

March 9, 2026 Agenda Board Questions and Responses Draft

(Agenda item numbers are based on the [3.9.26 draft agenda](#).)

E.10 Amendment - SpEd Specialized Services

1. How many hours (roughly) of services is this getting us?

I'm curious about recruitment and retention of these types of providers in a cost-saving capacity.

Contracted agencies were used to fill critical service gaps at the start of the school year when qualified direct hires could not be secured. These positions include speech-language pathologists, school psychologists, and specialized behavior support staff. While contracted providers come at a higher cost, they ensure compliance with federal requirements and continuity of services for students.

The requested funding supports:

- **Three full-time contracted speech-language pathologists**, currently serving more than 200 students with IEPs.
- **Two contracted behavior support specialists** who provide direct services to students with significant behavioral needs and coach district staff in implementing behavior intervention plans.

Without these contracts, the district would face serious challenges in meeting required service timelines and supporting high-need students effectively.

Recruitment and Retention Progress

School Psychologists and Related Roles

- Previously operated with significant vacancies, creating compliance challenges and missed evaluation timelines.
- Currently, nearly fully staffed, with only one contracted position remaining (scheduled to end to reduce costs).
- Strong recruitment efforts with graduate programs.
- Staff survey results show high retention intent, with a large majority planning to return.

Speech-Language Pathologists

- Expanded partnerships with graduate programs from one institution to nine.

- Increased student practicum placements from approximately two per year to eleven this year.
- Active recruitment efforts at universities and professional conferences.
- Strong retention intent among current staff despite workload challenges.

In summary, the district has relied on contracted providers to stabilize services during a period of significant staffing shortages. Recruitment pipelines have since expanded substantially, retention indicators are strong, and reliance on contracted staff is decreasing. Continued funding allows the district to maintain required services while transitioning toward a more sustainable, district-employed staffing model.