploma		LEA Modified Diploma		LEA Special Diploma	
LEA Standard Diploma		LEA Certificate of Completions		Private School Diploma	
Attending four year college		Competitive Employment		Non-vocational day program	
Attending two year college		Supported Employment		Adult partial care program	
Trade or Technical School		Sheltered Employment		Homemaker	
Other (please list)					

Required attachments:

- **Certificate of Compliance**
- **2010 Personnel Qualifications Report**

**Virginia Department of Education
Private Schools for Students with Disabilities
P.O. Box 2120**

Richmond, VA 23218-2120

**If you have questions contact Carolyn White Hodgins,
Phone 804 225-4551, e-mail Carolyn.Hodgins@doe.virginia.gov, Fax 804 371 8796**

Appendix D

Private Day and Residential Schools Licensed to Operate in the Commonwealth of Virginia (As of March, 2011)

- Accotink Academy
- Accotink Academy Learning Center
- Academy at Newport News (The) Formerly Keystone
- Alternative Paths Training School - Alexandria
- Alternative Paths Training School - Fredericksburg
- Aurora School (The)
- Barry Robinson Center (The)
- Bear Creek Academy
- Blue Ridge Autism and Achievement Center - Buena Vista
- Blue Ridge Autism and Achievement Center - Roanoke
- Boys' Home School
- Boys W.O.O.D.S. Educational Program
- BREC Academy
- Bridges Treatment Center
- Brook Road Academy
- Building Blocks
- Camelot Therapeutic Schools
- Charterhouse School
- Chesapeake Bay Academy
- Child Help East - Village Elementary School
- Commonwealth Academy
- Crisis Receiving Center I - Hull Street Road
- Crisis Receiving Center II - Cowardin Avenue
- Cumberland Academy
- Discovery School of Virginia (The)
- Discovery School of Virginia (The) Girls
- Dominion Academy
- Dominion School (The)
- Dominion School for Autism - Walnut Grove - Mechanicsville
- Dominion School for Autism - Richmond
- Dooley Elementary
- Dooley School at St. Joseph's Villa
- East End Academy, Inc.
- Educational Development Center
- Elk Hill Charlottesville Day School
- Elk Hill Harambee - Harambee School @ Elk Hill
- Elk Hill Varina Day School
- Fair Winds I
- Fair Winds II
- Faison School for Autism (The)

- Gateway Private School
- Girls In Focus Academy
- Girls Recovery Lodge (GRL)
- Gladys H. Oberle School
- Grafton School - Berryville Residential Treatment Center
- Grafton School - Elm Street
- Grafton School - Richmond Campus
- Grafton School - Ruth Birch Campus
- Graydon Manor Campus School
- Graydon Manor Day School
- Gus Mitchell - Hope Tree Academy
- Hallmark Youth Care- McAfee Academy
- High Road School of Richmond
- Hope Haven Day School - Blairs
- Hope Haven Day School - Halifax - South Boston
- Hughes Center Day School (The)
- Hughes Center Residential School (The)
- Jackson Feild Homes - Gwaltney School
- Jefferson Trail Residential Treatment Center
- John G. Wood School
- Kellar School (The)
- Kids In Focus Academy 1
- Lafayette School and Treatment Center
- Lead Center (The)
- Leary School
- Leary School Job Site
- Liberty Point Behavioral Healthcare
- Life Coach Academy
- Linkhorn Academy
- Little Keswick
- Little Kids In Focus Academy 1
- Little Kids In Focus Academy 2
- Marion Youth Center
- Matthew's Center for Visual Learning
- Metropolitan Day School
- Minnick Education - Harrisonburg
- Minnick Education Centers -Roanoke
- Minnick Education Centers - Roanoke Cave Spring Branch Campus
- Minnick Education Center - Wytheville
- Morrison School
- Mountain Laurel Boys
- Mountain Laurel Girls
- New Community School (The)
- New Life Learning Center
- New Hope Academy
- Newport News Behavioral Health Center

- New Vistas School
- North Spring Behavioral Healthcare
- Northstar Academy
- Oakland School
- Oakwood School
- Oak Valley Center
- Oyster Point Academy
- Paladin Program at Chesterbrook/Chantilly
- Paladin Program at Chesterbrook/Sterling
- Pathways Day School
- Pendleton Child Service Center
- Phillips School - Annandale
- Pines (The) Brighton Campus
- Pines (The) Crawford
- Pines (The) Kempsville Campus
- Poplar Springs Academy
- Poplar Springs Hospital Learning Center
- Pygmalion School
- Rivermont School - Alleghany Highlands
- Rivermont School - Chase City
- Rivermont School - Dan River
- Rivermont School - Hampton
- Rivermont School - Lynchburg
- Rivermont School - Roanoke Valley
- Rivermont School - Rockbridge
- Rivermont School - Tidewater
- Rivers Bend
- Riverside Academy
- Riverside School
- Sarah Dooley School for Autism
- Shenandoah Academy
- Shenandoah Autism Center
- Snowden Academy
- Spiritos School for Autism Spectrum Disorder and Developmental Delay
- Timber Ridge School
- Virginia Institute of Autism
- Virginia Wilderness Institute - AMIkids
- White Oak School
- Youth For Tomorrow

VITA

Judith Anne (Albert) McKinney was born on November 6, 1955 in Mishawaka, Indiana and graduated from Bishop Chatard High School in Indianapolis, Indiana in 1974. She received her Bachelor of Science in Special Education from Ball State University, Muncie, Indiana in 1978 and subsequently moved to Virginia where she worked in the field of special education in Hanover County Public Schools for over 32. She earned her Master of Arts in Counselor Education from Virginia Commonwealth University in 1994.