

Cecil County Special Education Staffing Plan
School Fiscal Year 2027

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Cecil County Public Schools

Process for Developing, Monitoring and Evaluating the Special Education Staffing Plan

Background

This document describes the process Cecil County Public Schools (CCPS) used to meet Federal and State requirements for the annual development, review and evaluation of a staffing plan for special education. Annually, CCPS will utilize this process to determine the needs for special education staffing to monitor its implementation and make adjustments as needed and to evaluate its effectiveness. The Maryland State Department of Education provides written guidance and a rubric for the development of this plan

Overview

Cecil County Public School's provide inclusive educational opportunities for all students regardless of the disability. Students with disabilities are educated in the neighborhood school with non-disabled peers as appropriate based on their IEP. In accordance with Federal and State requirements, students identified as having a disability are provided a free appropriate public education (FAPE) in the least restrictive environment (LRE). The CCPS census LRE Data, as of October 2025, indicates that 85.57% of students 5K-21 received special education services in the general education setting 80% or more of their school day. In order to support students with more significant behavioral/emotional needs, RISE classrooms (formerly Behavior Support Classrooms (BSC)) were created, at the elementary school in addition to a partnership with SESI Schools to develop In District Classrooms at three elementary schools, one at the middle school and one at the High School level. The RISE Classrooms are intended to be a forty-five-day placement with return to the GE setting. Continuum Classrooms were also created to support students at with significant communication/behavioral needs in five elementary schools and one middle school . Both the RISE and In District Classrooms provide intensive support with opportunity for inclusion in the general education setting. Staffing plans for the county and schools are formulated based on the data regarding the services and supports needed to implement the IEP for students with disabilities in the least restrictive environment. The county has embraced the Membership, Partnership and Learning Committee (MPL) to facilitate the inclusion of students with significant profound disabilities in the general education setting to the greatest extent possible. Every school in the county is supporting one or more students in the process.

A key element in the provision of a FAPE for students with disabilities is the availability of appropriately trained personnel to implement each student's IEP and access to appropriate and timely professional learning to train special education and general education staff working with students with disabilities. The Cecil County Public Schools (CCPS) staffing plan is a vehicle to ensure the appropriate personnel are available to deliver the services required to fully implement IEPs. Professional learning for school personnel and others in the district addresses the requirements of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA 2004), as well as ongoing activities to promote development of evidence based instructionally appropriate practices.

Professional Learning is provided for two days for all new staff to CCPS. In addition to the three days, the Special Education Department provides professional learning to all new related services personnel, psychologists and special education teachers for an additional day addressing IEP development, Schoology, Maryland Online IEP, Transition, Medical assistance and CCPS inclusive philosophy. The Superintendent of Schools welcomes the Special Education staff and provides information about CCPS.

Professional Learning provided during the 2025-2026 school year included: IEP development, embedded specially designed instruction (SDI), Reading Mastery, Corrective Reading, Wilson Reading, Bookworms Intensive, Fundations, Targeted Math Instruction, Crisis Prevention and Intervention, Ukeru, RBI Routines Based Interview Training, Family Coaching, Trauma and Evidenced Based Practices, and Transition.

All special education teachers participate in County Based professional development provided by Core Content area coaches and Instructional Coordinators. The PD occurs in the beginning of the school year and one or more days throughout the year to ensure that special educators have a firm understanding of the core curriculum and how to embed SDI and provide parallel instruction when appropriate.

In addition to professional learning, the Special Education Department has a comprehensive Tool Kit for teachers in Schoology and a shared Google Drive. The Tool Kit houses multiple resources for general education and special education teachers, i.e. Educating Students with Disabilities: A Guiding Document for General and Special Education Teachers, Sample Planning Tools, Creating Effective Compliant IEPs and Adapting Toys and Books.

Budget Process and Timeline

The school system follows the budget requirements for local school systems within the State of Maryland as specified by state law. Our local Charter Government requires the Board of Education to submit a budget request to the County Executive. The County Executive may modify the Board's request included in the total county budget submitted to the County Council.

The following shows the activities that comprise the overall annual budget process with our County's Charter Government:

1. The annual budget process begins with the annual update of the Board of Education's Long Range *Strategic Plan.*
2. Input from various stakeholder groups is gathered by school staff and department heads early in the process to assist the Board in determining priorities. These stakeholder groups include School Improvement Teams comprised of school faculty and parents, the local Business and Education Partnership Advisory Council (BEPAC), and our local SECAC, to name a few. In addition, we utilize a website survey for our students, parents, and staff to complete providing priorities for the upcoming budget. Public budget work sessions are held during the months of December and January where the Superintendent and Leadership Team members present their respective areas of the budget to the Board and the public. At a final formal public hearing in late January, the Superintendent's budget request is presented.
3. The Board of Education must submit a budget request to the County Executive prior to February 15.
4. The County Executive must submit a complete County budget to the County Council by March 1.
5. Following public hearings, the County Council must approve the budgets by June 30.
6. Based on the annual appropriation amount approved by the County Council, results of labor contract negotiations, and State Legislative actions, the Board of Education must make the appropriate adjustments and adopt a final budget in June.

A budget development calendar is established by the Superintendent in September of the preceding fiscal year. Budget requests received from each school community and department are carefully reviewed by members of the Superintendent's Leadership Team during the process of developing the Superintendent's budget request. Several public meetings are held between the Board of Education and staff in December and January when estimated revenue and expenditures in all budget categories are reviewed and discussed. All requests must align to the goals and objectives in the school system's Strategic Plan. At the conclusion of the hearings, the Board advises the Superintendent and staff of additions and/or revisions to the budget request. The Board of Education takes action to adopt the request at their regular monthly meeting in February.

The Board's request is then submitted to the County Executive. The County Executive must submit a complete county budget to the County Council by March 1. By law, the county government announces on May 1 a tentative appropriation for the Board of Education for the following fiscal year. A final appropriation is then announced by the county government on June 1.

Fiscal Year 2027 Budget Development Calendar

Budget documents emailed · Schools · Instructional Coordinators · Departments	October 17, 2025
Budget entered in Munis and completed budget documents due · Principals	October 31, 2025
Budget entered in Munis and completed budget documents due · Instructional Coordinators · Departments	November 14, 2025
Superintendent's parameters/ discussion with BOE	November 12, 2025
Scheduled budget meetings · Instructional Coordinators · Departments	November/December 2025
Board of Education Budget Work Session, GWCarver Center @ 5:00PM	January 28, 2026
Board of Education Budget Work Session, GWCarver Center @ 10:00AM	February 3, 2026
Board of Education Public Budget Hearing, GWCarver Center @ 5:00PM	February 25, 2026
Submit BOE Approved Budget Requests to the County Executive	February 28, 2026
Action by County County Executive submits Proposed Budget to Council Board of Education presentation to Council Public Hearing on Annual Budget, County Administration Building @ Time TBD Council Approval of Budget, County Administration Building @ 7:00 PM	 April 1, 2025 May 19, 2026 May 21, 2026 June 2, 2026
Board of Education Approves Budgets, GWCarver Center @ 5:30PM	June 12, 2026

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Denise M. Sopa, Associate Superintendent of Finance and Operations

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David B. Foye, Chief of Staff

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Maintenance of Effort

Cecil County Public Schools follows Maintenance of Effort guidance provided by MSDE and as outlined under COMAR 13A.02.05. In FY26, state and local unrestricted actual expenditures for special education were $51,799,197.38. In FY27, CCPS has budgeted $54,755,311.33 for special education unrestricted expenditures funded through state and local funds. Our FY27 budget exceeds the FY26 actual expenditures by $2,956,113.95.

Staffing Guidelines
Overview

Beginning in March, the Special Education Department administrators met periodically to review students with disabilities enrolled at each of the twenty-eight schools to determine staffing of teachers, building coordinators, paraprofessionals, related service staff, and school psychologists. Instructional Coordinators are intricately involved in the schools acting as advocates for students in IEP meetings and conducting eight to ten teacher observations per month. They possess comprehensive knowledge of students enrolled and students transitioning to a new grade configuration. In addition, building coordinators submit student matrices outlining student needs in multiple areas and instructional coordinators use a staffing formula based on student factors and complexity of need. Ratios act only as a guide in determining caseloads and staff patterns. The most significant factor is the severity of the needs of the students when determining teaching units, related service units and paraprofessional units necessary to maintain the LRE.

The SSIS system managed by the Administrative Assistant to the Director and Maryland Online IEP system provides current information regarding LRE data, services provided by teacher, related services caseload and other pertinent information to assist in allocating staff to buildings. Collected SSIS information, along with data submitted by case managers is analyzed and used as part of the decision-making process in determining what, if any, changes need to be implemented. The same procedure is used for determining related service staffing. At the building level, Special Education administrators and special education teachers are represented on the School Improvement Team. The CCPS *ESSA* Consolidated Strategic Plan is a comprehensive, integrated countywide plan identifying the school system's goal, strategies for meeting them, and methods of evaluating achievement of the goals and objectives.

SPECIAL EDUCATION STUDENT NEED MATRIX

SCHOOL:					DATE:														
			Hrs of Sp Ed/Week		Goal Areas					Accommodations			Supports			Related Services			
Gr	Student	DIS	INSIDE	OUTSIDE	Math	Read	Writ Lang	Study Skills	Beh	Read Entire	Read Select	Scribe	*Adult Supp	**Adult Assist	ALT	SL	PT	OT	OTHER INFO

*Adult Support: Full and direct support is needed for significant periods of the school day to address ...(Specific task, time, activity)
**Adult Assistance: Assistance is needed for...(Specific task, time, activity)

Suggested Special Education Caseload Staffing

Calculation Field		Current Data as of 2/13/26							Current Student Data - 2/3/26								Suggested Staffing Based On Current Student Data								
School	Loc	BC	PS	RISE	CONT	TRANS	Instruc.	Total	PS	RISE	CONT	TRANS	Level 1	Level 2	Level 3	Total Instr IEPs	BC	PS	RISE	CONT	TRANS	Level 1	Level 2	Level 3	FTE Calc
Bainbridge ES	1	0.5	1.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	4.5	6.0	9	0	0	0	37	7	8	61	1.0	1.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	3.1	0.7	1.0	6.8
Bay View ES	2	1.2	1.0	0.0	1.0	0.0	6.8	10.0	9	0	7	0	66	3	15	100	1.2	1.0	0.0	1.0	0.0	5.5	0.3	1.9	10.9
Calvert ES	3	0.5	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	4.5	5.0	0	0	0	0	39	1	9	49	0.5	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	3.3	0.1	1.1	5.0
Cecil Manor ES	4	1.0	1.0	2.0	0.0	0.0	7.0	11.0	11	7	0	0	39	1	14	72	1.0	1.0	2.0	0.0	0.0	3.3	0.1	1.8	9.1
Cecilton ES	5	0.5	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	3.5	4.0	0	0	0	0	26	1	4	31	0.5	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	2.2	0.1	0.5	3.3
Charlestown ES	6	0.5	0.0	0.0	1.0	0.0	4.5	6.0	0	0	4	0	32	5	8	49	0.5	0.0	0.0	1.0	0.0	2.7	0.5	1.0	5.7
Chesapeake City ES	7	0.75	1.0	0.0	1.0	0.0	4.25	7.00	8	0	2	0	40	0	10	60	0.75	1.0	0.0	1.0	0.0	3.3	0.0	1.3	7.3
Conowingo ES	8	0.5	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	4.5	5.0	0	0	0	0	17	11	9	37	0.5	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	1.4	1.1	1.1	4.1
Elk Neck ES	9	0.5	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	4.5	5.0	0	0	0	0	43	5	6	54	0.5	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	3.6	0.5	0.8	5.3
Gilpin Manor ES	10	1.0	1.0	0.0	1.0	0.0	6.0	9.0	10	0	0	0	45	8	15	78	1.0	1.0	0.0	1.0	0.0	3.8	0.8	1.9	9.4
Holly Hall ES	11	1.0	1.0	0.0	1.0	0.0	6.0	9.0	9	0	2	0	41	9	10	71	1.0	1.0	0.0	1.0	0.0	3.4	0.9	1.3	8.6
Kenmore ES	12	0.8	1.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	3.3	5.0	8	0	0	0	20	0	6	34	0.5	1.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	1.7	0.0	0.8	3.9
Leeds ES	13	0.5	0.0	0.0	1.0	0.0	3.5	5.0	2	0	6	0	25	5	2	40	0.5	0.0	0.0	1.0	0.0	2.1	0.5	0.3	4.3
North East ES	14	1.0	0.0	2.0	0.0	0.0	6.0	9.0	0	5	0	0	39	6	17	67	1.0	0.0	2.0	0.0	0.0	3.3	0.6	2.1	9.0
Perryville ES	15	0.75	2.0	2.0	0.0	0.0	5.25	10.00	11	5	0	0	37	14	7	74	0.75	2.0	2.0	0.0	0.0	3.1	1.4	0.9	10.1
Rising Sun ES	16	1.0	1.0	0.0	1.0	0.0	6.0	9.0	9	0	5	0	33	19	5	71	1.0	1.0	0.0	1.0	0.0	2.8	1.9	0.6	8.3
Thomson Estates ES	17	1.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	7.0	8.0	0	0	0	0	30	26	18	74	1.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	2.5	2.6	2.3	8.4
Bo Manor MS	21	0.6	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	6.4	7.0	0	0	0	0	54	11	4	69	0.6	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	3.2	0.6	0.4	4.8
Cherry Hill MS	22	1.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	8.0	9.0	0	0	0	0	40	2	4	46	1.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	2.4	0.1	0.4	3.9
Elkton MS	24	1.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	1.0	8.0	10.0	0	0	0	6	83	10	1	100	1.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	1.0	4.9	0.6	0.1	7.6
North East MS	25	1.0	0.0	0.0	1.0	0.0	11.0	13.0	0	0	5	0	105	15	7	132	1.0	0.0	0.0	1.0	0.0	6.2	0.9	0.7	9.8
Perryville MS	26	1.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	1.0	7.0	9.0	0	0	0	6	57	14	3	80	1.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	1.0	3.4	0.8	0.3	6.5
Rising Sun MS	27	1.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	6.0	7.0	0	0	0	0	69	17	5	91	1.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	4.1	1.0	0.5	6.6
Bo Manor HS	31	0.6	0.0	0.0	0.0	1.0	5.4	7.0	0	0	0	6	63	6	4	79	0.6	0.0	0.0	0.0	1.0	3.7	0.4	0.4	6.1
Elkton HS	32	2.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	2.0	10.0	14.0	0	0	0	17	77	91	4	189	2.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	2.0	4.5	5.4	0.4	14.3
North East HS	33	2.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	1.0	9.0	12.0	0	0	0	9	98	49	7	163	2.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	1.0	5.8	2.9	0.7	12.3
Perryville HS	34	1.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	1.0	7.0	9.0	0	0	0	11	65	37	3	116	1.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	1.0	3.8	2.2	0.3	8.3
Rising Sun HS	35	1.2	0.0	0.0	0.0	1.0	7.8	10.0	0	0	0	7	106	21	4	138	1.2	0.0	0.0	0.0	1.0	6.2	1.2	0.4	10.1

Throughout the summer special education teachers and related service provider allocations were analyzed. Teacher student ratios are used to guide allocations however complexity of student needs is at the forefront of the decision. Recommended ratio averages include Elementary 1-10, Middle 1-12 and High School 1-15. In addition, complexity of need and services were considered.

Elementary	Ratio
Level 1 = Under 3 hrs/wk outside & inside services	1/12
Level 2 = Over 3 hrs/wk	1/10
Level 3 = Adult Assistance / Alt, or 20+ hrs/wk	1/8
Secondary	**Ratio**
Level 1 = Under 3 hrs/wk outside & inside services	1/17
Level 2 = Over 3 hrs/wk	1/17
Level 3 = Adult Assistance / Alt, or 20+ hrs/wk	1/10

The goal is that students with disabilities should receive supports and services through the most qualified staff members. In addition, CCPS employs a Teacher for the Visually Impaired, a Teacher for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing and 2 Interpreters to provide support to students in multiple schools. Students with significant physical and cognitive delays continue to require the support of paraprofessionals.

CCPS believes that students with disabilities should be educated with non-disabled peers in their neighborhood schools to the greatest extent possible. In a county with twenty-eight schools and almost 2700 students with disabilities, scheduling related service providers is a herculean task. Recommended ratios based on National Organizations recommendations are used as a guide when staffing schools. Each year we are forced to contract through agencies for speech language pathologists, occupational therapists, physical therapists, school psychologists, nurses, and ASL Interpreters.

Special Education Staffing FY 27

Job Title	Count (FTE)
Director of Special Education	1
Program Coordinator	3
Administrative Assistant	.5
Administrative Secretary	2
Supervising School Psychologist	2
School Psychologist	9.9
Psych Intern	2
Teacher	**249.4**
Building Coordinator	27.1
Hearing/Vision	2
Infants & Toddlers Program	5
Grades PS-12	214.3
Instructional Coach	1
Paraprofessional	209
Interpreter Tutor	2
Occupational Therapist	8
Occupational Therapist Assistant	4
Physical Therapist	4
Speech Pathologist	23.6
Total	**520.4**

The Special Education Department and the Student Services Department work collaboratively to support ALL students. The multi-tier system of support requires schools to have data analysis teams, problem-solving teams and student services teams to address student behavior at all three tiers and ensure that students have access to tiered behavior supports.

During the 2019 summer, CCPS developed a strategic plan that supports high expectations for all to support student achievement. This plan was given a new look in the summer of 2024. All teachers both regular and special education are responsible for educating all students within their classrooms. Building Principals have the responsibility of ensuring that all students have access to high quality Tier 1 instruction. Director, Instructional Coordinators are members of multiple decision making committees to include Superintendent's Cabinet, Teacher Evaluation, Intervention, Code of Conduct, Curriculum Review, Grading and Reporting, Instructional Coordinators, Bridge to Excellence, Education Leadership, Instructional Leadership Teams, Budget and Early Childhood Committees. As members, special education's voice is in the forefront.



Accountability

Caseload Monitoring and Adjustment Process

Several methods are used to monitor the staff schedules and the provision of services to ensure supports and services to students with disabilities. At the beginning of the year teachers provide their schedule to the Program Coordinator to include the number of students served in each classroom and type of service provided (inside general education/outside general education).

The caseload of special education staff is monitored on an ongoing basis in each building by the school team, in cooperation with the building principal, building coordinator, and Program Coordinator. This ongoing review includes data collection and analysis through review of IEPs, case management and data collection. Monthly throughout the year, staffing is analyzed at the district level by the Special Education Administrative team. If a need is identified staff reallocation may occur or a request for above budget positions is made.

Instructional Coordinator conduct observations, walk-throughs and evaluation of teachers monthly. The process allows for direct observation of students and discussions with teachers regarding caseloads and or technical assistance to support instruction. Schedules are posted monthly to inform staff when a member of the special education department will be in the school.

Process for Resolving Staffing Concerns

The staffing plan for each school must be monitored throughout the year to ensure sufficient staff to fully implement each student's IEP. If during the school year, there is concern from staff or a parent regarding the level of staffing at a particular school, the following sequential may occur.

1. The parent and/or staff will have an opportunity to meet with the principal to present the concern to determine if it can be resolved at the building level.
2. Building Coordinator and Program Coordinator will review and gather relevant data and concerns generated by the teacher's caseload and/or the parent. Special and general education teacher's schedules will be reviewed in an effort to identify and remove any barriers to the delivery of services.
3. Program Coordinator will provide recommendations to the principal on how to resolve the issue. The recommendation may include a description of needed changes or additions to personnel and any realignment of duties.
4. Request for additional staff is reviewed and submitted to the Director for Special Education for consideration.

Evaluating the Local Staffing Plan for Effectiveness

Annually, CCPS will collect data and carry out activities to evaluate the effectiveness of the current staffing plan and to also evaluate the likelihood of the effectiveness of the proposed plan for the following year. CCPS will determine the strengths and areas of need in the current special education staffing plan. The results will be shared with stakeholders through the school improvement processes and the Special Education Citizens Advisory committee. Feedback will be used to develop the updated staffing plan. The effectiveness of the plan will be assessed each spring using a variety of data elements, including SSIS information, school improvement team data analysis, IEP data, surveys, and student achievement data. The Director for Special Education Services will lead the process.

Guiding Factors for the Development and Review of Special Education Staffing

In February of each year school teams meet to review current staffing and the staffing needs for the upcoming school year. Input is gathered from a multitude of staff to include general education, special education, and related services staff. Additionally, input from each school's SIT team and the Special Education Citizens Advisory Committee should be considered by both the school and district level teams. Building Principals submit the requests to the Executive Director. Recommendations for needed changes in staffing, training, materials, and or equipment are sent to the Director for Special Education.

The following questions provide some guidelines for the development of the staffing plan and delivery services in each school.

Structure and Process

- How will special education programs and services relate to other programs and services in the district, e.g. at-risk programs, Title 1, ML, after school and summer programming etc.?
- How are general education programs structured and operated?
- What are the scheduling roadblocks to the provision of co-teaching with general and special educators in regard to the number of staff needed?
- What role do instructional staff have in the process of identifying students who might require special education?
- What are the district's expectations for accommodations and modifications within general education and who participates in the development of the modifications?
- What related service supports are needed for students to benefit from their special education services in the LRE?

Changes and Vacancies By Position

Cecil County Public Schools has made staffing adjustments due to the vacancies during this past year. Vacancies in the area of related services providers and school psychologists have been contracted. As related service staff and school psychologists are employed by CCPS contracted services are decreased. The national shortage of school psychologists and face-to-face related service providers is of great concern. Recruitment and retention continue to be of concern.

Evaluation of FY 2026 Plan

(Review the current staffing plan)

1. Ongoing record reviews and monitoring of the staffing plan indicated that schools were appropriately staffed with teachers. However, teacher shortage because of a reduction in qualified candidates as well as a shortage of substitutes greatly taxed service provision to students. The addition of paraprofessionals to support students with significant disabilities were made. Related Service personnel were adjusted throughout the year to support student needs.

2. Currently, the students who are attending the Public/Private Partnership at the High Road Program are beginning to matriculate to their home schools when appropriate. Staff training and transitioning is needed as students matriculate from one school to another with these intense needs. Students who are successful in the program are receiving instruction within general education as appropriate on an individual basis. Monitoring of the success and needs will continue in both programs.

3. An analysis of achievement results for students with disabilities on quarterly assessments indicate that they are performing significantly below standards. A focus has been placed on embedded SDI and parallel instruction using core curricular materials in order to address the achievement gap.

4. Ensuring access to the general curriculum and evidenced based practices that support meaningful access in the general education classroom is the core of staffing decision-making.

5. Special Education along with the offices of Secondary and Elementary Instruction review state assessment and county benchmark data for all schools. Individual student data is also reviewed. Special Education is working in conjunction with the offices of Elementary and Secondary Instruction to review and expand intervention programs for all students working below grade level. Students receiving interventions will continue to have a seamless transition from elementary to middle and high schools. During the school year, reading interventions, math instruction and evidence-based practices were implemented in all grade levels and additional interventions were implemented in the secondary level in the area of reading. CCPS is developing a myriad of reading and math interventions to meet the need of students KN-12.