

West York Area School District

2026.6.9 Work Session Public Comment Questions and Responses



Where is your evidence to substantiate the claim that the district determined services can continue to be provided effectively within a reduced workday? Will you come sit in on all those IEP meetings and defend your decision to the parents?

- The determination is based on a review of current service delivery models, staffing patterns, and the support required by students' IEPs. The district's review shows that by restructuring schedules—rather than reducing services—we can ensure that both teachers and Learning Support Aides are available during the times students need them most. This is not a reduction in support; it is a reorganization of how support is delivered.

Does the Budget reflect the values of the District - Every Student, Every day?

- The District's mission, *Every Student Every Day*, guides every decision we make — including how we allocate our financial resources. Upholding this mission means being responsible stewards of public funds while ensuring that all students receive the programs, supports, and opportunities they need to thrive. A budget that reflects our values must balance fiscal responsibility with our commitment to equitable access, high-quality instruction, and the well-being of every learner. In short, our financial choices must demonstrate that we are investing wisely in what matters most: our students.

As the current aides resign or retire, will their replacement be highly qualified?

- Since 2001, Pennsylvania has required certain paraprofessionals—including those who work with special-education students—to meet 'highly qualified' standards in order to work in public schools. As has been our ongoing practice, West York will continue to meet that requirement in its hiring decisions based on the position that is vacated for both West York staff and any 3rd party agency staff members.

We're wondering how this additional outsourcing company located outside of Philadelphia will qualify and find qualified candidates.

- Although the agency's main office is outside the Philadelphia area, it employs recruiters and sourcing partners who work locally and already support several York County school districts. This local presence helps ensure they can identify and provide a strong pool of qualified candidates to meet our staffing needs.

Will the administration still receive their merit increases?

- The 2026–2027 Budget includes contractual increases for all employee groups—Support, Professional, Classified, Confidential, and Administration. Administrative staff is the only group whose merit increases are tied to performance evaluations; all other groups receive guaranteed increases as outlined in their contracts. Regarding bonuses: Leadership team members will not receive bonuses for the 2025-26 school year.

Why are we outsourcing the jobs at such large hourly rates?

- Although agency rates may appear higher at first glance, the overall cost is often comparable to employing District staff once salary, health benefits, PSERS contributions, unemployment, workers' compensation, payroll taxes, and other employment-related expenses are taken into account.
- The use of agency staff will occur only when the District is unable to fill open Special Education Aide vacancies through its regular internal or external hiring processes. The District partners with a number of staffing agencies to expand the candidate pool and ensure access to a broader range of qualified applicants, allowing us to select the best candidates to meet the needs of our students and schools. Any agency personnel will be utilized in accordance with the applicable labor contract and only when operational needs require it. The District remains committed to recruiting, hiring, and retaining West York employees as its primary staffing approach.

Is the district saying that they do not value the lives of certain students because they have a disability or speak another language? How will the District handle it when the student is not receiving the supports they should?

- The District is not saying — in any way — that it values some students less because they have a disability or speak another language. Our commitment to *Every Student Every Day* means that every learner, regardless of need, background, or ability, deserves the supports required for their success. That commitment has not changed.
- The supports required by a student's IEP are not ending. What may change is the way schedules are organized so that both the teacher and the Learning Support Aide can provide the required level of support throughout the day. While schedules may look different from those in previous years, the services themselves — including specially designed instruction, accommodations, and aide support — will continue as required by each student's IEP.

If we lose the quality assistants we have now, how do we retain people of the same quality?

- The District recognizes how essential high-quality assistants are to student success, and we are committed to maintaining that level of support. We are not eliminating the support students receive. The services required by each student's IEP will continue, and schedules will be developed to ensure that both the teacher and the Learning Support Aide can provide the required level of support throughout the day.
- Throughout this transition, the District's goal has been to retain our qualified staff. To support that goal, all aides affected by the transition from full-time to part-time positions were offered vacant full-time Special Education Aide positions within the District. We value the experience, relationships, and expertise these employees bring to our schools and have made every effort to provide them with full-time employment opportunities. At this time, seven full-time Special Education Aide positions remain available for affected aides who wish to continue working full-time with the District.
- If staffing changes occur, our goal is to retain and recruit individuals who meet the same high standards our students deserve. This includes setting clear expectations, providing appropriate training, and fostering a supportive work environment so that new assistants are prepared to deliver the same level of care, consistency, and instructional support.