

Pointers For Parents

Helping Children With Special Needs Succeed

(NAPSA)—For many families with special needs children, getting an appropriate education for those children can be a challenge.

Many students with special needs may do better in private schools. In states, where low-income families have access to tax-supported voucher programs, students with disabilities have this option.

Carmellat McVicker uses the Milwaukee Parental Choice Program to send her daughter, Willetta, 12, to Lutheran Special School, which serves only students with disabilities.

“My child is soaring because of what the private school has given her,” said McVicker. “She just learned how to read. For the longest time she couldn’t make out the difference between letters and numbers. Now, she’s reading.”

Susan Asid of Jacksonville Beach, Florida, uses the state-funded McKay Scholarship to send her son, Dylan, 9, to DePaul School, which serves children with varying degrees of dyslexia.

“I could not afford the school without the scholarship,” said Asid. “Now Dylan has a chance at success. It’s like he’s got another lease on life.”

In Cleveland, the Hanna Perkins School serves emotionally disabled, low-income children in the Cleveland scholarship program. According to Hanna Perkins Principal Joan Horowitz, the school deals with children who have emotional conflicts that are bothering them and getting in the way of their schooling.

“We’ve had children whose behavior would make it hard for them to attend public school.”

In Florida, more than 1,000



For many families with special needs children, tax-supported voucher programs offer constructive alternatives that did not exist before.

disabled students use McKay Scholarships to attend private schools that serve their disabilities. The Cleveland program provides extra funding to low-income students with special needs.

In Milwaukee, dozens of private schools serve children with disabilities for the same voucher amount as other kids.

Organizations such as The Black Alliance for Educational Options work to expand the options available to African-American and low-income families. Some of the options being explored are charter schools, publicly financed scholarships (vouchers) and private scholarship programs.

For more information, visit www.BAEO.org or call toll-free 1-866-865-BAEO.