

## Editor's Note

I am pleased to present for your professional enjoyment and consideration this edition of The Charter Schools Resource Journal. We had one article that made the cut, "The Efficacy Of Charter Schools In The San Bernardino City Unified School District Meeting The Needs Of Students With Disabilities," written by Gregory A. Jones, California State University – San Bernardino. Congratulations, Dr. Jones, on your excellent contribution.

Along with our editorial board, I strive to make this online journal relevant and important in the field of charter school policy, research, and practice. To that end, we are contacting various educational databases for inclusion. Thus far, and it is still early, we have received a positive response from EBSCOhost. We are working with several others.

Our goal continues to be to published two high-quality issues per academic year. To that end, we ask all of our readers and contributors to please keep us in mind for your charter school-related research.

Thank you for your interest in this journal!

Respectfully,

David E. Whale, Ed.D.

Editor

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The Efficacy Of Charter Schools In The San Bernardino City Unified School District Meeting  
The Needs Of Students With Disabilities

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Biography

Dr. Gregory Jones obtained his doctorate in educational leadership at California State University, San Bernardino. He has taught regular, special, and adult education. He assisted in setting up a charter school for the California Conservation Corps, was a principal for a school specifically for emotionally disturbed and special education students. His current research centers on correctional and special education and the changes necessary to prevent those with learning disabilities from becoming incarcerated.

## Abstract

Charter schools now play a key part in Americans being gainfully employed. This is essential because young adults with disabilities face difficulties in obtaining employment and earning a living. Some charter school students fare better than traditional school students, while others do worse. The exception is students with disabilities, in that they excel and outperform in the charter school environment. This is not the case with San Bernardino City Unified School District charter school students with disabilities. Not only do they not outperform their regular education peers, but actually regress in their academic performance. The results of this study showed that only one charter school of the eight examined met all its target goals. The four of eight charter schools were not meeting their target goals, but in fact their students learning outcomes decreased, which is unacceptable by the standards set by NCLB.

Key words: charter school students with disabilities, learning outcomes, San Bernardino City Unified School District, and proponents and critics.

## Introduction

A major step toward adulthood for Americans is employment. "Getting and keeping a good job is a major benchmark of adult status" (Fourqurean, Meisgeier, Swank, & Williams, 1991, pp. 400; Furstenburg, Kennedy, McLoyd, Rumbaut, & Settersten, 2004; Hendey & Pascall, 2001) Being gainfully employed and functionally independent is expected after high school (Harvey, 2001). This means meeting the needs of employment, housing, and healthcare (Hendey & Pascall, 2001). In order to accomplish these goals, today's global economy calls for new technological skills, which should be provided by vocational counselors and educators (Rojewski, 1999; Johnson, Stodden, Emanuel, Luecking, & Mack, 2002). Unfortunately, this has proven difficult for those with special needs.

### Vulnerability of Those with Special Needs

Young adults with disabilities face significant difficulties in obtaining employment, accessing postsecondary education, and living independently (Johnson, Stodden, Emanuel, Luecking, & Mack, 2002). Those with severe disabilities have a 30.7% chance of obtaining employment, compared to 75.2% for those with nonsevere disabilities, and 83.5% for those with no disability. Of those with severe disabilities, 27.1% live in poverty compared to 12% of those with nonsevere disability, and 9.1% of those with no disabilities (Brault, 2008).

### No Child Left Behind (NCLB) Correcting Educational Imbalance

A report by the National Commission on Excellence in Education, titled "A Nation at Risk," asserted that America's educational system was not preparing its students for the labor market and was falling short of providing equitable opportunities for all U.S. children. It stated

that nothing short of a major structural change will fix these problems (Goldberg & Harvey, 1983). The goal of No Child Left Behind of 2002 (NCLB) is to improve public school programs for all students from diverse, multicultural, and poverty backgrounds, with emphasis in special education (Rhim, Lange, & Ahearn, 2005). Any schools that chronically did not make Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) are to be restructured. Charter schools now play a key part in the high-stakes accountability of NCLB (Nelson, Rosenberg, & Van Meter, 2004).

Parents who enroll their children in a charter school do so because of its attractive features and negative experiences with the previous school. Regrettably, because of their lack of extracurricular activities and transportation, staff at some charter schools counsel parents against enrolling their child if he/she has a disability (Prothero, 2014). The Department of Education mandates that "charter schools may not ask or require students or parents to waive their right to a free appropriate public education in order to attend the charter school. Additionally, charter schools must provide non-academic and extracurricular services and activities in such a manner that students with disabilities are given an equal opportunity to participate in these services and activities" (Lhamon, 2014, p.5). Parents of children with disabilities go to great lengths to see that their needs are met. Diana Diaz-Harrison enrolled her son who has autism into a charter school because she felt the traditional public schools are not addressing his needs. Some charter schools are designed specifically for children with disabilities or are considered at-risk (Nelson, Rosenberg, & Van Meter, 2004). While this may be acceptable to some, others feel that this does not allow SPED students to interact with other children. The concern that some in the special education community have is that this is a step backwards towards segregating this student population. To address the matter of segregation, some charter schools have a 30-70 split between special and general education students. Still, parents such as Diana Diaz-Harrison, feel

that the benefits outweigh the risks. As of 2012, there are 100 charter schools that are specifically for the disabled (Prothero, 2014).

## History and Operations of Charter Schools

### History.

Charter schools are public schools that operate under the authority of a state charter statute, but are exempt from specific state or local regulations. This grants them greater autonomy to create successful learning environments, but with this autonomy comes increased accountability (Rhim, Lange, & Ahearn, 2005). In 1988, Albert Shanker first introduced charter schools as a means to improve public school education. They would be created by groups of teachers and/or parents wanting to improve on both instruction and student learning. Over time, this would set in motion a "cycle of curriculum improvement and renewal" (American Federation of Teachers, 2002. p.9). The intended purpose behind public charter schools was to "provide opportunities for teachers, parents, pupils, and community members to establish and maintain schools that operate independently from the existing school district structure" (Green, 2011). The assumption is that greater autonomy, such as teacher autonomy and types of instruction, will promote innovation and change (Finnegan, 2007).

Charter schools are based on the premise that the "market-based reforms" of parental choice will introduce competition into public education and, thereby, foster improved schools and student achievement (Rhim, Lange, & Ahearn, 2005). The American Federation of Teachers (AFT) first supported the creation of charter schools in the beginning, with the goal of providing parents with alternative schools that would be held accountable and would offer teachers new professional opportunities. The AFT also insisted that charter schools protect the rights of

teachers. According to this report, charter schools have failed to live up to these goals. Although they do not make a point of selecting only the best students, they have neglected low-income, English language learners, and special education students (American Federation of Teachers, 2002).

In 1992, California became the second state to allow the creation of charter schools. The Charter Schools Act of 1992 was the original legislation authorizing the creation of charter schools and allowing them to be exempt from existing education laws (Hill, 2004). The first charter schools opened in the 1993-94 school year. It has been found that charter schools are cost-effective in that their students achieve the same academic results as those of traditional public schools, even though their cost of operation is less. The California Legislature's intent behind establishing charter schools was to provide opportunities for teachers, parents/guardians, pupils, and community members to establish charter schools for the purpose of:

1. Improving student learning.
2. Increasing learning opportunities for all students.
3. Encouraging use of different and innovative teaching methods.
4. Creating new professional opportunities for teachers.
5. Providing parent/guardians and pupils with more varied choices of education.
6. Holding charter schools accountable for student performance.
7. Providing competition within the public school system. (California School Boards Association, 2009)



## Supporters and Non-supporters of Charter Schools

There are opposite views as to the efficacy of charter schools in addressing the needs of their students. Supporters of charter schools claim that charter schools will encourage innovation, be more accountable and focus on results, expand school choice, provide new professional opportunities for teachers, require little or no additional money, and act as a catalyst for improvement (American Federation of Teachers, 2002). Non-Supporters of charter schools believe that charter schools will, enroll more affluent students, be no more innovative than public schools, rely on low-paid and inexperienced teachers, exploit teachers and other educational personnel, reduce resources to traditional schools, be no more accountable, and maybe even less accountable, and undermine the democratic nature of public schooling in America (American Federation of Teachers, 2002).

## Percentage of Students with Disabilities Enrolled In Charter Schools vs. Traditional Schools

The study done by Rhim and Lange (2005) shows that the percentage of students with disabilities enrolled in charter schools is essentially that of the national average, which counters critics' assertions that charter schools are not enrolling a proportionate number of students with disabilities. The overall charter school population of students with disabilities was a mean of 12.76%, which is higher than the national average of 11.5% (Rhim, Lange, & Ahearn, 2006). The study did not show the types of disabilities, which may support the criticism of enrolling students with less severe disabilities (Rhim, Lange, & Ahearn, 2005). As of 2011, 7% of California's K-12 student population is now enrolled in charter schools (Green, 2011).

One significant difference is that charter schools are more likely to mainstream special education students (39%), with 64% for start-up schools in comparison to 19% for traditional

schools, and are less likely to use pull-out programs (37%), compared with traditional schools (61%). One reason might be the number of special education teachers: only 2% make up the teaching staff for start-up charter schools, with 16% for conversion charter schools (Hill, 2004). The Government Accountability Office (GAO) found that the special education services that were provided in charter school regular classrooms were "pull-out" sessions. This service, along with others, were provided to compensate for not having self-contained classrooms available (United States Government Accountability Office, 2012).

#### Results of Educational Efforts toward Students With/Without Disabilities Student Success

A report by the National Assessment of Education Progress in 2004 showed conflicting results of charter school student outcomes (Rhim, Lange, & Ahearn, 2005). A study by the RAND Corporation for the 2001-02 school year found that charter schools' API scores were not significantly different from traditional public schools. While another study showed charter schools attained higher test scores than traditional public schools in almost every grade level and subject (Hill, 2004).

A recent study by the RAND Corporation (2009) showed that charter schools compared with traditional schools are able to raise student achievement levels, but they vary greatly. Virtual charter schools tend to have lower test scores compared to traditional schools. First-year charter schools have a negative impact on student scores, but this is also common for first-year traditional schools. It was shown that charter school students have higher rates of graduation and attending college (RAND, 2009).

However, the American Federation of Teachers found charter school students generally do not do better, but in fact are often worse when compared with traditional school students. Charter schools have not been held to the agreement that they will trade freedom for increased accountability. Charter schools are supposed to experiment with new curricula and classroom practices, but have proven no more innovative than traditional schools. In fact, they sometimes import existing programs from the school districts they are in (American Federation of Teachers, 2002). Loveless's study (2002) discovered that, nationally, charter schools scored significantly lower than traditional public schools, whereas, Greene, Forster, and Winters (2003) encountered that charter schools outperform traditional public schools (Finnigan, Adelman, Anderson, Cotton, Donnelly, & Price, 2004).

A report issued by the Center for Research on Education Outcomes (2009) found that 17% of California charter schools reported academic gains significantly higher than traditional schools, 37% showed gains that were worse, and 46% showed no significant difference (Rhim, Faulkner, & McLaughlin, 2006).

An additional study done by the Center for Educational Reform in 2010 showed more positive results. Eighty-five percent of Colorado's charter elementary schools made Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) compared to 75% of traditional elementary schools. Eighty-one percent of charter middle schools made AYP, compared to 49% of traditional middle schools. Eighty-one percent of Georgia's charter school students made AYP compared to 79% of their traditional school peers. From 2004 to 2007, 17 percent of California's charter schools gained over 50 API points, compared to only 6 percent for traditional schools. In 2008, Los Angeles charter schools

had a median API score of 728 compared to 663 for traditional schools (Center for Education, 2013).

### Proponents and Critics of Charter Schools

There are arguments for and against charter schools. The proponents:

- Traditional schools fail to provide students with adequate educational opportunities.
- School districts become mired in bureaucracy and are ineffective in responding to these limitations.
- Charter schools have greater academic and financial autonomy and more direct community accountability.

The critics:

- Charter schools divert financial and teaching resources.
- Charter schools serve only a small fraction of California's students and have not proven to be academically secure.
- Charter schools lack proper accountability. (Green, 2011)

Accountability.

One of the concerns expressed by charter schools includes accountability measures and how this applies to children with disabilities. Accountability should not force charter schools to counsel-out children from enrolling (Nelson, Rosenberg, & Van Meter, 2004). Advising families of students with disabilities that they should not attend because the school cannot provide modifications and accommodations is discriminatory and illegal (California Department of Education, 2007).

One way of reducing the number of students with disabilities enrollment is by having parents sign a contract that they are committed to working at the school for a certain number of hours or to monitor their children's homework every night. For upper and middle-class parents this may not pose a problem, but can act as a deterrent for parents that are forced to work two or more jobs. Moreover, charter schools have elected not to offer free or affordable transportation and school lunch programs which can also act as a deterrent (American Federation of Teachers, p. 17, 2002).

As a final point, approximately 6,700 charter schools have been opened nationwide with 1,036 being closed since 1992, and out of the 1,100 charter schools that have been approved in California, only 17% of them have been closed (Consoletti, 2011).

#### California Charter School Association

In response to the statements leveled against charter schools, it would be only fair to allow the California Charter School Association (CCSA) to address these various accusations. Some say that charter schools are unwilling to service students with disabilities by often "counseling out" or referring students with disabilities to other schools. Others accuse charter schools of enrolling only students with mild to moderate disabilities. CCSA contends that charter schools take seriously their responsibility to service all students, even those with exceptional needs. To accomplish this goal, CCSA works with its charter school members to provide and ensure compliance of special education services by building a statewide infrastructure of resources available to all charter schools (California Charter School Association, 2013).

In response to the accusations that charter schools only accept the "cream of the crop" and reject underperforming students, the CCSA asserts that charter schools do not recruit and

select the best students. Charter schools are required by law to hold a public lottery to determine who will enroll and so cannot engage in selective admission policies. It is argued that California charter schools serve a large number of low-achieving and at-risk students (California Charter School Association, 2013).

To answer the charge that charter schools do not provide special education services, CCSA states that charter schools are committed to serving students with disabilities because they are designed to be more flexible and are therefore uniquely situated to provide innovative, high-quality educational services (California Charter School Association, 2013).

In reply to the myth that charter schools do not reflect the diversity of the communities they serve, CCSA states that between 2010 and 2011, 45% of charter school students were Hispanic/Latino, 33% were white, 11% were African-American, 4% Asian, and 5% other (Indian, Pacific Islander, and Multi-racial subgroups) (California Charter School Association, 2013).

Finally, it is claimed that charter schools are not held accountable for academic performance. CCSA maintains this is completely false in that charter schools are held accountable by the local school districts and the families they represent. When a charter school submits its petition, it must define its academic goals. In order to continue, they must meet or exceed those goals. Secondly, families can remove their children if they are dissatisfied with the school (California Charter School Association, 2013).

#### Reason behind Students With/Without Disabilities Performance Levels

It is interesting to note that one feature stands out, the academic performance between regular and special education students; regular charter school students perform below their

traditional school peers, whereas, special education charter school students outperform their traditional school peers.

In California, special education students are achieving academic proficiency slightly higher than their peers in traditional schools, particularly in English, while proficiency levels for general education students scored the same or below students in traditional public schools (Rhim, Faulkner, & McLaughlin, 2006). Charter schools are reducing the number of special education students by using early intervention strategies to keep students performing at grade level, along with providing quality education in a regular classroom setting (Rhim, Faulkner, & McLaughlin, 2006).

Kolderie's blueprint for charter schools states that these new schools must be "clear of traditional requirements" in order to "produce a different school; not a replica of the school that exists today" (Kolderie, 1990, p.8). One of the possible reasons for this difference is that the parents tend to have a higher level of education and are more involved in their child's schooling (Rhim, Faulkner, & McLaughlin, 2006). Another reason is a general shortage of qualified special education teachers and specialists. Charter schools struggle to hire and retain special education staff (Nelson, Rosenberg, & Van Meter, 2004). This forces charter schools to place their students with disabilities in general education classroom. The services offered in this setting are individual and small-group instruction, assistive technology, and resource specialists (Rhim, Faulkner, & McLaughlin, 2006).

This instruction is appropriate, adaptive, accommodative, and modified by including: changing the manner in which the material is presented; creating personalized study guides; adapting textbooks; arranging the classroom environment; altering task requirements; selecting

alternative tasks; managing classroom behavior; promoting social acceptance; and using assistive technology (California Department of Education, 2007). Charter schools' approach toward adaptive and individualized instruction may not have benefited regular education students, but has proven effective for students with disabilities. Nevertheless, the question remains as to the gap between special and regular education students attending charter schools.

#### Gap between Charter School Special and Regular Education Students

The Government Accountability Office (GAO) found that twenty-three percent of charter school students were classified with disabilities compared to thirty-four percent of traditional schools (United States Government Accountability Office, 2012). The study found that the explanations are complex and not attributed to SPED students leaving charter schools. The findings of this study gave a number of explanations for this difference. Students with autism and those who have a speech or language impairment are less likely to enroll in a charter school. This gap in special education enrollment continues from kindergarten up to third-grade, but a major contributor behind this is that charter schools are more likely to declassify eighty percent of their special education students. The other twenty percent of those students have transferred between charter and traditional schools (Winters, 2013). Instead of pushing SPED students out, more are enrolled in charter schools rather than leaving them. Special education students in traditional schools tend to change schools more often than those of charter schools. About sixty-five percent of charter school students stayed in their original school, compared to thirty-seven percent of traditional school students (Winters, 2014). This gap can also be attributed to the increase of the enrollment of general education students.



The study also showed the longer a special education student attends a charter school the more likely he/she will be declassified (Winters, 2013). This is meaningful since this is the primary goal of special education. More attention should be placed on identifying and replicating the effective academic and behavioral practices that allow charter and traditional schools to declassify students. Charter schools should be commended rather than penalized for this accomplishment. Another contributing factor is that students with special needs are less likely to enroll in a charter school in kindergarten and sixth grade which is often the time when students enroll in a new school (Winters, 2014).

## Design and Theoretical Framework

### Methodology

The study was an intrinsic case study dealing with charter schools operating in the San Bernardino City Unified School District. A quantitative approach was employed using Data Quest, a California database that collects the API scores of all charter schools and the district. This data was analyzed using the quantitative analysis program SPSS to compare the performance of charter schools with the district.

### Hypothesis

The hypothesis was formed from a number of concerns as to the efficacy of charter schools. States rarely hold charter schools accountable. Many charter schools do not enroll a child if they have special needs. Charter schools often use outside sources to service students with disabilities; this can prove to be below par. Out of these concerns came the research question, "how effective are SBCUSD charter schools in meeting the needs of students with

disabilities?" From this question the hypothesis was derived that SBCUSD charter schools are meeting the needs of students with disabilities.

The study answered the question, "How effective are SBCUSD charter schools in meeting the needs of students with disabilities?" This was accomplished by examining if charter schools have met their API target goals of 2011-2013 for regular, special education, and socioeconomically disadvantaged students.

### Settings and Context

The San Bernardino City Unified School District was founded in 1964 when it merged with the San Bernardino High School District (Wikipedia, 2012). It is the eighth largest school district in California, with over 54,379 students, of which 70.8% are Hispanic, 14.9% are African-American, 9.2% are Caucasian, 1.7% are Asian, and 1% are multiple races. The district is made up of 44 elementary schools, 10 middle schools, 8 high schools, 3 special education schools, and 1 adult school. Of these, 13 are charter schools authorized by the district. The charter schools are composed of different grade levels: 3 are grades K-12, 2 are grades K-8, 1 is grades K-7, 2 are grades K-6, 2 are grades 7-12, 1 is grades 6-12, 1 is grades 6-8, and 1 is grades 9-12 (San Bernardino City, 2013).

### Data Collection

Out of the 13 charter schools, only eight had API scores: ASA, Casa Ramona, EXCEL Prep, Hardy Brown, New Vision, Options for Youth, Public Safety, SOAR, and SBCUSD. The dataset was taken from Data Quest, which shows the individual scores for charter schools and SBCUSD for 2011-2013 and whether the projected growth targets were met. The State separates

growth targets into three groups: schoolwide; all student groups; and all targets. To gauge the performance levels between charter schools and district the data was divided into four sets: overall API scores; API scores for Learning Disabilities (LD) ; charter versus SBCUSD overall scores; charter versus SBCUSD API scores for LD. Missing values were replaced by substituting them with new values by using the Replaced Missing Values function of SPSS, this was compared with listwise values (missing values that were not replaced) to see if the difference was significant. This was critical since 8 of 24 values were replaced.

### Data Analysis

The study examined:

- How the District's charter schools are performing.
- Are some charter schools outperforming others?
- The differences of the API scores between regular, special education, and socio-economically disadvantaged students by comparing the mean of the charter schools with the district to see if there was any significant difference.

### Results

To measure student performance of these eight charter schools, an analysis of their API scores for the past three years, from 2011-2013 was performed. One-way ANOVA (analysis of variance) was used to measure the differences of the individual schools in comparison to each other to see if they were statistically significant at the  $p < .05$  level. The ANOVA is a statistical technique which compares different sources of variance within a dataset to determine if there are significant differences between two or more groups. The theory behind ANOVA is that it

calculates the ratio of the actual difference to the difference expected. This ratio is called F ratio which is the actual difference in the variance between groups and the expected difference in variance among groups.

## Charter School Performance

This data analysis dealt with whether charter schools outperform each other and the district. This was addressed by the use of one-way ANOVA to compare the differences between charter schools and the district to see if there was a significant difference. This was separated into combined regular and special education, and specifically special education.

## Regular and Special Education

### Overall Individual API Scores

The one-way between-subjects analysis of variance produced a significant difference in API scores  $F(8, 17) = 10.053, P = .000$ , indicating that there was a difference among of the means between individual mean scores of charter schools and SBCUSD. This difference in the API scores is shown in the Multiple Comparisons table. Four out of the eight API scores for the charter schools and district were significantly different from those of SOAR's API scores.

Table 1

### *Overall Individual API Scores*

SMEAN (Scores)					
	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	67885.628	8	8485.704	10.053	.000
Within Groups	14349.333	17	844.078		
Total	82234.962	25			

$F(8, 17) = 10.053, P = .000$

Table 2

*Multiple Comparisons (Overall Individual API Scores)*

Tukey HSD						
Schools (I)	Schools (J)	Mean Difference (I-J)	Std. Error	Sig.	95% Confidence Interval	
					Lower Bound	Upper Bound
SOAR	ASA	154.00000*	23.72170	.000	70.2865	237.7135
	Casa Ramona	96.33333*	23.72170	.018	12.6198	180.0469
	EXCEL Prep	57.00000	23.72170	.341	-26.7135	140.7135
	Hardy Brown	-14.00000	23.72170	.999	-97.7135	69.7135
	New Vision	84.33333*	23.72170	.048	.6198	168.0469
	Options for Youth	91.00000*	23.72170	.028	7.2865	174.7135
	Public Safety	8.66667	26.52166	1.00	-84.9279	102.2613
	SBCUSD	51.00000	23.72170	.475	-32.7135	134.7135

\* The mean difference is significant at the 0.05 level.

## Overall Combined API Scores

The one-way between-subjects analysis of variance produced no significant differences in overall combined API scores between charter schools and the overall API scores for SBCUSD  $F(1, 24) = .094, P = .762$ , indicating that there was no difference among of the means between combined mean scores of charter schools and overall scores SBCUSD.

Table 3

*Charter versus San Bernardino City Unified School District Combined Overall Scores*

ANOVA					
SMEAN (Scores)					
	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	319.425	1	319.425	.094	.762
Within Groups	81907.536	24	3412.814		
Total	82226.962	25			

$F(1, 24) = .094, P = .762$

## Special Education

### Overall Individual API Scores for Learning Disabled

The one-way between-subjects analysis of variance produced significant differences in the overall individual API scores  $F(7, 16) = 4.145, P = .009$ , indicating that there was a difference among of the means between LD for charter schools and SBCUSD. Because eight of twenty-four scores were missing, a comparison was made between data sets with and without missing scores by replacing the missing values and substituting them with new values using the Replaced Missing Values function of SPSS. These were compared with listwise values (missing values that were not replaced) to see if there was a significant difference (Tables 3 and 4). Listwise scores produced significant differences in the Individual LD API scores for charter schools and the district for API individual scores  $F(7, 16) = 4.145, P = .009$  and individual listwise scores  $F(7, 8) = 8.676, P = .003$ . This difference in the API scores is shown in the Multiple Comparisons table. Three of the seven mean API scores for charter schools and the district were significantly different from those of SOAR's scores. EXCEL Prep was not included since there was no data for students with disabilities.

Table 4

#### *API Individual Scores for Learning Disabled*

SMEAN (Scores)	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	36237.948	7	5176.850	4.145	.009
Within Groups	19981.802	16	1248.863		
Total	56219.750	23			

$F(7, 16) = 4.145, P = .009$

Table 5

*API Individual Listwise Scores for Learning Disabled*

ANOVA					
SMEAN (Listwise Scores)	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	49676.417	7	7096.631	8.676	.003
Within Groups	6543.333	8	817.917		
Total	56219.750	15			

$F(7, 8) = 8.676, P = .003$

Table 6

*Multiple Comparisons (API Individual Scores for Learning Disabled Scores)*

Tukey HSD						
Schools (I)	Schools (J)	Mean Difference (I-J)	Std. Error	Sig.	95% Confidence Interval	
					Lower Bound	Upper Bound
SOAR	ASA	94.75000	28.85438	.070	-5.1482	194.6482
	Casa Ramona	119.20833*	28.85438	.014	19.3101	219.1065
	Hardy Brown	54.54167	28.85438	.575	-45.3565	154.4399
	New Vision	43.66667	28.85438	.790	-56.2315	143.5649
	Options for Youth	106.75000*	28.85438	.032	6.8518	206.6482
	Public Safety	61.41667	28.85438	.438	-38.4815	161.3149
	SBCUSD	114.00000*	28.85438	.020	14.1018	213.8982

\* The mean difference is significant at the 0.05 level.

## Overall Combined API Scores for Learning Disabled (LD)

The one-way between-subjects analysis of variance produced no significant differences in the overall combined API scores for LD between individual charter schools and SBCUSD  $F(1, 22) = 2.341, P = .140$ , indicating that there was no difference among of the means between LD for charter schools and SBCUSD. In addition, because eight of twenty-four scores were missing,

a comparison was made between data sets with and without missing scores by replacing the missing values by substituting them with new values using the Replaced Missing Values function of SPSS. These were compared with listwise values (missing values that were not replaced) to see if there was a significant difference (Tables 8 and 9). Listwise scores produced no significant differences in the Individual LD API scores for charter schools and the district for API individual scores  $F(1, 22) = 2.341, P = .140$  and individual listwise scores  $F(1, 14) = 1.617, P = .224$ . This difference in the API scores is shown in the Multiple Comparisons table. Only one of the seven mean API scores for charter schools and the district was significantly different. EXCEL Prep was not included since there was no data for students with disabilities.

Table 7

*Charter versus San Bernardino City Unified School District Combined API Scores for Learning Disabled*

ANOVA					
SMEAN (Scores)	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	5406.006	1	5406.006	2.341	.140
Within Groups	50813.744	22	2309.716		
Total	56219.750	23			

$F(1, 22) = 2.341, P = .140$



Table 8

*Charter versus San Bernardino City Unified School District Combined API Listwise Scores for Learning Disabled*

ANOVA					
SMEAN (Listwise Scores)					
	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	5821.853	1	5821.853	1.617	.224
Within Groups	50397.897	14	3599.850		
Total	56219.750	15			

F (1, 14) = 1.617, P =.224

Table 9

*Multiple Comparisons (API Scores for Learning Disabled Scores)*

Tukey HSD						
Schools (I)	Schools (J)	Mean Difference (I-J)	Std. Error	Sig.	95% Confidence Interval	
					Lower Bound	Upper Bound
SBCUSD	ASA	-19.25000	28.85438	.997	-119.1482	80.6482
	Casa Ramona	5.20833	28.85438	1.00	-94.6899	105.1065
	Hardy Brown	-59.45833	28.85438	.476	-159.3565	40.4399
	New Vision	-70.33333	28.85438	.288	-170.2315	29.5649
	Options for Youth	-7.25000	28.85438	1.00	-107.1482	92.6482
	Public Safety	-52.58333	28.85438	.615	-152.4815	47.3149
	SOAR	-114.00000*	28.85438	.020	-213.8982	-14.1018

\* The mean difference is significant at the 0.05 level.

## Discussion

The study showed that individual APIs scores for SBCUSD charter schools were significantly different from one another and the district. The same was true for students with learning disabilities. In contrast, the combined overall API mean scores for charter schools and

the combined overall API scores for SBCUSD were not significantly different. The same was true for the combined API scores for LD. Out of the eight charter schools only one met all of the growth targets for 2011 - 2013. Three schools partially met their target goals, while four did not meet any of their goals for 2011 - 2013. SBCUSD, on the other hand, meet all its goals for 2011 - 2013.

The next segment of data dealt with the significant difference between the overall API scores for charter schools and the district. The Multiple Comparisons outlay for SOAR showed that four of eight charter schools and the district were significantly different. The next dataset dealt with the LD API scores for students with learning disabilities. The scores varied from school to school proved to be significantly different. The Multiple Comparisons outlay for API scores for SOAR were significantly different for only one charter schools and the district.

One interesting finding was that even though only one charter school met all its target goals for 2011 - 20113 there was no significant difference of the eight charter schools' combined API scores with the district's combined scores. These results are contrary to the study by Rhim, Faulkner, and McLaughlin (2006) which showed that in 2004 charter school students with disabilities outperformed their traditional school peers in English, language arts, and math.

#### Solutions to Addressing the Needs of Charter School Students with Disabilities

In the United States more than 5000 charter schools are not adequately overseen or supported by local school districts. Instead, they stand alone in developing their special education programs. In order to meet the needs of their SPED students, charter school staff must have user-friendly educational tools and resources. One comprehensive guide to help charter schools build these programs is the National Charter School Resource Center which developed

the manual, "Special Education Start-Up and Implementation Tools for Charter School Leaders and Special Education Managers." This manual lists various tools that charter schools can utilize that are available on the U.S. Department of Education website (National Charter School Resource Center, 2012).

After two decades, charter schools have introduced innovation and educational opportunities. Nevertheless, they have not used their autonomy in regards to students with special needs. Since many charter schools are small and have limited budgets they need to form partnerships with various community organizations, traditional public schools, and each other to extend their role with respect to special education. Because of this growing pressure, a group of charter schools in California contracted the nonprofit Seneca Family of Agencies to serve as a provider for special education services. These schools use their federal and state special education funds to finance this endeavor. In 2012, Massachusetts passed legislation permitting charter schools to form collaboratives (Rhim & O'Neill, 2013).

Finally, one other support comes from charter school authorizers: local school boards or districts, state boards of education, universities or colleges, and independent special charter school boards (Finnigan, Adelman, Anderson, Cotton, Donnelly, & Price, 2004). Authorizers monitor schools in the following areas: 1) compliance with federal or state regulations; 2) student achievement results by means of statewide assessments; 3) enrollment numbers; 4) financial record keeping; and 5) special education services. Authorizers monitor charter schools either annually or more than once a year in the areas of financial record-keeping, enrollment numbers, and special education services (Finnigan, Adelman, Anderson, Cotton, Donnelly, & Price, 2004). While charter school operators develop proposals that outline the goals and objectives for their school, it is the authorizers who hold the school responsible for their charter (Rhim, Lange, &

Ahearn, 2006). One way of accomplishing this is to provide a rubric that outlines the duties that are placed upon charter schools. The first component of this is to allow authorizers to have the responsibility to determine whether an applicant is qualified to operate a public charter school. The second component outlines the means to track charter school performance by regularly monitoring their activities. The third component addresses renewing a charter school's contract with the school district. In order to renew a charter school's application an authorizer has to examine the quality of its special education program. If the school does not meet the required expectations, closure may be a necessary action (Rhim & O'Neill, 2012).

### Conclusion

The results of this study have shown that only one charter school of the eight examined had met all of its target goals. The four that did not meet their goals, actually showed a decrease in student achievement. While overall scores varied, they were not significantly different from the district's scores. Still, four of eight charter schools were not meeting their target goals, but in fact their students learning outcomes decreased, which is unacceptable by the standards set by NCLB. Charter schools are to act as a place where new and innovative teaching strategies are to be developed and shared. Unfortunately, half of the schools examined did not accomplish this. It would be appropriate for the district to take responsibility and investigate why and take corrective measures. It is beyond the scope of this study to examine the reasons for such deficient performance. Nevertheless, these performance levels must be addressed and corrected if learning is to take place.

Some of the solutions offered have proven successful meeting the needs of students with disabilities. In 1930, Stanley Davies wrote *Social Control of the Mentally Deficit*. Davies

predicted that if measures were not taken to ensure a proper education for the mentally disabled, society would pay "for this either by supporting these persons for the rest of their lives in institutions, or more likely in a larger bill for crime, latency, pauperism, and social degradation" (Osgood, 2005, p. 36). Even though Davies' predictions made sense, no efforts were made during the 1930s. It behooves us not to give up this undertaking.

### Limitations

The study was not able to answer the question, why for three years (2011 - 2013) did half of the SBCUSD charter schools examined not meet their growth target goals, but in fact regressed? This is critical because America's future rests on the shoulders of its educated youth.

### Future Study

A qualitative study can be conducted that will focus on why SBCUSD charter schools are not addressing the needs of their students with disabilities.

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