

THE  
BALTIMORE  
COUNTY  
PUBLIC  
SCHOOLS

# SPECIAL EDUCATION STAFFING PLAN 2020-2021

***SPECIAL EDUCATION STAFFING PLAN FOR 2020-2021***

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## **I. Assurance**

The *Baltimore County Public Schools (BCPS) Special Education Staffing Plan for 2020-2021* is developed consistent with the procedures provided by the Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE) for the purpose of ensuring that personnel and other resources are available to provide a free appropriate public education (FAPE) to each student with a disability in the least restrictive environment (LRE) as determined by an *Individualized Education Program (IEP)* team. In accordance with *The Code of Maryland Regulations, COMAR 13A.05.02.13D*; this staffing plan includes the following:

- Evidence of maintenance of effort within the meaning of 34 CFR 300.231 and COMAR 13A.02.05.
- Evaluation of the previous staffing plan.
- Evidence of public input.
- Staffing patterns of service providers of special education and related services, including para-educators.
- The number and type of service providers needed to provide FAPE to each student with a disability in the LRE.
- The methods for monitoring the assignment of personnel to ensure that personnel and other resources are available to provide FAPE to each student with a disability in the LRE.
- The number of special education teachers and para-educators assigned to schools.
- The number of vacancies reported and how FAPE is provided when vacancies occur.

## **II. Introduction**

### ***Blueprint 2.0***

#### **VISION**

BCPS will be among the highest performing school systems in the nation as a result of creating, sustaining, and investing in a culture of deliberate excellence for every student, every school, and every community.

#### **PURPOSE**

BCPS will provide for every student the highest quality 21<sup>st</sup> century education in a safe, secure, and positive environment conducive to high levels of teaching, learning, and student engagement, resulting in globally competitive students prepared for their chosen college and/or career path.

#### **CORE VALUES**

- Learning is BCPS' core purpose.
- Effective teaching is the most essential factor in student learning.
- Effective leaders support learning and optimum performance at all levels.

- BCPS is committed to doing whatever it takes to ensure that every student learns and succeeds, regardless of race, ethnicity, gender, socioeconomic status, language proficiency, or disability.
- Every student will be successful when provided high expectations and sufficient, appropriate supports.
- Organizational development is essential to BCPS becoming a world-class school system.
- Trusting relationships and commitment to BCPS core values will foster learning at all levels.
- Students, parents/guardians, employees, community members, and all BCPS stakeholders comprise Team BCPS.
- Every member of Team BCPS has value and makes important contributions towards BCPS becoming a world-class school system.
- Positive and productive relationships among all members of Team BCPS are built through meaningful communication and engagement.
- All members of Team BCPS are partners in creating, sustaining, and investing in a culture of deliberate excellence and vital to BCPS' success.

### **Goal 1: Academics**

*Every student will experience high academic achievement and continuous growth by participating in a rigorous instructional program designed to raise the academic bar and close achievement gaps so that every student will become a globally competitive citizen in a culturally diverse world.*

#### **Strategic Initiatives:**

- A. Develop and implement an aligned written, taught, and assessed curriculum and assessment system based on common core standards with emphasis on literacy, numeracy, and writing in every class and built on the foundation of a 21<sup>st</sup> century teaching and learning framework.
- B. Provide equitable resources for and access to world-class first instruction and high-quality educational programs.
- C. Ensure a learner-centered, personalized, blended environment powered by digital learning and interactive curriculum access that is flexible anytime and anywhere.
- D. Strengthen and expand early childhood education in our community to build early foundations for learning success and eliminate achievement gaps before they occur.
- E. Develop and implement a Response to Intervention framework to provide early, effective assistance to students for academic interventions.
- F. Implement the Differentiated-Tiered Support Model to allocate resources and supports to all schools based upon student achievement and need.

### **Goal 2: Safety**

*Every school and office will be safe and secure, promote individual well-being, and provide positive, respectful, and caring environments for teaching, learning, and working.*

**Strategic Initiatives:**

- A. Develop and implement a comprehensive, systemwide framework for safe schools and offices.
- B. Strengthen and expand student support services efforts at each school and systemwide.
- C. Develop and implement a positive behavior support plan to provide early, effective assistance to students for behavioral interventions.
- D. Create a healthy environment that is conducive to learning and working in all schools and offices.

**Goal 3: Communication**

*Every stakeholder will experience clear, timely, honest, transparent, and widely available communication about system initiatives and activities that engages them in building a culture of trust through action and establishes BCPS as a world-class school system.*

**Strategic Initiatives:**

- A. Develop and implement effective two-way communication for internal stakeholders.
- B. Develop and implement effective two-way communication for external stakeholders.
- C. Cultivate innovative partnerships with members of *Team BCPS* to provide a sustainable system of support for every student.
- D. Build and nurture a culture of high engagement and customer service to ensure pride in *Team BCPS*.

**Goal 4: Organizational Effectiveness**

*BCPS will maximize organizational efficiency and effectiveness by engaging in strategic efforts that employ rigorous, relevant, and reasonable performance standards that provide for all employees' professional growth and shared accountability for student, school, and organizational performance.*

**Strategic Initiatives:**

- A. Develop and implement a comprehensive human resources management plan that addresses recruiting, selecting, developing, supporting, evaluating, and retaining highly qualified and effective staff at all levels of the organization
- B. Build, sustain, and invest in technology infrastructure and efforts to streamline data management and create efficiencies throughout the organization.
- C. Establish a comprehensive performance management approach that ensures data-informed and evidence-based decision-making.
- D. Develop and implement a long-range, comprehensive facilities modernization plan that addresses the aging infrastructure and provides safe, clean, and well-equipped facilities for students and staff.
- E. Develop and implement a systemwide framework to ensure efficiencies in all schools and offices throughout the organization.

## **SPECIAL EDUCATION MISSION**

In accordance with the *Blueprint 2.0*, the Office of Special Education (OSE) provides vision, leadership, and expertise to schools and offices regarding the implementation of curricular and instructional initiatives that support the achievement of students with disabilities in compliance with state and federal mandates. It is the commitment of the office that students with disabilities have access to a full continuum of services while being educated with nondisabled peers to the maximum extent possible.

## **SPECIAL EDUCATION GOAL**

OSE seeks to improve the performance of students with disabilities and assists in narrowing the achievement gap by ensuring equal access to the curriculum and differentiated instruction in the LRE.

### ***Philosophy and Guiding Principles***

In BCPS, services provided to students with disabilities align directly to the *Blueprint 2.0* by utilizing the key goals to achieve the strategic initiatives. The BCPS' Master Plan further defines how the school system will ensure that all students will graduate from high school and reach high standards, as established by BCPS and state proficiency levels in reading, language arts, mathematics, science, and social studies. Key strategies of Goal 1 and Goal 5 of the BCPS' Master Plan include the following:

- Provide for the consistent and systematic implementation of the curriculum in all content areas, which include differentiated curriculum for English language learners (ELL), special education, gifted and talented, and honor students.
- Develop, implement, and monitor intervention programs for students who have not demonstrated proficiency in reading, language arts, mathematics, science, and social studies.
- Educate all students with disabilities in accordance with the objectives defined in the students' IEP so that they learn the body of knowledge presented in the classroom to the maximum extent possible.
- Provide supports and services, modifications, and adaptations of curriculum, instructional methodology, and/or materials based on student needs.

### **III. Evaluation of the Special Education Staffing Plan**

In 2015-2016, OSE developed a multi-year strategic staffing plan to address areas of need identified through various data sources, including but not limited to State Performance Plan results, performance data, enrollment trends, LRE trends, referrals to more restrictive settings, and dispute resolution data. OSE continuously monitors and modifies its long-term plans to reflect continuous and anticipated areas of focus. The multi-year strategic plan was updated during the 2019-2020 school year and continues to include budget requests for the following positions from 2015-2016 to 2020-2021 school year.

- An increase in Infants and Toddlers teachers to ensure adequate caseload management and provision of services.
- An increase in elementary special education teachers to offer a continuum of services for students with disabilities in their home schools and regional models.
- An increase in secondary special education teachers to offer a continuum of services in home schools and regional models for students with complex social-emotional needs and high functioning autism.
- An increase in related service providers/ support staff (Speech and Language Pathologists, Occupational Therapists, Physical Therapists, and Teachers of the Visually Impaired) to address the increased need of services for students with disabilities ages birth to 21.
- An increase in para-educators for elementary and secondary schools to address the enrollment growth and services for students with disabilities.
- An increase in Transition Facilitators and job coaches to support transition activities for secondary students.
- An increase in Board Certified Behavior Analysts (BCBA) to support school-based staff in addressing complex behavioral needs of students.
- A request for IEP Chairpersons to provide oversight to IEP teams and guidance to case managers regarding IEP implementation.

The effectiveness of the 2019-2020 Staffing Plan was assessed by reviewing performance data, LRE data, regional program enrollment, and caseload information. Additional feedback was gained through public input processes inclusive of internal and external stakeholders.

**Strengths:**

- Improved analysis of staffing through assessment of multiple data sources in grades PS – 12.
- Increased staffing to support special education enrollment growth due to increased enrollment of new to county students.
- Increased staffing to support the continuum of services in elementary schools.
- Improved programmatic options to offer a continuum of services in secondary schools in additional geographic areas addressing the needs of students with high functioning autism and complex social-emotional needs.
- Increase in BCBA to improve school-based staff capacity in addressing complex behavioral needs and to support proactive positive behavior planning supports.
- Re-alignment of central office staff to address the differentiated support model including coaching opportunities provided by resource teachers to identified regional programs.
- Improved inter-collaborative processes with Offices of Strategic Planning, Facilities, Law, Budget, Human Resources, Student Data, and Transportation to address growth in special education enrollment.
- No appointments or reallocations of instructional staff have been made as a result of complaints or hearing decisions.
- Alignment of strategic professional learning plans to areas of identified need: early childhood, literacy, autism, and transition.

- A realignment of kindergarten programming to current regional programs to minimize transitions for the youngest learners.

**Needs:**

OSE updated the multi-year strategic staffing plan during the 2019-2020 school year to reflect current and anticipated patterns, trends, and needs. The multi-year strategic staffing plan addresses the following areas of need:

- Assurance of the continuum of services to provide LRE C at comprehensive elementary schools.
- Expansion of existing regional options in each geographic area to address capacity, caseloads, and special transportation needs.
- Review of recommended ratios for regional programs and separate public day schools.
- Consideration of IEP Chairpersons at elementary and secondary schools.
- Review of recommended ratios for para-educator allocations.
- Assurance of Related Services staffing to ensure adequate caseloads and provision of services.
- Increase of Infants & Toddlers teachers and service coordinators to address caseloads and service delivery.
- Increase of BCBAs.
- Increase of Transition Facilitators and Job Coaches to ensure adequate support to case managers in addressing and monitoring transition activities.

**IV. Public Input Process:**

The Office of Communications provides notification of all public hearings, meetings, and workshops regarding the development of each year’s operating budget. Communications are shared via the BCPS Website, OSE Website, and individual school publications. Stakeholders, including parents/guardians are invited to share feedback about the proposed budget. Historically, parents/guardians of students with disabilities are well represented at the various meetings.

In addition to the public hearings, the Special Education Citizens Advisory Committee (SECAC) executive board members advocate for OSE budget requests throughout the year at Board of Education meetings. The SECAC Executive Board meets bi-monthly with the Director of Special Education to discuss special education initiatives and priorities. Additionally, SECAC holds multiple meetings for parents and community stakeholders which are open to the public, throughout the school year to provide information and advocate for services for students with disabilities. In a collaborative effort, SECAC provided recommendations to the Superintendent and Board of Education addressing inclusivity, training, accountability, and staffing. Presentations addressed the following topics: OSE Updates, Transition, SECAC Recommendations for the Superintendent, Autism, Literacy, and Social and Emotional Learning. Agendas and topics are prepared based upon feedback provided by SECAC members and stakeholders.

<b>SECAC Meetings 2019-2020</b>	
<b>Date</b>	<b>Topic</b>
October 7, 2019	Executive Functioning with guest speaker Dr. Tana Hope
November 4, 2019	Special Education Updates
December 2, 2019	Dr. Darryl L. Williams, Superintendent, Baltimore County Public Schools
February 10, 2020	Transition
March 2, 2020	Autism
May 4, 2020	Literacy

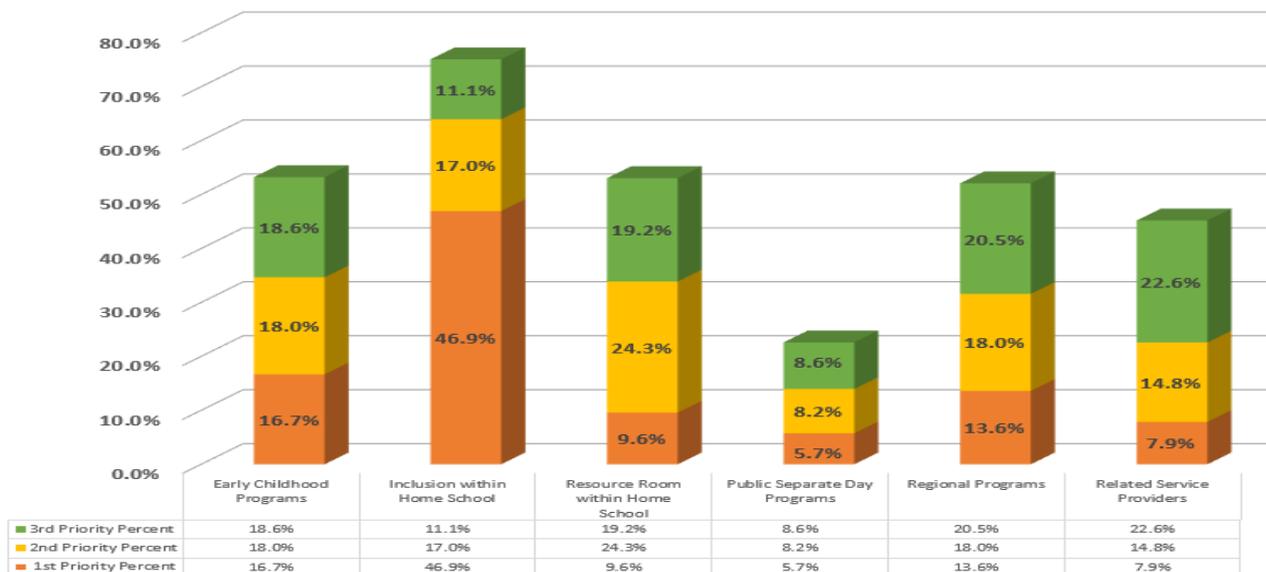
<b>SECAC Executive Board 2019-2020</b>	
<b>Name</b>	<b>Position</b>
Megan Stewart-Sicking	Chair
Ellen Galvez	Resource Center Representative
Kim Parry	Secretary
PJ Shafer	Executive Board Member
Eliza Hartman	Executive Board Member

The Special Education Staffing Plan and budget requests are shared at a SECAC meeting, in addition to subsequent meetings with the SECAC Executive Board. SECAC recommendations included requests to increase the special education teachers and para-educators for elementary and secondary schools to improve the continuum of services and ensure appropriate ratios for regional programs. Additionally, recommendations included the need to increase the number of BCBA's and Related Service Providers (*See appendix A*).

In order to obtain input from multiple stakeholder groups on the current Special Education Staffing Plan, OSE created an online survey that was available to all stakeholder groups through the OSE public internet site beginning in October 2019. The survey will remain open to all stakeholders for the remainder of the 2019-2020 school year.

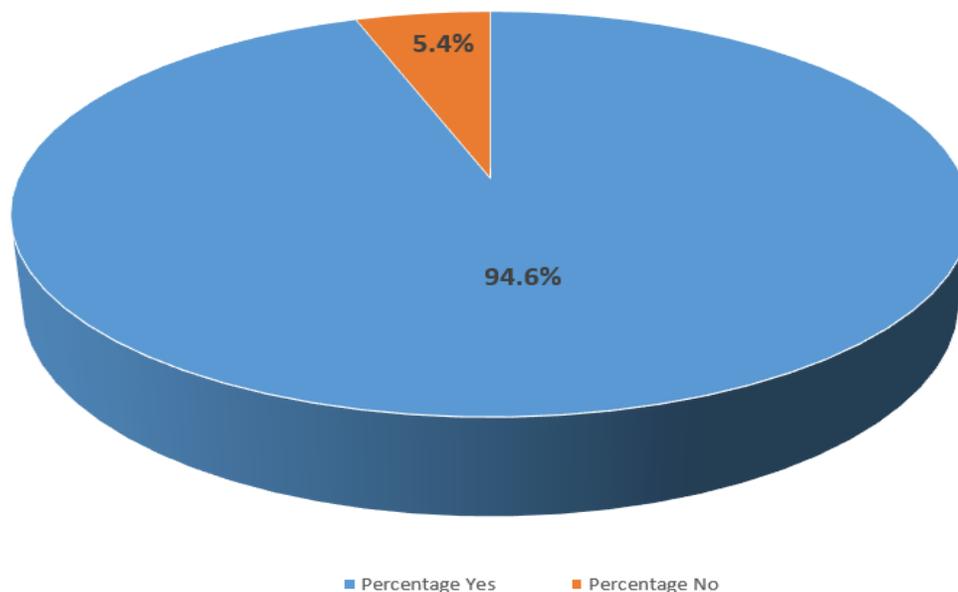
A preliminary analysis of the survey results indicates that there is strong support for consideration of increasing special education staffing to support students in the inclusion environment within home schools. Supporting students in an inclusion setting within the home school environment was identified the most as the first priority throughout all grade levels (Elementary, Middle, and High School). It should also be noted that this category of support was chosen most as the first priority by administrators, support staff, teachers, and parents subgroups.

**Priority Areas**  
*(All Stakeholders)*



There also appears to be strong support for consideration of IEP Chairperson positions to be allocated to schools within BCPS.

**Do you feel that an IEP Chair position should be a dedicated staffing allocation separate from special education teaching positions?**



An additional deeper analysis of the survey results will continue to occur as more responses are received from stakeholders.

The Special Education Staffing Plan and proposals are reviewed throughout the year with various BCPS stakeholders, including representatives from various offices, including but not limited to Executive Leadership, Community Superintendents, Offices of Strategic Planning,

Facilities, Transportation, Climate, and Law. Budget proposals and programmatic changes are reviewed to ensure alignment of requests to identified need as noted through enrollment and LRE trends. Historical and anticipated trend patterns are reviewed to ensure that students are receiving FAPE in their LRE within their home school, or school closest to their home. These stakeholders continue to engage in strategic planning to accommodate current and anticipated needs.

Date	Meeting or Action Item
July	◇ Present proposed operating schedule to the Board
August–September	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◇ Prebudget meeting with the interim superintendent</li> <li>◇ Prebudget meetings with staff</li> <li>◇ Grants and general fund instructions to central office staff</li> </ul>
September	◇ Performance Budget training and FY22 budget planning sessions for office budgets
October–November	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◇ Office budget requests are due to the Office of Budget and Reporting (OBR)</li> <li>◇ Budget review by the interim superintendent</li> <li>◇ Receive stakeholder feedback through the online Special Education Staffing Plan Survey</li> </ul>
January	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◇ Superintendent presents proposed FY2021 budget to the Board – distribution of the proposed budget document</li> <li>◇ Board public hearing on operating budget</li> <li>◇ Board work session on operating budget</li> </ul>
February	◇ Board votes on the FY2021 budget
March	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◇ Distribution of Board proposed budget document</li> <li>◇ County executive staff reviews BCPS budget proposal</li> </ul>
April	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◇ County executive presents FY2021 budget recommendations to the county council</li> <li>◇ County Council holds a public hearing on all county budgets</li> </ul>
April–May	◇ County council reviews budget request for all county operating and capital budgets.
May	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◇ County Council work session on BCPS budget</li> <li>◇ County Council votes to adopt FY2020 budget</li> </ul>

Date	Meeting or Action Item
July	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◇ FY 2021 funds available</li> <li>◇ Distribution of the FY 2021 adopted budget document</li> </ul>

## V. Maintenance of Effort

The proposed Board of Education budget for FY21 identifies funds allocated to the special education program that exceeds the amount of funds allocated to the program in FY20. The federal pass-through grant for FY20 will continue to fund special education positions and related services. The grant will also detail staff funded through local funds.

State and County Funding for Special Education								
FY10 through FY21 Board-Proposed								
Fiscal Year	General Fund Budget for Special Education <sup>1</sup>	Special Revenue Fund Budget for Special Education <sup>2</sup>	Total	% Change	General Fund Operating Budget for BCPS <sup>1</sup>	Total Special Revenue Fund Budget <sup>2</sup>	Total	% Change
2010	\$ 147,834,796	\$ 52,217,651 <sub>3</sub>	\$200,498,942	12.46%	\$1,197,905,720	\$107,588,610	\$1,305,494,330	4.54%
2011	\$ 150,213,418	\$ 50,285,524 <sub>3</sub>	\$194,094,488	0.22%	\$1,211,373,834	\$99,990,023	\$1,311,363,857	0.45%
2012	\$ 155,229,395 <sub>3</sub>	\$ 38,865,093	\$194,094,488	-3.09%	\$1,226,742,597	\$87,655,456	\$1,314,398,053	0.23%
2013	\$ 160,855,624 <sub>3</sub>	\$ 34,602,827	\$195,458,451	0.70%	\$1,272,253,709	\$74,272,536	\$1,346,256,245	2.39%
2014	\$ 162,659,137	\$ 35,245,572	\$197,904,709	1.24%	\$1,315,883,696	\$73,474,588	\$1,389,358,284	3.08%
2015	\$ 168,057,408	\$ 34,911,031	\$202,968,439	2.56%	\$1,349,057,045	\$ 70,386,054	\$1,419,443,099	2.17%
2016	\$ 171,041,339	\$37,114,109	\$208,155,448	2.56%	\$1,396,938,133	\$82,686,357	\$1,479,624,490	4.24%
2017	\$173,977,588	\$41,172,278	\$215,149,866	3.36%	1,435,990,222	\$87,061,826	\$1,523,052,048	2.94%
2018	\$180,087,014	\$40,278,552	\$220,365,566	2.42%	\$1,501,743,292	\$87,344,842	\$1,589,088,134	4.34%
2019	\$193,370,927	\$41,147,654	\$234,518,581	6.42%	\$1,559,702,137	\$95,300,897	\$1,655,003,034	4.14%
2020	\$209,735,032	\$39,498,688	\$249,233,720	6.27%	\$1,652,886,818	\$94,271,023	\$1,747,157,841	5.57%
<b>Sources of Data</b>								
<sup>1</sup> Based on modified budgets in Advantage FN for FY2010 - FY2013, FY2014, FY2015 Adopted Operating Budget, and FY2018 Board Proposed Budget.								
<sup>2</sup> Special Revenue includes Infants & Toddlers, Special Education, and Third Party Billing from the BCPS Budget Books for FY 2010 - FY2018.								
<sup>3</sup> All special education positions transferred from Third Party Billing fund to the operating budget in FY2009. Middle school instructional assistants transferred to the Part B Pass-through ARRA grant for FY2010 and FY 2011 and returned to the general fund for FY2012. Contracted additional assistants transferred from the general fund to the Third Party Billing fund for FY2012 and FY2013.								

## VI. Staffing Patterns for Special Education and Related Services

### *Determination and Monitoring of Special Education Staffing and Programs/Services*

The major considerations in recommending a staffing plan are the intensity of students' individual needs, the number of students based on census data, teacher responsibilities, and time required beyond direct services. When making recommendations about staffing and caseloads, the focus must be on the services and supports needed to implement the students' IEPs in the LRE.

BCPS provides a continuum of special education and related services ranging from consultative services to direct services both inside and outside of the general education setting. Special education staffing is determined by recommended ratios applied both to student counts per LRE and within specific programs.

Per COMAR13A. 05.01.03, Related Services are defined as the following:

“(65) Related Services:

(a) "Related services" means transportation and such developmental, corrective, and other supportive services as may be required to assist a student with a disability to benefit from special education.

(b) "Related services" includes:

- (i) Speech-language pathology;
- (ii) Audiology;
- (iii) Interpreting services;
- (iv) Psychological services;
- (v) Physical and occupational therapy;
- (vi) Recreation, including therapeutic recreation;
- (vii) Early identification and assessment of disabilities in students;
- (viii) Counseling services, including rehabilitation counseling;
- (ix) Orientation and mobility services;
- (x) Medical services for diagnostic or evaluation purposes;
- (xi) School health services, including school nursing services;
- (xii) Social work services in schools; and
- (xiii) Parent counseling and training.

(c) "Related services" does not include:

- (i) A surgically implanted medical device;
- (ii) The optimization of the device's functioning;
- (iii) Maintenance of the device; or
- (iv) Replacement of the device.

Related service staffing allocation recommendations are made collaboratively through OSE, Office of Student Support Services, Office of School Climate, and the Department of Human Resources. Every effort is made to ensure consistency and equity of allocations to schools.

The following principles have guided the development of the BCPS' staffing model:

- Appropriate supports and related services to meet students' needs in order to be successful in the LRE.
- Services and supports required by the students' IEPs.
- Federal and state laws, regulations, and policies governing special education.
- Parental participation.
- The specific needs of the school and community, including the impact of special education programs and inclusive services.
- Co-development and co-implementation of IEPs using interprofessional collaborative practice.
- The amount of time interpreters provide services to students in schools and at BCPS sponsored after-school activities.

- The number of parents/guardians who are deaf/hard of hearing and request an interpreter for equal access under the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA).

For SY2020-21, staffing is allocated based on student enrollment data collected in December 2019. Staffing was allocated based on the number of students in each given LRE. Staffing guidelines have been updated to allocate staffing based on ratios adjusted for LRE A, B or C. OSE received 47.2 additional special education teacher positions that can be allocated to schools for the 2020-2021 school-based upon the growth of special education enrollment. The proposed budget request being made by the Superintendent is requesting an additional 25.0 special education teachers, 25.0 special education paraeducators, and 1.0 orientation and mobility teacher position for the 2020-2021 school year.

The SY2020-21 Staffing Plan continues to be written with the intent to increase the placement of students with disabilities in their home schools, specifically at the elementary level. Adjustments were made to school allocations to account for students currently placed out of their home school for services in LRE B or C, who can return to their home schools to receive this same level of service in their LRE. This adjustment allows for additional resources to be allocated supporting students needing a continuum of services in their LRE in their home school.

OSE is committed to collaboration with all curriculum offices to provide a coordinated instructional program to meet the diverse needs of all students. Services are provided to support schools in the effective implementation of the curriculum and to meet the instructional needs of students. Additionally, OSE works with the Department of Human Resources in the recruitment and retention of staff and increasing the number of teachers meeting the highly qualified status.

Each year OSE analyzes student needs and program enrollment data to determine the programmatic needs that will support educating students in the LRE. Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) requires that students with disabilities be educated with nondisabled peers to the maximum extent possible. BCPS strives to provide a continuum of special education and related services ranging from consultative services to direct services in general education and special education classrooms. Services to students with disabilities are offered in their home school, or as close to their home school as possible.

The annual process of planning for special education programs requires calculated coordination, forecasted design, and collaboration with the Department of Physical Facilities, the Office of Strategic Planning, and OSE, with the support of the Executive Leadership Team. The instructional environment must be planned for and appropriately designed to accommodate the needs of students with disabilities. While the majority of students with disabilities are educated in the general education classroom, some students will require programming in a self-contained classroom.

Special education services are also a critical component of school improvement planning. Each School Leadership Team reviews multiple data sources, inclusive of those specific to special education, to address areas of need for improvement in the School Climate and Academic sections of their School Progress Plans.

IEP teams are responsible for the decision making regarding special education services necessary to provide meaningful access to general education. Each IEP team must include documentation of the discussion that students with disabilities are educated with nondisabled peers to the

maximum extent possible as outlined in their IEPs. The provision of services is a critical factor in the assurance of FAPE for students with disabilities. Collaboration amongst special education teachers and general education teachers is essential to ensure effective implementation of students’ IEPs. Collaborative practices include but are not limited to participation in professional learning opportunities, planning sessions, and co-teaching opportunities.

OSE works closely with content offices to provide collaborative professional learning sessions throughout the year for IEP chairpersons, special education department chairs, special education teachers, and reading specialists. An emphasis on collaborative planning and problem-solving practices is promoted to support the team approach in addressing the diverse needs of all learners in each school. OSE has a strong partnership with the Office of English Language Arts as noted through the collaborative strategic plan to address the diverse literacy needs of all learners in BCPS.

## VII. Number and Type of Service Providers

Service	Description	Service Delivery Model	Staffing Guidelines 2020-2021 School Year
<b>Infants and Toddlers (I &amp; T)</b> <b>(Birth - 36 months)</b>	<p>The Baltimore County Infants and Toddlers Program (BCITP), an interagency program among BCPS, Baltimore County Department of Health, and Baltimore County Department of Social Services, is a 12-month program that provides services to children birth through 36-months of age. The students have, or may have, developmental disabilities, delays, or special health needs. Staff from BCITP meet with and assess every child referred to the program. For each eligible child, an <i>Individualized Family Service Plan</i> (IFSP) is developed to define the services to be provided to meet the needs of the child and the family. Families of children who are receiving Infants and Toddlers and found eligible for special education services at age three may choose to continue to receive Infants and Toddlers services until the first day of school following the child’s 4th birthday.</p> <p>Many children receive multiple services including special instruction, related therapies, and health services. A service coordinator is responsible for supporting the family and ensuring that services are provided as they are defined on the IFSP.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>♦ Infants and Toddlers services are provided in “natural environments,” which may include the home, licensed childcare setting, or other community setting such as a library.</li> </ul>	<p>Staffing guidelines are based on interagency collaboration, with each public agency contributing staffing to address program needs.</p> <p>Infants and Toddlers:            20 students            1 teacher</p> <p>Additional services include the following categories of staff members:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Administrative</li> <li>• Clerical</li> <li>• Interpreters</li> <li>• Nurses</li> <li>• Related Service providers</li> <li>• School Psychologists</li> <li>• Service Coordinators</li> <li>• Team Leaders</li> </ul>

Service	Description	Service Delivery Model	Staffing Guidelines 2020-2021 School Year
<b>Inside General Education (IGE) (Preschool – Grade 12)</b>	<p>A continuum of special education services are provided in each comprehensive school. Students in need of these services have varied disabilities and multiple needs that can be met with support and related services. Services offered may include instruction in the general education curriculum with accommodations, small group support, co-teaching, and consultation with general education teachers.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>♦ Community based supports are provided in “natural environments” such as the home, licensed childcare setting, or parentally placed community pre-school for students ages 3 and 4.</li> <li>♦ Inclusion in general education classes for part of or all of the school day with an emphasis on specialized instruction.</li> </ul>	<p><i>Community-based:</i> 20 students 1 teacher</p> <p><i>Inclusion: 3 and 4 year olds (IGE 3 and IGE 4)</i> 6 students receiving special education services 6 typically developing peers 1 teacher 1 para-educator Per session</p> <p><i>Inclusion: Grades Pre-K - 12</i> 16 students in LRE A 1 teacher .5 para-educator</p> <p>14 students in LRE B 1 teacher .5 para-educator</p> <p>10 students in LRE C 1 teacher .5 para-educator</p>
<b>Outside of General Education Classroom (OGE) (Preschool – Pre-K)</b>	<p>Students in need of services delivered outside of the general education setting are those students who demonstrate significant delays in the areas of cognition, communication, social/emotional, motor, and adaptive skills. Services offered include a highly structured learning environment, use of developmentally appropriate practices, specialized instruction as identified by a student’s IEP team, use of multi-sensory lessons, and positive behavioral supports.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>♦ Instruction outside of the general education classroom setting for the majority of the school day and inclusion in general education classes, as appropriate for the individual student.</li> </ul>	<p>9 students 1 teacher 1 para-educator Per session</p>
<b>Social Emotional Learning Support (SEL) (Grades K - 12)</b>	<p>Students in need of social emotional learning support services are those whose significant social, emotional, behavioral, and learning difficulties adversely impact their ability to be successful in the general education setting in school. Students requiring these services may not be achieving academically due to emotional and behavioral difficulties. Services offered include a structured learning environment, behavior management system, implementation of behavior intervention plans, social skills instruction, counseling, conflict resolution, and availability of crisis prevention and intervention.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>♦ Self-contained classes for the majority of the school day and inclusion in general education classes, as appropriate for the individual student.</li> <li>♦ Public separate day school.</li> </ul>	<p><i>Self-Contained:</i> 9 students 1 teacher 1 para-educator</p> <p><i>Public Separate Day School:</i> 7.5 students 1 teacher 1 para-educator</p> <p><i>Additional Support:</i> 1 Social Emotional Learning Support Teacher is allocated to support students accessing special education services in the regional program.</p>

Service	Description	Service Delivery Model	Staffing Guidelines 2020-2021 School Year
<b>Social Communication Learning Support (SCLS)</b> <b>(Grades K – 12)</b>	Students in need of social communication learning support services are those whose complex communication, socialization, and learning needs are a result of having high functioning Autism Spectrum Disorder. Students requiring these services typically have needs in the areas of social communication, social/emotional functioning, executive functioning, sensory integration, social anxiety, and adaptive behavior. Services offered include: highly structured learning environments, use of visually based strategies, emphasis on the development of language and social competency skills, use of sensory processing techniques, and the development of individualized behavioral strategies.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ Blended model of self-contained classes and inclusion in general education classes as appropriate for the individual student.</li> </ul>	9 students 1 teacher 1 para-educator  <i>Additional Support:</i> 1 Social Emotional Learning Support Teacher is allocated to support students accessing special education services in the regional program.
<b>Communication and Learning Support (CLS)</b> <b>(Grades K - 12)</b>	Students in need of communication and learning support services are those who exhibit complex communication and learning needs. Students requiring these services typically have significant delays in the areas of cognition, communication, social/emotional, and adaptive behavior. Services offered include a highly structured learning environment, use of visually-based strategies, emphasis on the development of language and social skills, use of sensory processing techniques, and the development of individualized behavioral strategies.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ Self-contained classes for the majority of the school day and inclusion in general education classes as appropriate for the individual student.</li> </ul>	9 students 1 teacher 1 para-educator  <i>Public Separate Day School:</i> 7.5 students 1 teacher 1 para-educator  <i>Additional Support:</i> 1 Social Emotional Learning Support Teacher is allocated to support students accessing special education services in the regional program.
<b>Verbal/Behavior Learning Support (VB)</b> <b>(Grade PS - 2)</b>	Students in need of verbal behavior learning support are those who require a highly structured learning framework with an emphasis on verbal behavior and need a learning environment that breaks all skills down into component parts. Verbal Behavior Learning Support Programs provide specialized academic instruction with embedded pragmatic and social skills instruction in a low student to teacher ratio.	Public Separate Day School	<i>Public Separate Day School:</i> 6 students 1 teacher 1 para-educator  <i>Additional Support:</i> 1 Social Emotional Learning Support Teacher is allocated to support students accessing special education services.
<b>Functional Academic Learning Support (FALS)</b> <b>(Grade K – Grade 12)</b>	Students in need of functional academic learning support are those who demonstrate significant delays in measured intelligence, adaptive functioning, communication, and academic functioning. Services offered include instruction in functional life skills, including personal management, community, recreation/leisure, career/vocational, and communication/decision making. Students are provided with extensive modification of objectives and learning materials.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ Self-contained classes for the majority of the school day and inclusion in general education classes as appropriate for the individual student.</li> <li>◆ Public separate day school.</li> <li>◆ College campuses.</li> </ul>	<i>Self-Contained:</i> 10 students 1 teacher 1 para-educator 1 Social Emotional Learning Support Teacher  <i>Public separate Day School:</i> 7.5 students 1 teacher 1 para-educator  <i>Additional Support:</i> 1 Social Emotional Learning Support Teacher is allocated to support students accessing special education services in the regional program.  <i>College Campuses:</i> 10 students 1 teacher 2 para-educators

Service	Description	Service Delivery Model	Staffing Guidelines 2020-2021 School Year
<b>Learning Support for Students who are Deaf and Hard of Hearing (DHH) (Preschool – Grade 12)</b>	Students with hearing loss may require support through alternative communication interventions, specialized instructional strategies, auditory listening devices (ALDs), and related services. Services include communication development, speech and language therapy, aural rehabilitation, instructional support, use of auditory listening devices, and specialized accommodations/modifications. Communication modalities used in the instructional setting will include one of the following: 1) total communication with simultaneous sign and speech presentation, or 2) oral communication that may include a cued speech transliterator or oral interpreter. Students with a diagnosed hearing loss may or may not have other disabilities that require additional services.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>♦ Inclusion in general education for part or all of the day.</li> <li>♦ Itinerant services, resource services.</li> <li>♦ Self-contained classes.</li> </ul>	<i>Self-Contained:</i> 9 students 1 teacher 1 para-educator

Related Service	Description	Number of Service Providers Proposed for 2020-2021 School Year
<b>Audiology (Aud)</b>	BCPS educational audiology services include screenings, assessments and the recommendation, distribution, and monitoring of Assistive Listening Devices (ALD), such as FM/DM systems and sound field systems for the classrooms. As a member of the IEP team, an audiologist may also recommend acoustical modifications and accommodations within the classroom. Support services are provided to students, staff, and parents regarding hearing loss, hearing status, and equipment.	4.0
<b>Deaf and Hard of Hearing (DHH) Interpreting Services</b>	Interpreting services are provided for DHH students, parents/caregivers and staff. Types of interpreting services include Signed Language Interpreting (American Sign Language, Pigeon, Signed English), transcription (TypeWell), Cued Speech and Oral Interpreting. Interpreting services are provided to students during the instructional day and during extracurricular activities, as well as to parents/caregivers and staff at education related activities and events.	16.0
<b>Occupational Therapy (OT)</b>	The goal of occupational therapy (OT) service is to enable children/students from birth-21 to be functional participants in their natural learning environments. OT services are provided to or on behalf of a student to address identified needs that require the unique expertise of an occupational therapist. These services to students, school teams, and families may include: 1.) devising strategies and adaptive aids in order to improve school performance and to include students with disabilities in school activities; and 2.) Developing activities/strategies to improve fine motor control, self-care skills or promote sensory-motor development (body awareness, postural control, eye-hand coordination).	68.5
<b>Physical Therapy (PT)</b>	The goal of physical therapy (PT) service is to enable students with disabilities to achieve functional independence in the school environment. PT services are provided directly and/or indirectly to students as indicated in their IEP. These services to students, school teams, and families may include: 1)	25.2

<b>Related Service</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Number of Service Providers Proposed for 2020-2021 School Year</b>
	Recommending strategies, modifications, and adaptive aids in order to improve school performance, and to include disabled students in school activities; and 2) Activities to improve large muscle control and balance, to promote sensor motor development (body awareness, postural control), and/or to promote independence in functional mobility skills.	
<b>Speech Language Services (SL)</b>	The goal of speech language services is to identify and provide support to students who have communication needs that impact educational performance. Speech-language pathologists promote success in the areas of functional communication, intelligibility of speech, language understanding/use, fluency, literacy, and/or social interaction in general and special education classrooms using evidence based and interprofessional collaborative best practices.	185.6
<b>Vision (Vis)</b>	Students who are blind or who have visual impairments are, for the most part, fully included. Exceptions are those students with multiple disabilities receiving services in special schools. Itinerant vision services are provided to students attending comprehensive schools and special schools by certified teachers of students who are visually impaired. Orientation and mobility specialists provide services that assess individual student's ability to move independently and efficiently in the school and community and provide instruction as stated in the IEP. Primarily, itinerant teachers of students with visual impairments teach specific skills, e.g., Braille, so that the students can participate in the general education curriculum with modifications and accommodations, including assistive technologies that are identified in students' IEPs.	7.0

<b>Support Staff</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Number of Service Providers Proposed for 2020-2021 School Year</b>
<b>Adapted Physical Education (APE)</b>	Adapted Physical Education is a comprehensive program for students with disabilities who are unable to meet grade-level outcomes in physical education and require a specialized physical education program.  BCPS utilizes a consultative model to assist physical education teachers in assessing, planning, implementing, and evaluating quality physical education instructional programs. In addition to working with and advocating for students, the team provides professional development to teachers, special educators, administrators and parents.	3.0

<b>Support Staff</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Number of Service Providers Proposed for 2020-2021 School Year</b>
<b>Art Therapy</b>	<p>Art therapy services provide students with strategies to assist them with being functional participants in their educational environment. Art therapists provide direct and consult services to a student when assessed to show that art therapy is needed to assist in gaining progress toward their IEP goals and objectives. Art therapy may include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Providing verbal and nonverbal interventions to teachers to help with specific IEP goals.</li> <li>• Providing interventions to assist with self-regulation, cognitive perceptual integration and sensory needs.</li> <li>• Use of graphic tools to improve fine motor skills, group skills, and availability for learning.</li> </ul> <p>These strategies are used to enhance the skills of students that are important for daily life, along with academic IEP goals and objectives.</p>	1.0
<b>Assistive Technology (AT)</b>	<p>Assistive Technology (AT) services are available for students identified through the IEP/IFSP team process as requiring additional support for accessing their educational program. The AT program is a countywide interdisciplinary team comprised of a special educator, an occupational therapist, and speech language pathologists. The AT staff works closely with the school team to complete the evaluation of specific technology needs, provide training and technical support to students, staff, and parents to integrate technology supports into the curriculum.</p>	4.8
<b>Board Certified Behavior Analyst (BCBA)</b>	<p>Board certified behavior analysts (BCBA) services are utilized to provide advice, consultation, and guidance regarding student behavior issues. The BCBA supports school teams with the collection, organization, and analysis of data that assists with the development of individualized programming for students. The BCBA will provide professional development to personnel focused on using Applied Behavior Analysis (ABA) to support students in need of an intensive level of behavioral support.</p>	7.0
<b>Deaf and Hard of Hearing (DHH) Learning Support</b>	<p>DHH students receive special education/related services to include tiered interventions, 504 Plans, IEPs, auditory listening devices (ALDs). DHH special educators work with students in general education and special education classrooms. Communication modalities used in the regional special education instructional settings will include one of the following: 1) total communication with simultaneous sign and speech presentation, or 2) oral communication that may include a cued speech, transliteration or an oral interpreter.</p>	8.2

<b>Support Staff</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Number of Service Providers Proposed for 2020-2021 School Year</b>
<b>Health Services</b>	<p>School nurses provide comprehensive school health services for all students. Included in school health services are medication administration and the performance of medical interventions that students need during the school day. School nurses are a resource for the IEP team in assessing students' health status and strategizing how to accommodate students' health needs in school. School nurses are instrumental in coordinating services for students in school by collaborating with outside agencies and health care providers. School nurses serve as case managers for students with IEPs and are responsible for writing health goals when indicated.</p>	<p>School Nurses: 188.0</p> <p>Health Assistants: 54.1</p>
<b>Job Coach Services (JC)</b>	<p>Job coach services are provided to students that need support in employment situations and are a part of transition services. Job coach interventions provide one-on-one or small-group support to students and employers in the job setting. The increased supervision assists the student in developing appropriate work behaviors and interpersonal communication skills.</p>	<p>4.0</p>
<b>Music Therapy</b>	<p>As a related service, music therapy service (MT) assists students to be functional participants in their educational environment. Music therapists provide direct and consult services to a student when assessed to show that music therapy is needed to assist in gaining progress toward their IEP goals and objectives. Music therapy may include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Providing and modeling songs to teachers to help with specific IEP objectives.</li> <li>● Providing ideas to assist with MT relaxation techniques and those to assist with regulation and sensory needs.</li> <li>● Use of music and music activities to help a student achieve on their IEP.</li> </ul> <p>Music therapy services are provided by nationally board certified music therapists who are employed by BCPS. Music therapists are part of the transdisciplinary team who use music therapy interventions to assist with IEP objectives provided by other team members for a student.</p>	<p>1.0</p>

<b>Support Staff</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Number of Service Providers Proposed for 2020-2021 School Year</b>
<b>School Counselor Services</b>	<p>School counselors provide a needs-based developmental counseling program for all students. This program of services includes individual counseling, group counseling, classroom guidance, consultation with all staff and community members, and coordination of school wide programs. Special education students are to receive the same services as all students and are involved in counseling groups, individual counseling, and classroom guidance activities as part of the school counseling program. School counselors often provide consultation services to students with IEPs in order to supplement the services provided by other staff. Consultation with teachers, parents, and other service providers allows school counselors to assist teachers and parents with meeting the social-emotional and instructional needs of students. School counselors work with student support service teams, IEP teams, and teacher teams in a consultative role.</p>	347.8
<b>Social Emotional Learning Teacher</b>	<p>Social emotional support services are allocated for students in need of social, emotional, or behavioral support. SEL teachers provide services that assist schools in creating a quality support program employing positive behavior intervention practices that are proactive instead of reactive. As part of the school team, SEL teachers participate in the development and implementation of individual, classroom, and school wide positive behavior support programs in an effort to maximize student success.</p>	108.0
<b>School Psychologist Services</b>	<p>School psychologists provide consultation, assessment, prevention, and intervention services to students, parents/guardians, and school staff to support student achievement and school environments that are safe and conducive to learning. As members of the IEP team, school psychologists: 1) Review response to intervention assessments/data for students suspected of having an educational disability; 2) Conduct Functional Behavioral Assessments and develop Behavior Intervention Plans for behaviors significantly interfering with learning; 3) Review/conduct psychological assessments of cognitive, behavioral, social/emotional, adaptive and academic functioning; 4) Determine educational disabilities, provides support with writing IEP goals/objectives, and with developing IEPs; 5) Provide counseling on a consultative, group, or individual basis to support attainment of academic goals/objectives; and 6) Provide staff development to improve learning and behavior within inclusive school environments.</p>	119.0

<b>Support Staff</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Number of Service Providers Proposed for 2020-2021 School Year</b>
<b>School Social Work Services</b>	School social workers provide consultative, individual, and group therapeutic counseling services for special education students with counseling or social work services indicated on their IEPs. School social workers provide psychosocial assessments to the IEP team to assist in determining social emotional needs of students and the impact of the social emotional needs on academic functioning. School social workers provide parent training, coordinate and provide referrals to outside community agencies, provide consultation to teachers, and provide whole classroom interventions, which include both social skills training and character education presentations. School social workers maintain appropriate documentation to review the effectiveness of interventions to assist with student achievement.	122.0
<b>Transition (Trans)</b>	Transition services are designed to assist students with disabilities to move from public school into post-secondary activities such as employment, training, education, and/or independent living. During transition planning, the student identifies the desired post-school outcomes, and the IEP team assists the student in achieving that outcome. Transition planning services begin when a student reaches age 14 in BCPS. The transition facilitator assists the team in determining appropriate transition services and activities in the areas of academics, employment, training, independent living, daily living, communication, and transportation. In addition, the transition facilitators provide information and linkages for support services for post-secondary options.	17.0

***Special Area Staffing and Nurses for Public Separate Day Schools***

Special education allocations are utilized to fund art, music, physical education, library, and school counseling positions in Public Separate Day schools.

Recommendations for school nurses in Public Separate Day schools are based upon a staffing formula. As with all Baltimore County public schools, each Public Separate Day school receives a base allocation of one nurse. Additional nurses may be allocated based upon the percentage of students requiring nursing interventions during community instruction, and supplemental nursing indicators, including the number of procedures/medications that can only be performed by a nurse.

***Role of the Additional Assistant***

Additional assistants (AA) work with special educators, general educators, and para educators by providing support and additional adult assistance to individual students or groups of students with disabilities to meet requirements necessary for participation in the school environment. The need for additional adult support is determined on an individual basis by an IEP team after the use of all natural supports available within a building have been implemented with minimal success. In some cases, the intensity of additional adult support requires the use of staff beyond

existing school staff allocations (i.e., general educator, special educator, or para-educator). As of October 2019, BCPS has utilized 1368.0 Additional Adult Assistants during the 2019-2020 school year. These positions are mostly utilized to support students with complex medical, physical, and behavioral needs as identified on their IEPs.

### ***Role of the General Education Service Providers***

The majority of students with disabilities spend all or part of their day being taught by general educators. A variety of staff (general educators, special educators, related service providers, etc.) are responsible for the implementation of a student's IEP. All general educators who have students with disabilities in their classrooms are made aware of students' needs either by participating in the IEP team process, or through consultation with the student's case manager or special education teacher to review the student's IEP. For the 2020-2021 school year, a total of 7,648.8 general education teachers (including but not limited to classroom teacher positions) is being proposed to support the provision of FAPE. In addition, general education teachers:

- Serve as the teacher of record.
- Participate and present information regarding students' academic, socio-emotional, and behavioral performance in the classroom.
- Implement and discuss strategies to assist students.
- Evaluate the effectiveness of specific team recommendations and participate in the follow-up of these recommendations.
- Participate in the development, review, and revision of students' IEPs, including assisting in the determination of appropriate positive behavioral interventions and strategies for students and the determination of supplementary aids and services, supports, and program modifications that will be provided to the student.
- Provide expertise regarding the implementation of core curriculum standards.
- Co-teach/team teach with special education teachers.

### ***Role of School Administrators***

School administrators are responsible for providing the necessary leadership, coordination, and support to all teaching staff, ensuring that students are provided with FAPE. For the 2019-2020 school year, there are a total of 456 administrators.

School administrators provide school-based professional development for special and general educators to set high expectations for all students. In addition, building administrators are responsible for providing support and feedback to all staff through the appraisal process to ensure that special education services are delivered in accordance with IDEA.

School administrators are instrumental in helping to develop and monitor the schedules of staff members in order to maximize services to students with disabilities in the LRE. Administrators are encouraged to provide common planning time for general and special educators to work together to plan differentiated lessons that engage all students and provide the necessary modifications to address students' individual needs.

## VIII. Professional Development

OSE has developed a strategic plan addressing areas of prioritized need and alignment to the MSDE framework (Early Childhood, Access & Equity, Transition). These initiatives are also customized and embedded as universal, focused, and individualized professional learning opportunities for various stakeholders.

### Early Childhood:

OSE, Birth to Five Services (B5 Services) ensure that BCPS' system of services is designed to improve outcomes for every young learner receiving services under the framework of the B5 Services vision. Essential to this infrastructure is the assurance that there is a continuum of services for our youngest learners that allows every child the opportunity to receive special education services in that child's natural or LRE. Birth to Five Services have developed a Connections professional learning community (PLC) to support the implementation of effective teaching practices for teachers providing instruction to children with significant instructional needs who are receiving Infants and Toddlers services. This service delivery model addresses social, play, and communication development in a highly structured group setting for Infants and Toddlers.

The focus of the PLC is to build the capacity of teachers to utilize evidenced-based practices that have been determined to be integral components of effective teaching. B5 Services have also developed an additional professional learning community (PLC) for teachers of three and four year old programs that focuses on a group of practices as integral components of effective teaching and service delivery. These practices make up the *Intentional Teaching Framework* which is comprised of ten components including: effective use of functional communication systems; authentic assessment; identifying specific individualized targets; creating planned opportunities to respond; utilization of evidence-based practice; prompting; reinforcement; data collection and analysis; and effective team communication. Implementing the lesson study design model of hands-on intensive professional learning for teachers integrates learning with direct instructional experiences with children.

Additional professional learning communities provide opportunities to integrate evidence-based practices into all aspects of instruction and service delivery. Research and best practices include the implementation of reflective coaching, Applied Behavior Analysis, and Intentional Teaching Framework. Birth to Five Services also provide professional learning to support the implementation of the Child Outcome Summary process. Intensive, ongoing coaching is currently being provided to Connections teachers and a subset of Infants and Toddlers service providers to support fidelity of implementation of strategies learned.

### Access & Equity:

OSE has developed a strategic professional learning plan to improve access with outcomes for students with disabilities in their LRE. The strategic plan involves the coordinated efforts and focused planning with representation of content offices within the Division of Curriculum and Instruction.

The Offices of Special Education and English Language Arts continue to implement the strategic plan including comprehensive strategies which support a structured literacy approach. ELA and OSE have braided and aligned funds to support strategies addressing the needs of general education and special education teachers. ELA and OSE provide joint professional learning sessions to special education teachers and reading specialists to support learning how to identify literacy deficits and align appropriate, specialized instructional strategies. MSDE Technical Assistance Bulletins are reviewed during the various professional learning opportunities. Additional professional learning opportunities are provided to administrators, general education teachers, reading specialists, school psychologists, and special education teachers throughout the year to understand the literacy framework. Targeted professional learning opportunities supporting the effective implementation of the multi-tiered systems of support and tiered interventions are facilitated.

OSE provides additional professional learning opportunities to support the provision of professional learning to ensure that all students have a viable means of communication. The communicative competence framework focuses on curriculum, instruction, and assessment. Interactive sessions and job-embedded professional learning opportunities are provided to identified school staff including special education teachers, administrators, and related service providers.

OSE continues to provide focused professional learning specific to the application of applied behavior analysis (ABA). The professional learning series is designed to support special education teachers and para-educators who are working with school-aged children who demonstrate significant social, emotional, and behavioral needs and require highly structured, consistent, and intensive behavior management/modification programming to maximize their ability to access curriculum and instructional practices.

Professional learning communities are facilitated to support special education teachers and para-educators providing services in regional programs. The focus of each PLC is to build the capacity of teachers and support staff in utilizing evidence-based practices that are integral components of an effective instructional program. These opportunities integrate evidence-based practices addressing academic, social, functional, sensory, and behavioral areas. Application of professional learning is supported through job-embedded coaching opportunities.

OSE coordinates and delivers on-going professional learning for IEP Chairpersons and other participants to include special education teachers and related service team leaders to address Federal and State special education instructional and compliance requirements. Professional learning sessions focus on the development, implementation and evaluation of specially designed instruction, evidence-based instructional practices, and meaningfully engaging the family in the IEP process through collaborative practices. Additional professional learning opportunities are provided to support new IEP Chairpersons to support the effective facilitation techniques and organization tools for optimal implementation of the special education team process.

Transition:

OSE, in alignment with MSDE, has identified Transition as a priority area of need. OSE is increasing professional learning opportunities, in collaboration with various offices in the Division of Curriculum and Instruction, to support the improvement of transition activities

with a focus on instructional practices addressing post-secondary outcomes. OSE Transition Team provides presentations to IEP Chairpersons and special education teachers regarding transition documents, informed parental consent, timelines, changes to the IEP format, introduction to Naviance, reporting of transition assessments, agency linkages, and encouraging student attendance at IEP teams. Workshops are offered to secondary case managers with the emphasis on IDEA/COMAR regulations, transition assessments, IEP reporting, parental involvement, post-secondary outcomes, agency linkages, and social and leisure options. Targeted professional learning is provided to support case managers in understanding how to utilize the results of various assessments to support students with post-secondary outcomes (college, career, community).

## **IX. Process for Monitoring Caseloads to Ensure Implementation of IEP**

Special education positions are allocated based upon the LRE ratios and program to ensure adequate management of caseloads for special education teachers. In addition to an organizational document provided by Office of Position Management, each principal receives a guidance document which details how the special education teachers, social emotional learning teachers, and para-educators should be utilized to ensure FAPE and appropriate management of caseloads. Additional guidance documents are provided to each school administrator identifying the allocation and related service provider positions. OSE staff monitor special education enrollment and services on a monthly basis to ensure provision of FAPE and services to students with disabilities. Adjustments to allocations are made as necessary.

### **Resolving Staffing Concerns**

Staffing concerns may be raised by a variety of stakeholders. When parents have concerns, it is recommended that they meet with the principal of the school. When administrators have staffing concerns, a principal may choose to consult with OSE for assistance with the utilization of staff in order to implement students' IEPs. All requests for additional staffing are routed through the community superintendents to the Department of Human Resources and for ultimate approval by the Director. Upon request, OSE provides technical support in this process. Additionally, OSE monitors special education staffing needs on an ongoing basis by analyzing monthly enrollment figures, enrollment in self-contained regional programs, and the annual October child count.

Staff members from OSE conduct school visits through the Differentiated Support Request model and the Program Review and Support Process (PRASP). OSE staff review the guidance documents with administrators at the onset of the school year to ensure appropriate utilization of staffing, caseload assignments, and scheduling to address provision of services. As determined by need, OSE staff provide technical assistance and support in the development of master schedules and individualized student schedules. Additionally, during the course of the school year, the supervisor of compliance and the compliance specialist and resource teachers, in collaboration with the zone specialists and resource teachers, conduct staff development to ensure that school staff is in compliance with IDEA, COMAR, and BCPS' procedures. Formal reports of findings are shared with community superintendents, executive directors, school-based administrators, and OSE leadership staff. During program reviews, staff members observe the implementation of IEPs, review student records, and interview service providers about the service provisions noted on the IEP. School administrators receive feedback in the form of

commendations and recommendations for improvement. A *Compliance Action Plan* is generated, if necessary. Consistent with recommendations for improvement, technical assistance and staff development are provided to school staff. Follow-up visits are scheduled to assure that recommendations are implemented.

## **Resolving Vacancies**

The Department of Human Resources provides data for special education positions and monitors the certification status of teachers and vacancies by school. The Department of Human Resources, in collaboration with OSE, arranges recruiting trips, job fairs, and partnerships with local colleges and universities in an attempt to fill all vacancies in a timely manner with the most qualified candidates. BCPS hosts many job fairs throughout the year to recruit special education teachers, related service providers, and support staff. In addition to those held throughout the year, there is one specific Special Education Job Fair held to recruit special education teachers and related service providers. BCPS also participates in consortium fairs and recruitment fairs at various colleges and universities throughout the United States. Additional recruitment efforts are made to address critical shortage areas such as speech and language pathologists and Deaf and Hard of Hearing teachers. Conditionally certified teachers receive professional development, tuition reimbursement, and information on certification opportunities, such as cohorts conducted by colleges and universities. HR also monitors conditional teachers' compliance with certification requirements.

OSE works collaboratively with HR to fill vacancies as they arise. The majority of vacancies occur because of resignations or retirements, while others result from promotions, additional staffing allocations, and approved extended leaves. Principals contact the personnel officer in HR, who is responsible for hiring special education teachers, whenever they learn of a vacancy in their building. The personnel officer provides the principal with names of qualified candidates to interview.

Concurrent with national trends, BCPS has periodically contracted with approved vendors, specifically in the areas of speech-language and vision, to ensure the provision of FAPE and qualified service providers.

When vacancies occur in special education or related services, every effort is made to recruit and provide certified teachers or providers. OSE works closely with the Department of Human Resources to ensure FAPE is provided. Central office staff support school administrators in maximizing resources when vacancies arise. **As of October 2019, the following vacancies were reported: 11.0 Special Education Para-Educators, 9.0 Special Education Teachers – Self-Contained, and 14.5 Special Education Teachers – Inclusion.** If vacancies occur for a significant period of time, even with the utilization of substitutes, IEP Teams will convene to discuss and coordinate compensatory services.

## ***Data Communication Timeline***

Staffing in BCPS is based upon census data gathered every year on the last Friday in September and thereafter verified by MSDE. This staffing is then allocated to schools based on December special education enrollment data. Data collection, maintenance, and retention procedures to assure that schools are providing accurate information are as follows:

<b>Timeline Considerations</b>	
July	By July 1, all schools have current verification listings available in the Student Planning System (SPS), the BCPS' web based IEP system. The verification list identifies IEPs that are past due and those that are due prior to the October child count date. Area reports, by school, of IEPs current and past due totals are available in SPS.
October	All special education staff have access to the verification listing in SPS. IEP Chairs and special education department chairs are sent reminders regarding IEPs in need of review, prior to the last Friday in October.
January	All schools have their current verification listing available to them in SPS. School specific area reports of IEPs current and past due totals are available in SPS.
February	Projected lists of students transitioning to the next level (early childhood to elementary, elementary to middle, and middle to high) are sent to all schools with explanations and directions. IEP Chairs and Special Education Department Chairs are notified by SPS reports of Grade 12 students with projected exit dates and graduation status (diploma or certificate) for verifications and/or corrections.
April	All special education staff are sent reminders to review and finalize all completed SPS documents prior to the end of the school year.

## **X. Continuous Staffing Plan Review Process**

In order to determine the effectiveness of the *Special Education Staffing Plan for 2020-2021*, the plan will be monitored continuously throughout the school year. The goal is to serve most students with IEPs in their home school in the LRE while increasing student achievement.

The Special Education Staffing Plan 2020-2021 was written with the goal of providing services to students in their LRE. For many students, providing LRE means receiving services in their home schools. OSE remains committed to ensuring an appropriate continuum of services are available at all levels within the system, including services for students whose needs cannot be met in their home school. Staffing practices have been revised to allow for appropriate resources to be allocated to support students needing a continuum of services in their LRE in their home school as well as supporting regional programs at the secondary level as necessary. The 2020-2021 Staffing Plan will be reviewed at OSE Leadership Meetings and appropriate adjustments will be made to ensure the provision of FAPE for all students with disabilities. Additionally, OSE leadership will meet quarterly with BCPS stakeholders to analyze progress and plan for the 2021-2022 Special Education Staffing Plan.

<b>Timeline Considerations</b>	
June – August	OSE prepares multi-year strategic staffing plan and budget requests. Progressions are finalized. Adjustments to allocations are made

	as needed. Related services staffing is allocated to schools.
September – October	Child count is conducted by school-based personnel and Student Data. Child Count is finalized and submitted to MSDE. OSE presents the staffing plan and budget requests to SECAC. Staffing trends are assessed based on student enrollment. Staffing Plan is reviewed by OSE Leadership.
November – December	Staffing trends are assessed based on student enrollment. Staffing allocations are shared with Executive Leadership and Office of Position Management.
January - February	Special education teachers and para-educator staffing allocations are provided to principals.
March- April	OSE collaborates with school-based staff to review progressions.
May	The County Executive Budget is approved. Approved positions are allocated to identified schools.

Further public input will be sought throughout the year to ensure all stakeholders continue to be considered as BCPS moves forward with increased services delivery for students in their LRE. Input will be acknowledged in the 2021-2022 Special Education Staffing Plan.

## **List of Appendices**

Appendix A- SECAC Recommendations

Appendix B- Special Education Budget Book Page

Appendix A



**Special Education**  
**Citizens' Advisory Committee (SECAC)**  
 BALTIMORE COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS

**RECOMMENDATIONS**

**2019-2020**

STAFFING	TRAINING	ACCOUNTABILITY	INCLUSIVITY
<p>Special Education Teachers <i>Infants &amp; Toddlers, Elementary, Secondary</i></p> <p>Para-Educators</p>	<p><b>Administrator Professional Development</b>  <i>Administrators set the tone for the school and can foster (or not) an environment that encourages inclusion, professional development, etc. How can we increase administrator training and competence in special education issues? (See also Leadership Stability and Leadership &amp; Tone.)</i></p>	<p><b>School Visits</b>  <i>How is Special Education part of the conversation when Executive Directors visit schools? Increase efforts to regularly monitor special education issues in schools.</i></p>	<p><b>Leadership &amp; Tone</b>  <i>Do Principals and school leadership believe inclusion is important? How do they demonstrate this? (See also Administrator Professional Development, School Visits, Principal Evaluations).</i></p>
<p>Board Certified Behavior Analysts (BCBAs)</p>	<p><b>General and Special Educator Professional Development</b>  <i>Continue to improve opportunities to learn about specific disabilities, best practice interventions for various disabilities, discipline, and inclusion. Carefully consider what should be required rather than simply offered.</i></p>	<p><b>School Progress Plan</b>  <i>Require goals related to Special Education to be included in School Progress Plan. (Areas such as closing academic gaps, discipline, inclusion, etc.)</i></p>	<p><b>Grassroots Inclusion Efforts</b>  <i>Strengthen alliances with community groups already improving inclusion opportunities.</i></p> <p><i>How can local schools share their successful programs and community resources countywide?</i></p>
<p><b>Transition</b>  <i>Facilitators, Job Coaches</i></p>	<p><b>Leadership Stability</b>  <i>Excessive turnover at county and school levels must be addressed.</i></p>	<p><b>Principal Evaluations</b>  <i>Consider issues such as:</i></p> <p><i>Marks of inclusivity in the school</i></p> <p><i>Discipline statistics within Special Education</i></p> <p><i>Training of all staff including gen ed, special ed, adult assistants, etc.; assess utilization of staff</i></p>	
<p>Related Service Providers</p>	<p><b>Recognition of Administration &amp; School Teams</b>  <i>Improve school system efforts to congratulate, spotlight, and publicize school and program successes.</i></p>	<p><b>Case Managers and Discipline</b>  <i>When discipline issues arise, require student to be checked for IEP status, BIP, etc. Include Case Manager or staff familiar with IEP in discipline matters.</i></p>	
<p>Elementary IEP Chairpersons</p>		<p><b>Master Schedules</b>  <i>IEP students need priority in scheduling.</i></p>	

Appendix B

**Proposed Budget Book Page  
2020-2021**

	2020-2021 Count October 1, 2019	FY21 Proposed FTE	FY21 Proposed Paraeducator FTE	FY21 Proposed SEL FTE <sup>1</sup>
<b>School Based Continuum of Services</b>				
Continuum of Services- LRE A	7945	526.6	245.1	
Continuum of Services- LRE B	1878	179.6	69.1	
Continuum of Services- LRE C	329	65.7	40.7	
<b>Home School/Regional Programs</b>				
College Outreach	49	5.4	10.0	
Communication and Learning Support- Autism (CLS- Autism)	383	53.5	38.5	
Social Communication Learning Support (SCLS)	161	30.0	14.0	
Functional Academic Learning Support (FALS)	623	84.1	68.0	50.7 <sup>2</sup>
Learning Support for Deaf/Hard of Hearing	29	8.2	8.0	
Secondary Home School Social Emotional Learning (HSEL)	262	29.1	-	
Regional Social Emotional Learning (SEL)	270	35.4	38.0	
Verbal Behavior (VB MAPP)	38	6.3	2.0	
Language Based Learning (LBL)	4	-	-	
<b>Early Childhood Programs</b>				
Community Based Instruction (CBI)	57	2.9	7.0	
Infants and Toddlers	1,407	47.4 <sup>3</sup>	10.6	
Service Representative			5.0	
Inside General Education 3 year olds (ECIGE-3)	256	44.7	26.0	
Inside General Education 4 year olds (ECIGE-4)	166	27.7	11.5	
Outside General Education 3 year olds (ECOGE-3)	89	9.9	8.5	
Outside General Education 4 year olds (ECOGE-4)	125	13.9	9.5	
General Education Pre-Kindergarten Paraeducator			26.5	
<b>Separate Public Day School Positions</b>				
Special School Teacher Positions	292	38.9	14.5	3.0
Special Area Teacher Positions		12.0		
IEP Chair		3.0		
Principal		3.0		
Assistant Principal		3.0		
Clerical		6.0		
Health Assistant		3.0		
<b>Alternative School Positions</b>				
Alternative School Teacher Positions		9.0	9.0	1.0
<b>White Oak School</b>				
Special School Teacher Positions	72	9.6	24.0	3.0
Special Area Teacher Positions		4.0		
IEP Chair		1.0		
Principal		1.0		
Assistant Principal		1.0		
Clerical		2.0		
Health Assistant		1.0		
<b>Crossroads</b>				
Special Education Teachers		3.0	1.0	
<b>Central Office Support Teachers/Staff</b>				
Transition Facilitators		13.5 <sup>3</sup>		
<b>Private Separate Day Placements</b>				
Student Count	634			
<b>Speech and Language</b>				
Speech Only Students	2574			
<b>Baltimore County Detention Center</b>				
Special Education Teachers	7	2.0		
<b>Total</b>	<b>17,650</b>	<b>1,286.4</b>	<b>686.5</b>	<b>57.7</b>

<sup>1</sup> Social emotional learning teacher, previously titled behavior interventionist.

<sup>2</sup> Supports Home School/Regional Programs.

<sup>3</sup> Centralized Support Teachers funded by the Special Education Office.