



# Blueprint for Maryland's Future: 2024 Blueprint Implementation Plan

## Calvert County Public Schools

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November 2024



**Calvert County Public Schools  
Blueprint for Maryland’s Future  
2024 Blueprint Implementation Plan**

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**Calvert County Public Schools  
Systemwide Blueprint Implementation Response**

**Introduction**

Calvert County Public Schools is pleased to provide our Blueprint Systemwide Response as part one of our 2024 Blueprint Implementation Plan. This response is intended to provide the Accountability and Implementation Board (AIB) and Calvert’s broader community with information on how our current work aligns with and leverages the Blueprint for Maryland’s Future to achieve our goals and ensure that all students are prepared for success in college and career.

Our Systemwide response is organized in three parts. Part 1 provides an update on our strategic planning process, which provides context for our response. Part 2 provides an integrated response that addresses each of the required points, focusing on how our work is aligned with and leverages the Blueprint, how we are making systemic changes, and key challenges to Blueprint implementation. Part 3 summarizes our communication efforts and progress monitoring.

**Part 1. Strategic Plan Update**

Calvert County is in the final stages of developing its 2024 Strategic Plan, which will replace our 2017 Strategic Plan. Engaging in strategic planning within the context of the Blueprint for Maryland’s Future (The Blueprint) has provided an opportunity to align district goals and priorities to Blueprint outcomes and consider how we will utilize the policy instruments provided by the Blueprint. How Blueprint strategies and expected outcomes intersect with current (and anticipated) district programming is provided throughout. We anticipate that the 2024 Strategic Plan will address priorities focused on transforming our education system so that all students are college and career ready and excelling in academics, athletics, and the arts.

CCPS began a process in the fall to update our Strategic Plan, which will allow us to create a shared vision that defines where our schools are headed and what our priorities should be. We sought out bids from a consulting firm and through that partnership, received a high level of input from various stakeholders, including students, teachers, school staff, parents, and community members.

In order to understand the views of CCPS, our partner in the strategic planning process held stakeholder focus groups, where participants were asked their thoughts regarding community values, district strengths and challenges, significant issues for the District to address in the next three to five years, and their vision for the future of our schools aligned with Blueprint priorities. All CCPS stakeholders also had the opportunity to provide input through community forums and a district-wide survey.

CCPS formed a Strategic Planning committee, consisting of various school district staff as well as Calvert County Board of Education members to develop a draft plan with the stakeholder data collected that aligns with our core values and holds the Blueprint for Maryland’s Future at its core. The final plan will be presented to the Calvert County Board of Education at a future meeting for adoption in the upcoming school year.

**Part 2. Systemwide Response: Priorities, Systemic Changes, and Challenges**

Since 2017, Calvert County has taken action to address the priorities in our 2017 strategic plan, which included a focus on: (1) equity; (2) student outcomes; (3) improving climate and culture; (4) workforce; and (5) community engagement. Our priorities and related district programming are now more focused and will be described in our 2024 Strategic Plan. With this as context, we outline our current district priorities and alignment with Blueprint Pillars and strategies, in Display 1.

## Systemwide Blueprint Implementation Response

Our response is organized by each priority. Within each priority, we: (1) briefly describe departmental and district-wide initiatives intended to achieve our goals and how these initiatives are aligned with the Blueprint; (2) describe key **systemic changes** that we feel are foundational to our work; and (3) highlight key **challenges** to Blueprint implementation and how we anticipate addressing these challenges so that we can fully implement the Blueprint and achieve district goals.

**Display 1. District Priorities, Systemic Changes, and Challenges**

	Systemic Change	Challenge	Alignment
<b>Priority #1:</b> Maintaining and continually improving core instruction, including the use of high-quality instructional materials.	Yes		Pillar 1 and 3
<b>Priority #2:</b> Continuing to build strong leaders and teachers, including diversifying and ensuring a high-quality workforce.	Yes		Pillar 2
<b>Challenge:</b> Strategically and meaningfully changing the structure of the school day to leverage the career ladder		Yes	Pillar 2 and 3
<b>Priority #3:</b> Developing a robust multi-tiered system of support (MTSS) focusing on student-specific supports.			Pillar 3 and 4
<b>Challenge:</b> Shifting mindsets and providing teachers with skills and resources to meet all students’ needs.		Yes	All
<b>Priority #4:</b> Expanding and ensuring students’ access to high quality pre-k education.	Yes		Pillar 1
<b>Priority #5:</b> Continuing and expanding college and career pathways.			Pillar 3
<b>Challenge:</b> Financial Challenges		Yes	All

### Priority #1: Maintaining and continually improving core instruction, including the use of high-quality instructional materials.

CCPS leadership has been working on maintaining and improving Tier 1 universal instruction, so that all students have access to and are provided high-quality instruction. Three initiatives are described here, which align with Blueprint strategies and are intended to ensure that students attain CCR standards by 10<sup>th</sup> grade and are prepared to engage in a successful pathway.

<p><b>Initiatives and Systemic Changes</b>                  Tier 1 Universal Instruction                  High Quality Instructional Materials                  Equity and Inclusion</p> <p><b>Systemic Change:</b> Science of Reading</p>
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**Tier 1 Universal Instruction.** Led by the Department of Instruction, we are focused on shared understanding and consistent delivery of strong tier-one universal instruction; this is the heart of our work Calvert County Public Schools. Embedded in professional learning and the school improvement process the following components have been and continue to be emphasized with administrators and staff: lesson components, Culturally Responsive Instruction, Ready for Rigor Framework, Academic Mindsets, Research-based learning strategies, scaffolding and differentiation, Universal Design for Learning, and Specially Designed Instruction.

**HQIM.** The Department of Instruction continues to review instructional materials to align with the standard set by MSDE for High-Quality Instructional Materials. The following core content areas have instructional materials that meet the identified standard through EdReports: K – 12 mathematics. As MSDE refines the process for identifying High-Quality Instructional Materials, CCPS will review the requirements against our current materials.

## Systemwide Blueprint Implementation Response

**Equity and Inclusion.** Working with the Maryland Coalition for Inclusive Education, CCPS continues to support our schools in programming that supports including students in the general education setting. Professional learning focuses on meeting the needs of all students in the general education setting, providing support and interventions to those who need it, and collaborative planning between the general and special education teachers.

### Systemic Change: Science of Reading

As part of our work to improve Tier 1 instruction and ensure the use of HQIM, the Science of Reading represents systemic change that will have lasting impact. CCPS provides comprehensive and effective Science of Reading professional learning (LETRS, 3rd edition) for all K-3 general education teachers and all K-5 special education, ESOL, and Title I teachers. At least one administrator from each elementary school and five administrators from central office are participating in LETRS for Administrators professional learning. All PreK teachers who do not hold a LETRS for Early Childhood Educators certification are currently participating in the CCPS LETRS for Early Childhood Educators professional learning cohort. It is imperative that educators understand the Science of Reading research to implement best practices that support all students in acquiring critical literacy skills. In addition, CCPS utilized Maryland Leads grant funding to implement High-Quality Instructional Materials for reading foundational skills standards in grades 2 and 3. CCPS expanded the use of HQIM the following year to include grades 1, 4, and 5, and finally HQIM for Kindergarten was implemented beginning in the fall of 2024.

In school 2022-2023, 284 teachers completed LETRS Year 1. Currently CCPS has 284 total participants; 233 teachers are participating in LETRS Volume 2, and 51 teachers are participating in LETRS Volume 1. CCPS had a 100% completion rate for teachers in Year 1 of the LETRS professional learning course and is on track for 100% completion in Year 2. Teachers have noted the benefits of receiving this training whether it was new learning or an enhancement to what they already knew. A third-grade teacher who is new to CCPS stated, “I am loving this training. It is so helpful when implementing our reading lessons because I now know how to teach phonics!” A first-grade teacher shared, “LETRS has really been amazing and eye-opening. I didn’t know what I didn’t know!” One special educator noted how much she has benefited from the professional learning: “I wish I could go back to my previous students and teach them now that I know all of this!”

The use of high-quality instructional materials has benefited CCPS students who now have a consistent lesson plan structure and materials from year to year. Over the last three years, CCPS has reduced the number of students identified as being at-risk for reading difficulties:

#### Percent of Students At-Risk of Reading Difficulties

Grade	2021-22			2022-23			2023-24		
	Fall	Winter	Spring	Fall	Winter	Spring	Fall	Winter	Spring
<b>K</b>	28.7	11.8	7.7	26.6	13.2	7.2	28.2	6.3	4.2
<b>1</b>	45.8	28.7	19.3	28.8	17.2	12.9	8.2	2.8	1.8
<b>2</b>	54.3	38.2	27.3	42.4	25.9	15.6	22.7	10.3	5.3
<b>3</b>	37.9	23.4	15.9	28.1	17.4	13.5	26.5	12.4	9.8

**Priority #2: Continuing to build strong leaders and teachers, including diversifying and ensuring a high-quality workforce.**

CCPS is committed to building and maintaining a high-quality and diverse teacher and leader workforce. Over recent years, we have accomplished an increase in hiring minority candidates, instituted Employee Resource Groups with a specific focus on minority teaching staff, and revised professional development for new administrators to include alignment with the Blueprint. Over the coming year, CCPS will further define teacher leadership to align with the career ladder specifications and redesigned professional development.

<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Systemic Changes and Challenges</b></p> <p><b>Systemic Changes</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Next Level Leadership</li><li>• National Board Certification</li><li>• Grow Your Own Program</li></ul> <p><b>Challenge:</b> Changing the structure of the school day to leverage the career ladder.</p>
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The following initiatives, all connected to Blueprint goals and outcomes, are presented as systemic changes – the “how” we are making changes to support Blueprint implementation. We also share a key Challenge that we are facing and describe strategies that we are taking to address this challenge.

**Systemic Change: Next Level Leadership Academy**

CCPS staff realized that we were not developing a pipeline for current assistant principals and other teacher leaders to ensure the readiness of our teacher leaders to take their next career leadership steps and for assistant principals to fulfill the role of principal. In 2022, we partnered with the Region 4 Comprehensive Center and launched a ten-month, accelerated professional learning experience designed to build strong leaders aligned with the Blueprint’s Career Ladder Level 3 positions in a grow your own model.

**Systemic Change: National Board Teacher Certification Support**

CCPS has developed annual cohorts and support for NBC certification over the last two years. We have initiated recruitment strategies that aim to not only increase the number of NBC teachers in Calvert County, but also aim to increase to match our student population with the diversity of our NBC candidates and ultimately those who achieve NBC. Throughout the course of the school year, the National Board Certification Coordinator conducts two information sessions for recruiting, and support sessions led by National Board Facilitators; veteran NBC teachers who can work individually and in small groups with teachers and support them on their journey. As a result of these efforts, CCPs has increased our total number of NBC teachers from 13 in 2022 to 38 in 2024.

**Systemic Change: Grow Your Own Program**

Our district has partnered with Bowie State University to provide scholarship money to current CCPS instructional assistants who desire to become teachers. The program allows employees to benefit from working full time and still being able to pursue their teacher degree. Candidates can take coursework toward a dual certification in Early Childhood Education and Special Education, while also completing their student practicum experience at their school of employment, to avoid creating a hardship for the staff member.

**Challenge: Strategically and meaningfully changing the schedule and structure of the school day to leverage the career ladder.**

**Description and rationale.** The Blueprint calls upon districts to develop a career ladder that supports the re-organization of schools, so that educators may engage in professional learning and peer collaboration and provide student-specific support to all students. The re-organization incorporates new roles for leaders and teachers, and a new system of professional development. The challenge is how to design this system, given multiple challenges (e.g., fiscal concerns, shifting mindsets that value traditional school structures and ways of working). However, figuring out a solution to this problem of practice—how can we best organize our schools to leverage the career ladder—must be addressed if we are to accomplish our ambitious district goals, as well as Blueprint outcomes. Pragmatically, addressing this challenge involves multiple issues such as: instructional time requirements; course requirements; collective bargaining agreements, staffing and human



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resource capacity and availability. A technical solution to this challenge is not likely. As a result, we plan to use internal expertise and external research to explore and then design options for strategically changing the structure of the school day.

### Strategies to address this challenge.

1. During our February 2024 Administrator and Supervisor professional development session, we invited school leaders to develop exploratory option (e.g., models and examples of the school schedule and teacher and leadership roles) that they may explore or begin to implement (based on resources) during the 2024-25 school year. As school leaders design options that they may begin to use in their schools, we will document and learn from their work.
2. Paralleling the school-level exploration of options, the Pillar 2 steering committee team will convene a working group to research and explore options for school schedules, teacher and leadership roles, and professional development. This work will be informed by the Career Ladder specifications and aligned Blueprint initiatives (which involve leadership from the Department of Instruction, Department of Special Education, and Department of Student Services).
3. Executive leadership will continue to monitor budget constraints linked to staffing and how potential changes to class size could impact our ability to meaningfully implement intended strategies in the upcoming year.

**How we will monitor progress in addressing this challenge.** This challenge is a key component of Pillar 2. The challenge directly impacts our efforts to improve core and tiered instruction for all students and to continue to expand college and career pathways. As this work will occur over multiple years, we share several short-term questions and measures that we will use to monitor progress. These questions and measures are **in addition to** the outcomes in Pillar 2 related to career ladder implementation and expanding national board certification, that we will progress monitor as part of our implementation work.

- To what extent do principals and schools design and explore teaming and scheduling options?
  - The number of schools and school leaders that develop exploratory options (for collaboration, teacher leadership, or student-support) that are implemented in the 2024-25 SY.
- The development of exploratory options (e.g., models and examples of the school schedule and teacher and leadership roles); to be developed by a Pillar Two work group during the 2024-25 SY.

### Priority #3: Developing a robust multi-tiered system of support (MTSS)

CCPS leadership, including the Department of Instruction, Special Education, and Department of Student Services, are working collaboratively to improve how students are supported.

**MTSS.** The development of an integrated Multi-Tiered System of Support is a key feature of this work, which includes academic and non-academic supports for students for students in grades K through 10, and the development of a Support Pathway for students not meeting CCR standards by 10<sup>th</sup> Grade.

**Integration of SEL and Tier 1 Instruction.** Several strategies that we have implemented in recent years include: (1) school implementation of inclusive practices to include collaborative planning opportunities for teachers; (2) identification of an SEL screener; and (3) improving our students support team (SST) process by ensuring collaboration among SST members. However, specific strategies focused on recruiting and retaining mental health professionals (i.e., school psychologist and school social workers) have been unsuccessful. CCPS has several vacancies that limit the available supports for students, specifically in providing MTSS. Available staff continue to work with school

#### Initiatives and Systemic Changes

##### MTSS

Integration of SEL and Tier 1 Instruction  
Restorative Practices

**Challenge:** Shifting Mindsets and providing teachers with skills and resources.

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teams to develop strong Tier 1 instructional practices, and Tier 1 equitable and inclusive environments. District leadership is prioritizing strategic training that helps school teams make intentional connections between Tier 1 Academics, Behavior, and Social-Emotional supports. Our goal is that all students will increase their sense of belonging and develop positive academic mindsets.

**Restorative Practices.** Additionally, CCPS has a goal to have all staff trained in Restorative Practices (RP) by 2026 which will include ongoing support and consultation to schools. This will include developing a system-wide Restorative Practices plan that provides schools with guidance and recommendations on consistent implementation of RP. Further MTSS success goals include:

- Prioritizing culturally responsive instructional practices.
- Supporting schools in their development of Behavioral Health Teams and use of research based, and data driven practices to increase the capacity of staff to respond to social, emotional, and behavioral concerns in a way that is culturally responsive, and addresses students' unique learning needs.

### **Challenge: Shifting Mindsets and providing teachers with skills and resources to meet all students' needs.**

**Description and rationale.** A shift in mindsets is required if leaders and teachers are going to be able to fully implement key strategies in the Blueprint, specifically around how we provide effective supports and interventions for all students in grades K through 10, and in the Support Pathway for students not meeting the CCR standard by grade 10. Over the past decade, our district has progressively implemented heterogenous classrooms, including the use of natural proportions to guide classroom composition. Implementing this approach requires that all teachers have the requisite pedagogical skills, that research-based interventions are available and appropriately used, and that schools have processes in place to support classroom teachers and students. We have learned that ongoing professional learning is essential to ensure that teachers have the full complement of skills and knowledge of interventions to support all students in classrooms. And in some cases, students are provided Tier 2 and Tier 3 interventions outside of the general education classroom, which results in marginalized populations of students not having access to rigorous and culturally responsive instruction and educators may unconsciously reinforce biases that certain groups of students do not belong in certain courses or accelerated pathways. Our goal is to ensure that all students are included and have a sense of belonging in general education settings; and to ensure that educators have the skills and mindset to ensure high-quality education for all students.

#### **Strategies to address this challenge.**

The Departments of Student Services and Special Education are working together to improve behavioral and academic support, including the development of an integrated MTSS, in collaboration with the Department of Instruction leadership and Supervisors. Under the umbrella of MTSS, we are using multiple strategies to tackle the challenge of shifting mindsets, by designing and implementing instructional programming that attends to shifts in mindsets and practice, including training, professional development, and instructional support and feedback.

- 1. Behavior and Social-Emotional Learning.** Many educators require additional training in supporting students who have lagging skills that may result in challenging behaviors and emotional dysregulation. This plan and related actions include a focus on "shifting the lens" of staff by using Collaborative and Proactive Solutions (CPS). District trainers will provide CPS training and ongoing consultation in implementing the CPS model with school teams. Additionally, there will be a focus on training behavioral health team members and special education staff on the TEACCH Autism Program, a research-based practices to support students with autism and other educational disabilities in the least restrictive environment.
- 2. Instruction.** Building upon cross-department training and professional development provided during the 2023-24, special education and instructional supervisors and specialists (district staff) will continue to provide training and support to teachers, focused on incorporating scaffolding and differentiation into Tier



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1 instruction (e.g., to ensure equitable and inclusive learning environments). This strategy works to shift mindsets by giving teachers the skills needed to support all learners, and to clarify effective use of the Student Services Team and available academic and non-academic support.

3. **The Science of Reading initiative**, as described earlier, provides teachers with research-based practices and has resulted in a significant reduction in the percentage of students at-risk for reading difficulties, annually and during each school year. This initiative shifts mindsets by demonstrating that all students can succeed, when given appropriate support.
4. **Project-Based Learning**. Over two years, CCPS has implemented a pilot Project-Based Learning (PBL) initiative, to reimagine the use of time, the content of instruction, and to move away from the industrial model of public education. The PBL program has trained over 50 educators and impacted thousands of students. We have evidence that teachers and students have willingly embraced a shift in mindset from traditional theoretical learning to taking informed action through PBL. Due to budget constraints, the program will likely end at the conclusion of the 2023-2024 school year. Here, we see that the challenge of shifting mindset may not be about leaders or teachers; rather, we need to confront systemic inertia and the sometimes-unwitting desire to maintain the status quo. This dynamic is exacerbated during times of tightening budgets, when the competing interest for innovation is ensuring continued funding for existing programming. Our strategy for the coming year, based on our experience with PBL and the partial implementation of similar initiatives in the past, is to strategically envision an alternative to traditional instructional practice, and what this means with respect to budgets, staffing and roles, professional development and the “traditional” school day.

**How we will monitor progress in addressing this challenge.** Shifting mindsets is a system-wide challenge that bridges multiple pillars, multiple grade spans, and leaders and teachers. Measuring changes in mindsets and assessing whether teachers increase their capacity to meet all students’ needs in core Tier 1 classrooms/instruction is not simple. The following are several implementation questions and measures that the Steering Committee and Pillar 5 will use to monitor progress:

- To what extent is the CPS process used in schools?
  - Tracking of CPS training participation and use, including outcomes of use.
- To what extent are Student Service Teams used effectively and as intended?
  - Provision of systemwide expectations and training [# of teachers participating in training].
  - Inclusion of teachers in the process at the school-level.
  - Reduction in number of students referred to SST.
- To what extent do classrooms/teachers increase their use of differentiated instruction and scaffolded strategies?
  - Formal implementation and training on MTSS inclusive of Instruction, Special Education, Student Support, and English Learners [# of teachers participating in training].
  - School-level walkthrough data.
- Does collaboration and teaming among Core and Special Educators regarding implementation and use of tiered interventions and supports (a) increase and (b) lead to targeted support to students in core classrooms?
  - Perceived effectiveness of collaboration and co-planning [staff survey]
  - Improved academic growth among target population.

**Priority #4: Expanding and ensuring students’ access to high quality pre-k education.**

CCPS is actively working to accomplish Blueprint milestones and goals so that all students are ready to learn when entering kindergarten. Our work over the past few years, combined with the Blueprint’s emphasis on expanding pre-k to 3- and 4-year-olds, represents systemic changes to our approach to public education.

<p><b>Initiatives and Systemic Changes</b></p> <p>Shift to full day Pre-K Pre-K curriculum and professional learning</p> <p><b>Systemic Change:</b> Pre-K Expansion and CDA Certification</p>
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**Shift to full day Pre-K.** During the FY24 school year, CCPS moved all half-day 4-year-old prekindergarten programs to full day. Partnering with Head Start and one private provider supports our efforts in ensuring access to full day prekindergarten to four-year olds that meet income eligibility requirements of Tier 1, IEP services, or English Language Learner. This work has not been without challenges. Feedback from principals and our monitoring of the expansion shows that additional space is needed, and that some pre-K teachers are struggling to adapt to the shift in student population (and related needs, academically and behaviorally). Our work in the coming year will be to provide additional support to Pre-K teachers, through training and developing shared expectations for students’ pre-K experience. We are addressing this challenge by using a high-quality curriculum and reinforcing the importance of an inclusive learning environment.

**Pre-K Curriculum and Professional Learning.** To ensure high-quality prekindergarten programming, CCPS provides professional learning throughout the school year to teachers and paraprofessionals in understanding curriculum, playful learning, planning and delivery of strong tier 1 universal instruction, and creating equitable and inclusive learning environments. All private providers and Head Start partners are invited to all professional learning opportunities. During the FY24 school year, collaborative planning time was provided for the general and special education teachers to meet once a month.

**Systemic Change: Pre-K Expansion and CDA Certification**

Moving into the FY25 school year, the focus will be to maintain our current four-year old program while supporting Head Start in providing two full-day three-year old prekindergarten classrooms as well as supporting private providers in meeting the eligibility requirements for partnering with the school system. Expanding pre-K to more students requires building the capacity (numbers and quality) of educators.

Expanding CDA certification is crucial and is a specific Blueprint Milestone. In CCPS, our Prekindergarten Program Specialist supports staff in obtaining their CDA certification. The Prekindergarten Specialist serves as a coach, coaching and supporting potential candidates through the CDA process. Voluntary CDA support sessions are offered monthly afterschool to assist teaching assistants who are working towards achieving their CDA. CDA support sessions are also offered during Professional Learning days. During support sessions, teaching assistants receive individual support from the Prekindergarten Specialist and can work on completing training hours and portfolio resources. Additionally, the Prekindergarten Specialist conducts training and documentation review and verification in advance of the teaching assistant’s verification visit with a CDA Professional Development Specialist. Digital training logs have been designed for teaching assistants to document the training hours needed to apply for the CDA. Digital folders have been created for teaching assistants to store certification resources and materials as they go through the CDA process. A standardized CDA portfolio binder has been created for staff to use in collecting and documenting required portfolio resources.

CCPS has partnered with Maryland Family Network to support teaching assistants in accessing vouchers to the CDA Competency Book and CDA application to meet certification requirements. ProSolutions offers CDA training course curriculum for teaching assistants who need initial training certification or renewal hours. ProSolutions is a vendor with CCPS. CCPS’ Early Childhood Team also offers training through professional development and professional learning communities that can be used toward CDA training hours for staff.

**Priority #5: Continuing and expanding college and career pathways.**

**Expanding College and Career Pathways – early college, career advising**

Initiative and Systemic Changes
Career Counseling Program
CTE Expansion and Sharing with Students
Early College Program

In accordance with the Blueprint, CCPS has fully implemented a comprehensive Career Counseling program for grades 6-12. Career Advisors have been placed in each middle and high school. By partnering with our local workforce development board, we have had the opportunity to work with the consulting firm "Educators Cooperative;" through this, we have trained advisors, instructional supervisors, administrators, district teachers, students, and parents in the RIASEC framework to create a common language for talking about careers. This year, we were able to implement a complete CTE offering fair to all 8<sup>th</sup> grade students where students were able to preview the 24 CTE programs that are available to them during high school. In addition, middle and high school advisors have supported the addition of numerous field trips (to locations such as the JATC, Constellation Energy Nuclear Plant, and a Tech Careers Fair among other opportunities). Finally, in addition to hosting whole class, small group, and 1:1 counseling sessions with students, our career advisors have helped to facilitate numerous opportunities with guest speakers. This has broadened our ability to partner with our local community and engage them in the career development process.

CCPS has also implemented an early college program. Sixteen seniors from the four CCPS high schools are attending instruction full-time on campus at the College of Southern Maryland (CSM) Prince Frederick campus. Students who successfully complete the program will earn a general studies certification which can then be applied after graduation towards an associate degree or transferred to a four-year degree granting program. Over 1300 students have been able to receive on-campus support opportunities to ensure their success in this full dual-enrollment program. Through thoughtful scheduling and partnership with CSM, we have also maintained the students' ability to participate in "senior high school life," including extracurricular and athletic activities. This had been a barrier to implementation of similar programs in the past. The nature of the partnership ensures that our dually enrolled students are available for the "normal activities" they desire as high school seniors while providing a true college experience simultaneously. In the coming school year, our goal is to double the enrollment for the program. The Pillar 3 committee is exploring possibilities to expand the program to a two-year program to allow students to either earn a full associate degree or complete the general studies certification simultaneous with a career and technical education program while still earning all COMAR-required credits.

**Financial Challenges**

**Teacher Salary Increase of at Least 10%**

This was selected as one of the biggest financial challenges for several reasons. First, the cost for teachers alone was estimated at over \$5.3 million for FY 24 alone, and this amount will increase each year. For internal equity reasons, the District opted to provide a comparable pay increase for other employees, and this cost was estimated at \$2.4 million for FY 24. This amount, too, will increase each year, so it will have a perpetual impact on district finances. This presented a big fiscal challenge because it necessitated an unusually steep increase in the District's funding request from the county government, which ultimately, the county government agreed to a funding increase that was significantly less than what the District requested.

**Career Ladder**

This is another of the District's biggest financial challenges, and there are several reasons that this presents a significant challenge. First, and foremost, the career ladder must be collectively bargained with our teachers' association. Given that, there is much uncertainty about what the cost impact will be on CCPS. With only about 50% of the career ladder costs coming from State funding, the county government will need to fund approximately half of the costs, and county officials have already expressed their intent to less than fully fund CCPS' FY 25 budget support request. This cost pressure from the to-be-negotiated career ladder will cascade to future years as well, and salary increases that go with the career ladder will be accompanied by increased FICA, retirement, life

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insurance (tied to salaries), accidental life and dismemberment insurance (tied to salaries), and workers' compensation costs (also tied to salaries).

### **\$60,000 Teacher Salary Minimum**

This is a financial challenge for CCPS for multiple reasons. First, it will require that salary increases be offered (and collectively bargained) for the vast majority of teachers (provisional teachers excepted). Second, for teachers whose current salary is slightly more than \$60,000, they will expect salary increases, too. Third, teachers who have a salary near \$60,000 and who work 11 months per year will expect a salary increase as well. These salary increases also carry other cost increases including FICA, retirement, life insurance, accidental death and dismemberment insurance, and workers' comp insurance. All these cost increases cascade into future years and reduces the amount of funds available for other expenditures, programs, and services.

### **Strategies to Address these Challenges**

One strategy employed to address the 10% teacher salary increase requirement was to request additional funding from the local county government. While the county provided a bigger funding increase than in recent years, the increased funding was insufficient to fund the District's full funding request for FY 24. Further, county officials appear unlikely to fully fund CCPS initial FY 25 funding request. Another strategy employed to address the challenges, a strategy employed for the FY 25 budget, is (and was) to very conservatively, limit the number of additional staff positions for FY 25. Requests were received to add over 50 positions to the unrestricted fund budget for FY 25, and only one new position was approved by the administration.

## **Part 3. Communication and Progress Monitoring**

### **Community and Stakeholder Engagement**

CCPS continues to communicate Blueprint strategies to our stakeholders through staff and administrator professional development sessions, public stakeholder forums, regular presentations at CCPS Board of Education meetings, and Blueprint newsletters and presentations to the Calvert County Board of Commissioners. For instance, we used our November 2023 and February 2024 Administrator and Supervisor professional development sessions to collect detailed information from all school administrators regarding challenges and implementation ideas, focusing on each Blueprint Pillar. This information was subsequently analyzed by our Strategic Facilitator and shared with the Steering Committee and with school leaders. Similarly, we have organized multiple opportunities for teachers to learn about the Blueprint and provide feedback to CCPS leadership. Attendance at teacher forums was not as large as hoped, and we plan to revisit how we encourage teachers to provide input.

We formed the Calvert County Blueprint Committee, a stakeholder group consisting of CCPS staff, Calvert County Government representatives, and community members who share thoughts regarding Blueprint implementation and alignment to District and community goals. We have utilized that partnership to develop videos for each Pillar that communicate Blueprint requirements, as well as a web page that serves as a community resource to all our Blueprint work.

### **Blueprint Progress Monitoring**

Accountability and continuous improvement processes have been implemented and are being refined to progress monitor the implementation of Blueprint strategies and outcomes, as they align with CCPS goals and outcomes. The Pillar 5 (Accountability) team includes members who serve on each Pillar (1, 2, 3, and 4) and who are tasked with working with each Pillar chair to articulate strategies, actions, and short- and long-term outcomes that align with Pillar tasks and subtasks. Monthly Steering Committee meetings are then used to report and share progress on key activities. Within each Pillar team, Pillar 5 team members facilitate the development of indicators and measurement tools needed to supplement traditional outcome measures. This process, supported by our local accountability coordinator, is how we monitor progress towards meeting all Blueprint goals. We will use this progress monitoring system to monitor the strategies we are using to address implementation challenges, beginning in spring 2024.

## Pillar 1: Early Childhood Education

### 1. Access to High-Quality, Full-Day Pre-K

*Initial Blueprint Implementation Plan Reference: Questions 1 - 5, 11 - 16*

In March 2023, the LEA described how it would **increase access to high-quality, full-day Pre-K** for Tier 1 and 2 students, including students with disabilities, students experiencing homelessness, and English learners.

Responses discussed considerations related to facilities, including expansion to new facilities, transformation of existing facilities, opportunities for shared spaces with private providers, strategic communication and outreach, and the development of a common and unified enrollment system to support racially and socioeconomically diverse learning environments.

Based on implementation of the LEA's plans over the last year, discuss the district's progress in transforming its systems and practices and achieving the intended outcomes of the Blueprint. Responses must address the following questions.

- What progress has been made in implementation related to both planned activities and anticipated outcomes? If progress has been limited, what challenges has the LEA encountered? Consider, identify, and refer to available data as needed to demonstrate progress.
- How is the LEA adapting its plans to mitigate challenges and/or ensure continued progress and future success? Which strategies are not working that the LEA will no longer implement, and which new strategies does the LEA intend to implement? Include the rationale for adjustments.

Required Data Analysis: Through an analysis of data, discuss progress towards meeting the Blueprint Outcome to serve all Tier 1 4-year-old children who wish to enroll in Pre-K by SY 2025-2026.

### Strategies to increase access to high-quality, full-day Pre-K

- Increasing the number of full-day slots
- Accessing full day Prekindergarten Programming for Four-Year-Olds
- Providing high quality Prekindergarten Programming

### Increasing the number of full-day slots

Calvert County Public Schools (CCPS) increased access to high-quality prekindergarten programming for four-year-old students who qualify under the Tier 1 economic status ([Question 1 Enrollment Data Charts.docx](#)). An analysis of the data revealed that the four-year-old prekindergarten program caters to students who meet one or more of the following criteria: Tier 1 economic status, IEP, or multilingual.

- The prekindergarten four-year-old program has a larger proportion of students who have met Tier 1 economic status, at 81.5%, compared to the overall district-wide FARMS data, at 33.4%.
- The prekindergarten four-year-old program has a larger proportion of students who have an IEP than the overall district, which is 10.6%. 6% of students (4 of 67) in Head Start have IEPs, 33% of students (5 of 15) in the private provider setting have IEPs, and 29% of students (64 of 217) in the public setting have IEPs.

## **Pillar 1: Early Childhood Education**

- The prekindergarten four-year-old program has a larger proportion of multilingual students compared to the overall district, which is 1.5%. 16% of students (11 out of 67) in Head Start are multilingual, 46% of students (7 out of 15) in the private provider setting are multilingual, and 12% of students (27 out of 217) in the public setting are multilingual.

In the school year 2022 – 2023, there were six full-day prekindergarten four-year-old programs.

In the school year 2023 – 2024, CCPS increased access to full-day four-year-old prekindergarten programming:

- The number of full-day general education prekindergarten programs has increased to 13, with at least one at each of the 12 elementary school buildings.
- The number of full-day special education prekindergarten programs decreased to two schools, one offered in the county's northern end and one in the southern end.
- The number of private provider partnerships increased by one.
- Continued partnership with Head Start that increased to four full-day prekindergarten programs.

In the school year 2024 – 2025, in partnership with Head Start, CCPS will increase access to full-day three-year-old programming:

- Head Start will move the three-year-old four-hour prekindergarten programs to full-day at two locations.

### **Challenge**

Moving forward, CCPS is challenged to identify new appropriate prekindergarten classroom spaces within current school buildings. Lack of adequate space limits the ability to increase additional prekindergarten classrooms.

### **Next Steps**

- Continue to work with School Construction during the 2024 – 2025 school year to identify additional spaces that could be retrofitted for prekindergarten for the 2025 – 2026 school year and beyond.
- Begin to work with the county government during the 2024 – 2025 school year to identify locations within the district that could be utilized to provide prekindergarten programming in 2026 - 2027, specifically to increase access for three-year-olds.
- Continue to work with private providers to encourage them to complete and submit the Prekindergarten Expansion grant application. Provide private providers with individual support in completing the grant application.

### **Accessing Full-Day Prekindergarten Programming for Four-Year-Olds**

During the 2023 – 2024 school year, CCPS enrolled 223 four-year-old students who met the Tier 1 income eligibility criteria. No student meeting Tier 1 income eligibility was denied access to a full-day prekindergarten program. Seven students could not be placed within their neighborhood school due to the limited slots available at each location. Additional transportation routes were created to accommodate students who needed to be enrolled outside their neighborhood school.

### **Challenge**

As of September 30<sup>th</sup>, CCPS had 42 unfilled slots for students who qualify under Tier 1 status. The system continues to reflect on whether or not we have met the enrollment needs for Tier 1 enrollment-eligible families or whether families are unaware of the free full-day prekindergarten programs offered by CCPS.



### Next Steps

- Continue advertising the prekindergarten program, such as signs, flyers, social media, website, family engagement nights, etc.
- Continue to work with the Office of Multi-Lingual Learners to identify and remove barriers for families in applying and registering for prekindergarten.
- Continue to work with the Student Services Department to identify and remove barriers for families who are experiencing homelessness.
- Continue working with the Special Education Department to identify and remove barriers for families with students identified with an Individual Education Plan (IEP).
- For school years 2024 – 2025 and beyond, expand advertising through collaboration with the local government and private agencies and expand our access to pediatricians and local churches.
- For school years 2024 – 2025 and beyond, begin advertising with local radio stations and the cable network.

### Providing High-Quality Prekindergarten Programming

To ensure that all students enrolled in prekindergarten programming receive high-quality instruction, CCPS adopted Three Cheers for PreK, provided additional support for students with IEPs in the general education setting, and provided professional learning to staff. The Departments of Special Education and Instruction have worked closely to support teachers and playful student learning.

- Three Cheers for PreK was purchased in the summer of 2023 for use in CCPS and Head Start classrooms. The program was supplemented to include Heggerty for phonological awareness skill development, the linear calendar to develop numeracy skills, and math whole group and small group activities from the Learning Trajectories and Developing Number Concepts in PreK.
- To support meeting the needs of diverse learners, CCPS provided professional learning to prekindergarten staff on the following concepts: inclusive practices, scaffolding, specially designed instruction, and specially designed accommodations, strategies to support early learning and behavioral skills, best practices in early childhood education, social foundations, behavior supports including collaborative problem solving, meeting sensory needs through play, and visual supports. The [Question 1 Professional Learning 2023 - 2024.docx](#) overviews the professional learning provided. Head Start staff and all local childcare providers were invited to and attended professional learning sessions facilitated by CCPS staff.
- Instructional assistants participated in professional learning focused on developmentally appropriate practices, social and behavioral support, and scaffolding.
- PLC meetings occurred bi-weekly, focusing on learning and behavior strategies to meet each child's needs.
- Prekindergarten staff received a digital newsletter each week that included a section on meeting the needs of diverse learners, particularly those with special needs (example: <https://www.smore.com/9y7zf-the-playful-minute>).

The instruction and special education departments have worked collaboratively to provide inclusive opportunities that were developmentally appropriate within the general education 4-year-old prekindergarten programs. CCPS moved from six self-contained 4-year-old special education regional programs to two self-contained regional program classes. All other children with classroom-based special education services are fully included in the general education setting. An instructional assistant was added to each of the general education 4-year-old classrooms. In addition, seven special educators are working with 4-year-old prekindergarten classes to provide



## Pillar 1: Early Childhood Education

specialized instruction. Three of the seven teachers work exclusively with pre-kindergarten as itinerant special education teachers.

- Special education teachers received additional professional learning on IEP development, writing goals, collaborating with general educators, and data collection. Collaborative planning is offered monthly for general educators to plan with their assigned special education partners, focusing on differentiation, scaffolds, and needed modifications.
- The Early Childhood leadership team has been expanded. A supervisor of early childhood has been added. She works collaboratively with the supervisor of special education overseeing early childhood programming, the early childhood teacher specialist, and the early childhood special education teacher specialist to develop program information and professional learning opportunities.

### Challenge

CCPS has identified, through teacher survey data collected at the end of the first and second marking periods, that supporting diverse learning needs and behaviors in the prekindergarten setting are the top two priority areas.

### Next Steps

- Review and revise curricular materials during the summer of 2024 to include learner support and playful learning experiences for students.
- Continue to provide professional learning on supporting students with diverse needs and/or behaviors.
- Provide additional training on the IEP process, collaboration between special and general educators, behavior support strategies, environmental supports, and data collection.
- Revise the school-based and district-level articulation processes to ensure that students' prekindergarten-to-kindergarten articulation has the needed support from the beginning of the kindergarten year. A similar process for children moving from 3-year-old special education programs to 4-year-old classrooms will be used. [Guidance for SE Early Childhood Reg Prog Articulation.docx](#) and [EXCELS.Admin 12.docx](#)

## 2. A High-Quality, Mixed-Delivery (Public And Private) Pre-K System

*Initial Blueprint Implementation Plan Reference: Questions 6 - 10 and 18*

In March 2023, the LEA described how it would collaborate with private providers to **implement a mixed-delivery Pre-K system and ensure every student has access to a high-quality Pre-K program.**

Responses included considerations for increasing access as discussed in the previous question as well as sharing data and information, providing comprehensive services, and leveraging shared resources.

Based on implementation of the LEA's plans over the last year, discuss the district's progress in transforming its systems and practices and achieving the intended outcomes of the Blueprint. Responses must address the following questions.

- What progress has been made in implementation related to both planned activities and anticipated outcomes? If progress has been limited, what challenges has the LEA encountered? Consider, identify, and refer to available data as needed to demonstrate progress.
- How is the LEA adapting its plans to mitigate challenges and/or ensure continued progress and future success? Which strategies are not working that the LEA will no longer implement, and which new strategies does the LEA intend to implement? Include the rationale for adjustments.

### Strategies to implement a high-quality, mixed-delivery Pre-K system

- Private Provider Participation
- Mixed Delivery Application System
- Leveraging Resources
- Data and Information Sharing
- Comprehensive Services for Students and Families

### Private Provider Participation

Calvert County Public Schools' mixed delivery system includes 13 general education prekindergarten classrooms, two special education prekindergarten classrooms, and five private provider classrooms, four provided through Head Start and one through a local childcare provider. The following table shares the percentage of PreK slots operated by CCPS and eligible private providers: [Question 2 Enrollment Data Charts.docx](#). CCPS is working with Head Start to write for the Expansion Grant to provide two new full-day, three-year-old prekindergarten classrooms. One new private provider is applying to support an additional 4-year-old prekindergarten classroom.

- For the 2023 – 2024 school year, the four Head Start four-year-old prekindergarten programs moved to full day.
- One childcare provider in the district was awarded the Prekindergarten Expansion grant and is in the first year of the three-year grant award. Each of the requirements outlined in the memorandum of understanding for Bright Beginnings ([Bright Beginnings MOU - MSDE.pdf](#)) has been met or exceeded.

### Challenges

Finding private providers interested in applying for and receiving approval from MSDE to be approved partners is challenging. For the 2023 – 2024 school year, CCPS is at 6% of prekindergarten slots provided by private providers. When Head Start classrooms are included in the data, the percentage rises to 24%. CCPS estimates that

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32% of slots will be from private providers for the 2024 – 2025 school year ([Question 2 Enrollment Data Charts.docx](#)). This does not meet the required percentage outlined in the Blueprint. Private providers in our district have provided the following reasons for not wanting to participate: meeting the staffing requirements, meeting the pay requirements, challenges in completing the MD EXCELS process, and it is not profitable, they currently do not have any openings, lack of staffing and supports to meet the diverse needs of children requiring high supports due to disabilities, and lack of space.

### Next Steps

- The Early Childhood staff continues to meet with Childcare Directors to encourage grant writing and field questions and provide guidance for writing for the Prekindergarten Expansion Grant and any future early childhood grants.
- For the school year 2024 – 2025, shifting support for childcare providers will focus on writing for the expansion grant and future early childhood grants to provide three-year-old slots.
- During the spring of 2024, CCPS will work with Head Start Staff on writing for the Prekindergarten Expansion Grant.

### Mixed Delivery Application System

CCPS developed and utilized a system for prekindergarten applications that provided one place for families to apply for their child to attend at CCPS, Head Start, or Bright Beginnings (a private provider). The applications are received and reviewed by CCPS staff. Families who meet the income eligibility requirements are contacted to share location options and request the family share their location preferences. Individual support is provided to parents to assist with the application and enrollment process.

- For the 2023 – 2024 school year, CCPS reviewed 690 applications. Based on income eligibility, 322 families were offered a slot (229 CCPS, 78 Head Start, and 15 Bright Beginnings). Every family that met the Tier 1 income eligibility standard was offered a slot.
- In the spring of 2023, the Early Childhood office, in collaboration with our Partners (Head Start, Judy Center, HIPPIY, Library, etc.), held a Prekindergarten Round-up Event to promote the program and support families in applying. At the event, prekindergarten and kindergarten readiness materials were shared.

### Challenges

CCPS continues to analyze the impact of using a sliding scale for students who are offered a slot but do not meet Tier One eligibility status. CCPS is addressing concerns regarding fee communication, fee collection, and staff monitoring of fee payments. A future challenge for CCPS is how we will handle the application process when the number of slots increases beyond one staff member's ability to work with families individually through the application and enrollment process.

### Next Steps

- Continue to hold Prekindergarten Round-up events throughout the county to ensure families are aware of the prekindergarten program and are supported in applying.
- Work with MSDE and other locals to determine the best process for introducing and implementing a sliding scale.

### Leveraging Resources

CCPS worked closely with Head Start to determine the Prekindergarten curriculum. They have also jointly purchased curriculum and instructional materials and scheduled professional learning. Bright Beginnings (a private provider) did not adopt the Three Cheers for Pre-K curriculum but is using Creative Curriculum, another MSDE-approved curriculum.

### Challenges

With decreased funding for the 2024 – 2025 school year, CCPS is challenged in providing staff or additional resources to private providers. CCPS will continue to invite private providers to all professional learning opportunities the system offers.

### Next Steps

- Continue to invite private providers to professional learning opportunities and share resources.
- Staffing model strategies to identify possibilities for CCPS staff to work in private provider settings have been delayed due to budget restrictions. CCPS will reevaluate this strategy when the budget deficit is addressed.
- During the 2024 – 2025 school year, CCPS will explore expanding the apprenticeship program to include child development. This would allow CCPS students to apprentice in Head Start and private provider partner locations in future years.

### Data and Information Sharing

CCPS works with private providers to establish a data and information-sharing system that meets student data's legal, privacy, and security requirements. CCPS works with private providers to share IEP data with parent consent. Providers are invited to participate in IEP meetings with parent consent. CCPS collaborates with private providers to provide systems for communicating information related to skills that are part of IEP data collection and support necessary for implementation. CCPS will provide professional learning to the private providers on how to use the data and sharing system and manage their data security. CCPS will work with the private providers to determine structures for communication and sharing of instructional resources. CCPS will need to review current applications that house student data (MD IEP, Assessment platforms, grading, enrollment, etc.) to determine how those applications can be shared with private providers. CCPS will explore best practices for sharing data with private providers that align with Policy 1925 Student Data Governance and Privacy and accompanying procedures 1925.1. An example would be using the Preschool Early Literacy Indicators (PELI) Assessment and the Acadience Data Management System to input data and view reports. CCPS currently uses this resource, and we could encourage private providers to use and share data.

### Challenges

- Private provider schedules do not always allow participation in IEP meetings due to a lack of classroom coverage.
- The PELI assessment is a purchased license. Some private providers chose not to purchase this assessment, creating a data disconnect between public and private providers.
- The PreK report card CCPS uses is not housed in a system that allows external use. Therefore, Head Start and other private providers cannot access it, creating a data gap.

### Next Steps

- CCPS will use the MD Early Learning Assessment next school year. This is a free assessment. Training will be provided to CCPS PreK staff and offered to private providers free of charge.
- IEP clerks will work with private providers to try to schedule IEP meetings at times that work for the private providers to attend.
- The early childhood leadership team is working with Head Start and the IT department to make the report card usable for the Head Start program.
- Head Start will complete student articulation forms for all children and participate in articulation meetings for children with high support needs.

### Comprehensive Services for Students and Families

CCPS collaborates with private providers, key county agencies, and community partners to ensure that students and families can access comprehensive services. Through this collaboration, similar services are available to students who attend public schools and students at the private provider location.

Children enrolled in CCPS PreK follow the CCPS guidelines for the Student Services Team (SST) and referral process for services. Children who have received Individual Family Support Plan (IFSP) services through the Infants and Toddlers (ITP) Program receive their services through the extended IFSP process with ITP staff in the childcare setting until they age out of extended IFSP, are dismissed or transition to an IEP by parent choice. Once these children who have received services through ITP transition to an IEP, they receive services coordinated by the home school's IEP process, including planning for the services to be provided in a childcare setting if appropriate to meet the child's needs. Students enrolled in private provider settings who need to be screened for delays or suspected disabilities go through the Child Find Program process. A process is being implemented to provide social foundations and behavioral support to families and private providers through digital materials and recorded training before children are referred to Child Find for concerns in these areas.

### Challenges

- Family interest or ability to attend family nights was very low, with only two families registering. Events were scheduled at several locations but moved to a centralized location due to a lack of registration.
- Families and childcare providers have shared through surveys the need for social, emotional, and behavioral support.
- Families experiencing homelessness may not be aware of the resources available.

### Next Steps

- Materials will be sent home to all PreK students next school year to provide hands-on, developmentally appropriate, playful learning games each month for families to engage in early learning activities at home.
- The CCPS Infant and Toddler Program, Child Find, and service providers from the Department of Special Education support childcare providers with social and emotional support strategies. For students with an IEP in those settings, a CCPS special educator works with center teachers to support the children.
- Family training materials, including videos and recorded PowerPoint presentations, will be created to help families meet their children's behavioral and social needs.
- Families experiencing homelessness will work with the McKinney-Vento Coordinator to access available community resources.

**3. Workforce Development and Pipelines for High-Quality Pre-K Staff**

*Initial Blueprint Implementation Plan Reference: Questions 19 - 22*

In March 2023, the LEA described its plan to **develop its workforce and build pipelines for teachers and teacher assistants that meet the high-quality requirements.**

Responses addressed providing professional development related to the instructional program and high-quality instructional materials discussed in Pillar 3, using a diverse set of strategies to build the Pre-K teacher and teacher assistant pipelines, supporting teachers and teacher assistants in meeting the credentialing requirements set forth by the Blueprint by the beginning of SY 2027-2028, and communicating opportunities to current and prospective employees.

Based on implementation of the LEA’s plans over the last year, discuss the district’s progress in transforming its systems and practices and achieving the intended outcomes of the Blueprint. Responses must address the following questions.

- What progress has been made in implementation related to both planned activities and anticipated outcomes? If progress has been limited, what challenges has the LEA encountered? Consider, identify, and refer to available data as needed to demonstrate progress.
- How is the LEA adapting its plans to mitigate challenges and/or ensure continued progress and future success? Which strategies are not working that the LEA will no longer implement, and which new strategies does the LEA intend to implement? Include the rationale for adjustments.

Required Data Analysis: Through an analysis of data, discuss progress towards meeting the Blueprint Outcome of Pre-K teachers and teacher assistants meeting high-quality requirements.

**Strategies to Develop Workforce and Pipeline for High-Quality Pre-K Staff**

- Training and Professional Development
- Developing Teaching Assistants
- Developing High-Quality ESE Staff Projections

**Training and Professional Development**

CCPS partners with Head Start and works collaboratively on curriculum and professional learning for all prekindergarten staff. CCPS invites private providers, including those with the PreK expansion grant and other childcare and private preschool providers, to receive training and professional learning related to the implementation of the instructional program and high-quality instructional materials to ensure all preschool providers in the community have access to a strong knowledge base across early learning domains. A comprehensive professional learning model ([Question 3 Professional Learning 2023 - 2024.docx](#)) is used to deliver training, including in-person and virtual options. Sessions occur during the contractual day, with additional optional evening sessions to deepen knowledge. At the end of each professional development session, staff complete surveys to determine mastery of professional learning content and allow the early childhood leadership team to plan for future professional learning opportunities. CCPS prekindergarten and Head Start teachers also participate in Early Childhood Language Essentials for Teachers of Reading and Spelling (EC LETRS) training. Nine prekindergarten teachers have completed the training, and 21 are participating. The learning management platform, Schoology, is used to share resources and curriculum. The Kindergarten Readiness Assessment (KRA)

## Pillar 1: Early Childhood Education

domain data and other formal and informal assessments inform professional learning needs in collaboration with content area supervisors and specialists. Hands-on, developmentally appropriate, playful learning materials are modeled and shared with staff at each professional development to further the implementation of our CCPS early childhood philosophy statement in all PreK settings.

### Challenges

- The CCPS calendar includes limited professional learning days designated for the central office to access staff. With limited access, CCPS has been challenged to provide the professional learning needed to support teachers and teacher assistants in the shift to full-day inclusive PreK and implementing a new curriculum. As a result, additional professional learning is needed.
- Childcare and private preschool providers are often unavailable to attend training at times provided for CCPS staff within the CCPS contractual day due to the need for staff to cover their programs.
- CCPS requires special education staff to attend specialized sessions related to SDI and IEPs on central office-designated professional learning days. Simultaneously, the general education PreK staff receives training on the PreK curriculum and on meeting diverse student needs. As a result, special and general educators do not always receive the same information, creating barriers to collaborative planning and implementing instruction with a common understanding.

### Next Steps

- Continue providing ongoing communication through the weekly PreK staff newsletter “The Playful Minute.” (<https://www.smore.com/9y7zf-the-playful-minute>) This includes ideas for implementing the curriculum, tools for meeting diverse needs, and hands-on playful learning ideas. This newsletter is currently shared with PreK and Head Start staff. During the 2024-2025 school year, CCPS will begin sharing it with other private providers. It is more beneficial to private providers if they use the same curriculum as CCPS, Three Cheers for PreK, but ideas can be used with other curriculums.
- CCPS will continue inviting childcare and private preschool providers to our professional learning sessions during the contractual day. We have also partnered with a local early education consultant to hold evening workshops that private providers, childcare staff, and CCPS PreK staff are invited to attend.
- During the 2024-2025 school year, the special education and instruction departments will work collaboratively to evaluate the professional learning needs of all staff. The early childhood special education teacher specialist will continue to serve as a bridge between professional learning opportunities by presenting sessions to general education PreK staff aligned with SDI and the IEP process. She will work with the early childhood education supervisor to ensure that the special education staff are provided with professional learning similar to that of the general educators.
- The early childhood leadership team will continue meeting weekly to discuss professional development needs based on observations and staff feedback.
- Each year, the early childhood leadership team will identify which teachers have not completed the early childhood Language Essentials for Teachers of Reading and Spelling (LETRS) training and develop a schedule for completion.
- During the 2024-2025 school year, special educators and general education PreK teachers will be given ½ days to meet each month to plan to focus on specially designed instruction and accommodations to meet each learner’s needs.



### Developing Teaching Assistants

CCPS supports teaching assistants in obtaining the credential requirements set forth by the blueprint. CCPS has 39 teaching assistants supporting the prekindergarten setting. Of the 39 teaching assistant positions, 16 meet the qualifications outlined in the Blueprint, and 18 are pursuing. The following document shares the current status of teaching assistant credentials: [Question 3 Teacher Assistant Credential Status.docx](#). In addition to the professional learning teaching assistants receive alongside their teacher partners, the early childhood leadership team offers 2-hour sessions approximately monthly to broaden their skills while providing CDA credit hours. To assist teaching assistants in obtaining their CDA credential, the following support has been provided:

- Teaching Assistants receive ongoing support directly from the Prekindergarten Program Specialist as they complete the CDA credentialing process. The Prekindergarten Program Specialist serves as a coach, coaching and guiding potential candidates through the CDA process.
- The Prekindergarten Program Specialist developed a standard CDA portfolio binder to support Teaching Assistants in building their CDA Portfolio.
- Information Sessions are held periodically to provide Technical Assistance with detailed information and updates on the CDA credentialing process.
- Each Instructional Assistant completing the CDA process has access to a folder in SharePoint that includes a CDA progress tracker, training log, and all their training documentation.
- The Prekindergarten Program Specialist reviews and verifies the teaching assistant's CDA portfolio documentation before their verification visit.
- During the 2023 – 2024 school year, a partnership with Maryland Family Network was established to grant teaching assistants access to vouchers for the CDA competency book and CDA application.

### Challenges

- There is a lack of interest to start the CDA process. Some staff have indicated they will be retiring or completing their associate degree before the June 30, 2027, deadline. This may pose a challenge if staff decide not to retire or complete their designated degree pathway by the date.
- Only a limited number of applicants for teaching assistant positions meet the minimum qualifications outlined in the Blueprint.

### Next Steps

- Teaching assistants can obtain their associate degree using tuition funding in their contract. The Human Resources Department will communicate the tuition reimbursement with teaching assistants who would rather earn an associate's degree than a CDA. The associate degree earned could be a foundation toward a bachelor's degree to become an early childhood teacher.
- The Prekindergarten Program Specialist tracks instructional assistant credentials (CDA, Degree, HS Diploma) on the annual PreK staff roster (Word Document). The Department of Human Resources will develop a system for tracking and reporting on teaching assistant's credentials during the 2024-2025 school year and for future years.
- CCPS will expand its offer of CDA support to kindergarten teaching assistants in the 2024-2025 school year, giving the system more flexibility in staffing prekindergarten programs with qualified staff.

### **Developing High-Quality ECE Staff Projections**

CCPS currently staffs prekindergarten programs with one teacher and two teacher assistants for every 20 students. Head Start staffs prekindergarten programs with an instructor, two teaching assistants, and transition workers for every 15 students. The private provider setting is staffed with one teacher and one teacher assistant for every 15 students. Currently, CCPS does not project the need for additional staffing, and there are no increases in the number of slots available for the 2024 – 2025 school year ([Question 3 Staffing.docx](#)). Head Start does not project the need for additional staffing as they are utilizing current staff by moving half-day programming to full-day programming for 3-year-olds for the 2024 – 2025 school year.

### **Challenges**

CCPS is challenged to maintain high-quality general and special education early childhood staff when current staff transfer to a different grade level, retire or leave the system.

### **Next Steps**

- During the summer of 2024, early childhood leadership staff will identify key professional learning provided during the 2023 – 2024 school year that all new prekindergarten staff will need. This will help fill in the gaps in learning for newly hired staff.
- Each year, early childhood leadership and the Department of Human Resources will collaborate on staffing projections and work toward offering contingent contracts to fill projected early childhood vacancies.
- During the 2024 – 2025 school year, early childhood leadership will collaborate with Career Technology leadership to expand the apprenticeship program to include child development. This will support future teacher assistants and teaching positions.

4. **NEW - Kindergarten Readiness:** Discuss the LEA’s plans to **ensure all students in Pre-K programs, public and private, are ready for kindergarten.** Plans should include strategies for supporting the development and implementation of the instructional program in mixed-delivery settings and using data (e.g., Kindergarten Readiness Assessment) to adapt instruction.

Considerations:

- Private provider collaboration
- Selection and use of materials
- Teacher training and professional development
- Resource sharing
- Specific instructional strategies for early learning
- Transition from half-day to full-day Pre-K
- Alignment between Pre-K and K-2
- Transition into Pre-K and from Pre-K to Kindergarten
- Student groups (special education, multilingual learners, students experiencing homelessness)

Required Data Analysis: Through an analysis of data, discuss progress towards meeting the Blueprint Outcome of ensuring all Pre-K students are ready for kindergarten.

### **Strategies to Ensure All Students are Ready for Kindergarten**

- Shift to Playful Learning
- Curriculum and Learning Materials
- Private Provider Partnership
- Professional Learning
- Transitioning to PreK

#### **Shift to Playful Learning**

CCPS shifted the PreK instructional focus from traditional K-12 strategies to playful learning. This shift was necessary due to data trends showing children who attended CCPS PreK often demonstrated school readiness on the KRA but underperformed compared to peers by the end of 2<sup>nd</sup> grade. Upon researching, we found that children from more affluent backgrounds frequently had early care experiences focused on play. Research shows that play is essential in developing higher-order thinking, logic, and social foundations. The National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) promotes playful learning, combining student-centered and teacher-led play experiences. We have aligned our CCPS Early Childhood philosophy with NAEYC’s position statements on developmentally appropriate practices and equity ([philosophy and DAP.docx](#)). Staff participated in a summer book study on playful learning titled Serious Fun. Additional summer professional development opportunities allowed hands-on application of the learning to create materials and plans to begin implementation from the start of the school year. Professional development throughout the year has always tied back to the CCPS Early Childhood philosophy statement to be grounded in our playful learning work. [PreK Staff Handbook.docx](#)

#### **Curriculum and Learning Materials**

CCPS went through a curriculum selection process and found Three Cheers for PreK to be the best option for a comprehensive, developmentally appropriate curriculum. The curriculum committee included supervisors from instruction and special education departments, learning specialists, and PreK teachers. Team members represented

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all developmental domains to ensure the content area curriculum aligned with K-2 content practices in CCPS. As a leadership team, we met with consultants from the Three Cheers for PreK curriculum to develop an implementation plan. The consultants then worked directly with PreK and Head Start staff to present the curriculum and its components.

When selecting the curriculum, instructional supervisors and specialists from each content area weighed in to ensure alignment between Three Cheers for PreK and best practices in K-2. In math, a linear calendar and daily number sense routines are implemented and continued through 1<sup>st</sup> grade, aligning the focus with each grade level's standards. In English Language Arts, Heggerty is implemented to support phonological awareness skill development. Early childhood team leaders attend monthly meetings with the math and literacy leadership teams to promote cohesive expectations and practices from PreK-2.

### Private Provider Partnership

CCPS partners with Bright Beginnings Children's Center to provide ongoing family nights aligned with developmental domains to promote K Readiness skills. We have also provided training courses to childcare staff on behavior, playful learning, and developmentally appropriate instruction to foster K readiness for children attending home childcare and center-based instruction. Childcare staff have been invited to participate in CCPS district-level professional development provided to our PreK Staff. Head Start participates in all CCPS PreK professional learning community meetings. They use Three Cheers for PreK, our state-approved, developmentally appropriate curriculum. Head Start staff also attend CCPS PreK professional development sessions to plan and implement the curriculum to fidelity while adjusting instruction for individual learners to meet various development needs.

CCPS hosts quarterly family engagement nights based on The Basics. Head Start, Judy Center, Home Instruction for Parents of Preschool Youngsters (HIPPO) Healthy Families, Calvert Library, Calvert Family Resource Network, Child Find, and CCPS Infant and Toddlers collaborate with Early Childhood staff to share resources with families and childcare providers aligned with the five basics to cover all developmental areas. CCPS openly shares the lists of items purchased to supplement the curriculum with Head Start and private providers to ensure consistency of implementation.

### Professional Learning

Professional learning on inclusive practices, scaffolding, and specially designed instruction, including early learning and behavioral skills, has been provided for teachers and instructional assistants at each system-wide professional development day. ([Question 4 Professional Learning 2023 - 2024.docx](#)) The Early Childhood Special Education Teacher Specialist provided these sessions along with CCPS behavior team members. PreK teachers are participating in Early Childhood LETRS so that our literacy instruction aligns with the science of reading. A weekly digital newsletter is provided to prekindergarten staff that includes a section on meeting the needs of diverse learners, particularly those with special needs (example: <https://www.smores.com/9y7zf-the-playful-minute>).

PLC meetings occur at least monthly, each focusing on a part of the school day that includes strategies for meeting every child's needs. Each meeting focuses on a component of Three Cheers for PreK, outlines the expectations from the CCPS PreK handbook for that area, provides hands-on materials for classroom use, and refers back to our CCPS Early Childhood philosophy statement that guides our work. During professional development days, staff has been provided extensive training on planning aligned with Maryland Early Learning Standards and

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Developmentally Appropriate Practices. Model lesson plans have been shared and staff have been given opportunities to work collaboratively to develop plans that include scaffolding, individualized supports, and extensions to meet the needs of all children.

Teaching assistants have attended choice sessions on each 2-hr early dismissal or arrival that was not designated as school-based professional development to enhance their skills in developmentally appropriate practices, social and behavioral supports, and scaffolding.

All prekindergarten staff have opportunities to attend professional development sessions hosted by the departments of special education and instruction aligned with best practices in early childhood education, social foundations, and behavior supports, including collaborative problem solving, meeting sensory needs through play, and visual supports. Special education staff working with prekindergarten have received additional training on IEP development, writing goals, collaborating with general educators, and data collection. Collaborative planning is offered monthly for general educators to plan with their assigned special education partners, focusing on differentiation, scaffolds, and needed modifications. Kindergarten Readiness Assessment data was used to inform developmental domain areas needing focus to improve systemic performance.

### Transitioning to PreK

CCPS has Staggered Start days to transition children from their homes, community childcare settings, and private preschool to the PreK program. Families register for conference times for two days that work best with their schedules. Parents or caregivers meet with the teacher to share information about their child while the teaching assistants interact with the child through play to help them adjust to the classroom setting and reduce anxiety about coming to school. Special educators and related service providers also attend these conferences to ensure families are given the opportunity to share information about their children's strengths and needs with all educators involved in the child's care. Families and prior educators, including childcare and public-school providers, of children with special health care needs also have articulation and health planning meetings beyond the Staggered Start conferences. As needed, the school nurse coordinates a meeting to create a health care plan for the school team. Information on children's progress on IEP goals and objectives is shared with families through quarterly progress reports as well as IEP meetings at least annually that include present levels of performance, strengths, and needs, and goal development for the next calendar year. All children receive report cards aligned with developmental milestones and the Maryland Early Learning Standards three times during the school year while participating in the 4-year-old prekindergarten program.

### Challenges

- PreK teachers have shared the challenges of shifting to a more inclusive PreK model in which more children with disabilities are placed in general education settings. They have shared that they did not have adequate information about each child to feel prepared to best meet their needs at the start of the school year.
- The 2023 – 2024 KRA data shows that 45.9% of K students demonstrate readiness in comparison to 20.5% of students with disabilities demonstrating readiness.
- The 2023 - 2023 KRA data shows that 4.3% of multilingual students demonstrate readiness. This group significantly underperforms their peers on this assessment.

### Next Steps

- The school-based and district-level articulation processes have been revised to ensure prekindergarten to kindergarten articulation so that students have the needed support from the beginning of the kindergarten year. Children with disabilities who have IEPs have additional transition plans in place. Calvert County Public Schools has processes and procedures for case managers from Infants and Toddlers or Special Education 3-Year-Old Program teachers to complete articulation forms as well as teacher-to-teacher communication packets (both files are uploaded) to share information about a child's strengths, needs, and preferences to aid in the transition process. Articulation meetings are also held for these children. These meetings consist of the prior educators, which may include special educators, general educators, teaching assistants, related service providers, teacher specialists, and administrators dependent on the child's services and prior placement. During articulation meetings, the current educators meet with the team of educators for the 4-year-old prekindergarten program before the start of the school year and with the kindergarten team at the end of the year. These strength-based meetings focus on inclusive opportunities for the child to meaningfully participate with peers and engage in classroom tasks while setting a high bar for learning outcomes. Scaffolds, supports, and environmental needs are shared so teams of educators can proactively prepare for each learner. Copies of articulation forms, meeting notes from articulation meetings, and teacher-to-teacher communication packets are sent to receiving schools with copies earmarked for the receiving teacher and IEP chairperson. A similar process has been implemented for children moving from 3-year-old special education programs to 4-year-old classrooms.
- In response to the data trend of students with disabilities underperforming on the KRA compared to peers, CCPS has shifted from most children with classroom instruction-based IEPs receiving services in separate special education regional programs to most children attending general education PreK in their home schools and receiving services alongside nondisabled peers. Training will continue for general and special education staff to enhance their skills in inclusive practices. The early childhood special education teacher specialist will continue to provide support in classrooms and professional development sessions on tools to meet diverse learners' needs.
- CCPS is addressing the data trend of multilingual learners underperforming on the KRA through training and practices to support students with diverse learning needs, including communication boards, visual schedules, pairing auditory directions with visual supports, and limiting verbal directives when children are overwhelmed. These tools are strategies used in K-12 to support English Language Learners. Three Cheers for PreK offers literature and newsletters in multiple languages to encourage family engagement.
- CCPS will continue working with the McKinney-Veto coordinator to ensure that all children experiencing homelessness have access to PreK programs and that families of these children are linked with the needed community resources.

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### 5. A High-Quality and Diverse Teacher Workforce

*Initial Blueprint Implementation Plan Reference: Questions 28 - 36*

In March 2023, the LEA described how it would **recruit and hire a high-quality and diverse teacher workforce**.

Responses included identifying the most critical hiring needs, strategies for recruiting and hiring a diverse workforce, and how the LEA would partner with institutions of higher education and educator preparation programs to build talent pipelines in response to its needs (e.g., strategic placement and support of teacher candidates, full certification of conditionally certified teachers, grow your own programs, alternative preparation programs, etc.).

Based on implementation of the LEA's plans over the last year, discuss the district's progress in transforming its systems and practices and achieving the intended outcomes of the Blueprint. Responses must address the following questions.

- What progress has been made in implementation related to both planned activities and anticipated outcomes? If progress has been limited, what challenges has the LEA encountered? Consider, identify, and refer to available data as needed to demonstrate progress.
- How is the LEA adapting its plans to mitigate challenges and/or ensure continued progress and future success? Which strategies are not working that the LEA will no longer implement, and which new strategies does the LEA intend to implement? Include the rationale for adjustments.

Required Data Analysis: Through an analysis of data, discuss progress towards meeting the Blueprint Outcome of Pre-K teachers and teacher assistants meeting high-quality requirements.

### Strategies to Recruit and Hire a High-Quality and Diverse Teacher Workforce

- Recruitment and Support Strategies
- Grow your Own Program: This program offers financial support for students that were enrolled in the Teacher Academy of Maryland program who wish to become teachers. As a result of this program, CCPS was able to hire 6 former TAM students that accepted the scholarship.
- Mentoring and Induction

### Summary of Progress

Our systemwide priority #1 is to develop strong leaders and teachers. While our certificated staff is experienced and a source of internal expertise that we value and aim to leverage, there are two areas that we are actively working to improve upon: (1) increasing the diversity of our certificated staff and (2) hiring teachers and staff in high need areas, including staff to support students' social-emotional learning.

The recruitment of minority teachers remains a strategic priority for CCPS. The CCPS Board of Education voted for the continuance of Policy 1018 regarding Antiracism, which affirms CCPS' unwavering commitment to antiracism. It outlines our procedures to provide annual interview bias training, equity in interview questions, recruitment at Historically Black Colleges and Universities and a support system for non-certificated staff to gain



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teacher certification. From 2018 to 2023, the proportion of minority certificated staff members increased from 9.9% to 11.5%. Preliminary data for the 2023-2024 academic year indicates a slight rise to 11.8%. Although there has been progress in diversifying our certificated staff, the rate of increase has not met our expectations. Our objective is to align the percentage of minority certificated staff with that of our student body.

Our initiatives in this area are designed to bolster our broader objectives. As an integral component of this effort, we have established Employee Resource Groups specifically tailored for minority teaching staff to enhance retention. Additionally, we persist in leveraging the Grow Your Own Program to cultivate a robust pipeline of future educators from within our community. These measures are foundational to our commitment to fostering a diverse workforce.

### **Recruitment and Retention**

CCPS has increased recruitment efforts at diverse college and university campuses. During the 2023-24 school year, we visited 24 campuses (including two Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCU)) and participated in four education career fairs, one of which was the Maryland HBCU career fair, which has resulted in multiple potential candidates. We also modified our hiring procedures by proactively offering contingent contracts to candidates prior to knowing available positions. Last school year we were able to offer 40 contingent contracts and this year we were only able to offer two, which resulted in being able to offer highly qualified minority candidates positions prior to other school systems. Through the implementation of offering contingent contracts, CCPS has been able to hire high-quality and diverse teacher candidates. Internally, planning has continued for the offering of employee resource groups with implementation to begin in the Fall of 2024. And Human Resources and district leaders have prioritized annual training for those involved in the interview process, focusing on reducing interview bias.

### **Challenges**

- The lack of minority applicants and a decrease in the overall number of applicants has been a challenge. Colleges and Universities are not graduating enough teachers to fill all vacancies.
- While recruiting at HBCU, minority candidates have not shown an active interest in moving to Calvert County. For example, at the Virtual HBCU Career Fair, we had only one candidate in two years sign up to meet with representatives from our school system.
- The hiring for high-need areas, such as related service providers and school psychologists continues to be a challenge.
- Budget constraints to have limited our recent ability to offer contingent contracts, which likely reduced our ability access and potentially hire high quality and diverse candidates.

### **Next Steps**

- We will continue recruitment efforts at diverse colleges and universities and expand to additional areas outside of MD. We will target schools in which many of our local graduates have attended.
- Our original plan included the continued issuance of contingent contracts to prospective staff. However, due to budgetary constraints currently facing the school system, we must temporarily suspend this practice. We are actively exploring alternative strategies to address this challenge and will resume offering contingent contracts as soon as fiscal conditions permit.

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### Grow your Own Program

CCPS used the Grow your Own program with to provide current Instructional Aides with the opportunity to earn degree and certification began in June 2022; however, additional opportunities for the program need to be provided annually. Over the past two years, CCPS's Grow Your Own Teachers scholarship was expanded from a narrow list of teaching majors to include ALL teaching majors. Teachers Academy of Maryland completing students are eligible for \$1,500/semester for four years. In return, these students agree to provide one year of teaching service to CCPS for each year of scholarship provided. For the SY23-24, 6 past TAM graduates were eligible for teaching service as part of this agreement. Of the 6 TAM graduates eligible for the scholarship, all 6 TAM graduates were hired to teach in the Calvert County Public Schools for the 2024-2025 school year.

### Challenges

As we emerged from the pandemic, enrollment in TAM has declined significantly. For instance, we typically see ample enrollment in a first TAM course (through CTE participation); however, these students do not continue to concentration or completion stages. To understand why students are not completing, we have formally and informally spoken with students to identify barriers. Students tend to provide the following reasons:

- **Scheduling and Preference for other Courses.** Students' desire to take additional electives or advanced placement courses does not allow room in the schedule to meet the demands in senior year of TAM for a minimum of 2 period to accommodate the final TAM course in addition to the internship.
- **Preference for Advanced Placement Courses.** Students have stated that they prefer to take AP courses which over an additional 1.0 of weighting vs. unweighted TAM courses as the weighted courses are more likely to improve overall class rank.
- **General Interest.** Students participating in a first TAM course sometimes decide, upon exploration, that they no longer are interested in pursuing teaching.

### Next Steps

To support Instructional Aides, we plan to provide additional opportunities to educate staff on the Grow your Own program, working with principals and school leaders to encourage staff to pursue teaching degrees.

For Students who enroll in the TAM course of study, two next steps will be taken:

- We will pair those first-year TAM students with upper-level TAM students or possibly NBC teachers to mentor and encourage the students to continue.
- We will explore how to use the CCR pathways to better align existing course opportunities (e.g., Advanced Placement courses) with the required TAM courses. For instance, we anticipate examine the four comprehensive high schools' prioritization of encouraging students to enroll in the TAM program. This may include offering incentives (such as weighting) to students as well as looking closely at scheduling options which allow students to pursue an early college program in addition to TAM program courses.

### Mentoring and Induction

The CCPS Induction program has brought an added advantage in attracting potential high-quality and diverse candidates during recruitment. Through this program, teachers are provided with mentor support over the first three years. These mentors are full-time teachers who work with up to 4 teachers. All new hires are provided with

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a mentor in their building. Teachers who are new to the profession have the option to opt into additional support that is provided by a full-time release mentor (three in the district) who provides coaching cycles focused on instructional practice. This aspect of mentoring was developed through funding from the Maryland Leads Grant and a partnership with the New Teacher Center. The support of the full-time mentor positions has supported the acceleration of instructional practice of teachers new to the profession and retention. Feedback from participants working with the full-time release mentors has been positive indicating that their support has helped them to grow as teachers.

### **Challenges**

The Maryland Lead Grant is ending. With the loss of the grant funding and the reduction in State Aid, CCPS will no longer be able to support the full-time mentor positions. Teachers new to CCPS will still be provided a mentor, they will not have the support of coaching that occurs within the school day. Our standard mentoring support includes the pairing of an expert teacher as a “buddy mentor” with four new teachers, to provide support throughout the year.

### **Next Steps**

- Utilize some of the remaining funds from the Maryland Leads grant to provide support during the summer for New Hires.
- Continue to work with the New Teacher Center in providing professional learning to mentors.
- Identify possible funding sources that would allow CCPS to have full-time release mentors to support teachers new to CCPS.
- As the Career Ladder and Teacher Leadership roles are operationalized, we plan to explore ways to pair teacher leaders with new teachers, to build teacher capacity across the system.

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### 6. NEW - A High-Quality and Diverse Corps of School Leaders

For the March 2024 submission, the LEA must also discuss how it **recruits and hires a high-quality and diverse corps of school leaders, including its collaboration with institutions of higher education and other organizations to build leadership pipelines**. Consider the potential impact of the Career Ladder and how the LEA will adapt its plans to address any challenges (e.g., National Board Certification for future school leaders, smaller candidate pools if teachers remain in classrooms, etc.).

**Required Data Analysis: Through an analysis of data, discuss progress towards meeting the district’s staffing needs and the Blueprint outcome of recruiting and hiring high-quality and diverse leaders.**

#### Strategies to Recruit and Hire a High-Quality and Diverse Corp of School Leaders

- Next Level Leadership Academy
- Principal Mentoring and Leadership Development
- Partnerships with Institutes of Higher Education
- Leverage Career Ladder Teacher and Leadership Levels

#### Introduction

As described in our Systemwide Response, building strong leaders and teachers, including diversifying, and ensuring a high-quality workforce, is a key district priority. Calvert County’s approach to leadership development includes our focus on hiring diverse and high-qualified professionals and then building the capacity of teachers, teacher leaders, and administrators (including assistant principals and principals) through ongoing professional development and professional learning opportunities. As the Career Ladder is finalized and we define the characteristics (e.g., roles, responsibilities, and key attributes) of leaders across the system (including teachers), current and to-be-developed professional learning opportunities will support professionals to move through the teacher and leadership levels. Leadership development begins with hiring and recruitment (as described in the question); however, our focus is on building leaders within our system – to build an internal pipeline of leaders – rather than relying on recruitment of leaders from outside.

Our strategies to build strong leaders across our system include partnering with IHEs, professional learning through a Next Level Leadership Academy, mentoring and leadership development, and leveraging the career ladder leadership tracks.

Over the past three years (2021 to 2023), our school leadership has remained consistent. We have seen an increase in the number of female principals and assistant principals from 55 to 57, now representing 71.3% of the total. Females make up 80.5% of our professional staff. We have hired two additional African American principals and assistant principals over the last three years, bringing their representation to 17.5% compared to our African American student population of 13.8%. However, the number of racial minority principals and assistant principals has decreased by one. CCPS aimed for the Next Level Leadership Academy cohort to reflect the racial demographics of our student population. We had four racial minority participants out of twenty-eight (14.3%), compared to 11.8% of CCPS professional staff and 34.7% of our students. Next year, we will work with principals to encourage their minority teachers to apply and participate in the Next Level Leadership Academy. The Next Level Leaders application is sent to all staff in an email, just as we do for job opportunities. Principals will be asked to encourage minority teachers to apply for these opportunities. CCPS will offer informational sessions.

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Calvert County has developed Employee Resource Groups (ERGs) to support our diverse staff. Opportunities within Calvert County for teachers will be shared during meetings.

The response should explain how that will be done through marketing communications, information sessions, and other strategies.

	SY 2024				SY 2022			
	Total	Female	African American	Other Minority	Total	Female	African American	Other Minority
<b>All Principals</b>	24	15	4	2	24	11	3	2
Elementary	12	8	0	2	12	6	1	1
Middle/Combined	7	4	2	0	7	4	1	0
High School	5	3	2	0	5	1	1	1
<b>All Assistant Principals</b>	56	42	10	1	55	44	9	4
Elementary	24	23	5	1	25	24	5	2
Middle/Combined	13	9	2	0	13	10	1	2
High School	19	10	3	0	17	10	3	0

### Next Level Leadership Academy

In 2022, we partnered with the Region 4 Comprehensive Center (R4CC) and launched a ten-month, accelerated professional learning experience designed to build strong leaders aligned with the Blueprint’s Career Ladder Level 3 positions in a grow your own model. Gradually the Calvert County team has taken over more of the responsibility for the training. Our goal is to take full responsibility for the training beginning with the spring 2024 cohort of aspiring leaders. A total of 60 staff members have participated in this leadership opportunity in the past two years. Marketing and communication to school leadership, through email, targeted invitations, and principal recommendations are used to identify those within our system with the potential and desire to serve as administrators. Additionally, employees in leadership positions, including teacher leadership positions, were targeted for inclusion in the program, and has included. Deans, core leads, team leaders, and SST (Student Services Team) coordinators.

### Next Step

We have advertised for and will be selecting candidates for next year’s cohort of future leaders in CCPS. Although the partnership with R4CC will not continue, we are in a position to sustain the program and will begin with our new cohort at the end of this school year.

### Principal Mentoring and Leadership Development

Calvert County developed and implemented a principal mentoring position, which has been in place for the past two years. The designated mentor worked with and supported all 24 principals and principals in their first three years. Support included monthly meetings with individual principals, surveys to assess their needs and being on call to answer questions and address concerns.

#### Year 1 Support

Last year there were 11 principals in their first 3 years who regularly met with the principal mentor. All 11 returned this year in their principal positions. There were 205 visits and meetings with principals last year. On the end of year survey provided to the principals, all 11 responded that the principal mentor position was a

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positive resource and helped them in their roles as principals. One piece of feedback that was implemented this year was the suggestion to create ongoing agenda items that would be covered at the monthly scheduled meetings.

### **Year 2 Support**

The principal mentor again supported all 24 principals in some capacity with the primary focus on 13 principals who are in their first 3 years, including 4 new principals. Thus far, 160 meetings and school visits have occurred. Two principals from the group have requested placement in another position, deciding the principalship is not for them. Principals will not complete the evaluation survey until the end of the school year.

### **Challenge and Next Step**

While the position of principal mentor will not be in place for next year, there is a plan to continue supporting the systems principals. The plan is still being formulated. Part of the plan will involve assigning veteran principals as mentors to principals in their first two years.

### **Partnerships with Institutes of Higher Education**

CCPS maintains student teacher partnerships with Bowie State, McDaniel, and College of Notre Dame, Student Teacher partnerships with Bowie State, McDaniel, and College of Notre Dame. The response to Question 8 provides details on our partnerships with each IHE. Additionally, our Project Lead the Way Teacher Academy for Juniors and Seniors provides students with internship opportunities. For leaders, graduate level cohorts of students (Masters and Doctorate) attend the University of Maryland, McDaniel, Bowie State, and the College of Notre Dame.

### **Leverage Career Ladder Teacher and Leadership Levels**

Technical aspects (e.g., financial) of the Career Ladder will be operational beginning in SY24-25. Key next steps include designing and aligning the leadership competencies of the leadership and teacher tracks with our system goals and professional development, in addition to using NBC as the primary criteria for teachers and leaders' movement within the career ladder.

### **Challenges and Opportunity**

Like many districts, principals and assistant principals play a crucial role in improving instruction and maintaining strong professional learning environments for teachers and students. Also, our principals and assistant principals have established roles and responsibilities that have been institutionalized over time. Our next step—as a district and using the expertise of our existing school leaders—is to revisit extant roles and responsibilities and craft an updated profile of leadership competencies that aligns with system goals and the goals of the Blueprint.

### **Next Steps**

An immediate next step is to continue to promote NBC teacher and leadership development, through the pay incentives through the proposed career ladder. Increased marketing of NBC as a viable pathway will be emphasized through professional development sessions and hiring practices. In SY24-25, we anticipate convening a working group of current leaders, to conceptualize leadership competencies and roles, building upon our Vision of a Learner, the district Strategic Plan, and to leverage Blueprint policies, including the Career Ladder. This work was initiated in SY23-24, during our Administrator and Supervisor professional development sessions, that included feedback and initial brainstorming regarding the implications and potential of the Leader and Teacher

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tracks. This information was analyzed and shared with school leaders and will be used to inform future conversations.

Specific goals regarding the hiring of teachers expressing an interest in NBC status and the number of teachers and leaders progressing along the Career Ladder tracks will be determined during the 2024-25 school year, as the Career Ladder is operationalized.



## **7. National Board Certification**

*Initial Blueprint Implementation Plan Reference: Questions 37 - 44, 48, and 51*

In March 2023, the LEA described its plans to **recruit and support diverse candidates through the successful completion of National Board Certification or advanced degrees (if NBC is not available)** to be eligible for the designation of Lead Teacher within the Career Ladder.

Based on implementation of the LEA's plans over the last year, discuss the district's progress in transforming its systems and practices and achieving the intended outcomes of the Blueprint. Responses must address the following questions.

- What progress has been made in implementation related to both planned activities and anticipated outcomes? If progress has been limited, what challenges has the LEA encountered? Consider, identify, and refer to available data as needed to demonstrate progress.
- How is the LEA adapting its plans to mitigate challenges and/or ensure continued progress and future success? Which strategies are not working that the LEA will no longer implement, and which new strategies does the LEA intend to implement? Include the rationale for adjustments.

**Required Data Analysis: Through an analysis of data, discuss progress towards meeting the Blueprint outcome to recruit and support diverse candidates pursuing and achieving National Board Certification or advanced degrees (if NBC is not available).**

### **Strategies to Recruit and Support diverse candidates through completion of National Board Certification or Advanced Degrees**

- Expanding National Board Certification (NBC) in CCPS
- Supporting NBC Teachers by Cohort
- Strategic and Increased Recruitment

National Board Certification is a key component of our systemwide priority to continue to build strong leaders and teachers, including diversifying, and ensuring a high-quality workforce.

### **Expanding National Board Certification (NBC) in CCPS**

CCPS identified the need to increase numbers of NBC teachers over the next few years. We established NBC mentors and facilitators from the three regions of our school district in an effort to provide regional support to NBC candidates. Professional development opportunities for these mentors to work with all candidates throughout the district helped to strengthen teacher candidacy and resulted in an increase of our NBC teacher numbers from 19 NBC teachers to 38 NBC teachers in one calendar year. Recruiting efforts to attract facilitators helped to grow the NBC cohort support program in Calvert County and the program supports new candidates as well as MOC renewal candidates in their process through virtual and in-person support methods. CCPS does not have any identified low performing schools, but careful consideration will be made when hiring and offering positions to NBC teachers new to the district to diversify our NBC teaching staff across our buildings.

### Supporting Teachers by Cohort

The NBC Coordinator determined best practices and supports for NBC Facilitators and NBC teacher candidates through discussions with other LEAs and implemented a cohort model for NBC candidates that supports them throughout their NBC journey, with an initial kick-off meeting and subsequent support meetings taking place virtually and in-person. Two in-person sessions were held, along with small group or individual sessions at schools, and NBC facilitators had virtual office hours during the submission window from early April through mid-May, so candidates could get additional feedback and support for their Components.

### Strategic and Increased Recruitment Efforts

CCPS again conducted a virtual interest meeting in the fall and spring for teachers to inform them of NBC and the process and the benefits. The NBC Coordinator surveyed teachers to determine interest and potential to determine how teachers from historically underrepresented groups could participate. Targeted invitations for candidacy were sent to teachers in the fall, to expand diversity among candidates. This resulted in an increase in minority NBC candidates this year from seven (7) to ten (10) this year.

### Challenges

While we were able to increase the number of minority candidates, there were still barriers cited by all candidates to why they chose not to pursue. These barriers include: the amount of work required in addition to their teaching duties, the individualized nature of the process, and lack of time during the workday to complete aspects of the process. For instance, many of our excellent teachers already have advanced degrees and may not be immediately motivated to go through the NBC process. Our strategy of sending personal invitations to minority candidates did not yield the anticipated results. We will work with our school administrators and continue to identify candidates to help in this area, but additional strategies will need to be developed this spring to plan for next year.

Additionally, we acknowledge the need to improve our registration and tracking process, so we will be utilizing our Applicant Tracking software to capture candidate information to more easily track candidates and their pursuit of NBC.

### Next Steps

For the next three years, CCPS will continue to expand the support for NBC candidates, but support may look different due to funding issues that will prevent us from hiring NBC facilitators. We plan to continue offering candidate mentoring but will need to think strategically about our Extra Duty Extra Pay positions and how to leverage NBC with mentor teachers across the district and continue to grow our NBC candidate pool. We plan to utilize current NBC teachers as mentors to candidates in buildings, with the goal of:

- Providing regionalized support based on school location and level (ongoing – CCPS will consider professional learning days/times in the future where support can be provided).
- Providing in-person and virtual support options for teacher candidates will allow flexibility in support structures (three times per year – fall, winter, and spring).
- Give candidates additional means of providing feedback on the support via email feedback, post-session feedback forms, and Schoology discussion boards, in addition to the surveys mentioned. Following different opportunities for educators, feedback will be captured from educators in the following ways; Surveys will be developed and conducted following any NBC sessions. When teachers meet with their mentor, feedback will be solicited regarding how the mentor supporting the process through a survey and individual conversations. The Learning Management System (Schoology) will be used to create group

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support for NBC candidates. The candidates will be able to ask questions through the discussion board feature. These questions will be used to provide additional support for the mentors ensuring that all mentors are supporting candidates collectively.

We plan to continue our active marketing and support (as described above). Additionally, we aim to reduce perceived disincentives (e.g., extra time, or additional work) to NBC and integrate the NBC process into current and new professional learning opportunities in schools. A committee will be developed to discuss additional support strategies and responsibilities of Level 3 and 4 teachers regarding the 60/40 split to include mentoring of NBC teacher candidates. As noted in Questions 5 and 6, CCPS sees NBC as an important way to continue to increase the quality and diversity of our professional staff, by providing ongoing professional learning opportunities and ultimately utilizing NBC teachers in leadership positions.

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### 8. NEW - Cultivating and Managing Effective Partnerships:

How does the LEA **cultivate and manage its partnerships with institutions of higher education (IHE) and educator preparation programs (EPP) to ensure the needs of all organizations are met?** Consider the challenges associated with the current labor market and the individual mission and goals of each partner. Discuss how the LEA works with its partners to build relationships and adapt each organization's systems and practices to achieve shared goals.

Considerations:

- Teacher candidate placement and experiences
- Teacher induction and mentorship programs
- Talent pipelines, including alternative pathways to certification and professional development
- Advanced degree programs (e.g., in support of dual enrollment expansion, critical needs areas, etc.)
- Developing and implementing Post College and Career Readiness (CCR) pathways and CCR Support pathway
- Regular communication and feedback between LEA and IHE/EPP leadership to strengthen programs and systems

### Strategies to Cultivate and Manage Effective Partnerships

- Teacher Preparation Programs
- Cohort Models to Provide Competitive and Reduced Tuition Costs
- Teacher Academy of Maryland
- Teacher Certification among Support Staff

### Introduction

Calvert County Public Schools (CCPS), specifically the Department of Human Resources, works closely with multiple higher education institutions to support teacher placement, internships, and observations within our school system, and to ensure the needs of all organizations are met.

### Teacher Preparation Programs

CCPS collaborates with Towson University, Bowie State University, University of Maryland Global Campus, Western Governor's University, McDaniel College, Notre Dame of Maryland University, College of Southern Maryland to align the college/university teacher preparation program requirements to the needs of the school system. We provide veteran mentor teachers that are vetted by our supervisory staff to ensure the experience is with a highly qualified educator.

As described in Question 5, CCSP utilized a portion of the Maryland Leads Grant to partner with the New Teacher Center, a national organization focused on teacher development. Our work with the New Teacher Center was well received and successful, as the full-time mentor positions accelerated new teachers' learning and retention. Our goal is to learn from this program and build similar processes in the coming years as funding allows.

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### Cohort Models to Provide Competitive and Reduced Tuition Costs

CCPS is committed to working with local and virtual colleges/universities to offer cohort models that provide competitive/reduced tuition costs and direct billing options for CCPS employees. We have Memorandum of Understandings (MOU) with Bowie State University, McDaniel College, Notre Dame of Maryland University, College of Southern Maryland, Towson University, and American College of Education. The MOUs allow for competitive tuition pricing aligned to the CCPS tuition reimbursement allotment per fiscal year. The MOU allows CCPS staff to utilize direct billing. Through the direct billing incentive, CCPS works with the colleges/universities to put students on a bypass list for paying tuition upfront. Upon completion of the course, the colleges invoice CCPS directly so that the student pays no money out of pocket for college coursework.

### Teacher Academy of Maryland (TAM)

CCPS actively utilizes the TAM teacher education program to support high school students who may be interested in careers in education. We offer articulated college credits at the following colleges and universities:

Bowie State University (3 credits)	Morgan State University (3 Credits)
College of Southern Maryland (3 Credits)	Salisbury University (3, 4, or 5 Credits + Scholarship)
Coppin State University (3 Credits + Scholarship)	St. Mary's College of Maryland (4 Credits + Scholarship)
Frostburg University (6 Credits)	Stevenson University (3 or 6 Credits)
Hood College (3 Credits + Scholarship)	Towson University (3 Credits + Scholarship)
McDaniel College (Scholarship)	

The TAM district coordinator and Human Resources communicate high-needs areas with university partners to establish a pipeline for the subjects and grade levels the school system needs. One of our next steps is to continue to work with university partners to establish special program cohorts (e.g., Special Education) eligible for reduced pricing/scholarships and course location incentives for recruitment.

### Supporting Teacher Certification among Support Staff

CCPS is committed to encouraging and supporting Calvert Educational Association of Support Staff (CEASS) employees with obtaining their teaching certificates. This is achieved by tuition reimbursement of \$3500.00 per fiscal year, cohort models with partnering colleges/universities. In 2024, CCPS provided approximately \$80,000.00 in tuition reimbursement for CAESS employees to obtain a teaching degree or obtainment of an advanced degree.

### Challenges

Teacher preparation program requirements vary across IHEs and it is sometimes challenging to meet the requirements of different programs given different time requirements for classroom teachers and school administration. Also, it is important to better align the content areas of new/potential teachers coming from IHEs, with the specific needs of CCPS, to ensure that the candidate pool is both diverse and eligible for positions in our system. We are often challenged to find qualified applicants and in hiring professionals in hard-to-staff content areas, such as ESL and teachers of ML students due to the limited number of educators in those highly specialized positions.

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### **Next Steps**

Our immediate next step is to establish a district liaison to assist with building and strengthening partnerships, experiences, and opportunities for the partner and for the school system. The liaison will interface with district leadership, including Human Resources, and the leadership of IHEs responsible for teacher preparation programs. For instance, two potential areas for improvement include: (1) providing additional incentives for mentoring teachers and schools for accepting student interns and (2) aligning both institutions' goals to enhance the student teachers' experience. We also plan to consider the direct billing and tuition reimbursement agreements for CCPS to provide more pathways to obtaining educator and advanced degrees. Anticipated strategies to overcome the challenges mentioned may include:

- Providing a list of our positions which tend to be the hardest to fill in an effort to allow the IHEs to communicate with new students.
- Utilizing our Career Advisor program to establish connections between teacher preparation programs and high school students.
- Continue to communicate, advertise, and recruit, while offering contingent contracts to teacher candidates ahead of our official hiring dates in an effort to fill high needs positions.

## 9. Educator Compensation

*Initial Blueprint Implementation Plan Reference: Questions 52 and 54*

In March 2023, the LEA discussed how it intended to **meet the requirements set forth in the Blueprint to improve teacher compensation.**

The LEA's response was to ensure that teachers receive a minimum starting salary of \$60,000 by July 1, 2026.

Based on implementation of the LEA's plans over the last year, discuss the district's progress in transforming its systems and practices and achieving the intended outcomes of the Blueprint. Responses must address the following questions.

- What progress has been made in implementation related to both planned activities and anticipated outcomes? If progress has been limited, what challenges has the LEA encountered? Consider, identify, and refer to available data as needed to demonstrate progress.
- How is the LEA adapting its plans to mitigate challenges and/or ensure continued progress and future success? Which strategies are not working that the LEA will no longer implement, and which new strategies does the LEA intend to implement? Include the rationale for adjustments.

**Required Data Analysis: Through an analysis of data, discuss progress towards meeting the Blueprint outcome to ensure teachers receive a minimum starting salary of \$60,000 by July 1, 2026.**

### Strategies and Activities

Calvert County Public Schools (CCPS) is negotiating with the Calvert Education Association to develop a Career Ladder salary schedule that includes a minimum teacher salary of at least \$60,000. The minimum salary is currently \$54,373.

The following lists key activities and decisions that illustrate our progress through May 1, 2024:

- CCPS negotiated and implemented the Teacher Salary Incentive Grant Program, contained in Senate Bill 1030, that was effective July 1, 2019. The purpose of the program was to provide increases teacher salaries to improve recruitment and retention of high-quality teachers. As a result of this program, the starting teacher salary was increased from \$47,522 to \$50,500 effective July 1, 2019.
- Pursuant to the 2016-2020 *Agreement between the Board of Education of Calvert County and the Calvert Education Association*, the salary schedule increased 1%.
- Pursuant to the 2020-2024 *Agreement between the Board of Education of Calvert County and the Calvert Education Association*, the salary schedule received a 1% increase in school year 2022-2023 and a 1% increase in school year 2023-2024.
- Blueprint 10% Mandate: On or before July 1, 2024, each county shall demonstrate to the Accountability and Implementation Board established under § 5–402 of this article that, during the period between July 1, 2019, and June 30, 2024, teachers in the county received a 10% salary increase above the negotiated schedule of salary increases between the public school employer and exclusive representative for the employee organization. Pursuant to this mandate and in negotiations with the Calvert Education Association, the salary schedule increased 2.75% effective the first (1<sup>st</sup>) pay of the 2023-2024 school years and 2.75% effective the thirteenth (13<sup>th</sup>) pay of the 2023-2024 school years. The mandate was met pursuant to the two increases.



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**Immediate Next Steps**

Negotiations began in November 2023 with the Calvert Education Association for a successor agreement between the Board of Education, Calvert County and the Calvert Education Association that would be effective July 1, 2024. Included in the negotiations will be a Career Ladder salary schedule that includes a minimum teacher salary of at least \$60,000.

A successor agreement was ratified by the Calvert County Board of Education and the Calvert Education Association on June 13, 2024. The Calvert County Public Schools Career Ladder has a minimum teacher salary of \$61,000 effective July 1, 2024.

**Appendix A  
Career Ladder Salary Schedule 2024 - 2025**

Career Ladder												Related Service Providers
Interval	Level 1		Level 2		Level 3							
	State Certified Teacher		Teacher Pursuing NBC or		Teacher with NBC or Qualified Masters*							
	**Prov.	** Standard Professional Certificate (SPC)	Bachelors and SPC	APC or Masters	Bachelors and SPC			APC or Masters				
					NBC \$10,000	MOC 1 \$8,000	MOC 2 \$7,000	NBC \$10,000	MOC 1 \$8,000	MOC 2 \$7,000	MOC 3 \$6,000	
A	\$54,000	\$61,000	\$61,000	\$65,500	\$71,000	\$79,000	\$86,000	\$75,500	\$83,500	\$90,500	\$96,500	\$67,465
B	\$55,620	\$63,440	\$63,440	\$67,793	\$73,440	\$81,440	\$88,440	\$77,793	\$85,793	\$92,793	\$98,793	\$69,827
C	\$57,289	\$65,978	\$65,978	\$70,165	\$75,978	\$83,978	\$90,978	\$80,165	\$88,165	\$95,165	\$101,165	\$72,270
D	\$59,007	\$68,617	\$68,617	\$72,621	\$78,617	\$86,617	\$93,617	\$82,621	\$90,621	\$97,621	\$103,621	\$74,800
E	\$60,777	\$70,675	\$70,675	\$75,163	\$80,675	\$88,675	\$95,675	\$85,163	\$93,163	\$100,163	\$106,163	\$77,418
F	\$62,601	\$72,795	\$72,795	\$77,418	\$82,795	\$90,795	\$97,795	\$87,418	\$95,418	\$102,418	\$108,418	\$79,741
G	\$64,479	\$74,979	\$74,979	\$79,740	\$84,979	\$92,979	\$99,979	\$89,740	\$97,740	\$104,740	\$110,740	\$82,132
H	\$66,413	\$76,479	\$76,479	\$82,132	\$86,479	\$94,479	\$101,479	\$92,132	\$100,132	\$107,132	\$113,132	\$84,596
I	\$68,406	\$78,008	\$78,008	\$84,596	\$88,008	\$96,008	\$103,008	\$94,596	\$102,596	\$109,596	\$115,596	\$87,134
J	\$70,458	\$79,569	\$79,569	\$87,134	\$89,569	\$97,569	\$104,569	\$97,134	\$105,134	\$112,134	\$118,134	\$89,748
K	\$70,458	\$72,219	\$79,569	\$80,762	\$79,569	\$89,313		\$99,313	\$107,313	\$114,313	\$120,313	\$91,992
L	\$70,458	\$74,025	\$79,569	\$81,974	\$79,569	\$91,545		\$101,545	\$109,545	\$116,545	\$122,545	\$94,291
M	\$70,458	\$75,875	\$79,569	\$83,203	\$79,569	\$93,834		\$103,834	\$111,834	\$118,834	\$124,834	\$96,649
N	\$70,458	\$77,772	\$79,569	\$84,451	\$79,569	\$96,180		\$106,180	\$114,180	\$121,180	\$127,180	\$99,065
O	\$70,458	\$79,716	\$79,569	\$85,718	\$79,569	\$98,584		\$108,584	\$116,584	\$123,584	\$129,584	\$101,542
P	\$70,458	\$81,709	\$79,569	\$87,004	\$79,569	\$101,049		\$111,049	\$119,049	\$126,049	\$132,049	\$104,080
Q	\$70,458	\$83,752	\$79,569	\$88,509	\$79,569	\$103,575		\$113,575	\$121,575	\$128,575	\$134,575	\$106,682
R	\$70,458	\$85,827	\$79,569	\$89,634	\$79,569	\$106,165		\$116,165	\$124,165	\$131,165	\$137,165	\$109,350
S	\$70,458	\$87,136	\$79,569	\$90,978	\$79,569	\$108,819		\$118,819	\$126,819	\$133,819	\$139,819	\$112,084
T	\$70,458	\$88,878	\$79,569	\$92,343	\$79,569	\$110,995		\$120,995	\$128,995	\$135,995	\$141,995	\$114,325
U	\$70,458	\$90,656	\$79,569	\$93,728	\$79,569	\$113,215		\$123,215	\$131,215	\$138,215	\$144,215	\$116,611
V	\$70,458	\$92,469	\$79,569	\$95,134	\$79,569	\$115,479		\$125,479	\$133,479	\$140,479	\$146,479	\$118,943

\* in Content Area (No NBC Available)  
\*\*Green Cells Only Apply to CTE teachers at the Career and Technology Academy

**Anticipated Outcome**

The Calvert County Public Schools (CCPS) has proposed a Career Ladder salary schedule with a minimum starting salary of at least \$60,000. The proposed Career Ladder salary schedule is proposed to be effective July 1, 2024. When the Career Ladder has been finalized pursuant to agreement with the Calvert Education Association (CEA), approval by the Board of Education of Calvert County and ratification by CEA, the Career Ladder will be submitted.

**Challenges**

Future success of the implementation of the Career Ladder salary schedule is dependent upon funding. There are two main sources of funding, the state of Maryland and the Calvert County government. For SY24-25, CCPS

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experienced a 22.5 million decrease in funding. Such a decrease, and potentially limited future funding, poses a significant challenge for funding the Career Ladder salary schedule for the present and the future.

As we work to address these challenges and mitigate the impact on classroom instruction, we have identified the following areas for consideration and action:

- CCPS stakeholders should understand Blueprint funding that may necessitate changes in the present operations of the Calvert County Public Schools.
- There will be a need for increased staffing for teachers and administrators to implement the Blueprint both in schools and in the central office. It is important for all stakeholders to know these challenges and the effect they will have on the operations of our schools.
- Stakeholder engagement will be critical to this process as there should be a common understanding of the Blueprint cost pressures on our school budget.
- It is crucial that we maintain and expand our collaboration with the County Commissioners to share the challenges of funding and consequent reallocation of resources.

### **Next Steps**

- Reprioritize or reallocate resources to implement the Blueprint. This will include consideration of current school schedules, staffing roles and expectations, and Blueprint expectations for teachers professional learning and instructional support to all students, PreK through Grade 12.
- Develop an understanding of the requirements of Blueprint implementation plans across all CCPS stakeholders and raise community awareness of the requirements of Blueprint implementation.

## Pillar 3: College and Career Readiness

### 10. College and Career Readiness in English Language Arts

*Initial Blueprint Implementation Plan Reference: Questions 57 - 76 and 81*

In March 2023, the LEA described how it would **ensure all students are proficient in reading by the end of 3rd grade and Pre-K-5 students are on the path to becoming college and career ready in English language arts.**

Based on implementation of the LEA’s plans over the last year, discuss the district’s progress in transforming its systems and practices and achieving the intended outcomes of the Blueprint. Responses must address the following questions.

- What progress has been made in implementation related to both planned activities and anticipated outcomes? If progress has been limited, what challenges has the LEA encountered? Consider, identify, and refer to available data as needed to demonstrate progress.
- How is the LEA adapting its plans to mitigate challenges and/or ensure continued progress and future success? Which strategies are not working that the LEA will no longer implement, and which new strategies does the LEA intend to implement? Include the rationale for adjustments.

**Required Data Analysis: Through an analysis of data, discuss progress towards meeting the Blueprint outcome ensuring all students are proficient in reading by the end of 3rd grade and on the path to becoming college and career ready in English language arts.**

Note: LEAs must submit their final Pre-K-12 comprehensive literacy plans in alignment with the science of reading by June 28, 2024.

### Introduction

Priority #1 in our Systemwide Response is to maintain and continually improve core instruction, including the use of high-quality instructional materials. The strategies we are implementing to ensure that Pre-K-5 students are proficient in reading are listed here.

### Strategies in English Language Arts

- Improving Tier 1 Universal Instruction, focusing on LETRS training in the early grades.
- Increased use of HQIM.
- Equity and inclusion, to ensure that students’ academic needs are addressed in the core/general education setting as appropriate. A key feature of our work is continued implementation of the Science of Reading (Systemic Change #1).

### Improving Tier I Universal Instruction through LETRS training

CCPS currently has 51 teachers participating in LETRS, Volume 1 professional learning and 233 teachers participating in LETRS, Volume 2 professional learning. This is 100% of our K-3 teaching staff and 100% of the

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CCPS K-5 special education, ESOL, and Title I teaching staff. Teachers have noted the benefits of receiving this training whether it was new learning or an enhancement to what they already knew.

CCPS currently has 21 PreKindergarten and Head Start staff participating in LETRS for Early Childhood Educators. 100% of CCPS PreK teachers hold LETRS for Early Childhood Educators certification or are currently participating in the training.

CCPS currently has 19 elementary school administrators (Principals and Assistant Principals) and central office supervisors and administrators participating in LETRS for Administrators.

**Progress.** CCPS is showing strong progress toward meeting the goal of ensuring all students are proficient in reading by the end of 3<sup>rd</sup> grade. In 2023-24, CCPS has a reduction of K-3 students at-risk for reading difficulties from 21.4% in the fall to 7.95% in the winter and 5.27% in the spring. The past three years demonstrates CCPS' progress as measured by Maryland's Ready to Read Act data:

Table 1. Percent of Students At-Risk of Reading Difficulties

	2021-22			2022-23			2023-24		
Grade	Fall	Winter	Spring	Fall	Winter	Spring	Fall	Winter	Spring
<b>K</b>	28.7	11.8	7.7	26.6	13.2	7.2	28.2	6.3	4.2
<b>1</b>	45.8	28.7	19.3	28.8	17.2	12.9	8.2	2.8	1.8
<b>2</b>	54.3	38.2	27.3	42.4	25.9	15.6	22.7	10.3	5.3
<b>3</b>	37.9	23.4	15.9	28.1	17.4	13.5	26.5	12.4	9.8

CCPS has also demonstrated an increase in the percentage of students scoring at level 3 or 4 (proficient) in 3<sup>rd</sup> grade. From 2022 to 2023, the percentage of all 3<sup>rd</sup> grade students proficient in ELA increased from 56.6 to 64.4 percent. And the percentage of low-income students proficient increased from 33.2 to 44.5 percent (10-English, MSDE Data).

#### Challenges

No major implementation challenges apart from budget cuts and obtaining substitutes for covering teachers to participate in professional learning sessions.

Achievement gaps in ELA proficiency continue to persist, specifically between students with disabilities and nondisabled students, between African American students and all students, and between low-income and non-low-income students. Calvert County Public Schools has demonstrated success with implementing literacy best practices based on the Science of Reading research as evidenced by student achievement and progress. Pervasive achievement gaps emphasize the need to continue the system's focus on equity and inclusion, along with an effective Multi-Tiered System of Supports (MTSS), for all students.

#### Next Steps

This strategy will be continued and supported through training for new teachers and monitoring of implementation through Supervisors' and principals' support to teachers. CCPS ensures that all teachers are able to access the full Science of Reading training with various options for course completion and participation in facilitated sessions. We have taken a number of steps to ensure that all teachers are able to access the full training. CCPS has provided multiple dates for training sessions to alleviate the burden on schools when teachers are out of the building. The limited availability of subs required CCPS to repeat trainings with smaller groups of teachers so that schools did

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not have more than two teachers on professional leave with substitute coverage on the same day. LETRS Coaches have been trained as LETRS Certified Local Facilitators so that CCPS can provide LETRS facilitated sessions with CCPS staff to reduce the amount of funds required for contracted services. The current LETRS Volume 1 cohort will participate in Volume 2 in the 2024-2025 school year and new-to-CCPS teachers will begin LETRS Volume 1. The LETRS for Early Childhood Educators cohort will conclude in December 2024. A new cohort will begin in the 2025-2026 school year. The LETRS for Administrators cohort is a 2-year cohort. A new cohort will begin in the 2025-2026 school year.

#### **Increased use of HQIM**

CCPS now has consistent instructional materials in Grades K-5 to address reading foundational skills, as well as reading, speaking and listening standards. The curricular materials are aligned with the Science of Reading research and CCPS implements Structured Literacy as the instructional approach. Evidence of progress is illustrated in Table 1 and continued increase in the percentage of students scoring at level 3 or 4 (proficient) on MCAP in 3<sup>rd</sup> through 5<sup>th</sup> grade, as described above.

#### **Next Steps**

This strategy will continue, through instructional supervisors' ongoing support to schools via weekly professional learning communities. CCPS will continue to use HQIM in Grades K-5 to address reading foundational skills, and reading, speaking, listening, writing and language standards. Students will have consistent high-quality instructional materials in K-5. The ELA team will continue to evaluate the instructional program, including materials, to determine the effectiveness and outcomes for student literacy skills. CCPS' implementation of the MTSS guidebook, which includes expectations for the use of HQIM, will reinforce Supervisors' engagement with teachers and principals.

#### **Equity and Inclusion**

District and school leaders continue to work with the Maryland Coalition for Inclusive Education to support our schools in programming that supports including students in the general education setting. Professional learning focuses on meeting the needs of all students in the general education setting, providing support and interventions to those who need it, and collaborative planning between the general and special education teachers.

#### **Challenges**

As noted in the Systemwide Response, CCPS is taking steps to implement an integrated multi-tiered system of support. Shifting mindsets and ensuring that teachers have the skills and support needed to meet the academic needs of all students is crucial.

#### **Next Steps**

This strategy will continue. Building upon our work over the past few years, the following actions represent previously planned new actions that will be implemented in 2024-25 and moving forward: (1) formal roll-out of the [MTSS Guidebook](#), which will provide expectations and strategies for Tier 1 instruction and (2) the implementation of school-based MTSS teams, responsible for improving instruction and ensuring that all students that may need academic support are identified and receive appropriate interventions and support. Additionally, we have updated strategies in our Comprehensive Literacy Plan that will allow a greater focus on professional learning, such as (1) enhancing engagement strategies incorporated into lessons and practiced with colleagues across the district, (2) analyzing model lessons with colleagues and connecting insights to student work and assessment data, and (3) strategies to support ML learners and improve cognitive engagement.



## 11. College and Career Readiness in Mathematics

*Initial Blueprint Implementation Plan Reference: Questions 82 - 100 and 105*

In March 2023, the LEA described how it would **ensure all Pre-K-5 students are on the path to becoming college and career ready in mathematics.**

Based on implementation of the LEA's plans over the last year, discuss the district's progress in transforming its systems and practices and achieving the intended outcomes of the Blueprint. Responses must address the following questions.

- What progress has been made in implementation related to both planned activities and anticipated outcomes? If progress has been limited, what challenges has the LEA encountered? Consider, identify, and refer to available data as needed to demonstrate progress.
- How is the LEA adapting its plans to mitigate challenges and/or ensure continued progress and future success? Which strategies are not working that the LEA will no longer implement, and which new strategies does the LEA intend to implement? Include the rationale for adjustments.

**Required Data Analysis: Through an analysis of data, discuss progress towards meeting the Blueprint outcome ensuring all Pre-K-5 students are on the path to becoming college and career ready in mathematics.**

### Introduction

Priority #1 in our Systemwide Response is to maintain and continually improve core instruction, including the use of high-quality instructional materials. The following provides the required data analysis and current and planned Strategies in Mathematics that we are implementing to ensure that Pre-K-5 students are proficient in Mathematics

### Required Data Analysis

CCPS aims to continue to improve Mathematics Instruction for all students. Our ongoing analysis of MCAP data, which includes disaggregating data for subgroups and looking at trends over time, shows that the percentage of students proficient on the MCAP (grades 3, 4, and 5) demonstrate growth towards 2019 proficiency levels, and strong growth from 2022 and 2023. Between 2022 and 2023, gains in the percentage of students proficient were made in all grades 3, 4, and 5 for all students, and for nearly all disaggregated student groups. Notably, the percentage of students proficient in 2023, for many student groups and overall, is approaching and in some instances greater than the proficiency rates in 2019 (11-Math, MSDE data). Similar to our analysis of data for English Language Arts, we note that gaps in proficiency exist among student groups, which calls for action as illustrated in our current and proposed strategies.

The data table on page 48 reflects proficiency levels for FY22 and FY23, respectively and disaggregated by grade level and student group. Only one student group showed a decrease in proficiency from FY22 to FY23. It is also noted that 3<sup>rd</sup> grade EL students, 4<sup>th</sup> grade Hispanic students and 5<sup>th</sup> grade White students show the highest percentage proficiency gain from 2022 to 2023.

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<b>Test</b>	<b>Groups</b>	<b>2022 % Proficient</b>	<b>2023 % Proficient</b>	<b>Difference</b>
<b>MAT03</b>	All Students	52.4%	57.0%	4.7%
	Asian	81.8%	71.4%	-10.4%
	Afr Am/Black	31.8%	34.8%	3.1%
	Hisp	44.8%	54.4%	9.6%
	Multi Racial	50.4%	48.0%	-2.4%
	White	56.5%	62.4%	5.9%
	SWD	20.0%	20.6%	0.6%
	Economically Dis	27.2%	35.9%	8.7%
	English Learner	13.8%	44.0%	30.2%
	Female	48.3%	56.5%	8.2%
	Male	55.8%	57.6%	1.8%
<b>MAT04</b>	All Students	41.5%	51.8%	10.2%
	Asian	58.8%	69.2%	10.4%
	Afr Am/Black	23.8%	34.3%	10.5%
	Hisp	34.8%	50.5%	15.7%
	Multi Racial	33.3%	44.3%	11.0%
	White	46.5%	56.2%	9.7%
	SWD	12.8%	19.6%	6.8%
	Economically Dis	15.3%	30.4%	15.1%
	English Learner	8.0%	22.2%	14.2%
	Female	38.2%	45.6%	7.4%
	Male	44.6%	57.2%	12.5%
<b>MAT05</b>	All Students	33.0%	36.2%	3.1%
	Asian	63.6%	52.6%	-11.0%
	Afr Am/Black	18.8%	16.2%	-2.6%
	Hisp	27.5%	29.2%	1.7%
	Multi Racial	31.9%	27.7%	-4.1%
	White	36.3%	41.8%	5.5%
	SWD	3.0%	6.7%	3.7%
	Economically Dis	13.8%	14.8%	1.0%
	English Learner	0.0%	4.2%	4.2%
	Female	29.1%	33.3%	4.2%
	Male	36.3%	38.9%	2.6%



### **Strategies in Mathematics**

- Increased use of HQIM
- Administrative Professional Development
- MTSS – Mathematics Intervention Resources Piloted

### **Increased use of HQIM**

CCPS is implementing updated math instructional materials with the use of i-Ready Classroom Mathematics 2024 in grades K-5 and the use of Three Cheers for PK. i-Ready Classroom 2024 received perfect scores from Ed Reports in March 2024. Professional Development for all grades is made available to all teachers in the fall and spring. Discourse routines, manipulative use for Concrete Representational Abstract – CRA models, planning for personalized and targeted instruction, and use of NCTM’s Math Teacher Practices are the focus of professional development.

CCPS has provided multiple dates for training sessions to alleviate the burden on schools when teachers are out of the building. The limited availability of subs required CCPS to offer training to smaller groups of teachers to limit the number of subs required on one day.

### **Next Steps**

In 2024 – 2027 we will continue to use i-Ready Classroom 2024 and provide professional development for teachers with a focus in discourse routines, manipulative use for Concrete Representational Abstract – CRA models, planning for personalized and targeted instruction, and use of NCTM’s Math Teacher Practices.

### **Administrative Professional Development**

Mathematical mindset training is occurring with an administrator from each CCPS elementary school. The training has produced alignment of expectations for instructional strategies and monitoring of data in the i-Ready platform.

### **Challenges**

The challenges are maintaining the knowledge with administrative turnover and scheduling time with each of the buildings in a timely manner for each year.

### **Next Steps**

CCPS will continue to provide Mathematical Mindset training to elementary administrators. One administrator from each of the 12 elementary schools is involved in the training. Additional updates will be provided through building walkthroughs with Supervisor of Elementary Math and Principals.

### **MTSS – Mathematics Intervention Resources Piloted**

Tier 1, 2 and 3 intervention resources are being piloted at the elementary level. Math Skills Builder is being piloted as a Tier 3 resource and along with the use of the CCPS tier 2 protocol My Path personalized instruction is being piloted for use with Tier 1 and 2 instructions. Math Skills Builders is used in addition to core instruction to individual students. CCPS is currently using it with one elementary student and seeing success. With consultation from the Special Ed Math Specialist and Elementary Math supervisor the intervention will be expanded to additional students for the next school year using a review diagnostic data. All students access personalized learning during core instruction and a few schools based on diagnostic data are also providing time for personalized instruction during the additional flex math time. Teachers monitor student progress weekly.

### **Pillar 3: College and Career Readiness**

CCPS continues to show progress to proficiency on MCAP by growing in all service groups for 2023. There are three elementary schools in TSI status due to performance of students with disabilities. Our i-Ready diagnostic results are ahead of the national norms. The elementary math supervisor and specialist have spent time with teachers and administrators to be able to interpret the data. During Building PLCs, County professional development and Virtual grade level PLCs teachers can use the diagnostic data to plan for targeted instruction based on lesson and student need to fill gaps in understanding.

#### **Challenges**

Challenges are presented due to budget cuts. The lack of substitutes makes it difficult to provide embedded professional development for teachers in all buildings and grade levels to receive ongoing training on how to use the data reports in i-ready to target instruction as needed for small group and individual instruction.

#### **Next Steps**

In 2024-2027 CCPS will expand the use of Math Skills Builders as a tier 3 intervention. All Elementary schools will begin full use of My Path personalized instruction during tier 1 instruction and will use it for tier 2 instruction as needed. Training for this expansion will take place in the fall of 2025.

Challenges will arise due to the lack of substitute teachers. We will need to train smaller groups of teachers so that the building is not burdened with a lack of substitute coverage.

**12. NEW - Algebra Readiness and Success**

Describe the LEA’s plan to **increase student readiness and success in Algebra I at both the middle and high school levels**, including specific strategies and supports to intervene with students struggling with math. Discuss related challenges and data as needed.

Considerations:

- Analysis of student-level data by specific skills
- Intervention models and progress monitoring
- Training and professional development for teachers
- High-quality school day tutoring

**Required Data Analysis: Through an analysis of data, discuss progress towards meeting the Blueprint outcome of increasing middle and high school students’ college and career readiness in mathematics.**

**Required Data Analysis**

The data below reflects proficiency levels for FY22 and FY23, respectively and disaggregated by grade level and student group. Ten student group showed a decrease in proficiency from FY22 to FY23. It is also noted that 7<sup>th</sup> grade Asian students, 7<sup>th</sup> grade EL students and 8<sup>th</sup> grade Hispanic students show the highest percentage proficiency gain from 2022 to 2023.

Test	Groups	2022 % Proficient	2023 % Proficient	Difference
<b>MAT06</b>	All Students	24.2%	24.5%	0.4%
	Asian	41.7%	50.0%	8.3%
	Afr Am/Black	11.2%	10.9%	-0.3%
	Hisp	17.0%	26.3%	9.3%
	Multi Racial	23.0%	23.6%	0.7%
	White	27.8%	27.1%	-0.7%
	SWD	3.5%	4.1%	0.6%
	Economically Dis	6.3%	9.6%	3.3%
	English Learner	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
	Female	23.9%	22.1%	-1.7%
Male	24.3%	26.7%	2.4%	
<b>MAT07</b>	All Students	22.8%	25.0%	2.2%
	Asian	37.5%	63.6%	26.1%
	Afr Am/Black	12.3%	11.5%	-0.8%
	Hisp	18.9%	24.5%	5.6%
	Multi Racial	22.4%	20.6%	-1.8%
	White	25.5%	28.6%	3.0%
	SWD	3.3%	0.9%	-2.4%

**Pillar 3: College and Career Readiness**

	Economically Dis	7.3%	8.7%	1.4%
	English Learner	0.0%	10.0%	10.0%
	Female	23.0%	25.0%	1.9%
	Male	22.7%	25.1%	2.4%
<b>MAT08</b>	All Students	13.2%	15.0%	1.9%
	Asian	33.3%	33.3%	0.0%
	Afr Am/Black	6.1%	4.6%	-1.5%
	Hisp	10.6%	18.5%	7.9%
	Multi Racial	8.7%	13.8%	5.1%
	White	16.2%	17.8%	1.5%
	SWD	2.7%	2.7%	0.0%
	Economically Dis	7.6%	9.0%	1.4%
	English Learner	8.3%	0.0%	-8.3%
	Female	14.0%	15.0%	1.0%
	Male	12.5%	14.9%	2.5%
<b>ALG01</b>	All Students	20.1%	21.6%	1.5%
	Asian	36.0%	18.2%	-17.8%
	Afr Am/Black	6.7%	8.4%	1.7%
	Hisp	14.4%	14.8%	0.4%
	Multi Racial	23.7%	23.3%	-0.4%
	White	22.8%	25.6%	2.8%
	SWD	0.9%	0.9%	0.0%
	Economically Dis	4.9%	7.2%	2.3%
	English Learner	0.0%	4.8%	4.8%
	Female	21.9%	21.3%	-0.6%
	Male	18.4%	21.9%	3.5%

**Strategies**

- Algebra Lab
- Algebra 1 Collaborative Planning
- Professional Development
- Data Analysis
- Intervention

## **Algebra Lab**

In CCPS, all 4 high schools have at least one Algebra Lab period that supports some selected students in Algebra I. This 45-minute daily course provides students with an additional period with a smaller teacher/student ratio. In this course, students have additional time to more deeply connect Algebra skills/concepts, more opportunities for concrete and representational practice (use of Algebra tiles and other manipulatives to support conceptual understanding), and additional opportunities to deliberately perform the higher-order thinking Standards for Mathematical Practice such as constructing viable arguments and critiquing the reasoning of others. CCPS has historically scheduled a double-period of Algebra for students that are not projected to attain proficiency on the end-of-year state assessment, in which these students are homogeneously grouped for 90 minutes of daily instruction. This model has recently been replaced with a new model, in which students are heterogeneously placed into a 45-minute core Algebra class and those who need extra help have an additional 45-minute Algebra Lab class for one or two semesters, depending on need. This new model did not achieve of the outcomes that were hoped for and the district was faced with a choice: to discontinue the model or to change what is done with the model. The high school Algebra proficiency rate of under 10% (compared to the middle school Algebra proficiency rate of 45.9%) led teachers and leaders to think that there is something that needs to be done for some students to help build confidence through competence, so the CCPS Math Leadership Team decided to pilot the use of instructional software, Edia, to identify students and standards in need of targeted intervention within this course structure.

Throughout the 2023 – 2024 school year a comparative analysis was conducted to determine the value added for similar sets of students who did and did not have Algebra Lab. Results were that it was inconclusive whether the Algebra Lab class was adding value to outcomes; the Math Leadership Team decided to focus the work done in this class on known best practices of personalizing instruction using data and on expanding the use of modeling and reasoning tasks for students to discuss or write to. Comparative analysis will be completed for 2023 – 2024 once end-of-year MCAP (Maryland Comprehensive Assessment Program) data are available, and the Math Leadership Team will subsequently review the data and decide on future steps.

### **Next Steps**

Our plan for 2024 to 2027 includes the following next steps and actions. Beginning in SY24-25, MCAP and NWEA MAP data will be analyzed to monitor the effectiveness of the Algebra lab and Supervisor of Secondary Math will work with the Math team to revise strategies used as determined by the data.

## **Algebra 1 Collaborative Planning**

All high school Algebra teams have additional time in their schedule for collaborative planning. During this time, teachers review student data and work together to determine best approaches for student support and acceleration and whether instruction is best suited for small group, whole group, or individualized delivery during regular class time, extended time, or office hours (i.e. student lunch period). They collaboratively problem-solve to support emerging student needs.

### **Next Steps**

If staffing allows collaborative planning will remain and teachers will have time to analyze data to enhance instructional planning. Teachers will use of MAP, system-wide assessments, and common assessments to monitor progress.

### Professional Development

Professional development opportunities for middle and high school teachers are intended to empower and engage teachers to be active participants in their own growth. In addition to the mechanisms in place designed to help all teachers in CCPS grow such as Student Learning Objectives and Non-Tenured Staff Development Plans, the Secondary Math department provides opportunities for teachers to conduct guided visitations of other math classes in the district. In these visits, teachers discuss with one another the teacher moves and decisions that promote student engagement and reflect upon their own practices along with the secondary math learning specialist and an instructional consultant/advisor. During county-wide professional development days teachers from across the district collaborate with colleagues who teach the same course to align understandings of, delivery of, and measurement of student acquisition of the intended curriculum. Professional development, which focuses on The National Council for Teaching of Mathematics (NCTM's) Effective Mathematics Teaching Practices, occurs during whole-county professional learning days, within math department meetings at the school level, and throughout coaching cycles with individual teachers and members of the Secondary Mathematics Leadership Team.

### Next Steps

The Learning Specialist has provided opportunities to participate in a book study with *Building Thinking Classrooms in Mathematics* by Peter Liljedahl to support student-engaging teaching practices. Additionally, disaggregated MCAP data have allowed and empowered individuals and teams of teachers to identify their own content strengths and weaknesses and to collaboratively learn more about the standards and instructional strategies known to have gotten above-average results district-wide through choice sessions and workgroups. These opportunities and the ongoing professional development will continue through 2027. Challenges arise from budget cuts and providing substitute coverage for embedded professional development.

### Data Analysis

All general education and special education teachers of mathematics are required to analyze and act upon a variety of data sources to improve student outcomes. Early in the year, every teacher collaboratively reviews the School Evidence Statement Analysis graphs provided by MSDE to identify relative instructional strengths and weaknesses. They identify their teams' weakest performing standards on the previous year's MCAP assessment and form theories of improvement including needed professional learning throughout the year, new instructional approaches, and new allotments of instructional time. Throughout the year teachers compare student work on common assessments to identify meaningful differences in design and implementation of lessons with the dual purpose of understanding their students' strengths and weaknesses and understanding the effectiveness of their chosen instructional approaches. Additionally, all secondary courses have a battery of quarterly system-wide assessments that are blueprinted to proportionally match learning expectations of the course. These can be disaggregated by student demographic and analyzed by standard, topic, and item type. Teachers analyze their own results and the secondary math supervisor and general and special education specialist compare results across the district to those of previous years to identify schools, grade levels, grade level teams, and individuals that may need additional support. Individual data/instructional conversations are held between the math supervisor, principal, and teacher to identify successes and opportunities for growth. In these meetings the supervisor shares emerging trends that are leading to higher-than-expected growth and teachers share successes, change ideas, and needs to help the supervisor calibrate the needed systemic support.

### Next Steps

This is an iterative process meant to continuously improve the consistent delivery of high-quality pedagogy. As new data sources and innovative data practices emerge, CCPS will incorporate them into the data-driven improvement process.

### Intervention

After a period of learning about best practices in intervention, the CCPS Mathematics Leadership Team trained teachers in one building to deliver three-week intervention cycles to groups of students in one middle school. In each cycle, the interventionists identify potential barriers to upcoming content that will likely lead to student difficulty without intervention. They identify students that will potentially benefit from a targeted skill-based intervention and develop a theory of action including the targeted content, instructional approach, success criteria, communication plan, and evaluation plan. After the two weeks of acceleration strategies are delivered, the teachers take one week to evaluate the success of the cycle and plan the next cycle of intervention. Through this process, students gain a specific, measurable skill that the teachers think is most likely to help students succeed with upcoming course material. Along the way the interventionists and teachers in the building learn about which strategies and approaches are succeeding, and to what degree they are effective.

### Next Steps

Leading data are encouragingly positive, with system-wide assessments suggesting that this middle school may have among the highest growth on MCAP in the district. If this intervention model is in fact successful, work will be done to build master schedules for all middle schools and high schools that allow for such flexible and responsive intervention with students. This may not happen until the '25 – '26 school year, as state testing data won't be back until after buildings have built their master schedules for the '24 – '25 school year. Even without such data to confirm success of the model, the district is moving forward in implementing a Multi-Tiered System of Support (MTSS) that will increase students' ability to receive needed just-in-time behavioral, social-emotional, and academic interventions identified by the school's MTSS team.



### 13. High-Quality School Day Tutoring

*Initial Blueprint Implementation Plan Reference: Questions 77 and 101*

In March 2023, the LEA discussed how it **leveraged high-quality school day tutoring to accelerate instruction and provide additional support to students in literacy and math.**

Responses included considerations related to the LEA’s organization of the school day, collaboration with external partners, and alignment of resources (e.g., Transitional Supplemental Instruction Aid).

Based on implementation of the LEA’s plans over the last year, discuss the district’s progress in transforming its systems and practices and achieving the intended outcomes of the Blueprint. Responses must address the following questions.

- What progress has been made in implementation related to both planned activities and anticipated outcomes? If progress has been limited, what challenges has the LEA encountered? Consider, identify, and refer to available data as needed to demonstrate progress.
- How is the LEA adapting its plans to mitigate challenges and/or ensure continued progress and future success? Which strategies are not working that the LEA will no longer implement, and which new strategies does the LEA intend to implement? Include the rationale for adjustments.

#### Strategies to leverage high-quality school day tutoring

- Flex Time and Advisory Time

#### Flex Time and Advisory Time

CCPS continues utilizing flex time at the elementary school and advisory time at the middle and high schools to leverage time during the school day to provide tutoring/supplemental instruction/support and targeted intervention by certified teachers. Each school and teams of teachers in schools determine, based on data, if there are students that would benefit from one-on-one tutoring in addition to small group support. Tutoring is provided on a case-by-case basis, rather than as a formal tutoring program that is used by each school.

Individualized support via the i-Ready MyPath program is currently being piloted in elementary mathematics in a sample of schools, to determine if the platform will meet the needs of students who may need additional individualized support. If selected, MyPath would be used to provide support during the school day in the mathematics classroom and during flex time.

In elementary ELA (English/Language Arts), CCPS expanded the guidance aligned with the Ready to Read Act to encompass grades K – 5. This guide provides schools with information on identifying and supporting students struggling to read as identified through the Universal Screener. As noted above, some students may receive targeted instruction (e.g., phonics) in small group settings, or individually if deemed necessary by teachers and school leaders.

Currently, each of the four district high schools run a daily flexible time to allow for additional, targeted student support during the school day. Similar to the approach used in elementary schools, individual tutoring may be provided to students; however, a formal “tutor” or tutoring program is not implemented systemwide.

### **Pillar 3: College and Career Readiness**

As noted in our systemwide response and in reference to AIB feedback, CCPS is moving forward with the implementation of its MTSS approach, which includes student-specific support that may be provided during core instruction, and also coordinated during Flex or Advisory time.

#### **Challenges**

While CCPS and its schools utilizes processes, including but not limited to teacher teaming and the Student Services Team process, for identifying and determining student support and interventions, challenges include ensuring that teachers: (a) have the capacity to fully review student-specific data and (b) have quick access to and the skill to deliver appropriate, evidenced based interventions (including tutoring). Developing formal MTSS teams and related professional development are aimed at improving academic support for all students, which may include tutoring as one component of suite of supports.

In the 2023-2024 school year, CCPS started working on a proposal for the Maryland Tutoring Corps Grant. The grant was meant to assist LEAs in starting high-quality day tutoring programs. However, the grant application was not completed because CCPS faced budgetary challenges that made it difficult to provide the required matching funds. We have experimented with using the tutoring funds and provided tutoring outside of the school day and will be exploring ways in which this can be done within the school day.

#### **Next Steps**

- CCPS is reviewing platforms that will allow it to track, monitor, and evaluate the supports and interventions provided to students. Five platforms have been reviewed. However, the impact of the drastic cuts in funding has halted progress.
- Identify possible funding sources to purchase and implement an application allowing interventions to be tracked and monitored efficiently.
- Continue to provide professional learning on the MTSS process to ensure support and interventions are determined and provided to students based on data.
- Provide professional learning on strengthening tier one to reduce the number of students in need of tier 2 or 3 support and interventions.
- In the 2024-2025 school year, CCPS will research models for reorganizing the school day to provide systemwide tutoring by qualified tutors. CCPS will examine models such as using alternative scheduling, flexible day schedules, and/or unique scheduling models that build tutoring into the regular school day for students. Based on the research, CCPS will develop the next steps for providing tutoring during the school day.
- In the 2024 – 2025 school year, CCPS will complete research to become more prepared to take advantage of funding sources that may include grants to fund school-day tutoring.

**14. Support for Students to Demonstrate College and Career Readiness in High School**

*Initial Blueprint Implementation Plan Reference: Questions 109 - 110 and 112 - 115*

In March 2023, the LEA described the **services and support provided to students identified as not on track to graduate in 9th grade and/or not demonstrating college and career readiness (CCR) by the end of 10th grade.**

Responses included creating and implementing student support pathways, collaborating with institutions of higher education partners, developing individualized CCR plans for each student, and engaging families in supporting student success.

Based on implementation of the LEA’s plans over the last year, discuss the district’s progress in transforming its systems and practices and achieving the intended outcomes of the Blueprint. Responses must address the following questions.

- What progress has been made in implementation related to both planned activities and anticipated outcomes? If progress has been limited, what challenges has the LEA encountered? Consider, identify, and refer to available data as needed to demonstrate progress.
- How is the LEA adapting its plans to mitigate challenges and/or ensure continued progress and future success? Which strategies are not working that the LEA will no longer implement, and which new strategies does the LEA intend to implement? Include the rationale for adjustments.

**Required Data Analysis: Through an analysis of data, discuss progress towards meeting the Blueprint outcome of providing support to students identified as not on track to graduate in 9th grade and/or not demonstrating college and career readiness (CCR) by the end of 10th grade.**

**Strategies**

- Develop and Implement an Early Warning System (EWS).
- Develop and Implement MTSS Guidebook and Processes.
- Identify, Use, and Evaluate the Impact of Intervention Materials and Resources.
- Implement and Refine Individualized College and Career Support Plans.

**Develop and Implement an Early Warning System**

Calvert County Public Schools (CCPS) has developed an Early Warning System (EWS) report that identifies 9<sup>th</sup> grade students twice per year as not on track to graduate. Specifically, the report identifies students who failed two or more core classes (math, English, social studies, and science). This data is provided at the end of the second marking period and the end of the fourth marking period. At the end of the second marking period, CCPS had 144 students total identified through the EWS report. School administrators, core leads, and school counselors then worked together and with teachers to intervene appropriately or evaluate and adjust the intervention model if students were already receiving support.

**Challenges**

The development team had to complete research and run trials to identify the correct set of criteria for the report. The team did not want to overidentify students.

### Next Steps

Moving forward, CCPS will continue to use the EWS report to help make sure we are identifying students who are at risk of not graduating. Members of the Department of Instruction and Department of Information Technology will continue to collaborate to develop report options that identify at-risk students prior to 9<sup>th</sup> grade. It is anticipated many of these students would already be identified through the MTSS process; however, an additional report that is available at least annually starting in 6<sup>th</sup> grade would be supportive of the same goal of making sure all students are on track to graduate and become college and career ready.

### Develop and Implement MTSS Guidebook and Processes

CCPS has developed an [MTSS Guidebook](#) to support schools in early identification of students not making the expected academic, social emotional, and/or behavioral progress necessary to meet CCR standards. The Guidebook also describes processes and expectations for schools to employ to ensure consistent implementation of systems of support and monitoring (e.g., identification, targeting of supports, provision of supports, and progress monitoring). Training in understanding and use of the guidebook began in July 2023 and has continued through the 2023–2024 school year.

During summer leadership in 2023, CCPS rolled out the Multitiered System of Support Guidebook that provides school staff with specific support and interventions for students in reading and mathematics that address all three tiers. The initial focus centered on ensuring strong tier 1 universal instruction is provided to all students with scaffolding and differentiation as a part of tier 1. The guide provides a problem-solving approach utilizing data to identify small groups and individual students who may need more support than what is provided in tier one. Over the 2023 – 2024 school year, professional learning for administrators has been provided to build an understanding of MTSS and develop a team to implement and monitor MTSS within their buildings. An increase in MTSS will include an increase in setting success criteria and evaluating return-on-investment success of interventions, which is a strategy known to increase student outcomes.

### Challenges

School-based teams have shared the challenge of developing an MTSS team while remaining responsible for other required teams: Student Services Team and School Improvement Team, for example. It has been a challenge to have full teams and avoid the perception that the same work is replicated across teams. Moving beyond an understanding of what MTSS is (definitions, processes, etc.) to consistent implementation across schools has also been a challenge.

### Next Steps

CCPS will continue to build staff understanding of the MTSS process for supporting students by:

- Continuing to provide professional learning to administrators on the MTSS process and how to utilize current teams to effectively identify and provide appropriate support and interventions.
- Utilizing the school improvement process to impact providing strong tier 1 universal instruction and strong tier 1 equitable and inclusive learning environments.
- Identifying and purchasing an application that will provide schools with accessible data to inform decisions on supports and interventions, progress monitor supports and interventions, and evaluate the effectiveness of interventions. With the impact of the current budget cuts, this may be delayed due to lack of funding.

### **Pillar 3: College and Career Readiness**

- CCPS has collaborated with the College of Southern Maryland (CSM) to develop Post-CCR pathways. Moving forward, CCPS would like to determine if CSM is able to help with CCR Support Plan strategies.

#### **Identify, Use, and Evaluate the Impact of Intervention Materials and Resources**

Over the 2023-24 school year, the Secondary English and mathematics supervisors and learning specialists worked with teacher leaders to identify and/or develop materials specific to standards assessed on the MCAP assessments for school-day and after-school tutoring to support students not on track to graduate and/or not demonstrating college and career readiness by the time they are assessed. The resources and materials are now available in our learning management system (Schoology) for students and teachers.

#### **Next Steps**

The Secondary English and math teams will continue to refine resources based on student need and continued professional learning. As the state begins to release items, teams can compare CCPS resources to skills being assessed in items to make sure we are preparing students as best we can for success on MCAP.

#### **Implement and Refine Individualized College and Career Support Plans**

CCPS implemented Individualized College and Career Readiness Plans at the start of the 2023 – 2024 school year for students whose scores were below proficient on MCAP, as MCAP scores were the only CCR measure at the start of the school year. English core leads and the Secondary English supervisor used the Student Item Analysis Report from the spring 2023 MCAP administration to identify which resources, materials, and support models were the best fit based on students’ strengths and weaknesses. The English core leads and the Secondary English supervisor were intentional in identifying a range of resources, materials, and support models to accommodate the range of student needs and availability based on student schedules. Support models included self-paced, digital resources as well as in-person reteaching sessions. This occurred in the summer after assessment results were available in preparation for the start of the school year. Once the school year began, English core leads worked with school counselors, grade-level administrators, and English teachers of the students with Support Plans to communicate with students and parents the need for a CCR Support Plan and get input about availability and support options. Plans were fully developed and implemented by the end of quarter one. Reteaching opportunities occurred up to reassessment. Students were reassessed during the 2023 – 2024 Fall Block MCAP administration in English 10 ELA/Literacy MCAP. Their assessment results should be available this April. Families engaged in CCR Support Plans by providing input about student interests and motivations and receiving updates about student progress while preparing for reassessment.

CCPS has increased collaboration with The College of Southern Maryland (CSM); however, the focus of the meetings has been Early College and dual enrollment pathways, not CCR Support.

Now that LEAs are no longer working from the interim definition for CCR, collaboration with CSM to identify opportunities to support students who are not yet CCR could begin in the 2024 – 2025 school year. Currently, students who are not yet CCR can still take dual enrollment courses with CSM.

#### **Next Steps**

- To mitigate the need for a CCR Support Plan, CCPS will gather a team of school-based and central-office based leaders to consider how to leverage the Early Warning System (EWS) report to intervene prior to the end of 10<sup>th</sup> grade for students who are not progressing towards reaching the CCR Standard. Part of this team’s work will include how to increase opportunities for collaboration with families to support

### **Pillar 3: College and Career Readiness**

students in meeting the CCR Standard. A representative from CCPS Student Services will be consulted or included on this team to incorporate family engagement opportunities that address barriers to attendance and academic success.

- To increase opportunities for collaboration with families in the development and implementation of CCR Support Plans, school-based teams will offer the option of face-to-face meetings with parents to review the Individual Student Report (ISR) that summarizes performance on the English and Math MCAP assessments. The updates to parents about student progress leading up to MCAP reassessment will also include the option of a phone call or meeting.
- CCPS meets monthly with CSM to monitor and improve Early College. Opportunities for how CCPS and CSM can collaborate to support students who have not yet met the CCR Standard will be included on monthly agendas for the 2024 – 2025 school year.

## 15. Access to Post-CCR Pathways

*Initial Blueprint Implementation Plan Reference: Questions 118 - 122 and 128 - 133*

In March 2023, the LEA discussed how it would **ensure every student has access to post-CCR pathways, including college preparatory programs** (IB Diploma Programme, Cambridge AICE Diploma Program, and Advanced Placement Program), **dual enrollment programs, middle and early college high school programs, and CTE programs that include opportunities for apprenticeships and other industry-recognized credentials.**

The LEA’s response included descriptions of current offerings and proposed expansion plans if applicable, strategies to recruit students representative of the school system’s demographics, and plans to overcome barriers for student enrollment such as transportation, scheduling, entry requirements, or inadequate academic support.

Based on implementation of the LEA’s plans over the last year, discuss the district’s progress in transforming its systems and practices and achieving the intended outcomes of the Blueprint. Responses must address the following questions.

- What progress has been made in implementation related to both planned activities and anticipated outcomes? If progress has been limited, what challenges has the LEA encountered? Consider, identify, and refer to available data as needed to demonstrate progress.
- How is the LEA adapting its plans to mitigate challenges and/or ensure continued progress and future success? Which strategies are not working that the LEA will no longer implement, and which new strategies does the LEA intend to implement? Include the rationale for adjustments.

### Strategies

- Introduction and Expansion of Early College
- Implementation and Expansion of CTE Program and Expanding IRCs
- Implementing and Advanced Placement Pathway

### Introduction and Expansion of Early College Program

CCPS implemented the initial year of the Early College program in partnership with the College of Southern Maryland. The pilot program includes 16 students representing all four high schools. Students successfully completed the first semester and are doing well in their second semester. They will finish the year with 25 college credits (General Education Transfer Certificate). We are in discussions with the College of Southern Maryland about adding a junior and senior Early College program for the 2025-2026 school year.

We have discussed several options that would allow more students to participate while still participating in high school programs as the current inability to do so has somewhat limited enrollment and interest as students have been forced to “choose” between early college and CTE programs in particular. In addition, we have reviewed the challenges of transportation and meals and have a plan to modify the existing transportation and meal plans if necessary (this year only one student needs transportation; most students drive themselves or get a ride to campus).



### Next Steps

We have recruited for the next year of Early College. This recruitment has included two virtual and two in-person information sessions; in addition, at least three email messages were sent to the families of all rising seniors, and further sent a specific email to all rising seniors that meet the requirements for the program. This year, we had 55 students submit applications. Of these 55, 30 students are being directly accepted to the program. An additional 20 students are receiving conditional acceptance based on a need to take additional coursework in Summer of 2024 in order to ensure the early college schedule can fulfill all graduation requirements. An additional 5 students who applied are not eligible for the program due to GPA. Fifty-five students represent approximately 2.5 times the number of applications received in the first year of inception. We credit this growth to increased awareness and success of the program. To date, growth is tracking as expected/hoped for.

As part of our plan for further growth, we are in discussions with the College of Southern Maryland about adding a junior and senior Early College program possibly as soon as the 2025-2026 school year if funding on both sides allows for this expansion. We have discussed several options that would allow more students to participate while still participating in high school programs. This expansion would allow for students to dually participate in school-based career and technical education (CTE) programs concurrently with early college which would expand the eligible number of students and would allow students to not have to choose “one or the other” pathway, thus avoiding a scenario where unintentional tracking occurs. There are many CTE programs in which college credits in addition to industry recognized credentials provide a marked strategic advantage into careers for students.

### Implementation and Expansion of CTE Program and Expanding IRCs

New industry recognized credentials have been administered for three pathways with a plan to add two more in the coming school year. We have, however, put some plans on pause as the CTE committee works to finalize their guidance on definitions for IRCs as well as an approved list of IRCs. This year, we have administered certifications in Business Ethics for students in the Accounting and Business Management pathways and our TAM students will take the PRAXIS exam in May. In better marketing our CTE programs, this year, with the help of career advisors, all 8<sup>th</sup> grade students had the opportunity to experience a “CTE Exploration Fair” that was produced in several parts. First, career advisors provided an introductory lesson to students. This was followed by a student field trip to the 14 programs at the Career & Technology Academy (CTA) where all 8<sup>th</sup> grade students attended. The next portion had students in the 11 CTE programs that are housed in the 4 comprehensive high schools visit 8<sup>th</sup> graders to demonstrate, discuss, and display their programs. The final component included post-exploration counseling sessions with small groups of 8<sup>th</sup> grade students and career advisors. Initial data shows an increase in program enrollment at most comprehensive schools in CTE programs that begin in the 9<sup>th</sup> grade year: NJROTC (Navy Junior Reserve Officers Training Corps), Engineering, Biomedical Science, and Computer Science.

### Next Steps - Increasing IRCs in CTE - Plan for 2024-2027

As the CTE Committee finalizes the list of IRCs, an appropriate IRC will be identified for the following CTE programs: Criminal Justice, Agriculture, Accounting, Business Management, Computer Science, Engineering, and Biomedical Science. Plans for a modeling software credential for engineering are underway. Perkins funds will be utilized to obtain necessary equipment and technology upgrades needed to administer new IRCs in the engineering field. The first group of students anticipated to complete an IRC for engineering is scheduled to test in the 2024-25 school year. The plan is for all above-mentioned programs to have fully implemented an IRC and have tested at least one class of students by SY2026-27. This allows the time necessary to restructure curricula and purchase any updated or new materials required. One key challenge will be whether the CTE Committee recommends an IRC for all programs, especially Criminal Justice and Agriculture. In the past, these two programs have relied on dual-enrollment credits associated with the programs to provide next-steps from the program to

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future career paths. Finally, we will monitor program enrollment data to determine if this year's 8<sup>th</sup> grade exploration activities ultimately result in increased programmatic enrollment as most of those students will not enroll in CTE programs until either the 10<sup>th</sup> grade year (SY25-26) or 11<sup>th</sup> grade year (SY26-27). As we follow this lagging data, we will also consider plans to incorporate exploration activities for these same students as 9<sup>th</sup> graders next year to remind and encourage them to join pathways that begin in 10<sup>th</sup> and 11<sup>th</sup> grade. These activities will include specific advising from career advisors by targeting students who have not clearly identified a post-CCR pathway by mid-year of 9<sup>th</sup> grade.

#### **Implementing an Advanced Placement Pathway**

Calvert County Public Schools has done a tremendous amount of work with the support of Equal Opportunity Schools to ensure students have equitable access to Advanced Placement course offerings. This work has resulted in notable increases in the number of students attempting at least one AP course. As we progress, the next step will be to determine the make-up of an identified Advanced Placement Pathway. Initial discussions on vision and alignment to district strategic goals and beliefs occurred during the Instructional Programs And Curriculum Committee (IPACC) meetings held from September 2023 to December 2023. At that time, the team declined to decide on a finalized plan for a full pathway, but several suggestions and models were identified. The Pillar 3 Committee, along with stakeholders from IPACC have continued to review suggestions and will present a proposed pathway during the 2024 IPACC session.

#### **Next Steps**

The Pillar 3 team will present potential models for an AP Pathway during the 2024 IPACC session. A pathway will be identified and put into place starting for SY25-26. Of consideration is the role of testing associated to AP Pathway (whether the “tests” or test scores play a role in a student’s completion of a pathway) and which courses or clusters of courses will be required. There are financial challenges potentially associated with the final implementation of the AP pathway.

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### 16. Engagement and Communication with Multilingual learner (ML) families

*Initial Blueprint Implementation Plan Reference: Question 137*

In March 2023, the LEA described how it would **engage and communicate with Multilingual learner (ML) families, also known as English learners (EL), including leveraging the EL family coordinator position.**

Based on implementation of the LEA's plans over the last year, discuss the district's progress in transforming its systems and practices and achieving the intended outcomes of the Blueprint. Responses must address the following questions.

- What progress has been made in implementation related to both planned activities and anticipated outcomes? If progress has been limited, what challenges has the LEA encountered? Consider, identify, and refer to available data as needed to demonstrate progress.
- How is the LEA adapting its plans to mitigate challenges and/or ensure continued progress and future success? Which strategies are not working that the LEA will no longer implement, and which new strategies does the LEA intend to implement? Include the rationale for adjustments.

### Strategies

- Translation and Interpretation Services
- School and Teacher Communication with ML Families
- Interpreters

### Introduction

Communication with our multilingual learner families is critical to ensuring access and support. CCPS has a small but growing population of Multilingual Learners (ML), increasing from 154 tested students in 2019 to 236 tested students in 2023. Of the 236 ML learners in CCPS, 15% of those students tested proficient/exited. Additionally, 70% of students were making their minimum expected growth target. Our ML students attend 19 of our 24 schools, and Calvert County has seven regional ESOL programs: Barstow Elementary School, Dowell Elementary School, Mount Harmony Elementary School, Windy Hill Elementary School, Calvert Middle School, Windy Hill Middle School, and Calvert High School. With a limited number of ML families, students are provided transportation from their sending school to schools to receive ML services. Calvert County Public Schools has multiple means to communicate with Multilingual Learner Families, which is critical to ensuring equitable access to high quality curriculum, materials, and family support, to include the following:

### Translation and Interpretation Services

**Language Line** is a telephonic interpreting service that provides interpretation services and is available to all school sites and is used by teachers, school counselors, administrations, administrative assistants, nurses and any school system employee. The service works like a conference call connecting, school personnel with parents and a certified interpreter over the phone line to provide immediate interpreted information between the parties.

**TransAct** is a subscription service CCPS purchased that provides translated standardized letters, forms, and documents in over 40 languages. School staff are provided annual training on accessing and using these

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documents. All staff are encouraged to use both English and the translated language when providing documents to families.

### School and Teacher Communication with ML Families

**SMORE** is an electronic newsletter that allows recipients to translate the newsletter into their language. The SMORE subscription was added in January 2023 to better meet the needs of our school community. Schools use the SMORE platform to generate weekly newsletters for families with important information, dates, and flyers to keep families informed of school happenings.

**School Messenger** is a notification platform that allows for system or school messages sent electronically to be translated into the language of correspondence for each individual guardian in eSchoolPlus, the student information system. The integration between eSchoolPlus and School Messenger allows for nightly updates to contact lists to ensure accurate contact information. As of April 2024, we have identified and enabled over 25 languages to support our guardians in the district.

**Talking Points** is an AI assisted application teachers use to communicate with students and families through computers, cell phones or other forms of technology that has the ability for students and families to choose the language in which to receive messages and the teachers and school staff to send the messages in English. Families and Students are able to send messages in their language to be received by teachers and school staff in English.

**Translated Documents** - District specific documents are translated through a professional translation service using vetted translators. Documents that have been translated include Student Code of Conduct and various documents not available through TransAct.

### Interpreters

CCPS contracts trained interpreters to provide interpretation in person, via online meetings, over the phone conversations, and via email. A system is in place to request an interpreter. Our interpreters attend any school function that a family requests support for, such as Individualized Education Program (IEP) meetings, Section 504 meetings, parent conferences, school award ceremonies, open houses, graduations, and family engagement events. Interpreters also help families with registration paperwork, placement testing, accessing school databases and technology, and ESOL family events. Interpreters function as a liaison between the family and the school.

### Challenges

**Lack of Direct Communication.** Calvert County Public Schools, despite having many tools, over-relies on certain tools, like interpreters to communicate with families instead of some of the others because it is the easiest and quickest way to relay information in the life of a very busy professional. This creates a third party involved in communication with families instead of direct communication between teacher or administrator and parent. That distance does create a barrier to family engagement and belonging. If parents do not feel they can directly reach out to a staff member or teacher, they may be less likely to fully engage with teachers and the schools.

**Underutilization of Resources.** Language Line is underutilized because most people in society no longer answer a phone call from an unfamiliar phone number. This is even more true for families that may be wary of deportation and such realities.

**EL Family Coordinator Position.** Due to budget constraints, we were unable to hire an EL family coordinator and those responsibilities were assigned to other staff.

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### **Next Steps**

- More training is needed to have a greater population of employees and specifically classroom teachers to become proficient in the tools available to communicate directly with non- English-speaking parents and families.
- More teacher and parent friendly tools can help with communication.
- Hiring of a Multilingual Family Coordinator for FY25 and beyond to develop resources and engagement opportunities for families.
- Use of the Multilingual Family Coordinator to develop a comprehensive family engagement plan.

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**17. Supporting Multilingual Learners and Increasing Language Acquisition**

*Initial Blueprint Implementation Plan Reference: Question 138 - 139*

In March 2023, the LEA described how it would **support Multilingual learners (ML), also known as English learners (EL), and implement the recommendations of the ML workgroup to increase English proficiency for ML students.**

Responses included strategies to increase language acquisition and ensure the alignment and investment of resources.

Based on implementation of the LEA’s plans over the last year, discuss the district’s progress in transforming its systems and practices and achieving the intended outcomes of the Blueprint. Responses must address the following questions.

- What progress has been made in implementation related to both planned activities and anticipated outcomes? If progress has been limited, what challenges has the LEA encountered? Consider, identify, and refer to available data as needed to demonstrate progress.
- How is the LEA adapting its plans to mitigate challenges and/or ensure continued progress and future success? Which strategies are not working that the LEA will no longer implement, and which new strategies does the LEA intend to implement? Include the rationale for adjustments.

**Required Data Analysis: Through an analysis of data, discuss progress towards meeting the Blueprint outcome of increasing English proficiency for Multilingual learner students.**

**Introduction**

As noted in Question 16, CCPS has a small but growing population of Multilingual Learners (ML), increasing from 154 tested students in 2019 to 236 tested students in 2023. While ML students attend 19 of our 24 schools, our seven regional sites serve 84 percent of all CCPS ML students. Our regional program provides for the targeting of services and instructional support. We have seen strong growth in English Language Acquisition, yet we recognize that as our ML population grows, we need to build capacity to support all ML students across multiple schools (See 17a\_ML\_Data\_CCPS). Our regional approach has worked well thus far, and CCPS leadership is exploring options for ensuring that all ML students receive appropriate services. The following table provides current disaggregated data for ML students.

<b>Student Group</b>	<b>Met Proficiency</b>	<b>Student Group</b>	<b>Met Proficiency</b>
Male	62.0%	504	44.4%
Female	63.0%	SWD	45.8%
AfrAmer	11.1%	US Born	63.0%
Asian	66.7%	Non-US Born	61.1%
Haw/PacIs	*		
Hispanic	63.9%	Newcomer (First Year)	10.0%
MultiRace	57.1%	1-5 Years	71.1%
White	90.0%	5+ Years	0.0%

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### Strategies

Our key strategies for increasing language acquisition include small teacher to student ratios, a regional program that allows us to focus resources on the greatest number of MLs, and evidence-based professional development.

- 15:1 student teacher ratio for instruction and instructional support
- Regional program that enables staff to meet with students daily for push in and pull-out support.
- At the secondary level, dedicated ESOL class periods for learning and content support
- EL and teacher goal discussions
- Professional Development for teachers of ELs through Seidlitz Education
- Professional Development for teachers of ELs through the PLC model in schools

**Progress.** 2023 Access Scores (May 2023) indicated that CCPS continues to exceed the State of Maryland's Minimum Growth Expectations of 56% of students making the minimum growth target. CCPS provided two professional development sessions for teachers, one in October 2023 and one in April 2024 with Seidlitz Education: 7-Steps to a Language Rich, Interactive Classroom. We provided professional development for 121 teachers.

### Challenges

- Maintaining a 15:1 student ratio for effective instruction is a challenge. We have continued enrollment in our program, and there is a budget deficit in Calvert County based upon the state of Maryland reducing our funding by \$22 million dollars. CCPS may have to RIF teachers and we are raising class size ratios. This has a negative impact on our school system and the richness of our programs.
- We continue to enroll students with limited formal educations, where it is a realistic challenge that while students do make growth, the gap is so large that the growth may not meet the standard on a chart of minimum expected growth.
- Experienced MLs in Calvert County struggle to make the appropriate growth to exit from services.
- Time for professional development opportunities with classroom and content teachers is a struggle. There are so many competing forces within content, strategic plans, initiatives, etc. that it is difficult to access teachers as much as would be beneficial.

### Mitigation of Challenges and Ensuring Continued Success

- Investigating the possible opportunity to add to our professional development model by targeting a specific ML regional program building. This would be a model of recursive PD and coaching to build the capacity of all teachers in a building to effect change to a strong universal tier one instruction model.
- Continue the model of instruction that has proven successful for the ESOL Department for many years.
- Determine an action plan for individual Experienced MLs to ensure a dedicated approach to this demographic that seems to be our struggle point. This data will be monitored quarterly and compared to new MLs to determine any correlation or divergence in progression toward proficiency. Data will also be monitored annually to determine gaps forming or that exist between student groups.
- Additional next steps are to use tools to communicate more often at the between teacher and parent, so we don't rely on interpreters, which would create more flexibility and availability to talk to our families. Talking between teacher/school and parent empowers the teachers and the parents and creates a closer relationship between school and family, which is our ultimate goal.



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### 18. Improve Education for Students with Disabilities

*Initial Blueprint Implementation Plan Reference: Questions 140 and 142*

In March 2023, the LEA described how it would **improve education for students with disabilities**.

Responses addressed supporting general and special education teachers in the implementation of effective classroom instructional practices and increasing and aligning investments in talent, time, and resources. Considerations included:

- Strategic staffing to implement a co-teaching model that allows for two teachers to share all responsibilities for a single classroom.
- Professional development to support all teachers in differentiating instruction effectively.
- Scheduling models to support collaboration and co-planning between general and special education teachers.

Based on implementation of the LEA's plans over the last year, discuss the district's progress in transforming its systems and practices and achieving the intended outcomes of the Blueprint. Responses must address the following questions.

- What progress has been made in implementation related to both planned activities and anticipated outcomes? If progress has been limited, what challenges has the LEA encountered? Consider, identify, and refer to available data as needed to demonstrate progress.
- How is the LEA adapting its plans to mitigate challenges and/or ensure continued progress and future success? Which strategies are not working that the LEA will no longer implement, and which new strategies does the LEA intend to implement? Include the rationale for adjustments.

**Required Data Analysis: Through an analysis of data, discuss progress towards meeting the Blueprint outcome of improving education for students with disabilities.**

### Strategies to improve education for students with disabilities

- Strengthen Tier 1 Core Instruction.
- Implement a multi-tiered system of support.
- Integrate evidence-based behavioral supports and interventions.
- Professional learning and support.

### Introduction

CCPS leadership, including leadership from the Department of Instruction, the Department of Special Education, and the Student Services Team, are working collaboratively to develop a consistent approach to supporting all students, and specifically those students identified for Special Education services and support. Our joint work, which includes strategic planning and co-development of professional learning for our Supervisors and Specialists, is an important action that we have taken to improve education for students with disabilities.

### Evidence of our Commitment to Data Analysis and Continuous Improvement

To illustrate how CCPS uses data, data processes, and systems improvement to improve instruction (including Core Instruction and instruction for Special Education students), we provide a detailed description of recent work

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undertaken to improve district systems and directly improve classroom instruction. The following information provides information that is directly relevant to CCPS's comprehensive efforts to improve instruction and the provision of interventions and supports to all students and should be considered when reviewing all questions in Pillar 3 (questions 10 to 15 in the 2024 Implementation Plan).

**Context and Initial Analysis.** The CCPS Comprehensive Coordinated Early Intervention Services (CCEIS) Implementation Team used the **Success Gap Rubric** self-assessment tool as recommended by MSDE, to support the root cause analysis process required each year to identify factors contributing to disparate impacts on different racial and ethnic groups. The team examined the decision-making processes, procedures, and practices for students ages 3 through 21 with an intentional focus on the impact of Identification, Placement, and Disciplinary Removals on local system trends, patterns, and outcomes.

The sections and ratings of the Success Gap Rubric tool were used to **develop an online survey to collect and organize the necessary information for the self-assessment and root cause analysis process.** An explanation and description of the purpose, process, and timeline for the survey was sent to the various team members from the district level implementation team, members of the reading, math, and behavior subgroup teams, as well as an elementary and middle school principal. Participants were asked to reply to the survey within specific ratings that addressed data-based decision making, cultural responsiveness, core instructional programs, assessments/universal screener/progress monitoring, and interventions and supports. These areas aligned to prior district priorities and the planning for next steps needed to address the success gap identified.

The following Success Gap Statement was identified after a thorough review of the district's disproportionality trend data:

*"In CCPS African American and Multi-race students have an increased likelihood of being identified for an intellectual disability, emotional disability, and specific learning disability, as well as an increased likelihood for disciplinary removals as indicated by a risk ratio of 2.0 or higher in trend data over 2 consecutive years."*

Note: The success gap statement was revised to include discipline after our root cause analysis process.

After providing a rating, participants were asked to include evidence that aligned to the descriptors of the rating and to identify any additional information needed while considering the success gap. Participants were provided with an additional reminder to complete the survey before the data was collected for analysis; 11 of 13 participants completed the survey as requested prior to the April 9, 2024 deadline.

On April 9th, 2024, the survey was closed, compiled for analysis, and the information was entered into the template: [IDEA Data Center – Equity, Inclusion, and Opportunity: How to Address Success Gaps Rubric](#). CCEIS team members reviewed the data provided from the survey to identify ratings in each of the specific areas identified on the tool. For example, if most of the ratings were in the "Partial Implementation," and data sources or evidence were provided to support that rating, then "Partial Implementation" was assigned. Evidence for each of the ratings was compiled into a word document for review and then used to capture the summary statement entered as evidence or information needed.

The team analyzed the data provided by MSDE relative to the Alternate Assessment and found that 56, 58, and 48 students were assessed respectively in 2019, 2022, and 2023. In 2022 the percentage of students proficient dropped from 42.9 percent to 15.5 and 14.6 percent in 2022 and 2023. This drop is indicative of changes in the Alternate Assessment at a state level and are mirrored across the state level data for these years. The team went to work to better align the content and the standards with the new approaches to assessment. These actions are reflected in the following section.

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**Action Determined Based on Data Analysis and Stakeholder Input.** Discussion about which team members completed the survey, and the specific evidence each team member provided highlighted the disconnect and lack of communication between departments. *The need for cohesive systems and structures in alignment with MTSS implementation was identified as an area of concern for the team to consider. The departments of special education, instruction, and student services impact the effective implementation of MTSS; the work must be in alignment with all district work.*

The CCEIS Implementation Team used the [IDEA Priority Setting Tool](#) as recommended by the IDEA Data Center - Equity, Inclusion, and Opportunity: How to Address Success Gap Rubric resource documents and descriptions online. According to the IDEA Data Center, “The priority setting tool helps the user rate each indicator from the rubric based on the urgency of the issue, the availability of resources to intervene, and the level of effort required to create change. The tool then helps the user calculate a priority recommendation based on these ratings. Any item with an urgency rated as critical will automatically appear as a high-priority recommendation. In addition, items would appear as a higher priority if the team rated them as requiring a low level of effort—enabling your team to accomplish some quick wins.”

Using the Priority Setting Tool, the CCEIS team identified the following areas as High priority levels:

1. Data-based Decision Making (2 of 2 areas identified as high priority)
2. Cultural Responsiveness (1 of 3 areas identified as high priority)
3. Core Instruction (2 of 5 areas identified as high priority)
4. Assessment (0 of 3 areas identified as high priority)
5. Interventions (1 of 3 areas identified as high priority).

Five of the six high priority areas are included in the action plan for this year. Indicator 4b (Low priority level) was included, as well; the importance of documenting and determining student progress with a consistent and clear monitoring system is a component of a successful MTSS implementation.

### Implementation Actions

The **CCPS MTSS Guidebook** was developed and shared with staff at the beginning of the 2023-2024 school year. The document was created by a team of stakeholders from the departments of special education, instruction, and student services which describes in detail how schools should proactively work with data to support students at the school and classroom levels with guidelines on how to develop MTSS teams, implement academic, behavioral, and social emotional learning, and evaluate the progress of MTSS.

The following theory of action is named on page 5 of the CCPS MTSS Guidebook, “If CCPS implements a Multi-Tiered Systems of Supports with fidelity, then all staff will be able to meet the needs of the whole child and all students will access, progress and master grade-level standards in general education.”

**Overview of MTSS Guidebook.** Implementation Fidelity, Problem Solving, Data Systems, Instruction & Intervention, and Stakeholder Engagement were all identified as critical components needed for successful MTSS implementation; together, these provide the framework for the MTSS Guidebook.

The [Guidebook](#) also provides information and expectations regarding the systems that schools should develop to implement an effective MTSS approach. Guidance on school-based team development, roles, core principles, schedules, data required, and monitoring is included on pages 6-16. The next section, Academics, defines, describes, and provides resources for strong Tier 1 Instruction (pages 17-20). The building blocks named in the guidebook are Lesson Components, Culturally Responsive Instruction, Ready for Rigor Framework, Academic Mindsets, Research-based Learning Strategies, Scaffolding & Differentiation, Universal Design for Learning, and Specially Designed Instruction.

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The Guidebook provides a tool specifically designed to assist schools in narrowing a focus area for ensuring strong tier 1 universal instruction as part of an iterative school improvement cycle, providing expectations for math instruction (page 22), reading instruction (page 34), social-emotional learning (page 45), and behavioral supports (page 50); best instructional practices are named and described for Tiers 1, 2, and 3. Implementation of the policies, practices, and procedures identified for schools to follow varies depending on staffing, resources, and school improvement action plans.

**CCPS Supplemental Guide for Reading.** The CCPS Supplemental Guide for Reading is another resource referenced for staff to consider in alignment with Maryland’s Ready to Read Act Law requirements. This tool provides critical guidance for school-based teams, interventionists, special educators, and classroom teachers. Again, CCPS provides a guidance document for district leaders and schools to follow but how the information in the document is received and put into action is highly dependent on the staffing and resources at the individual building.

**Implementing MTSS.** During the 23-24SY, the district’s MTSS Committee and CCEIS Implementation Team reviewed the structures and systems school-based teams were using to monitor the students identified as being at-risk for reading, math, and behavior. It was determined that more support from the district through MTSS was required for the school-based teams to understand the purpose of the progress monitoring process, plan for how information would be shared with staff at the schools and determine if adjustments were needed within school level structures (e.g., ILT, SST, PLC/collaborative planning, adjusting the master schedule) for student-level planning and monitoring to be effective.

Initial CCEIS training was offered to each of the school-based facilitators identified in the buildings at the board of education building in the fall of 2024. During this training, the CCEIS Implementation Team provided specific and detailed information on the CCEIS process and time for intentional collaboration and support to begin the initial steps for CCEIS planning and monitoring. Each school based CCEIS facilitator was provided time to develop an action plan for inputting required data, meeting with teachers/staff, providing training, and evaluation procedures needed. Of the 12 elementary schools, 7 schools completed the At-Risk Student Progress Monitoring Plan, including the identification of the systems and structures within the school building to support the identification of students at-risk for reading/math difficulties and behavior concerns, as well as a complete action plan outlining building-specific next steps. Three schools partially completed the At-Risk Student Progress Monitoring Plan, and 2 schools did not complete the plan at all. Both middle schools, Southern and Mill Creek, completed the At-Risk Student Progress Monitoring Plan.

**The first round of meetings** for each school was scheduled to include various stakeholders. The agenda items were the following:

- CCPS Data Profile for Significant Disproportionality
- School Data Profile
- IDEA Significant Disproportionality Areas: Identification, Placement, Newly Identified Students
- What intervening strategies were put in place before referring students to IEP
- Review at risk student list
- Schools Agreements of Monitoring Students on the “Principal’s Report”
- At Risk Student Progress Monitoring Plan
- Resources & Supports Needed, Schedule Follow-Up

**The second round of meetings** for each school was held mid-year with similar agenda items and provided additional insights to the CCEIS Implementation Team regarding the level of support schools will need for effective MTSS Implementation and student progress monitoring practices. The level of support requested by schools was highly dependent on staffing inconsistencies and/or the number of students identified as “At-

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Risk” mid-year according to the iReady/Map cut scores. During the mid-year meeting, At-Risk Student Progress Monitoring Plans were reviewed, and schools were tasked with revising the plans based on data discussed at the meeting. Six elementary schools revised their plan, 1 school that had not previously completed the At-Risk Student Progress Monitoring Plan completed it with support from the CCEIS implementation team, and the remaining 6 elementary schools did not revise their plans. One elementary school still has not completed the At-Risk Student Progress Monitoring Plan. Both middle schools revised their plans based on the mid-year data review meeting. Although not all At-Risk Student Progress Monitoring Plans were completed, each of the school teams identified the need for cohesive collaboration between the Departments of Special Education, Instruction, and Student Services to streamline systems and structures for students identified as at-risk for academic and behavioral difficulties.

**Using Implementation Feedback and Data to Improve.** These meetings provided insight into the need for the district to reevaluate the systems and structures currently being used to be more consistently modelled and continuously supported. Through the CCEIS quarterly meeting discussions and review of the At-Risk Student Progress Monitoring Plan, schools identified the need for support with progress monitoring at the school/class/student level underscoring the need for MTSS system alignment. Additionally, teams discussed the number of students referred to the IEP team and whether the referral source was from the school or parents. This discussion helped to facilitate reflection on school-specific structures and systems in place to monitor and evaluate implementation of strong Universal Tier 1 instruction for all students and the levels of support provided to students through Tier 2 and 3 supports and interventions.

**Recent and Ongoing Actions.** After these meetings occurred, the district leadership determined a more focused and direct approach for implementation was needed. Collaboration and cohesion between central office departments was identified as an area of focus, particularly with the Department of Student Services as the SST process is inconsistently implemented throughout the district. The coaches were identified as leaders for this work since they have had research-based training for coaching and school-improvement processes that align with and support a coherent MTSS implementation system through collaboration between central office departments and school administration.

During district-level Departments of Instruction and Special Education (DIS) and Administration & Supervision (A&S) meetings, intentional collaboration between the Departments of Instruction & Special Education (DIS), Student Services Team (SST), Diversity & Equity Leadership Team (DELT), Administration & Supervision (A&S), and the MTSS Team has been identified as an area for cohesion and consistency. With the designation of ATSI schools within the district (5), the ATSI specialist, in conjunction with district-level stakeholders, identified the need for a cohesive system for school improvement centered on interleaving central office department expectations for school-based MTSS implementation, particularly in the development of a strong universal Tier 1 for academic, SEL, and behavior. Student Service Teams (SST) have historically operated in silos within the district, with each school cultivating a referral and monitoring process outside of the guidance provided in the MTSS Guidebook. During SY24 district-level meetings, CCPS cabinet leaders determined that for SY25 the Department of Student Services (Directors/Supervisors) would regularly attend monthly meetings with the Departments of Instruction and Special Education so that all departments are represented for alignment of expectations and levels of support available to schools for MTSS implementation that includes SST processes and procedures.

Based upon the data analysis of the assessment scores for the Alternate Assessment, the district has adopted a new Alternate Standard curricula in Teach Town and we have worked with teachers to connect IEP goals, content, and grade level standards together to increase rigor for our students with the most complex needs. These approaches are becoming systematized and on-going data analysis is needed to ensure that our approaches are impacting

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student data positively. We are also discussing these approaches with peers and colleagues across the state to make sure that we are aware of any best practices that might have positive impacts on our students.

**Next Steps.** The CCEIS implementation team will reference and model how to use both the MTSS Guidance document and the CCPS Supplemental Guide for Reading when meeting with school-based stakeholders to streamline structures for school improvement and progress monitoring procedures that reach the individual student level. The Supervisor of Elementary ELA is finalizing a data literacy protocol for schools and grade level teams to utilize for progress monitoring and data informed decision making as required by the Ready to Read Act. This tool will be embedded in the CCPS MTSS Guidebook for SY25. Training on the protocol and tools will be provided and supported throughout the school year through district level and school based MTSS teams. Also, more detailed progress monitoring is needed in math, attendance, and behavior so subgroups for reading, math, and behavior will be used within the CCEIS Implementation Team for SY25. Each subgroup will identify how schools will be supported with MTSS Implementation, disproportionality, and student progress monitoring criteria for math and behavior that reach the individual student level, like progress monitoring for reading.

**Challenges.** Currently, the lack of consistent data surrounding schools' implementation of universal Tier 1, inconsistent SST and IEP referral practices, and varying progress monitoring processes, contribute to higher rates of Tier 2 and 3 supports/interventions, referrals to SST, and referrals to IEP. Barriers that CCPS continue to encounter while focusing on disproportionality include communication and accountability of district level expectations for implementation of a strong universal Tier 1 and the lack of consistent progress monitoring for the academic and behavioral components of CCEIS under MTSS as evidenced through the review of school specific At-Risk Student Progress Monitoring Plans and CCEIS meetings. A level of accountability will be provided using school-based inquiry cycles and reflective coaching with instructional leadership teams. The school improvement inquiry cycles will require schools to frame all school improvement efforts through an equity lens and uncover instructional practices rooted in a deficit mindset to begin addressing the CCPS Success Gap.

With this as context, our strategies to improve education for students with disabilities include a focus on strengthening Tier 1 Core instruction, including training and support for co-teaching; implementation of a MTSS that includes specially designed instruction, as part of Tier 1 instruction and as part of Tier 2 and Tier 3 supports; integration of behavioral supports and interventions; and ongoing professional learning to ensure that all teachers, including but not limited to special educators, have the skills needed to meet students' needs.

### Strengthen Tier 1 Core Instruction

Collaborative planning for co-teaching in inclusive settings continues to be a key aspect of our approach to supporting students with disabilities. CCPS's inclusive education facilitators work with teachers to ensure co-planning occurs so that identified students have full access to instruction with their grade level peers. Additionally, the implementation of our MTSS Guidebook includes expectations for inclusive instructional practices, that guide high-quality co-teaching and inform how all teachers engage in planning and the development of appropriate scaffolding, differentiation, and support for all learners.

### Implement a multi-tiered system of support

**Specially Designed Instruction in a Tiered System of Supports.** The Departments of Special Education and Instruction have provided professional development in co-planning. We have also worked with teams to carve out time during the school day for teachers to use these skills to co-plan for their students. When time is not available during the school day, we provide stipends for teachers to work outside of their contracted hours. Additionally, a team of teachers worked together to create Schoology course related to Specially Designed Instruction focused on



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evidence-based practices vetted by district leadership. Every special education teacher has been trained to date and many schools have trained every teacher with the SDI modules. This training will be completed by the conclusion of the 2024-2025 school year.

### **Integrate evidence-based behavioral supports and interventions**

Initiated in 2023, every elementary and middle school participates in data meetings related to disproportionality and new identifications of students throughout the county. The team discusses the data connected to interventions and overall student needs in the building. These approaches and data-driven decisions are helping us move our disproportionality data in the right direction and ensure that all students receive the targeted support they need. CCPS has been implementing the MTSS behavioral system for many years. This year we purchased a level 1 screener for SEL (Social Emotional Learning) and the team is working to determine the scores that would represent the need for additional support. Additionally, operations, support staff, and teachers have been provided introductory de-escalation training in the 2023-24 school year.

At the school-level, teams review i-Ready, MAP data, and other formative assessments to determine if instructional practices are effective with our identified students. Facilitated by district supervisors, data meetings are held that address disproportionality across schools at least 3 times per year. During these meetings we talk about solid Tier 1 instruction and interventions for struggling learners. Recent discussions have included a review of newly identified students and the identification categories selected for individual students with similar composite scores. As noted in the description of our CCEIS Implementation Team planning, schools have identified differences between white students and African American students in various categories. We are working with school teams to analyze and use this data and change processes to reduce disproportionality. We have also looked at who is making referrals for testing in all racial subgroups and holding similar conversations related to needed changes in systems and protocols.

### **Challenges**

As described in our Systemwide Response, one challenge our system faces is shifting the mindsets of all stakeholders so that we collectively become better at serving all students, including those identified for special education, during Tier 1 core instruction through direct support and interventions. A detailed description of this challenge is provided in the Systemwide response.

### **Next Steps**

Plans are underway to examine system components and structures that may be reinforcing ways of working that constrain how we provide all students with targeted and student-specific support. As described earlier, our CCEIS Implementation Team is examining data and working with the Department of Instruction, and Department of Student Services to implement the MTSS Guidebook. We are examining how schools are organized, how Student Service Teams (SSTs) are staffed and used by schools, and how special educators work with their colleagues across the system.

### **Professional learning and support**

Professional learning and support are provided through multiple venues, and we are aiming to coordinate learning opportunities across the system. At the district level, internal professional development sessions and monthly meetings are used to discuss topics related to our academic and behavioral MTSS, including our current roll-out of the MTSS guidebook. Regular Administrator and Supervisory professional learning sessions include guidance and training related to MTSS and specially designed instruction. Then, Special Education Supervisors and



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Instructional Supervisors work with principals and teachers. For instance, CCPS has two instructional coaches that serve all schools related to literacy. The instructional coaches are part of the disproportionality data conversations in all buildings, and they use the information from these meetings to inform their coaching protocols. Similarly, CCPS has used book studies, direct instruction, and virtual learning to build capacity across all schools related to specially designed instruction, co-planning, inclusion, and behavior to all staff regardless of title. The team has also included parents in many of these activities and professional development to increase partnerships with parents.

Recognizing that behavioral interventions are important in inclusive classroom settings, we have invested in significant training for all teachers and support staff, regarding the use of effective behavior interventions in the general education setting that support student learning. For instance, as the population of students in our PreK classrooms becomes increasingly diverse, providing teachers with the skills they need to be successful with students is crucial.

19. **NEW - Disproportionate Identification and Disciplinary Practices:** Discuss the LEA’s plan to **improve education for students with disabilities through accurate screening and disciplinary practices.** Provide an analysis of current data related to both the under- and over-identification of students with disabilities and disproportionality of student discipline during the pre-referral process or once identified as a student with a disability. Identify affected student groups and areas of disproportionality, the root causes for the disproportionality(ies), and the specific strategies the LEA uses or intends to use to mitigate and eliminate such occurrences at individual schools and across its system of schools.

**Required Data Analysis: Through an analysis of data, discuss progress towards meeting the Blueprint outcome to mitigate disproportionate identification and disciplinary practices.**

#### **Introduction**

To mitigate this, CCPS has developed a discipline disproportionality sub-committee to reduce discriminatory discipline practices, which uses root cause analysis data to address increased identification of students receiving Special Education services. Our district developed an “Internal Student Discipline Review” data report to assist with collecting and monitoring discipline proportionality data by race/ethnicity, gender, and special needs. Thus, the district only has available discipline trend data by proportionality for school years 2022 – 2023 and 2023 – 2024. There will be continued monitoring of discipline and disproportionality and academic data to measure progress. In addition to data monitoring, the district’s Behavioral Health Services Coordinator continues to provide guidance and support to district-level and school-based administrators and staff regarding effective disciplinary practices to eliminate disproportionality.

The district also recognizes the importance of prioritizing cultures for learning that promote students’ sense of belonging. Students who establish supportive and positive relationships with adults within their learning environments have an increased sense of belonging. Students with a strong sense of belonging are more likely to be engaged in school and to perform well academically. Thus, strategies will be implemented to address this root cause of disproportionality in alignment with strategies in our district [MTSS Guidebook](#).

#### **Data Analysis**

CCPS data demonstrates that there are a disproportionate number of students with disabilities removed from the school environment through out of suspensions because of behavior incidents during the 2022 – 2023 and 2023 – 2024 school years. There were 1606 students with disabilities enrolled in CCPS during the 22-23 school year,

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making up 10.10% of total enrollment. There was an increase to 1710 students with disabilities enrolled in CCPS during the 23-24 school year, making up 11.06% of total enrollment. Over the past two years, students with disabilities make up approximately 10 – 11 % of the student population but are suspended out of school at a 9.26 discrepant rate in 22-23 and 9.04% in 23-24.

Chart 1. CCPS Demographic Proportionality Percentages (2022 – 2023)

**Proportionality by Race/Ethnicity**

	<b>Black</b>	<b>White</b>	<b>Hispanic</b>	<b>2+Races</b>	<b>All Other Races</b>
Total number of students in Service Group	2,212	10,409	1,350	1,646	286
Proportional Percent: # Service Group/Total # of Students	13.91%	65.45%	8.49%	10.35%	1.80%

**Proportionality by Gender**

	<b>Male</b>	<b>Female</b>	<b>Non Binary &amp; Transgender</b>
Total number of students in Service Group	8,162	7,719	22
Proportional Percent: # Service Group/Total # of Students	51.32%	48.54%	0.14%

**Proportionality by Special Needs**

	<b>IEP</b>	<b>504</b>
Total number of students in Service Group	1,606	1,319
Proportional Percent: # Service Group/Total # of Students	10.10%	8.29%

Chart 2: CCPS Out of School Suspensions and Expulsion Discrepancies by Demographic (2022-2023)

	<b>Black</b>	<b>White</b>	<b>Hispanic</b>	<b>2 + Races</b>	<b>All Other Races</b>	<b>Male</b>	<b>Female</b>	<b>Special Education</b>
OSS Expulsion Removal %	26.96%	51.84%	6.22%	14.29%	0.69%	69.12%	30.88%	19.35%
Proportional % from Chart #1	13.91%	65.45%	8.49%	10.35%	1.80%	51.32%	48.54%	10.10%
Discrepancy %	13.05%	-13.61%	-2.27%	3.94%	-1.11%	17.80%	-17.66%	9.26%

Chart 3. CCPS Demographic Proportionality Percentages (2023 – 2024)

**Proportionality by Race/Ethnicity**

	<b>Black</b>	<b>White</b>	<b>Hispanic</b>	<b>2+Races</b>	<b>All Other Races</b>
Total number of students in Service Group	2,154	10,067	1,336	1,646	296

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Proportional Percent: # Service Group/Total # of Students	13.93%	65.10%	8.64%	10.42%	1.91%
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**Proportionality by Gender**

	Male	Female	Non Binary & Transgender
Total number of students in Service Group	7,984	7,474	6
Proportional Percent: # Service Group/Total # of Students	51.63%	48.33%	0.04%

**Proportionality by Special Needs**

	IEP	504
Total number of students in Service Group	1,710	1,496
Proportional Percent: # Service Group/Total # of Students	11.06%	9.67%

Chart 4: CCPS Out of School Suspensions and Expulsion Discrepancies by Demographic (2023-2024)

Total # of Unduplicated Removals	Black	White	Hispanic	2+ Races	All Other Races	Male	Female	Special Education
Total Number of Students in Service Group	171	313	50	84	5	425	198	125
Percent = # in Service Group/Total # of Students	27.45%	50.24%	8.03%	13.48%	0.80%	68.22%	31.78%	20.06%

**Root Cause Analysis**

- Need for staff training on understanding behavior and supporting students who experience emotional and behavioral dysregulation that may or may not be a manifestation of a disability.
- Need for consistent Tier 1 student learning opportunities on pro-social skill development.
- A lack of sense of belonging among students who have a disability, especially among students of color.
- Inconsistent teacher practices that communicate high expectations for all students, specifically among students with disabilities.

**Data from CCPS End of Year School Climate Surveys Regarding Perceptions of High Expectations**

Measures for Monitoring	2018 Baseline	2019	2020	2021	2022
Percentage of students perceiving high expectations	82%	84%	N/A	N/A	83%

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Percentage of staff perceiving staff having high expectations and positive attitudes towards all students regardless of background	0%	0%	96%	96%	97%
Percentage of students reporting that their teachers treat them with respect	93%	90%	N/A	N/A	90%

**Strategies**

Our school teams present data during school improvement teams meetings. The director of Special Education meets with schools that are showing the greatest disproportionality and offering support to enhance efforts to move the data. The Student Services leadership team provides guidance and training to school staff when students exhibit disruptive behaviors resulting from SEL and mental health support needs. Guidance and direct technical assistance begin with meeting with administrative teams and looking at how discipline data presents and developing strategies to reduce disproportionality. Strategies include:

- Early identification of students in schools based on discipline, academic, and attendance data to provide intervention and support early in the process in hopes of reducing identification for Special Education services.
- Utilizing our Supervisor of Equity to provide bias training to school-based staff incorporated with MTSS and restorative practices to reduce disproportionate identification of students.
- Data meetings which focus on addressing attendance concerns for students so that we may rule out other psychometric factors and lack of instruction that could lead to misidentification for Special Education services.

The identification rate among African American students in two areas (Specific Learning Disability and Emotional Disturbance) decreased from SY21-22 to SY22-23. However, we did see an increase in the rate of African American students receiving an in-school suspension. This data suggests that interventions may be contributing to a lower rate of students identified for special education; however, schools and teachers continue to need support in responding to student behavior in ways that lead to positive outcomes (19a-Disproport\_CCPS).

- Expand district work on culturally responsive practices that include school and district staff’s actions that recognize, value, and effectively incorporate students’ lived experiences and cultures in teaching, learning, and the school environment.
- Utilize data from the spring 2024 social and emotional learning (SEL) Panorama universal screener to identify core competencies development training needs. CCPS recently implemented Panorama and administered our first student survey to collect data and assess needs related to student emotional regulation.
- Teachers intentionally integrate learning opportunities that seek and leverage knowledge of student backgrounds.

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21. **NEW - Expanding Behavioral Health Support:** Discuss how the LEA will **enhance and expand behavioral health support for students**, including how it leverages the Consortium on Coordinated Community Supports to provide services to students and communities.

**Required Data Analysis: Through an analysis of data, discuss progress towards meeting the Blueprint outcome to enhance and expand behavioral health support for students.**

### **Introduction**

Calvert County Public Schools has developed a comprehensive plan to enhance and expand behavioral support for students. This effort is part of our systemwide priority to develop a robust, academic and non-academic, multi-tiered system of support (MTSS) focusing on student-specific support. The strategies shared here align with and reinforce strategies described in Question 19, regarding our efforts to reduce disproportionate identification of students and discipline policies.

### **Strategies to Enhance and Expand Behavioral Health Support for Students**

- Restorative Practices
- Collaborative and Proactive Solutions
- Building Capacity among School Staff
- Continued implementation of MTSS
- Equity Plan

To create equitable and inclusive learning environments for all, CCPS has focused on refining its Multi-Tiered Systems of Support (MTSS) so that it encompasses academic supports (including Core and Tiered support) and non-academic behavioral and health supports, that may also be available to all students and provided in a targeted manner. The district has several existing research-based programs and initiatives to support students at each tier. CCPS has also identified a need to build the capacity of school-based teams, at all levels, to develop interventions and student support plans for students with greater needs. To further our work, we have convened district focus groups, comprised of behavior specialists, social workers, school psychologists, special education and student services leadership, inclusive education specialists, and the mental health coordinator, to identify multiple areas of need at each level.

### **Analysis of Need**

Elementary schools have reported an increase in students who are entering school for the first time and who are demonstrating significant concerns with self-regulation. At all levels, school teams are increasingly tasked with managing student behaviors which include aggression toward students and staff, self-injurious behaviors, elopement from the classroom and school building, and major disruption which in some cases results in the classroom being cleared. Schools report not having on-site staff with the training to be able to proactively plan for the needs of students who require intensive Tier 3 support and manage the emotional and behavioral dysregulation they experience. To proactively and appropriately plan for students with developmental disabilities, including autism, school staff requires on-site trained staff on developing interventions for students with developmental disabilities/autism in the general education setting. At the high school level, discussion and data revealed many high school students do not have clear post-graduation goals, a supportive network or team of adults at school, home or in the community, and experience academic, behavioral and mental health obstacles. Because of these factors, they may engage in disruptive or avoidant behaviors which leads to discipline referrals, increased

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absenteeism and truancy, and are at risk of not earning their high school diploma. To meet the intensive needs of students who require Tier 3 interventions at the high school level, school-based mental health professionals including the social worker and counselor need to be trained to develop effective intervention plans which include developing students’ individual systems of support, goal setting, and specific transition planning.

The results of the 2023 CCPS School Climate and Culture Survey for Students revealed the following regard to students’ sense of belonging and interactions between students:

Percentage of students who “disagree” or “strongly disagree” with the following statements:

When I’m at school, I feel like I belong	17 percent
Students at my school treat each other with respect	47 percent
Students at my school are caring and friendly to each other	44 percent
When I am at school, I feel safe	19 percent

A review of district data for the 2022-2023 school year, including graduation rates, attendance/truancy and discipline, was analyzed for students in the four high schools, Career and Technology Academy, and separate public day schools which houses a behavior development program for high school students. A review of that data showed the following:

	CHS	HHS	NHS	PHS
Graduation Rate SY22	95	95	95	92
Students with 8 or more discipline incidents	25	35	35	49

**Restorative Practices**

All schools have a Restorative Practices (RP) trainer or an identified staff member who will receive training to be a trainer so that each of the district’s 24 schools has a restorative practices trainer. 22 schools have trained a portion of their instructional staff in RP.

A review of the 2023 RP implementation survey data, collected from the 22 schools who have trained a portion of their staff, revealed inconsistent use of restorative practices among and within school buildings. Schools were able to identify what strategies were being implemented, and where growth was needed. School administrators noted the following areas that require improvement in the implementation of RP in their schools: continued punitive responses (rather than restorative responses) to student behavior within the classroom, a lack of both preventative and restorative circles, over focus on circles (to the exclusion of other RP methods), and staff members’ incomplete or incorrect understanding of the role of restorative practices which may result in poor buy-in. Additionally, school administrators report restorative practices in the classroom are not implemented with consistency unless there is a directive from administration to do so. They report there has not been a school-based implementation plan to provide coaching and support to teachers and establish school-wide expectations for its use.

**Next Steps**

CCPS has set a goal to train all staff in the use of RP by 2026. To respond to the needs identified by school-based administrators, the following strategies will be implemented:

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- In order to achieve the goal that all CCPS staff will be trained in Restorative Practices (RP) by 2026, each school will have a RP trainer who will train existing and new school staff.
- RP trainers will provide on-site consultative support to schools in the implementation of RP as a community building preventative strategy as well as a framework for restorative discipline.
- RP trainers will serve as resource to teachers to use RP proactively in their classrooms, including addressing classroom and school climate, working with teachers and school-based intervention staff to utilize RP in conflict resolution, work with school administrators to apply RP to discipline practices, and develop a plan for monitoring implementation of RP school-wide.
- CCPS's PBIS/MTSS Conference learning activities will provide guidance to PBIS/MTSS school teams on developing a tiered intervention framework which includes the use of RP.
- CCPS's PBIS/MTSS Conference learning activities will provide guidance to PBIS/MTSS school teams on analyzing their schools' discipline and climate data to conduct a root cause analysis of a problem of practice which addresses students' sense of belonging and interactions between students.
- CCPS Department of Student Services will coordinate quarterly meetings with RP trainers to provide a space for trainers to collaborate on implementation strategies.
- CCPS Department of Student Services will work with school-based administration teams to revise their schools' RP implementation plan and set school discipline and attendance goals.

### **Collaborative and Proactive Solutions**

CCPS also has the opportunity to continue its work with the Collaborative and Proactive Solutions (CPS) model. Cohorts of staff at eight schools have been trained on the Collaborative and Proactive Solutions (CPS) model to “change the lens” of staff, teach staff to identify students' lagging skills, and collaboratively engage with students to solve problems. Three staff members have completed pre-certification training to provide Collaborative and Proactive Solutions training to schools. The Supervisor of Equity has been involved in developing programs and initiatives which are in alignment with culturally responsive instruction.

### **Build Capacity Among School Staff**

As noted in our analysis of data, it is important to build capacity among school-level staff to support students, and to support fellow teachers in working with students. Our partnership with RENEW and TEACCH will be used to build capacity, through the following next steps:

#### **Next Steps**

- CCPS will provide grant funded TEACCH training (to address students' instructional, social and behavioral needs) to schools' behavioral health team members, interventionists, and special education teachers in August 2024.
- CCPS will provide grant funded RENEW training to 10 high school staff members including high school level social workers, counselors, and high school Student Services Team (SST) leads.
- Develop an implementation plan for Restorative Practices, TEACCH and RENEW, which includes follow-up support and monitoring of staff trained.



## **Continued Implementation of MTSS**

CCPS Department of Instructions, Special Education and Student Services will continue to collaborate to develop a MTSS framework that integrates instructional, social/ emotional, and behavioral support to create equitable learning environments to ensure the success of each student. The MTSS committee will continue to train school-based administrators and instructional leaders on best practices for developing school-based teams to implement MTSS, and to help schools integrate these practices in their school improvement goals and initiatives.

### **Next Steps**

The annual PBIS conference focus will align with the district’s MTSS framework. Training will be provided to PBIS team members on conducting a root-cause analysis, defining problems, identification of trends, applying an equitable lens to the development of interventions and initiatives to address students’ social emotional learning and behavior, cultivating a sense of belonging for all students, and maximizing students’ individual academic mindset. The District PBIS team has partnered with the CCPS Equity Coordinator to ensure that training and practices are in alignment with the equity plan.

We will continue to deepen the understanding of all staff on the CASEL SEL Framework and Five Core Competencies and how district and school teams can use this framework to identify interventions across all tiers of support.

We will continue to recruit highly qualified school psychologists and social workers to support the social/ emotional and behavioral needs of students at each tier of the MTSS model.

### **Equity Plan**

Integral to the district’s success in supporting students’ behavioral health is its equity plan. The Supervisor of Equity has been involved in developing programs and initiatives aligned with culturally responsive instruction to:

- Helping students cultivate a positive mindset and sense of self-efficacy;
- Support each student to take greater ownership for learning;
- Teaching students cognitive routines using the brain’s learning system;
- Creating environments that are intellectually and socially safe for learning;
- Enhancing students’ ability to learn, teachers’ ability to teach, and all educators recognizing their roles in supporting classroom teaching;
- Preparing students to find their own places in the global community they will enter when they leave their school communities;
- Promoting positive community relations;
- Preparing students for outstanding citizenship.

### **Maryland Consortium on Coordinated Community Supports Grant**

CCPS will also benefit from the Maryland Consortium on Coordinated Community Supports Grant. CCPS provided letters of support for 15 proposals based on an analysis of the needs of students and families. The Department of Student Services, along with data collected by the Local Behavioral Health Administration (LBHA), was able to identify needs in the following areas:

- Access to individual and family counseling;

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- Access to psychiatric care for youth;
- Mentorship;
- Drug and Vaping/ Nicotine prevention and treatment;
- Social skills training;
- Building youth's capacity for self-regulation;

Seven community partners were awarded grants to support students and families in the schools. CCPS has begun coordinating with these awardees to ensure their intervention programs align with district initiatives and work in equitable practices.

## Pillar 5: Governance and Accountability

### 22. Stakeholder Engagement

*Initial Blueprint Implementation Plan Reference: Question 161*

In March 2023, the LEA discussed how it would **engage and represent the voices of stakeholders in the development and implementation of its Blueprint Implementation Plan**, an essential element for the 2024 submission as well. Discuss the LEA’s strategy or framework for successfully engaging multiple stakeholder groups for varied purposes during this process, including empowering stakeholders to provide meaningful input into developing and implementing its Blueprint Implementation Plan. Describe how the LEA determines success in this area, including lessons learned and adjustments needed.

Provide specific examples of where stakeholder input has been incorporated into the plan and explain why stakeholder input was critical for each example.

Considerations:

- Key stakeholders (teachers, school leaders, community members, LEA Executive Team including the superintendent)
- Vision building and goal setting
- Communicating to educate and inform about Blueprint implementation (e.g., the Career Ladder)
- Collaborating to create and refine plans
- Establishing feedback loops
- Data collection and analysis
- Engaging educators across subject areas (e.g., social studies, science, fine arts)
- Engaging underrepresented groups
- Successful strategies and opportunities for improvement
- Reporting and sharing progress
- Leveraging strategic facilitators and Blueprint coordinators

### Overview

Pillar 5 is responsible for supporting the other four pillars and ensuring that all plans and tasks are executed in a timely and efficient fashion. The four main responsibilities of the pillar were designed to engage multiple stakeholder groups and empower stakeholders to provide meaningful input regarding the development of the Blueprint implementation plan, and are explained below:

### Identifying authors of the Blueprint plan

CCPS created five distinct Pillar subcommittee groups by selecting experienced educators and individuals with diverse experiences in education to ensure representation from a wide array of positions in the district. The subcommittee chairs schedule regular meetings to review and examine the Blueprint in preparation for writing the implementation plan. They report back to the steering committee on a regular basis to update progress and address current issues. CCPS also works in conjunction with the Calvert County Blueprint Committee to allow for stakeholder feedback to aid in planning, development, and implementation.

### Ensuring Teacher & Principal Voice

The CCPS Steering Committee solicited volunteers from school-based principals and classroom teachers to ensure that feedback and recommendations were provided from those groups. Teachers and principals served on the Steering Committee and provided suggestions and insight during the writing and reviewing process of creating the draft Implementation Plan. Lastly, focus groups and surveys were conducted and administered, with feedback provided to the Steering Committee to aid in the discussion and writing of the plan. We have conducted professional development during the year for administrators and supervisors in whole group meetings, as well as in smaller work groups. Subcommittees have also included teachers and support staff to ensure all aspects of the Blueprint garner input from all stakeholder groups. We have updated our community regularly through Board of Education Meetings, Administrative Bulletins, a Comprehensive Blueprint Website, Postings on the County Commissioners' Website, Individual Pillar Meetings, and Town Hall Meetings. A final Town Hall meeting was conducted in November of 2023 where all CCPS staff were invited to provide feedback and input regarding the goals and objectives of each of the pillars. Each pillar consolidated the feedback from our stakeholders across all levels and schools on tablet paper and the results were compiled. The recommendations and concerns were provided to each pillar team, and they incorporated these recommendations into their respective pillar goals, responses, and outcomes.

One notable example of stakeholder feedback, analysis, and application involved our Administrator and Supervisor (A&S) professional development sessions. Working closely with our Strategic Facilitator, we organized two input and feedback sessions. The first session was held November 29-30, 2023, followed by a second session on February 28-29, 2024. Each session was collectively attended by ~115 stakeholders, inclusive of school-based leadership, district supervisors, and literacy coaches. During the November sessions, district and school leaders received an overview of the Blueprint, an update on current strategies, and then participated in facilitated roundtable conversations to collect feedback on specific questions regarding Pillars 1, 2, 3, and 4. These sessions provided significant data, which was analyzed and documented in a written report and a slide deck to district leadership. An executive summary of the Administrator and Supervisor feedback report was presented to district and school leaders during the February 28-29 A&S Professional Development sessions. Building upon the collaborative process started in November, we shared our analysis of feedback and then invited school leaders to “explore and propose how you could plan for and implement strategies” in one of two areas: (1) Support Pathways for students or (2) Leadership and Professional Learning. Our goal was to have school leaders use the ideas that they generated to develop small “pilot” changes related to Pillar 2 (e.g., teaming structures and use of teacher or school leaders) and Pillar 3 (e.g., MTSS and academic supports for students who may not be on target to reach CCR standards). School leaders developed preliminary ideas and plans which were captured on school-specific planning documents. Our next step is to encourage instructional supervisors to work with school leaders, to articulate their ideas into concrete actions, using existing school improvement planning documents.

### Quality Control and Project Management

The five workgroups that were created --- one for each pillar --- included a range of central office and building-based stakeholders. These work groups met regularly throughout the year to examine the Blueprint for their assigned pillar and draft implementation plans. We placed at least one Pillar 5 committee member on each of the first 4 pillars for oversight and to provide any data sets that would be helpful for them. The chairs of these work groups met with the steering committee regularly to report on the work of their respective subcommittees.

### Stakeholder Engagement

The purpose of the strategy is to increase awareness of the Blueprint's five pillars among CCPS stakeholders, which include parents, guardians, students, staff, potential staff, Board of Education members, County Commissioners, school partners, and the Calvert County community at large. Stakeholder engagement began in March 2022, with the first Calvert County Board of Education Meeting update. Updates have been provided at Board of Education meetings since that date. These meetings are recorded, and the presentations are posted on the district's website on the Blueprint webpage. Focus groups with staff started during the Fall of 2022. In December of that year, CCPS hosted a virtual community forum that provided a brief overview of each of the pillars and the Blueprint timeline. A baseline survey was conducted from December 20, 2022 - January 6, 2023, to determine the awareness level of parents and staff of the Blueprint and its five pillars. At the end of the 2023 school year, another survey was conducted as another opportunity for parents and staff to share feedback. Community input was sought through electronic surveys and town hall style meetings. And lastly, the district website is continually updated with CCPS Blueprint information and resources.

#### Timeline of Stakeholder Engagement Activities

**March 2022:** Stakeholder engagement begins with the first update at the Calvert County Board of Education Meeting.

**Ongoing since March 2022:** Updates provided at subsequent Board of Education meetings. These meetings are recorded, and presentations are posted on the district's Blueprint webpage.

**Fall 2022:** Focus groups with staff commence.

**December 2022:** Virtual community forum hosted by CCPS providing an overview of each of the Blueprint's pillars and timeline.

**December 20, 2022 - January 6, 2023:** Baseline survey conducted to gauge awareness among parents and staff of the Blueprint and its five pillars.

**End of 2023 school year:** Survey conducted to gather feedback from parents and staff.

During the 2023-24 school year, stakeholder engagement activities included additional internal (e.g., district-based) and external activities designed to support the development of the 2024 Implementation Plan, including the development of the Career Ladder and consideration of changes needed leverage Blueprint policies. Steering Committee meetings were used to review feedback from stakeholders (including principals, supervisors, and teachers) and we used our Strategic Facilitator to formally collect data and input from district and school leaders. A detailed timeline of these activities is provided below.

#### Blueprint Steering Committee Meetings – Monthly

- October 23, 2023: Focused on building a shared understanding of how the district and stakeholders can develop an aligned, and cross-pillar approach to strategy development, and to anticipate the required questions in the Blueprint Implementation Guide
- November 27, 2023: Participants developed questions and issues for which additional feedback might be needed from stakeholders, including principals, district supervisors, and teachers. A draft of feedback questions was shared and reviewed, as the basis for the Administrator and Supervisor (A &S) feedback sessions planned for January 2024.

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- January 22, 2023: A written summary and slide deck providing an analysis of the A&S feedback session was provided to Steering Committee members; participants discussed key observations as they pertained to the development of the Systemwide Response and 2024 Implementation Plan.
- March 4, 2024: The March 4<sup>th</sup> Steering Committee was used to review and revise draft Systemwide Responses, leading to the submission of the first part of the 2024 Blueprint Implementation plan.
- May 24, 2024: The May 20<sup>nd</sup> meeting focused on reviewing and reflecting upon the final 2024 Blueprint Submission (Part 1 and 2)

### **District Organizational Analysis**

The district-level organizational policy analysis was initiated in December 2023. Between December 8 and December 18, Calvert County’s Strategic Facilitator, Brett Lane, met in-person and virtually with district leadership and staff from Special Education, Student Services, and Instruction, and conducted interviews with the Director of Instruction, the Local Accountability Coordinator, and the Director of Technology. The purpose of the analysis and data collection was to collect stakeholder feedback and input from district leaders – those responsible for working with school leaders and for implementing district initiatives – regarding key strengths and challenges. The analysis included a description and analysis of key issues and challenges within and across Pillars, organizational and fiscal challenges and decision points, a summary of points of intersection, and recommendations regarding issues and policies to consider modifying. A written analysis was provided to district leadership and the district’s Inclusive Practices Committee, on July 16<sup>th</sup>, 2024.

### **Feedback Sessions for Administrators and Supervisors**

**November 29-30, 2023:** On November 29-30, 2023, Brett Lane participated in and co-led two Input and Feedback sessions during Calvert’s Administrator and Supervisor professional development sessions [See detail in Ensuring Teacher and Principal Voice, above]

**February 28-29, 2024:** As a follow-up to the November 2023 A&S Feedback Session, an executive summary of the Administrator and Supervisor Feedback Report was presented to district and school leaders during the February 28-29 A&S Professional Development sessions. This session was structured as a formal feedback loop to build upon the collaborative process started in November [See detail in Ensuring Teacher and Principal Voice, above]

**November 12, 2024:** School principals and district instructional supervisors explored the expectations of the Blueprint regarding Level 3 and 4 teachers and the 60/40 teaching ratio. Collaboratively, level table teams discussed different approaches to reaching the 60/40 teaching ratio to provide ideas on the next steps.

### **Calvert County Blueprint Steering Committee Meetings – Open to the Public –**

- First Wednesday of every month

### **Early Childhood Committee –**

- First Tuesday of the month 4:30-6:30.
- Early Childhood Leadership meets weekly 2:00-3:30.

### **District Inclusive Practices Team Meeting**

The District Inclusive Practices Team meets on the second Wednesday of every month. Team meeting dates for 2024-2025 are:

- October 9, 2024

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- November 13, 2024
- December 11, 2024
- January 8, 2025
- February 12, 2025
- March 12, 2025
- April 9, 2025
- May 14, 2025
- June 11, 2025
- July 9, 2025
- August 13, 2025
- September 10, 2025

### Ongoing and Planned:

- Community input sought through electronic surveys and town hall-style meetings.
- District website continually updated with CCPS Blueprint information and resources.
- The District Organizational Analysis will be supplemented through site visits to a sample of schools (in Fall 2024) to conduct semi-structured interviews and focus groups with school leaders, teachers, students, and community members.

This timeline encapsulates the major activities and milestones related to stakeholder engagement and communication regarding the CCPS Blueprint.

Seeking input from various stakeholder groups was crucial when we developed our Blueprint plans. Parents, students, staff, Board of Education members, county commissioners, and the community at large provided important feedback. The reasons for garnering input from those stakeholder groups as well as the importance of the feedback are outlined below:

### Parents/Guardians:

- **Reasons for Input:** Parents are essential stakeholders because they represent the interests and concerns of students, who are directly impacted by educational policies and practices. Their input helps in understanding community expectations, educational priorities, and the specific needs of students.
- **Importance of Feedback:** Parental feedback helps ensure the Blueprint aligns with the expectations and aspirations of families, fostering greater support and engagement in educational initiatives.
- **Feedback Summary:** Parents attended numerous Pillar feedback sessions, and the feedback from all sessions centered primarily on individual interests. Attendance at Pillar sessions showed that parents/guardians were interested in Pillars based on where their own child(ren) fell across the grade spectrum.

### Students:

- **Reasons for Input:** Students are the purpose of any school system. Their perspectives on learning experiences, school climate, and support services are invaluable in shaping student-centered Blueprint policies.
- **Importance of Feedback:** Including students ensures that their voices are heard in the decision-making processes, promoting a sense of ownership and empowerment. Their insights can uncover issues like



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bullying, mental health concerns, or curriculum relevance that adults may overlook, leading to more responsive and inclusive educational strategies.

- **Feedback Summary:** Student feedback provided during the student session showed that high school students are more aware of the impact of the blueprint than any other level. Primarily, they were focused on how the supports for the Career Advisor program affect them and their career aspirations.

### Staff:

- **Reasons for Input:** Staff members, including teachers, administrators, and support personnel, are key implementers of educational programs. Their expertise and frontline experience provide practical insights into what works in classrooms and schools.
- **Importance of Feedback:** Engaging staff ensures that CCPS' Blueprint plans reflect the realities of the educational environment. Their input helps in identifying professional development needs, improving working conditions, and refining instructional strategies to better meet student needs.
- **Feedback Summary:** Staff feedback primarily focused on Career Ladder and the impact of the Blueprint to their status as related to Career Ladder eligibility.

### Board of Education Members:

- **Reasons for Input:** Board members are responsible for governance and oversight of the school system. Their role involves setting policies, allocating resources, and representing community interests.
- **Importance of Feedback:** Input from Board members ensures that the Blueprint aligns with strategic goals and legal requirements. Their perspectives help in setting priorities, allocating budgetary resources, and ensuring that the Blueprint supports long-term educational objectives.
- **Feedback Summary:** Board member feedback centered on fiduciary responsibilities. Several meetings and comments focused on ensuring that CCPS considered all options for serving students based on financial tightening.

### County Commissioners:

- **Reasons for Input:** County Commissioners control funding and resources allocated to public education. Their support is crucial for securing financial backing and community resources.
- **Importance of Feedback:** Involving County Commissioners ensures that the Blueprint aligns with broader county development plans and budgetary constraints. Their input helps in advocating for necessary funding, facilities, and community partnerships to support educational initiatives.

### Community at Large:

- **Reasons for Input:** The broader community includes taxpayers, businesses, nonprofit organizations, and residents who have a vested interest in local education.
- **Importance of Feedback:** Community input fosters transparency, accountability, and community buy-in for educational initiatives. It helps in building partnerships, leveraging community resources, and addressing community-specific needs or concerns that impact educational outcomes.

In summary, seeking input from parents, students, staff, Board of Education members, county commissioners, and the community at large help ensure that our Blueprint plans are inclusive, responsive to diverse needs, and supported by key stakeholders who play critical roles in the success of Calvert County Public Schools.

**23. NEW - Blueprint Funding and Resources:**

Discuss the process the LEA uses to assess budgetary needs and make critical decisions about the **allocation of new resources and the reallocation of existing resources to implement its Blueprint Implementation Plan**. Include estimated funding allocations by pillar and program. Provide specific examples and the rationale for the allocation and reallocation of resources.

Considerations:

- Budgeting annually and over multiple years
- Funds following students to their schools (Education Article § 5-234)
- Targeted funds (e.g., Transitional Supplemental Instruction Aid, Concentration of Poverty grants, State Aid Funding for CCR, etc.)

**Required Data Analysis: Through an analysis of data, discuss progress towards meeting the Blueprint outcome to ensure resources are aligned to meeting student needs at the school level.**

**Process used to assess budgetary needs and make critical decisions.**

**District Directors and Chiefs.** Budgetary needs are identified by Directors and Chiefs throughout the year, and they are collected as part of the budget development process. This includes the opportunity for directors to request additions to their contracted services, supplies and materials, other charges, and equipment accounts. In addition, the budget development process includes an opportunity for directors to request the hiring of any new staff through submission of a new staff request form.

After budgetary needs are identified by directors, the following steps are taken:

- Each director emails his/her proposed line-item budget to his/her supervisor and to the CFO.
- Each director meets with the chiefs (chief academic officer, chief financial officer, and chief operations officer) to “walk through” their budget request, and to answer questions from the chiefs regarding their proposed budget.
- The chiefs collaboratively determine which budget requests to include in the Superintendent’s proposed budget for the ensuing fiscal year.

**Principals.** Principals also participate in the budget development process. Each principal receives a “per student” budget allocation to fund the purchase of supplies, contracted services, equipment, and more. The principals’ budget allocations do not include employee salary and benefit costs. Principals have the latitude to allocate their building budget allocation among their assigned budget accounts in a manner that best aligns with their schools’ needs. After the new fiscal year begins, principals also have the opportunity to request budget transfers among their budget accounts.

**Resource Allocation/Reallocation**

With that context, it is anticipated that the budget development process described in the “Directors and Chiefs” section above will (1) continue to be used to assess budgetary needs, (2) be used to make critical decisions about the allocation of new resources, and (3) be used to recommend the reallocation of existing resources to execute the Blueprint Implementation Plan. It is also likely that directors, principals, and other key stakeholders will be included in discussions of resource reallocation required by the Blueprint.

**Estimated Funding Allocations by Pillar and Program**

**Pillar 1 – Early Childhood Education**

Staffing additions \$732,100 per year (FY 24 estimate)

CCPS is in the process of creating a comprehensive PreK expansion plan that involves Blueprint funding, PreK Expansion Grant Funding and increasing the number of private providers. The plan will also include an audit of existing classroom space to determine if there is a need to utilize Capital Improvement Plan funding. The plan will allow for CCPS to increase the mixed delivery model to include full-day three-year-old prekindergarten for Tier 1 families. The impact of cuts in State funding has and will continue to impact the rate at which CCPS is able to expand the prekindergarten program.

**Pillar 2 – High-Quality & Diverse Teachers and Learners**

CCPS negotiated a four-year contract with the teachers’ association that includes a robust career ladder with a starting salary of \$61,000 and substantial COLA increases each year. This four-year contract is on top of the required 10% salary increase. CCPS will use state and local revenue sources in which teachers are budgeted to continue to enhance compensation to remain competitive with other jurisdictions. This will require new revenues as well as some difficult discussions, but it remains a top priority to compensate all employees to ensure the most highly effective employees serve all students.

We hope that with current structures in place plus a Career Ladder, we will see a significant increase in the number of teachers pursuing and achieving NBCT. In FY 2025, CCPS applied for and received a grant from MSDE that supports NBCT certification. CCPS is investigating how to align teacher licensure and the NBCT program to best meet the needs of our staff.

With the assistance of our Strategic Facilitator, CCPS is meeting with principals to determine how to implement the 60/40 requirement. CCPS and the association maintain a joint committee to outline level four of the career ladder to include salary adjustments, positions, and responsibilities.

CCPS anticipates an estimated \$3,000,000 compounded increase each year for staffing costs to meet the 60/40 split over the next three years. CCPS has 12 elementary schools, 6 middle schools and 4 high schools. Three middle schools received additional staffing in FY 2025. Depending on funding, CCPS will begin to increase staffing in FY 2026 to include four elementary schools and one high school. In FY 2027, CCPS will increase staffing at four additional elementary schools, three middle schools, and one additional high school. In FY 2028, CCPS will complete staffing increases at four elementary schools and two high schools.

**Pillar 3 – College and Career Readiness**

Advanced placement testing	\$428,300 (FY 24 estimate)
CTE certification	\$175,400 (FY 24 estimate)
Dual enrollment	\$177,000 (FY 24 estimate)
Workforce development	\$924,000 (FY 24 estimate)

CCPS has budgeted for testing, certification, dual enrollment, and workforce development in FY 2024 and FY 2025. CCPS has offered unlimited dual enrollment at the Community College and AP/CTE courses at no cost

## **Pillar 5: Governance and Accountability**

(tuition-free, no exam fees) for all students regardless of CCR status in FY 2023 and FY 2024 through a combination of CCR funding and General Funds. Due to the reduction of funding, it will not be possible to offer that same benefit in FY 2025 and in future years. In FY 2025, CCPS limited the number of dual enrollment courses paid for by CCPS to four per student annually outside of the early college program. In FY 2025, CCPS limited paying for AP tests to four per year. In FY 2026, CCPS will further limit paying for AP assessments to the number required by the established pathway. In collaboration with the College of Southern Maryland (CSM), CCPS developed an early college program. In FY 2024, CCPS had 16 students participate in the one-year early college program and expanded to 44 students in FY 2025. CCPS and CSM continue to meet to expand Early College program to include a Business Management Associate's degree. Enrollment goals for the Early College program in FY 2026 is 80 students, with 60 in the one-year program and 20 in the two-year program.

CCPS will begin working with CSM to identify ways in which we can partner in providing students who are not yet CCR the ability to complete non-credit bearing courses so that students are eligible to take a credit bearing course at CSM upon graduation.

CCPS partners with the College of Southern Maryland and Tri-County Workforce Development Board to create a Career Counseling Program. CCPS uses the funding allotted by the state for Workforce Development to fund this effort. Ten career advisors and one coordinator have been hired for FY 2025. These advisors, along with our partners, will provide instruction, experiences, and insight into future careers using the RIASEC model. This program will be provided to all students in grades 6-12 in FY 2025 and FY 2026. CCPS will review metrics with TCWDB and CSM to determine whether the partnership will continue in FY2027.

## **Pillar 4 – More Resources for Students to Be Successful**

CCPS has historically allocated staffing for Multilingual Learners based on the location of the regional programs that support our learners. Our MLL population has more than doubled in the last ten years. While our ML staffing has increased, CCPS will need to add additional staff to support our MLL. CCPS has provided professional learning from Dr. Salva, *7-Steps to a Language-Rich, Interactive Classroom*, to support MLL. Additionally, the Multi-Lingual Family Coordinator position was posted and is currently being hired.

CCPS does not have a community school. However, CCPS has been monitoring the Economically Disadvantage rates at each of our schools. We have identified one school that may qualify as a community school in the coming years. Therefore, we are learning more about the community schools' program.

## **Pillar 5 – Governance & Accountability**

Calvert County has maintained an internal CCPS Blueprint Steering Committee and a Calvert County Government Steering Committee. Both of these committees help shape our Blueprint responses and ensure accountability of implementation. Additionally, CCPS has leveraged the support of the AIB grants to receive support from a Strategic Facilitator and a Strategic Partner. The Strategic Facilitator provides targeted technical assistance on the following items:

**Career Ladder and Support Pathways:** Ongoing collaboration and facilitation with district leaders and selected schools (and school leaders) to research, design, and implement school-based teaming structures and professional learning that leverage the Career Ladder.

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**Blueprint Implementation and Progress Monitoring:** In collaboration with district leadership, including the Chief Operations Officer and the Chief Academic Officer, the Strategic Facilitator will co-facilitate Steering Committee meetings and provide technical assistance to Implementation Teams in implementing the 2024 Blueprint Plan. Specific outcomes include developing a multi-year plan and establishing routines for monitoring the progress of key strategies and actions.

**Finalize and implement multi-year change process:** Finalize and support a multi-year Change Process that directly addresses the findings from the Organizational and Policy Analysis and that are needed to successfully implement Calvert County's 2024 Blueprint Plan.

The Strategic Partner is assisting CCPS in the following ways:

**Reaching full compliance with the Blueprint's minimum school funding requirements.** Afton is reviewing our baseline data documenting the starting point and developing options for consideration to achieve compliance, including trade-offs and implications. Afton will undergo a detailed review of the district's accounting data and anticipates that we may need to support a restructuring and/or other changes in account codes if the current financial reporting system does not satisfactorily map funding sources with funding use. Afton will then develop a financial model to track district progress towards the requirement.

**Better understand the financial impacts of their updated pay structures,** particularly in the context of overarching Blueprint funding mechanisms, and Pre-K funding available in particular. Afton is modeling compensation structures in the near- and longer terms, while detailing Blueprint fund source availability.

CCPS has gone through the process of developing a new strategic plan during FY 24. From this work, CCPS has identified the following priority areas: Student Excellence, Culture of Learning, Organizational Accountability and Community Engagement. Through this work, the Blueprint has been front and center to ensure there is an alignment between this work. Our strategic plan committees are ensuring that the strategies outlined in the Strategic Plan will support the CCPS Blueprint Implementation Plan.

We are fortunate to have a collaborative relationship with our County Government who has consistently provided funding to our school system. As the incremental costs of our negotiated agreements combined with other anticipated cost increases of health insurance, student transportation, utilities, and escalating inflation exceed the projected State Aid contributions, the continued support of the school system from County Government is critical.

### Examples

- Increasing teacher salaries by at least 10% between July, 2019 and June 30, 2024. The rationale for this allocation for the teachers defined by the Blueprint was to fulfill a Blueprint requirement. The rationale for providing a commensurate pay increase to other employees was to provide equity.
- Fund National Board Teacher Certification
- Fund AP testing, dual enrollment, and CTE certification for high school students.
- Additions to staffing to expand pre-kindergarten instruction.
- Implement Career Advisor program in middle and high schools.

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There are also some Blueprint requirements that will require resource allocation *in the future*. Some of these are as follows:

- Increase teacher salaries to at least \$60,000 per year
- Negotiate a new career ladder with a new salary scale that includes maintenance of certification pay increases
- Teachers will teach a maximum of 60% of their workday

### Strategies to Increase the Number of Schools Meeting the Minimum (75%) School Funding Requirement

CCPS strategies to meet the minimum 75% school funding requirement can be categorized based on *timing* as follow:

- Previously implemented strategies
- Planned future strategies
- *Possible* future strategies

The specific strategies within these three categories are listed below.

#### Previously Implemented Strategies

- Finance staff used ESSA cost allocation methodology to allocate perceived permissible costs from district-wide accounts to school-based accounts
- Some types of employee benefits costs have been disaggregated and are now allocated at the school level
- Various other district-wide budget accounts have also been disaggregated from district-wide accounts to school-based budget accounts (e.g., copier lease costs, copier maintenance costs, contracted shredding costs, and more)
- Per-student allocations for schools have been increased

CCPS recently submitted its FY 25 budget data. Once this data is processed by the State, CCPS finance staff will review its current attainment *or non-attainment* of the 75% minimum requirement. Based on

#### Planned Future Strategies

- Identify additional costs that can be appropriately disaggregated to school-based budget accounts, and begin charging them to the applicable school budget accounts (iPad purchases, computer purchases, copy machine leases, and more)
- Evaluate feasibility of allocating more employee benefit costs to the schools (e.g., education allowance, fitness program allowance, health/dental/vision insurance, retirement, and wellness incentive costs)
- Continue exploring possible operating efficiencies to free up finite funds to allocate to high needs schools

#### Possible Future Strategies

Depending on the total dollar amount underspent the 75% minimum, CCPS may consider some of the strategies listed below. This list is presented in alphabetical, unprioritized order, and is subject to change. Three of the five school board seats in CCPS are up for election in November 2024, so these *possible* future strategies could change significantly.

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- Downscale the district’s student notebook computer program to free up funds to re-allocate to sub-75% schools
- Encourage or require some relatively experienced administrators and/or teachers (with higher salaries) to work in sub-75% schools
- Explore ways to reduce student transportation costs to free up funds to re-allocate to high needs schools
- Increase the per-student budget allocation for sub-75% schools
- Provide a higher staff ratio (e.g., lower class sizes) in sub-75% schools
- Provide some additional non-teaching staff to sub-75% schools
- Provide a lower staff ratio (e.g., higher class sizes) in sub-75% schools
- Reduce staff in to-be-determined positions outside of the sub-75% school(s)
- Re-evaluate the refilling of non-instructional positions through staff attrition
- Designate eligible, sub-75% schools as low performing schools and pay a stipend to teachers assigned to these schools
- Consider modifying school attendance boundaries (a low likelihood option)

### Budget Considerations

CCPS faces several significant budget challenges for FY 25 and beyond. These are as follows:

- For FY 25, CCPS received a \$22.5 million reduction in state aid. This was driven by (1) the expiration of a pair of Calvert County “payment in lieu of taxes” (“PILOT”) agreements, and (2) the expansion of a natural gas plant within the school district. Unlike other school districts in Maryland, CCPS will receive significantly less state aid in FY 25. That makes budgeting more challenging, as does the impending 75% requirement.
- The Blueprint requires school districts to demonstrate that at least 75% of specified costs are being allocated to, and charged at, the school level. This presents a challenge because relatively little written guidance was provided to school districts until the “baby blue book” was released in April 2024.
  - Although this resource provides some guidance, it welcomes more specificity.
  - Now that the fiscal reporting guidelines (“baby blue” book) has been released, it will take time to configure link the respective eFinance accounts to the proper Blueprint expenditures.
- The reporting infrastructure for the 75% requirement is still being developed. Since this district’s initial submission of its implementation plan, finance staff have begun working with a consulting firm (Afton) to efficiently and accurately meet the 75% requirement.
  - The character-limited fields in our general ledger (financial) system limits the district’s ability to efficiently assign budget accounts to Blueprint funding sources and pillars.
  - Guidance on the 75% reporting is still being developed by the MSDE and/or the AIB.

### Multi-year Budgeting

CCPS currently has a form of multi-year budgeting, whereas a few months after the CCPS fiscal year begins, development begins anew for the next fiscal year’s budget; consequently, for most of the time, two budgets are being managed (the current fiscal year’s adopted budget and development of the ensuing fiscal year’s budget).



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With the *possible* eventual addition of a finance team member whose primary responsibilities include budget development, budget monitoring, and overseeing budget transfers, it may become more feasible to prepare two-year budget projections.

In planning for the CCPS budget over the next three years, Pillar priorities have been identified which have funding implications and are listed below:

**Pillar 1:** Prioritizing EXCELS and Accreditation required of the blueprint to ensure future budgets include funding, so all our prekindergarten settings meet the minimum requirements. As grant funding ends, we must identify funds within the local budget to ensure high-quality staffing of teacher assistants as well as support current staff in getting their CDA or Associate’s degree. Additionally, we need to determine the funding needed to expand to offer 3-year-old prekindergarten to include staffing, supplies, and location renovations.

**Pillar 2:** Funding a negotiated agreement (and salary increases) for the Career Ladder as well as funding negotiated agreements (and salary increases) with support professionals and administrators.

**Pillar 3:** Continued rising cost for students’ AP tests and Dual Enrollment (including Early College), and CTE costs along with Career Advisors and additional Workforce Development mandates.

**Pillar 4:** Funding to support our EL Family Coordinator position, as this position was not previously filled, and duties were assigned to Central Office staff.

**Blueprint Related Revenue**

The next three tables include projected, Blueprint related state and local revenue.

<b>FY 2025 Blueprint Related Revenue</b>				
<b>Funding Source</b>	<b>Statute</b>	<b>State</b>	<b>Local</b>	<b>Total</b>
Foundation	5-201	\$ 55,381,249	\$ 75,900,044	\$ 131,281,293
Workforce Development	5-213	Included above	Included above	Included above
Comparable Wage Index ("CWI")	5-216	2,143,808	2,938,091	5,081,899
College and Career Ready ("CCR")	5-217	293,989	378,569	672,558
Transportation	5-218	7,562,440		7,562,440
Compensatory Education ("Comp Ed")	5-222	13,225,226	19,796,582	33,021,808
Multi Lingual - English Learners	5-224	870,688	1,262,982	2,133,670
Special Education	5-225	6,139,426	9,210,824	15,350,250
Transitional Supplemental Instruction	5-226	316,215	508,545	824,760
Pre-Kindergarten	5-229	649,640	1,307,646	1,957,286
Pre-Kindergarten - Private Providers		392,061	537,319	929,380
Career Ladder NBC Stipend	6-1009	82,932	107,068	190,000
Blueprint Coordinator		29,308	39,572	68,880
<b>Totals</b>		<b>\$ 87,086,982</b>	<b>\$ 111,987,242</b>	<b>\$ 199,074,224</b>

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Projected FY 2026 Blueprint Related Revenue				
Funding Source	Statute	State	Local	Total
Foundation	5-201	\$ 58,133,697	\$ 75,900,044	\$ 134,033,741
Workforce Development	5-213			
Comparable Wage Index ("CWI")	5-216	2,056,341	2,938,091	4,994,432
College and Career Ready ("CCR")	5-217	295,018	378,569	673,587
Transportation	5-218	7,713,689	-	7,713,689
Compensatory Education ("Comp Ed")	5-222	13,071,813	19,796,582	32,868,395
Multi Lingual - English Learners	5-224	836,557	1,288,242	2,124,799
Special Education	5-225	6,387,459	9,395,040	15,782,499
Transitional Supplemental Instruction	5-226	215,659	518,716	734,375
Pre-Kindergarten	5-229	723,114	1,333,799	2,056,913
Pre-Kindergarten - Private Providers		399,902	548,065	947,968
Career Ladder NBC Stipend	6-1009	84,591	109,209	193,800
Blueprint Coordinator		14,654	40,363	55,017
<b>Totals</b>		<b>\$ 89,932,493</b>	<b>\$ 112,246,721</b>	<b>\$ 202,179,215</b>
<b>Year-over-Year Change</b>		<b>\$ 2,845,511</b>	<b>\$ 259,479</b>	<b>\$ 3,104,991</b>

Projected FY 2027 Blueprint Related Revenue				
Funding Source	Statute	State	Local	Total
Foundation	5-201	\$ 61,319,424	\$ 77,228,295	\$ 138,547,718
Workforce Development	5-213			
Comparable Wage Index ("CWI")	5-216	2,012,541	2,938,091	4,950,632
College and Career Ready ("CCR")	5-217	296,051	385,194	681,244
Transportation	5-218	7,848,678	-	7,848,678
Compensatory Education ("Comp Ed")	5-222	12,303,191	19,796,582	32,099,773
Multi Lingual - English Learners	5-224	802,426	1,288,242	2,090,667
Special Education	5-225	6,945,723	9,559,454	16,505,176
Transitional Supplemental Instruction	5-226	-	-	-
Pre-Kindergarten	5-229	996,741	1,357,140	2,353,881
Pre-Kindergarten - Private Providers		406,901	557,657	964,557
Career Ladder NBC Stipend	6-1009	86,071	111,121	197,192
Blueprint Coordinator		10,991	41,070	52,060
<b>Totals</b>		<b>\$ 93,028,735</b>	<b>\$ 113,262,844</b>	<b>\$ 206,291,579</b>
<b>Year-over-Year Change</b>		<b>\$ 3,096,241</b>	<b>\$ 1,016,123</b>	<b>\$ 4,112,365</b>

**Pillar 5: Governance and Accountability**

**Blueprint Related Expenditures**

The table below shows *tentative* cost estimates by pillar for the current fiscal year and the next two fiscal years.

<b>Blueprint Related Expenditures</b>			
<b>Blueprint Pillar</b>	<b>FY 25 Budget*</b>	<b>FY 26 Budget Projection*</b>	<b>FY 27 Budget Projection*</b>
Pillar I - Early Childhood Education	\$ 200,646	\$ 207,669	\$ 214,937
Pillar II - High Quality & Diverse Teachers & Leaders	24,128,249	24,972,738	25,846,784
Pillar III - College & Career Readiness	672,735	692,917	713,705
Pillar IV - More Resources for Students	7,201,040	7,417,071	7,639,583
Pillar V - Governance & Accountability	7,759,619	7,992,408	8,232,180
All Pillars			
<b>Totals</b>	<b>\$ 39,962,289</b>	<b>\$ 41,282,802</b>	<b>\$ 42,647,188</b>
<b>Year-over-Year Change</b>	<b>N/A</b>	<b>\$ 1,320,513</b>	<b>\$ 1,364,386</b>

*\*These amounts are based on preliminary cost allocations to each pillar, and they are very likely to change as more guidance becomes available.*

**Data Analysis**

Progress towards meeting the Blueprint’s requirement to expend at least 75% of specified costs at the school level is a work in progress. CCPS finance and technology staff are working with PowerSchool to ensure that CCPS financial data is uploaded onto the MSDE PowerSchool portal so FY 23 data can be assessed as it relates to the Blueprint’s 75% requirement. Finance staff are examining the following options:

- Work with our general ledger vendor, PowerSchool, to modify our general ledger account codes in a way that would allow assignment of pillars and/or programs to each general ledger account number.
- Work with “in house” information technology staff to “map” each general ledger account to the applicable pillar and/or program. This option appears time-consuming and labor intensive. In addition, every time a new general ledger account is created, district staff would need to update the account mapping for future data uploads into the data reporting website.
- Work with our consultant, Afton, to determine if there is a more efficient way than the two aforementioned options.

While CCPS finance team members are optimistic that we will work through the above challenges, the 75% requirement will clearly increase the workload of the finance team. It will also result in duplication of budget development work because FY 26 budget development must begin before the 75% challenge is resolved, and before any and all necessary new general ledger accounts are created.