



UNDERSTANDING THE FULL COST TO NEW JERSEY TAXPAYERS FOR SPECIAL EDUCATION PROGRAMS

A COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS SUMMARY

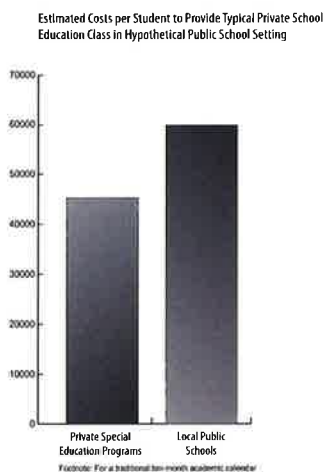
For years, it has wrongly been assumed that the cost of serving students with disabilities in approved private settings is greater than the cost of serving similar students in public school programs. Private school tuition rates include **all** costs. Public school tuition rates **exclude** pension, social security, health benefits on retirement, facilities construction and associated debt service. These costs are paid by **State and/or County** tax dollars, not local school districts. This accounting difference allows public schools to report special education tuition rates that are lower than the full actual cost.

ASAH's comparative study, which incorporates these missing costs borne by taxpayers, indicates the following:

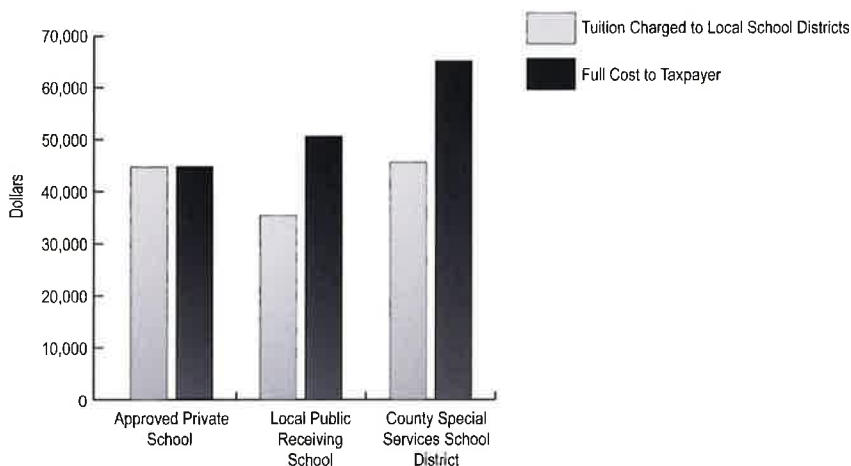
- The average per pupil cost for special education services in **approved private schools** for the disabled is: **\$45,358**
- The average per pupil cost for special education services in **county special services school districts** is: **\$65,266**
- The average per pupil cost for special education services **local public schools** who receive students with disabilities on a tuition basis from sending school districts is: **\$50,146**
- The average per pupil cost for a **local public school** providing the same level of service as an **approved private school** for the disabled is **\$59,051**

NOTE: All costs are adjusted to reflect 10-month academic calendar.

Estimated Costs per Student to Provide Average Private School Education Class in a Public School Setting



Full Cost per Pupil to Taxpayers for Self-Contained Special Education Programs, Statewide Average, 2008-09 School Year



ASAH's analysis reveals that when students with disabilities need intensive specialized services as outlined in their Individualized Educational Plan (IEP), **the full cost to taxpayers is less** when services are provided by an approved private school, than when provided by either a local public school or a county special services district.

ASAH is a not-for-profit association of more than 145 private special education schools in New Jersey representing roughly 11,000 students with disabilities. For more information and/or a copy of the report, visit www.asah.org, or call 609-890-1400 x12.