

# Special Education

## Program Overview

Harford County Public Schools Department of Special Education is dedicated to the provision of a free, appropriate public education (FAPE) to all students with disabilities in need of special education and related services. The Department of Special Education provides direction and support to leadership and administration throughout the school system for special education including related services, programs and activities. The Director and Coordinators of Special Education provide leadership, support, accountability for results related to a seamless, comprehensive system of coordinated services to children and students with disabilities, birth through 21, and their families. These administrators supervise over 1,000 teachers and support services personnel, including contractual employees from agencies. They administer Non-Public Placement; Early Intervention Programs; the Partners for Success Resource Center; the Child Find Office and services and the Infants and Toddlers Program; chair various central IEP teams; communicate with parents and parent groups; conduct professional development activities in the area of special education law, instruction, assessments, and increased access and achievement in the general education setting. Administrative staff facilitate the development and monitoring of federal and state grants; quality assurance; compliance with regulatory expectations; due process and the Maryland On-Line IEP Program.

Programs and services for students with educational disabilities require Special Education services which are developed under their leadership. The services to which these administrators provide direction include: consultative services; itinerant services (speech, hearing, vision, assistive technology, audiology, transition, physical, and occupational therapy); instructional services in home schools and cluster/regional programs; special school services; infants/toddlers-early intervention programming and non-public services.

## Accomplishments – FY 2014

- Supported a birth to age 21 continuum of services to 5,474 children with disabilities and their families. (Board Goal 1)
- Met State accountability targets for General Supervision, Performance and Compliance Indicators. (Board Goal 1)
- Preschool children with disabilities demonstrated substantial progress with 58% identified as “fully ready” on the Ready at Five, school readiness indicators. (Board Goal 2)
- Exceeded State accountability targets for participation of students with disabilities, age 6 through 21, in the least restrictive environment. (Board Goal 1)

## Goals – FY 2016

In collaboration with all partners, the HCPS Department of Special Education will narrow the gaps in school readiness, school achievement, and readiness for adult life after school by focusing on action imperatives in four critical areas: Early Childhood; Access and Achievement; Capacity Building; and Secondary Transition.

- Increase the number of children with disabilities, birth through age 5, accessing equitable, age appropriate, inclusive educational opportunities by 2% each year over the next five years. (Board Goal 1)
- Implement strategies and supports expanding access to and achievement of general education standards for children, students and youth with disabilities, birth through age 21, as evidenced by pattern of gap reduction and increased participation in the least restrictive environment. (Board Goal 1)
- Ensure all stakeholders have the knowledge and skills to support children, students and youth with disabilities, birth through age 21, by means of increased access and opportunity to differentiated professional learning and resources. (Board Goal 3)
- Provide comprehensive transition services tailored to individual needs, interests and abilities supporting self-determination and proactive planning; promoting increased college and career readiness for all youth with disabilities. (Board Goal 1)

## Objectives – FY 2016

- Work collaboratively with district and community partners to identify barriers to and increase participation in equitable, age-appropriate inclusive educational settings for children with disabilities, birth through age 5. (Board Goal 2)
- Identify and evaluate the targeted and effective use of resources to determine the impact of special education supports and services on gap reduction and participation in the least restrictive environment. (Board Goal 4)
- Collaborate with district partners to identify and cultivate the use of embedded supports, accessibility tools and accommodations within curriculum resources to increase access and achievement of general education curricular standards. (Board Goal 1)

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- Establish a multi-tiered system of evidence-based interventions targeting the core characteristics (academic, behavioral, social and communicative competencies) of ASD in young children, adolescents and young adults participating in a full continuum of supports and services across varied learning environments. (Board Goal 4)
- Application of evidence-based interventions including increased access to assistive technologies and augmentative alternate communication options across learning environments promoting increased social interaction, enhanced communicative competencies and access to general education content. (Board Goal 4)
- Provide county-wide and on-site support to schools for the implementation of Common Core Standards, Differentiated Instruction and Universal Design for Learning principles to communicate district expectations for the success of children, students and youth with disabilities, birth through age 21. (Board Goal 1)
- Promote high-quality, evidence-based models of transition services and activities that include data-informed decision-making focusing on increased attainment of post-secondary goals, economic independence and meaningful community participation for youth with disabilities. (Board Goal 1)

### Special Education Expenses by Program

Program	FY14 Actual	FY15 Actual	FY15 Budget	15 - 16	
				Change	FY16 Budget
Special Education Administration	786,751	812,914	865,412	(35,494)	829,918
John Archer School	2,433,478	2,430,693	2,432,085	87,198	2,519,283
Special Education Home School	19,582,530	19,473,649	19,985,139	(267,520)	19,717,619
Special Education Cluster Programs	2,653,698	2,277,617	2,365,276	644,631	3,009,907
Special Education Infants and Toddlers	1,154,049	1,303,077	1,376,453	21,901	1,398,354
Special Education Related Services	5,390,477	5,309,347	5,338,409	198,615	5,537,024
Special Education Nonpublic Placement	8,022,040	9,009,248	8,660,706	(469,914)	8,190,792
<b>Total Special Education</b>	<b>40,023,022</b>	<b>40,616,545</b>	<b>41,023,480</b>	<b>179,417</b>	<b>41,202,897</b>

### Special Education Full Time Equivalent Positions

Program	FY14	FY15	Change	FY16
Special Education Administration	8.5	8.5	-	8.5
John Archer School	59.8	62.2	-	62.2
Special Education Home School	659.8	663.0	(19.0)	644.0
Special Education Cluster Programs	64.0	53.0	24.0	77.0
Special Education Infants and Toddlers	12.8	12.2	-	12.2
Special Education Related Services	88.7	87.2	-	87.2
Special Education Nonpublic Placement	-	-	-	-
<b>Total Special Education</b>	<b>893.6</b>	<b>886.1</b>	<b>5.0</b>	<b>891.1</b>

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## Challenging Trends

Although special education enrollment has slightly declined in the past decade, special education costs have increased significantly due to the change in student conditions and the intensity of services required. On average, during the 2013 – 2014 school year a special education student costs \$15,326 more to educate than a general education student. The higher cost per pupil for special education students is due primarily to:

- Lower student – teacher ratios;
- Nature and intensity of services provided;
- Increase in costs of materials and equipment to support students with disabilities and,
- Higher cost of transportation.

The average cost for a special education student placed in a non-public school was \$75,171 in fiscal year 2015, down \$9,584 from the prior year.

Cost Per Student*					
Current Expense Fund (Unrestricted and Restricted Programs)	Actual FY 2011	Actual FY 2012	Actual FY 2013	Actual FY 2014	Actual FY 2015
Enrollment as of:	Oct. 2010	Oct. 2011	Oct. 2012	Oct. 2013	Oct. 2014
<b>Average for General Education</b>	<b>\$9,456</b>	<b>\$9,616</b>	<b>\$9,629</b>	<b>\$9,535</b>	<b>\$9,584</b>
<i>Total Unadjusted Enrollment</i>	38,394	38,224	37,868	37,842	37,537
<b>Average for Special Education</b>	<b>\$23,110</b>	<b>\$23,841</b>	<b>\$24,271</b>	<b>\$24,257</b>	<b>\$24,910</b>
<i>Special Education Enrollment</i>	5,319	5,105	4,980	4,879	4,812
<b>Average for Non Public Placemen</b>	<b>\$74,426</b>	<b>\$85,695</b>	<b>\$81,179</b>	<b>\$84,755</b>	<b>\$75,171</b>
<i>Non Public Placement Enrollment</i>	197	187	215	229	248
<b>Total SE Enrollment (Inc. Non-Public)</b>	<b>5,516</b>	<b>5,292</b>	<b>5,195</b>	<b>5,108</b>	<b>5,060</b>

\*Revised August 2015

Disabilities of HCPS Students (ages 3 - 21) Receiving Special Education Services*					
Disability	School Year				Change FY14 - 15
	2011-2012	2012-2013	2013-2014	2014-2015	
<i>Enrollment Date</i>	Oct. 2011	Oct. 2012	Oct. 2013	Oct. 2014	FY14 - 15
Intellectual Disability	177	169	176	166	-10
Deaf/Hearing Impaired	27	32	27	27	0
Traumatic Brain Injury	11	9	8	9	1
Autism	408	424	426	388	-38
Speech/Language	1,085	1,048	967	861	-106
Visually Impaired	17	17	17	24	7
Emotional Disability	303	316	286	284	-2
Orthopedically Impaired	11	9	13	11	-2
Other Health Impaired	1,054	1,004	951	928	-23
Specific Learning Disability	1,477	1,464	1,450	1,492	42
Multiple Disabilities	325	381	459	510	51
Deaf/Blind	1	1	1	1	0
Developmental Delay	396	321	327	359	32
<b>Total Students</b>	<b>5,292</b>	<b>5,195</b>	<b>5,108</b>	<b>5,060</b>	<b>(48)</b>

Source: MSDE special education enrollment figures used to calculate state special education funding.

\*Includes non-public placement students and pre-k/pre-school students.

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## FY 2016 Funding Adjustments

The changes to Special Education for fiscal 2016 are:

### **Wage Adjustments of \$592,178:**

- Proposed salary/wage adjustments of \$1,264,312.
- Turnover savings of (\$672,134).

### **Cost Saving Measures of (\$889,506):**

- Reduce materials of instruction, (\$15,000).
- Reduce inclusion helper substitutes, (\$50,000).
- Eliminate 5.0 FTE Special Education Teachers, (\$222,150).
- Eliminate 14.0 FTE Inclusion Helpers, (\$202,356).
- Reduce Non Public (\$400,000) by utilizing the increase in Medical Assistance billing in the restricted budget to cover the expense.

### **Cost of Doing Business for \$976,745:**

Harford County Public Schools must address the educational challenges for our students with disabilities (SWD) by having a full continuum of programming. For identified SWD, the requirement of a Free Appropriate Public Education (FAPE) that provides an individualized educational program calculated to meet the needs of the student is established in IDEA (34 CFR 300.17) and in COMAR (13 .05.01.03 (27)).

A critical need area in the HCPS Special Education programming is to have a viable Autism Program. Autism is specifically defined in IDEA and COMAR regulations (IDEA (34 CFR 300.8(c)(1)(i) and COMAR (13A.05.01.03 (8))). Autism is often referred to as a spectrum of disorders. The learning behaviors of autistic students are complex. This disability may affect social interaction, the ability to communicate needs and wants, establishing relationships, behavior, and ability to learn. Autism is a developmental disorder with a neurobiological origin.

#### Important Facts:

- Nationally, 1 in 68 students are identified with Autism (1.47%).
- HCPS, 607 out of 37,842 students are identified with Autism (1.6%).
- HCPS, 11.88% of SWD are identified with Autism or Multiple Disabilities with Autism.
- Non-public HCPS, 33.45% of placements involve students with Autism or Multiple Disabilities with Autism.
- John Archer School, 51.8% of the students placed in this school are identified as having Autism and Multiple Disabilities with Autism.

An Autism Program must include: early intervention, intensive intervention, low student to teacher ratio, inclusion of a family outreach, provision or opportunities to interact with typically developing peers, and a high degree of structure. The curriculum in the Autism Program must address: functional and spontaneous communication, social skills, functional and adaptive skills, reduction of disruptive and maladaptive behaviors, readiness and academic skills.

To develop an Autism Program that is calculated to meet the individual needs of the Autism students, additional funding is sought.

- 2.0 FTE Special Education Teachers, \$88,860 and 12.0 FTE Special Education Paraprofessionals, \$220,668 are required for the Elementary Autism Program.
- 1.0 FTE Special Education Teacher, \$44,430 and 7.0 FTE Paraprofessionals, \$128,723 are required for the Secondary Autism Program Expansion and Enhancement.

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These programs will:

1. Facilitate the meeting of the standards set forth in IDEA (34 CFR 300.17) and in COMAR (13 .05.01.03 (27)).
  2. Foster implementation of specially designed instructional methodology (34 CFR 300.39(a)(1) and 34 CFR 300.39(b)(3) and 34 CFR.300.324(a)(2)(i).
  3. Enable students to be educated within closer proximity to their neighborhood school (34 CFR 300.116(b)(3).
  4. Ensure the students have increased access to opportunities to build communication competencies 34 GFR 300.324(a)(2)(iv).
  5. Promote building family partnerships (34 CFR 300.34(c)(8)).
- 1.0 FTE Special Education Teacher and a 1.0 FTE Special Education Para-educator, \$62,819, to implement a Classroom Support Program at Edgewood Middle School. In addition, professional development funds and materials of instruction totaling \$1,159. The cost of the Classroom Support Program will be offset by the elimination of the Type II Nonpublic Partnership at Edgewood Middle, (\$269,914).
  - Nonpublic placements projected increase in operating expenses attributable to the use of one time restricted revenue in fiscal 2015 for nonpublic expenses, \$700,000.

### **Reversal of FY15 Transfers, (\$500,000):**

- Reversal of year end transfer for nonpublic contracted services, (\$500,000).

**The increase in expenditures from fiscal 2015 for Special Education is \$179,417.**



## Summary Report

### Special Education

By Object Code	FY13 Actual	FY14 Actual	FY15 Actual	FY15 Budget	15-16 Change	FY16 Budget
Salaries	\$31,464,273	\$31,095,229	\$30,538,277	\$31,133,718	\$664,132	\$31,797,850
Contracted Services	\$7,972,403	\$8,459,327	\$9,630,408	\$9,309,655	(\$469,914)	\$8,839,741
Supplies	\$219,705	\$215,425	\$225,076	\$325,988	(\$14,801)	\$311,187
Other Charges	\$148,124	\$158,017	\$145,689	\$155,541	\$0	\$155,541
Equipment	\$108,419	\$95,023	\$77,158	\$98,578	\$0	\$98,578
<b>Total:</b>	<b>\$39,912,925</b>	<b>\$40,023,022</b>	<b>\$40,616,608</b>	<b>\$41,023,480</b>	<b>\$179,417</b>	<b>\$41,202,897</b>

### Budgeted Full Time Equivalent Positions

	FY13	FY14	FY15	15-16	FY16
Assistant Supervisor	3.0	3.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Asst Principal 10 Month	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Asst Principal 12 Month	1.0	1.0	1.0	0.0	1.0
Clerical 10 Month	1.0	1.0	1.0	0.0	1.0
Clerical 12 Month	4.5	5.5	5.5	0.0	5.5
Director	1.0	1.0	1.0	0.0	1.0
Inclusion Helper	321.9	296.9	284.0	(14.0)	270.0
Interpreter	9.0	9.0	7.0	0.0	7.0
Paraeducator	221.5	222.5	227.0	20.0	247.0
Principal	1.0	1.0	1.0	0.0	1.0
Supervisor	2.0	2.0	5.0	0.0	5.0
Teacher/Counselor	346.1	346.7	349.6	(1.0)	348.6
Technician School Based	4.0	4.0	4.0	0.0	4.0
	<b>916.0</b>	<b>893.6</b>	<b>886.1</b>	<b>5.0</b>	<b>891.1</b>

By State Category	FY13 Actual	FY14 Actual	FY15 Actual	FY15 Budget	15-16 Change	FY16 Budget	FY16 FTE
<b>SPECIAL EDUCATION</b>							
Contracted Services	\$7,972,403	\$8,459,327	\$9,630,408	\$9,309,655	(\$469,914)	\$8,839,741	
Equipment	\$108,419	\$95,023	\$77,158	\$98,578	\$0	\$98,578	
Other Charges	\$148,124	\$158,017	\$145,689	\$155,541	\$0	\$155,541	
Salaries	\$31,464,273	\$31,095,229	\$30,538,277	\$31,133,718	\$664,132	\$31,797,850	
Supplies	\$219,705	\$215,425	\$225,076	\$325,988	(\$14,801)	\$311,187	
<b>TOTAL:</b>	<b>\$39,912,925</b>	<b>\$40,023,022</b>	<b>\$40,616,608</b>	<b>\$41,023,480</b>	<b>\$179,417</b>	<b>\$41,202,897</b>	<b>891.1</b>
<b>Grand Total:</b>	<b>\$39,912,925</b>	<b>\$40,023,022</b>	<b>\$40,616,608</b>	<b>\$41,023,480</b>	<b>\$179,417</b>	<b>\$41,202,897</b>	<b>891.1</b>