Special Act Public School Districts

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1. Special Acts are PUBLIC school districts created by the New York State legislature

2. Each Special Act was created to ensure that students unable to attend their local community school districts have EQUAL ACCESS to a public education

3. Special Acts increasingly serve more and more day students

4. Special Acts are required to meet all Part 100 and Part 200 regulations

5. Over the past several years 3 special acts have closed and more remain vulnerable.
Challenges: FISCAL

1. Insufficient budget-to-budget increases
   - RMI (regional maximum increase national not regional).
   - 0% since 2009.

2. Lack of timely adjustments for funded mandates.
   - Certification by DOB
   - Offsetting revenue
   - No fund balance or reserve funds

3. Lack of adjustments for non-discretionary fixed costs, such as health insurance and the Affordable Care Act, retirement, fuel, etc.
   - Reconciliation and appeals
   - Rebilling
   - RANS
Regulated as LEA’s but funded as nonpublic schools

Challenge: Public, but Not Completely

“REGULAR” Public School District

**POLICY**
- Comply with all federal/ state regulations (NCLB, IDEA, Part 100, Part 200).
- Meet all unfunded mandates.
- Meet the Core Curriculum Standards
- Students take CCS assessments
- NYS certified faculty
- Award NYS diplomas
- Meet all public financial oversight requirements

**FUNDING**
- State-Aid Formula
- Local School Tax
- Access to Competitive Grants
- High Tax Aid
- Access to Medicaid
- Reserves Funds

“SPECIAL ACT” Public School District

**POLICY**
- Comply with all federal/ state regulations (NCLB, IDEA, Part 100, Part 200).
- Meet all unfunded mandates.
- Meet the Core Curriculum Standards.
- Students take CCS assessments.
- NYS certified faculty.
- Award NYS diplomas.
- Meet all public financial oversight requirements.

**FUNDING**
- Tuition Rate (Expenses of 2 years ago)
- Tuition rate affected by offsetting revenue
- Staffing parameters.
- 0% growth for 4 years
- Ineligible for major federal and state allocations (Title I Part A, Reading First).
- Ineligible for most public school state aid, including textbook, library and computer aid.
- Cannot access Medicaid
- No Reserve Funds
We meet all the demands of public schools and successfully teach special populations

- Creativity
- Collaboration
- Fiscal Restraint
Creativity
Mt Pleasant Blythedale

✓ Direct and supervisory services for payroll, housekeeping, engineering and technology functions outsourced.

✓ Interns replace substitutes. Administrative Interns for some unfunded mandates.

✓ Teacher aides replace teaching assistants.

✓ Technology used to streamline attendance and purchasing functions.
Creativity
Hawthorne Cedar Knolls

- Timepiece – Technology Based Personnel Accountability System.
- Outsourced Technology Infrastructure Support District Wide.
- E-School Plus Student Information System.
- e-Chalk-Instruction, Communication.
- Instruction-American Sign Language (ASL).
- Redefine Roles and Responsibilities of Support Staff to Support PBIS.
Collaboration
Mt Pleasant Blythedale

✓ Hudson Valley Shakespeare
✓ Spoken Interludes
✓ University partnerships (Pace University, Manhattanville College, Manhattan College, Fordham University, Teachers College, Mercy College)
✓ Westchester Arts Council
✓ Art Therapy Outreach
✓ Reading to Rover
✓ Deaf/Blind Collaborative
Collaboration
Hawthorne Cedar Knolls

✓ Peers to Peers
✓ CANYS
✓ Jacob Burns Film Center
✓ Internet Safety Training
✓ Gang Prevention
✓ PBIS
✓ Mason’s Behavior Management Training Seminar
Collaboration
MPB/HCKS

✓ Program sharing
  (cosmetology, animation)

✓ Professional development
  (PBIS, Dignity Act)

✓ Grant writing

✓ Shared staff

✓ Peer-to-Peer program
Fiscal Restraint

Impact: Program Reduction & Fiscal Instability

Staffing
Story of psychology and reading positions, Mt Pleasant Blythedale
Story of aides and reductions, Hawthorne Cedar Knolls

Safety
Story of the Roof, Randolph Academy

Finances
Story of a RAN, Hawthorne Cedar Knolls
To survive Special Act Public Schools need

- Sufficient budget-to-budget increases.
- Timely adjustments for mandates.
- Adjustments for non-discretionary fixed costs, such as health insurance, retirement, fuel, etc.
Impact on students

A nation’s greatness is measured by how it treats its weakest members.

(Mahatma Gandhi)