

# Special Education Continuum

Board of Education Business Meeting  
February 27, 2023

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**Colleen Sasdelli**

**Director of Special Education**

**Special Education Coordinators**

**Melissa Romano**

**Birth to Five Programs**

**Kimberly Heeter**

**Elementary Programs**

**Shannon Jennings-Jones**

**Secondary Programs**

**Kim Manzo**

**Low Incidence Disabilities**

**Robin Meyer**

**Interagency Supports & Non-Public  
Placements**

**Carey Reise**

**Related Services**

**Stephanie Swisher**

**Compliance**

**Jeffrey Hoffman**

**Training and Technical Assistance**

**Pauline Timmons**

**State and Federal Grants**

**Objective:**

**To provide an overview of the HCPS Special Education continuum to address the individual needs of students with disabilities who have been determined eligible for Special Education and related services.**

Verification Year	Total Students, 3-21 with IEP's As of Sept. 30
2022	5,645
2021	5,257
2020	4,899
2019	5,044
2018	4,931
2017	4,842

## Our Special Education Team ...

- 12 Special Education Administrators
- 27 Teacher Specialists
- 396 Special Education Teachers
- 11 Transition Resource Itinerants
- 105 Related Service Providers
- 2 Board Certified Behavior Analysts
- 51 Staff with Specialized Certification/Job Responsibilities
- 536 Support Staff



## Key Principles of **IDEA**:

**Free Appropriate Public Education (FAPE)**

**Full and Comprehensive Evaluation**

**Individualized Education Program (IEP)**

**Least Restrictive Environment (LRE)**

**Parent and Student Participation in Decision Making**

**Procedural Safeguards**

Individuals with Disabilities  
Education Act (IDEA)



**COMAR outlines additional  
requirements that are specific to the  
State of Maryland**



Least Restrictive

Most Restrictive

# Least Restrictive Environment Continuum

In general  
education  $\geq$  80%  
of the student's  
day  
**4485/84.4%**

In general  
education 40%-79%  
of the student's day  
**196/3.7%**

In general  
education  $\leq$  40% of  
the student's day.  
**215/4.0%**

Placement in a  
public/private  
separate day  
school.  
**122/2.3% (public)**  
**207/3.9% (private)**

Parentally privately placed with Service Plans **98/1.8%**



# Infants and Toddlers, Birth to Age 4

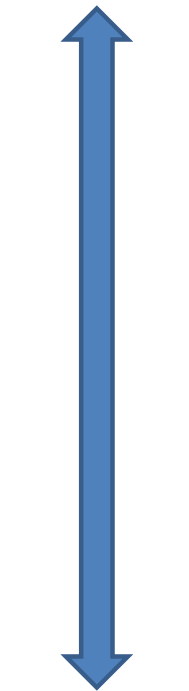
- Service children Birth through 3 (some 4-year-olds) through an Individual Family Service Plan (IFSP).
- Children are provided service in their natural environment (e.g., home, daycare) through a family coaching model.
- Supported by 9 special educators, 15.7 related service providers and support staff (Administrative Assistant, Family Service Network Coordinator, Family Service Assistants, Social Worker, and Teacher Specialist, Coordinator).



Year	2018-2019	2019-2020	2020-2021	2021-2022	July 1, 2022, to February 2023
Number of Children Served	644	624	577	678	568

# Preschool Special Education, Ages 3-5

Least Restrictive



Most Restrictive

Community Support

Learning Together Preschool

Co-taught  
Prekindergarten/General  
Prekindergarten

Early Learner  
Preschool

Harford  
Academy



Year	2018-2019	2019-2020	2020-2021	2021-2022	2022-2023
Number of Children Serviced	432	501	328	376	408 as of October 2022  525 as of February 2023



# **Elementary and Secondary Special Education Services, ages 6-21**

**HCPS adheres to a strong commitment to inclusive practices with the majority (84.4%) of students with IEPs serviced in the general education setting using a co-teaching model.**

**All HCPS secondary schools have Life Skills classrooms to address the needs of students who require services outside of general education. Transition Resource Itinerants support IEP teams with transition planning, goals and training.**

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# Classroom Support Regional Program (CSP)

**Classroom Support Program (CSP) creates a safe and positive learning environment that promotes academic and behavioral success through school and family partnerships and the provision of intensive social emotional and behavioral supports.**

**CSP teachers and staff facilitate access to the general education setting by reducing interfering behaviors while supporting a successful transition in the least restrictive environment (LRE).**

	2018-2019	2019-2020	2020-2021	2021-2022	Current Enrollment
Number of Students	102	97	67	94	80
Returned to GE	13	7	12	16	4

**5 Elementary Schools  
3 Middle Schools  
Expansion to High School planned for  
the 2024-2025 SY**

## Structured Teaching with Reinforcement in a Visual Environment



STRIVE	18-19	19-20	20-21	21-22	22-23
Elementary	60	71	79	91	106
Middle School	10	9	15	17	16
High School	10	13	15	17	15
Total	80	93	109	125	137

- **Applied Behavior Analysis (ABA) - B.F. Skinner's Verbal Behavior (VB) Model**
- **Highly trained staff**
- **Intensive Structured Teaching with a strong focus on generalization across people and settings**
- **Low student-teacher ratio**
- **8 elementary, 2 middle, and 2 high schools**
- **2 classrooms at Harford Academy**
- **Expansion to 9th elementary school in 23-24**
- **Expansion to 3rd middle school in 24-25**



## Public and Private Separate Day Schools

### Public Separate Day School:

Harford Academy serves students from age 3 to age 21 whose educational and medical needs cannot be adequately served in an HCPS comprehensive school. Embedded within the continuum of services provided at Harford Academy are all therapies (occupational, speech, physical, vision, hearing, etc.) that students require to make progress and to access instruction. **122 students are currently enrolled in Harford Academy.**

### Private Separate Day Schools:

Through the Central IEP Process, and in partnership with MSDE, HCPS places students whose needs cannot adequately be met within the HCPS continuum, in COMAR approved Special Education schools throughout Maryland and neighboring states. **207 students are currently serviced in approximately 30 private separate day/non-public schools.**

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**Least Restrictive**

**Most Restrictive**

# Least Restrictive Environment Continuum

**Co-Taught Classrooms in all 55  
HCPS Schools**

**Services in all 55 HCPS  
Schools**

**Select students in  
STRIVE and Early Learners Programs**

**Community Preschool Services**

**Regional CSP Programs**

**Public Separate Day School (Harford  
Academy)**

**Learning Together**

**Life Skills in all Middle and  
High Schools**

**Placement outside of HCPS in a  
Private Separate Day  
School/Nonpublic Program**

**General and Co-Taught Pre-  
Kindergarten**



**Need to expand the existing HCPS SE continuum to include programming in HCPS comprehensive schools and/or expansion of regional programs to address the following:**

- **Elementary students who require specially designed instruction outside of general education to address development of functional/adaptive skills.**
- **Secondary diploma bound students who require specially designed instruction to address development of functional/adaptive skills.**
- **Secondary diploma bound students who require supports and specially designed instruction to address development of social and social/emotional skills.**