



SPECIAL EDUCATION MODEL POLICIES for OPEN-ENROLLMENT CHARTER SCHOOLS

AS REQUIRED BY 20 U.S.C. §1413(A)(1)

Charter School: **Trinity Environmental Academy**
County School No.: **057849**

Introduction

To further promote local initiative, the 1995 revision of the Texas Education Code (TEC) established a new type of public school, known as a charter school. Charter schools are subject to fewer state laws than other public schools with the idea of ensuring fiscal and academic accountability without undue regulation of instructional methods or pedagogical innovation. Like traditional school districts, charter schools are monitored and accredited under the statewide testing and accountability system.

According to the TEC, the purposes of charter schools are to (1) improve student learning; (2) increase the choice of learning opportunities within the public school system; (3) create professional opportunities that will attract new teachers to the public school system; (4) establish a new form of accountability for public schools; and (5) encourage different and innovative learning methods.

Policy Overview

Each open-enrollment charter school, must assure that it has (or will have upon opening for initial charter applicants) policies and procedures in place that ensure implementation of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act 2004 (IDEA) and all federal regulations, Texas laws, State Board of Education (SBOE) rules, and Commissioner's rules concerning students with disabilities

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receiving special education services, and further assures that any future amendments to the regulations, laws, and rules will be incorporated into policies and procedures and implemented by the charter school.

The Special Education Model Policy Series for Charter Schools is a series of publications by the Texas Charter Schools Association (TCSA). These publications are an educational tool for charter school leaders to aid in the operation and management of open-enrollment charter schools in Texas.

Unless specifically noted in the policies, all of the Special Education Model Policy Series are legally required for each open-enrollment charter school and must be updated regularly.

Each policy in the Special Education Policy Series provides a summary of state and federal statutes, regulations, and related case law applicable to all open-enrollment charter schools. Citations to these materials are provided throughout the policies.

Where "school" or "public school" is used in chapters of the TEC that are applicable to open-enrollment charter schools, the term "open-enrollment charter school" is substituted to conform to the applicable requirements or prohibitions. An open-enrollment charter school is subject to federal laws governing public schools. (TEC §12.103(a))

Scope of Service & Copyright Notice

The Special Education Model Policy Series is designed as resource of information for open-enrollment charter schools, students and their families. The policies should not be construed as legal advice. It should be used in connection with consulting and obtaining advice from the school's legal counsel to ensure compliance with applicable legal requirements.

Companion Guide to these Policies: (1) *Texas Open-Enrollment Charter School Handbook* (TEA, Division of Charter School Administration, September 2011), available at:
<http://www.esc11.net/cms/lib3/TX21000259/Centricity/Domain/67/CharterS>

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[choolHandbook.pdf](#); and (2) the 2016 Model Policy Series (Texas Charter Schools Association, 2016, available at: <http://quality.txcharterschools.org>

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