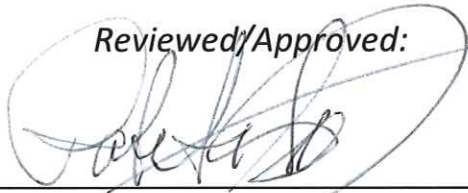


**Anne Arundel County Public Schools**  
**2644 Riva Road**  
**Annapolis, MD 21401**

**DEPARTMENT OF SPECIAL EDUCATION**  
**FY 2024 STAFFING PLAN**

*Reviewed/Approved:*



Robert Silkworth, President  
Board of Education

2/6/24


Date



Dr. Mark T. Bedell  
Superintendent of Schools

1-24-24

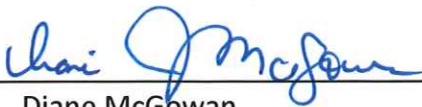
Date



Sonya McElroy  
Director, B-5 Services, Special Services and  
Non-Public Interagency Partnerships

1/18/2024

Date



Diane McGowan  
Director, Specially Designed Instruction and Compliance

1/18/2024

Date

# FISCAL YEAR 2024 SPECIAL EDUCATION STAFFING PLAN

## Table of Contents

Title	Page
Assurances	3
Introduction	3
Evidence of Public Input	4
Anne Arundel County Special Education Citizens' Advisory Committee	5
Maintenance of Effort	7
Staffing Patterns of Service Providers	7
Staffing Guidelines	9
Assessment of Staffing Requirements to Meet the Needs of Students with Disabilities	16
Process for Ensuring Available Resources in the Provision of FAPE	17
Professional Development	19
Monitoring and Evaluation	21
Additional Timeline Considerations	23

## **ASSURANCE**

It is the goal of the Anne Arundel County Public Schools to provide a Free, Appropriate Public Education (FAPE) to all students with disabilities in need of special education and related services. Local school systems are required by the Code of Maryland Annotated Regulations (COMAR) 13A.05.02.13 §C and D to develop a yearly staffing plan to ensure sufficient staff are available to meet the programming needs of students. The plan must include the following:

- Evidence of public input
- Evidence of maintenance of effort within the meaning of 34 CFR. 300.321, Maintenance of Effort and COMAR 13A.02.05, Maintenance of Effort
- Staffing patterns of service providers of special education and related services, including paraprofessionals
- The number and type of service providers needed to provide FAPE to each student with a disability in the least restrictive environment (LRE)
- How Anne Arundel County Public Schools will use the staffing plan to monitor the assignment of personnel to provide FAPE to each student with a disability in the LRE
- The number of current vacancies by positions reported within the jurisdiction and how FAPE is provided when vacancies occur.
- Prior year staffing plan evaluation

## **INTRODUCTION**

### **AACPS Vision and Department of Special Education Mission**

Our students will graduate as caring citizens with the dispositions and skills necessary to think, read, write, compute, collaborate, and communicate effectively in our fast-paced, complex world. They will be ready to think critically and creatively; work independently and collaboratively with others from diverse backgrounds; engage in innovative interdisciplinary analysis and problem solving, and confidently contribute to solutions for real world issues.

The AACPS Department of Special Education seeks to achieve the system vision by adhering to our mission to provide all students with disabilities access to high quality specially designed instruction and resources through a continuum of services and supports that equip students and their families with the skills and competencies to exit Anne Arundel County Public Schools college, career, and community ready.

Additionally, through collaboration and establishment of updated policy, the Board of Education of Anne Arundel County is committed to:

- Ensuring the assessment and identification procedures used to determine who is eligible as a student with a disability or who is experiencing developmental delays and in need of special education and related services are not discriminatory.
- Developing and implementing appropriate systemwide general education interventions and culturally responsive instructional practices, which aim to link educational content with student culture (e.g., activating student's prior knowledge and capital culture, making learning contextual, and building relationships) that are not contingent on the identification or determination of a disability to eliminate overidentification or misclassification of infants and toddlers and students.
- Providing a specifically designed educational program that seeks to prepare infants and toddlers and students with disabilities to be fully participating members of our society, including being prepared for education and training, employment, accessing adult services, independent living, and community participation.



- Creating and actively fostering a climate of inclusivity, acceptance, and respect for individuals with disabilities given that every child can learn and succeed with the support and collaboration of the school system, families, students, and the community.
- Providing opportunities for infants and toddlers and students with disabilities to participate, to the maximum extent appropriate to meet individual student needs, with peers without disabilities in all aspects of school life, including academic, social, and extracurricular activities, as a critical component to their educational experiences.
- Promoting high expectations and success for infants and toddlers and students with disabilities by communicating and collaborating with all staff and holding all staff accountable for the education of students with disabilities.
- Providing an education program where infants and toddlers and students with disabilities have access to the general education curriculum and are included and accepted in general education classrooms and as members of the community participating, learning, belonging, and working with age-appropriate peers to the maximum extent appropriate to meet individual student needs.
- Active engagement with parents/guardians and families to provide the partnership and collaboration between home and school fundamental to student success.

Through a shared commitment to improving outcomes for students with disabilities, staff are united in their efforts to provide a specialized partnership of instruction that meets the diverse needs of all students. Through a collaborative approach, where general educators and special educators come together to design and implement effective educational programs, we ensure that the strengths and needs of our students are identified and addressed in the most appropriate manner.

To support this collaborative effort, systems are in place for identifying strengths and areas for improvement, ensuring appropriate educational programs and services, and continuously evaluating through various methods like site visits, coaching, and internal monitoring. By embracing this collaborative approach and utilizing these systems, the educational experience, and outcomes for students with disabilities can lead to a more inclusive and supportive learning environment for all.

## **EVIDENCE OF PUBLIC INPUT**

The Public Information Office provides notification of all public hearings, meetings, and workshops regarding the development of the Operating Budget in the AACPS website, local newspapers and through individual school newsletters.

The schedule for preparation of the annual budget is as follows:

September	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Superintendent outlines budget priorities for the upcoming budget cycle. Individual offices meet with key stakeholders to identify priority areas for their office.</li> <li>• Each office develops a Maintenance of Effort Budget and Supplementary Budget to appropriately address their priority areas based on input.</li> <li>• Draft budget requests are collaboratively reviewed with the Office of Budget and Finance.</li> </ul>
October	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Senior staff meets with the appropriate Assistant Superintendent to review and justify the budget requests.</li> </ul>

- Work with all stakeholders to help shape AACPS special education accountability process in a way that drives and supports improved results for students with disabilities and special needs.
- Support the efforts of parents to be actively and meaningfully involved in the education process.
- Advocate for positive changes in Special Education in AACPS.

Active, involved parents and supporters of children receiving special education services comprise the Anne Arundel Special Education Citizens' Advisory Committee (AA-SECAC). AA-SECAC meets regularly with the Directors of Special Education, and members of the Partners for Success Team to discuss best practices, gain updated information and advice on the direction for special education services.

Special Education Parent Meetings provide networking opportunities, chances to advise the Directors and powerful presentations from experts in the field. During the 2022-2023 school year, priorities and presentations included:

<b><u>Communication Outreach:</u></b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Board of Education Presence and Presentation</li> <li>• Resource Fair</li> <li>• Relationship Building between staff and parents</li> <li>• Increased participation at events</li> </ul>	<b><u>Presentations included:</u></b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Individualized Education Plan (IEP) Process</li> <li>• Functional Behavioral Assessment (FBA)/ Behavior Intervention Plan (BIP)</li> <li>• Assistive Technology topics</li> <li>• Inclusion</li> <li>• Transition services</li> <li>• Early Childhood services</li> </ul>
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**Anne Arundel – Special Education Citizens' Advisory Committee Board Members for 2023-2024 include:**

- Chair - Kathy Rentfrow
- Co-Chair - Rick Riley
- Secretary - Corrine Emerson
- Treasurer - Becky Pike

Agendas are prepared based on specific areas of interest of the group, AA-SECAC goals, and the Directors' report. Department priorities continue to be reviewed with parent input solicited. The AACPS AA-SECAC meetings, when convened, are typically the second Thursday of each month. During the 2023 – 2024 school year, the meeting and events schedule has reflected:

September 14, 2023	October 5, 2023	November 9, 2023
December 14, 2023	January 11, 2024	February 8, 2024
March 14, 2024	April 11, 2024	May 9, 2024

**Presentations and activities being considered for 2023-2024 school year include:**

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Updating the AA-SECAC by-laws</li> <li>• Special Education Resource fair</li> <li>• Introduction to Special Education</li> <li>• What Parents Need to Know About Special Education Continuum of Services in AACPS</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Building Peer Relationships</li> <li>• Parent/Teacher roundtable</li> <li>• Alternate Curriculum</li> <li>• Mental Health</li> </ul>
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Assistant Superintendent / Associate Superintendent / Chief Budget Review</li> <li>• Budget Review Meetings with Deputy Superintendent &amp; Chief of Staff</li> </ul>
November	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Superintendent review and decisions</li> </ul>
December	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Superintendent submits recommended Operating &amp; Capital Budgets to the Board of Education</li> </ul>
January	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Public Hearings are held</li> <li>• The Board of Education holds public workshops</li> </ul>
February	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Board of Education approves the requested Operating and Capital Budget</li> <li>• County Executive holds budget hearings</li> </ul>
Feb.-March	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Superintendent and Board of Education approve Operating &amp; Capital Budgets are forwarded to the County Executive</li> </ul>
April	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• County Executive's recommended Operating &amp; Capital Budgets are forwarded to the County Council</li> </ul>
April/May	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Superintendent presents the proposed budget to the County Council</li> </ul>
May	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Public hearings are held on the County Executive's recommended budget. The public is notified of hearings through media, website, and letters.</li> </ul>
June	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The County Council approves the County Operating and Capital Budgets which include the Board of Education's Operating and Capital Budgets</li> <li>• The Board of Education adopts the School System's Operating and Capital Budget</li> </ul>

At the public hearings, parents are invited to provide testimony for the proposed budget. Traditionally, parents of students with disabilities are represented at these hearings and vocal regarding the needs of the Department of Special Education.

### **Anne Arundel County Special Education Citizens' Advisory Committee (AA-SECAC)**

AA-SECAC is a partnership between parents, families, community leaders, advocates, educators, and administrators. The committee works to enhance services available to students with disabilities and to advise on positive changes in special education in the Anne Arundel County Public Schools.

#### **SECAC Mission Statement**

To advise and provide meaningful input to Anne Arundel County Public Schools regarding the achievement of a Free and Appropriate Education for students with disabilities or special needs in Anne Arundel County.

#### **The purpose of AA-SECAC is to:**

- Work collaboratively with the AACPS Directors of Special Education and community stakeholders to identify priorities, goals and potential solutions designed to improve achievement and outcomes of students with disabilities or special needs within AACPS.
- Facilitate communication and collaboration between parents, families, educators, administrators, and community leaders to enhance services available for students with disabilities and advocate for positive changes in special education services within the Anne Arundel County Public School System.
- Share information and education with parents, educators, students, professionals, and community members on issues related to special education.
- Promote the acceptance, awareness, and inclusion of students with disabilities or special needs in our schools and community.

The local school system informs the public about the special education program, including data related to improvement in order to increase parental awareness and participation in the local school system. The AACPS Department of Special Education values our parent partnerships. Budget priorities are shared, and input sought from the parents and community members.

### MAINTENANCE OF EFFORT

The Directors of Special Education and the Office of Financial Operations ensure that Special Education funds are used to supplement and increase special education services to students with disabilities in addition to the provision of Early Intervening Services to students in the general education setting. These two offices also ensure that funds are not used to displace state or local funds and that funds expended are at least equal to or greater than those of the most recent year for which expenditure reports are available. Maintenance of Effort is documented in the FY 2024 Operating Budget.

#### NEW FOR FY24 STAFFING PLAN:

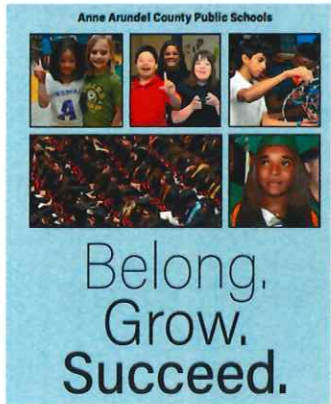
Category	Actual FY2022 Expenditures	Approved Budget FY2023	Approved Budget FY2024
<i>Salaries</i>	103,691,616	116,120,718	128,038,375
<i>Contracted Services</i>	32,825,740	38,277,661	39,189,032
<i>Supplies</i>	2,204,809	1,240,780	1,249,202
<i>Other Charges</i>	460,491	720,741	722,491
<i>Equipment</i>	8,245	14,000	14,000
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>139,190,901</b>	<b>156,373,900</b>	<b>169,213,100</b>

*\* NOTE: The above figures are general funds only in special education categories. They do not include transportation or fixed charges.*

### STAFFING PATTERN OF SERVICE PROVIDERS

#### Special Education Inclusion in System-wide Plans

Anne Arundel County Public Schools is embarking on the development of a new five-year Strategic Plan. While in development, AACPS is intentionally focused on ensuring that every student feels a sense of belonging, experiences growth, and achieves success. For the 2023–2024 school year, this will include deliberate work in the following areas aligned to Blueprint for Maryland’s Future.



Blueprint Pillars & Foci	
<b>Pre-K</b>	Communication, Expansion, PD to Support, Partnerships with County Government and Private Providers
<b>Teachers and Leaders</b>	Career Ladder, Leadership Roles and School Structures, Distribution of Teachers, Equitable Hiring
<b>Teachers and Leaders</b>	Professional Development, Interns, New Teacher Support, Teacher Evaluation
<b>College and Career Readiness</b>	Elementary Education Focus, Secondary Education, 6-10, Non-CCR (CCR Yet) Students
<b>College and Career Readiness</b>	Dual Enrollment, AP/IB, CTE/Apprenticeships, Career Counseling
<b>More Resources</b>	Special Education Funding, English Language Learner Funding, Concentration of Poverty (Community Schools), Mental Health



The planning and delivery of special education instruction is an integral part meeting the needs of students with disabilities. Teams making decisions about special education services are aware of their responsibility to consider each student's strengths, needs and the supports and services necessary to provide meaningful access to common core standards (Universal Design for Learning). The IEP Team process must include documentation of the discussion that students with disabilities are educated with nondisabled peers to the maximum extent possible as specified in their IEPs. A partial continuum of special education services is in place to educate students in their neighborhood school. A key element in the provision of a free appropriate public education (FAPE) for students with disabilities is the availability of appropriately trained personnel to implement each student's Individualized Education Program (IEP). The AACPS staffing plan is a vehicle intended to ensure that appropriate personnel are available to deliver the services required to fully implement student IEPs and promote accelerated achievement.

The following chart reflects the AACPS Special Education student count by disability for students ages 3 - 21:

<b>Students with Special Needs October 2022 by Disability (SY2022/2023)</b>															
<b>Disability Code/ Disability Label</b>	<b>Grade Level</b>														
	<b>Pre- K (ages 3-5)</b>	<b>K</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>Grand Total</b>
1 Intellectual Disability	0	6	12	10	9	25	14	21	27	25	32	21	48	33	283
2 Hearing Impairment	3	4	1	1	1	3	3		2	1	1		1	2	23
3 Deaf	3		2		3					2		1		1	12
4 Speech/Language Impairment	416	283	302	272	200	130	98	42	35	27	14	11	2	4	1836
5 Visual Impairment				1	2	4			1	1			1	1	11
6 Emotional Disability			5	4	8	10	20	15	30	31	46	39	23	33	264
7 Orthopedic Impairment												1	1	1	3
8 Other Health Impairment	27	33	44	79	119	118	135	120	158	113	157	139	104	63	1409
9 Specific Learning Disability			5	27	84	147	182	203	234	230	247	236	180	178	1953
10 Multiple Disabilities	17	32	77	84	164	200	195	219	230	219	300	222	212	166	2337
13 Traumatic Brain Injury	2		1		1	2	1	2	2	1	2	5	2	4	25
14 Autism	170	105	124	139	101	88	83	71	63	55	84	56	74	54	1267
15 Developmental Delay	318	183	127	52											680
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>956</b>	<b>646</b>	<b>700</b>	<b>669</b>	<b>692</b>	<b>727</b>	<b>731</b>	<b>693</b>	<b>782</b>	<b>705</b>	<b>883</b>	<b>731</b>	<b>648</b>	<b>540</b>	<b>10103</b>
<b>DATA SOURCE: MSDE Child Count 2022a 10/1/2022</b>															

*The AACPS staffing plan, while ensuring "maintenance of effort," attempts to strikes a balance among student needs, teacher responsibilities (shared accountability) and consideration of the specific environment or educational settings in which the service will be provided based on a LRE standard.*

General Education collaboration is vital to the success of students with disabilities. Special Education staff are actively involved in collaborative planning with their general education colleagues at both the local schoolhouse and Central Office level. Cooperative engagement includes attendance in content meetings, the on-going curriculum and assessment writing activities, collaborative planning teams, material of instruction committees, and student achievement steering committees. In addition to implementing customized school support plans, special educators are expected to support school-wide improvement plans, be involved in building the capacity of all personnel to meet the needs of struggling learners and to continue their own professional growth.

To effectively support the growth in teacher's capacity to deliver high quality specially designed instruction in the least restrictive environment, AACPS utilizes the Specially Designed Instruction (SDI) Coaching Tool as part of the self-assessment process. Inclusive of ten indicators that are rooted in evidenced-based practices, the tool is designed to help



assess and improve the provision of specially designed instruction to students with disabilities, with fidelity, in the areas of Learning Environment, Specially Designed Instruction, and IEP Alignment. Building leadership and central office staff can use the data collected from the use of this tool in a coaching feedback loop, focusing feedback on specific behaviors that teachers can improve, recognizing the positive, and emphasizing opportunities for growth and learning.

School leadership teams are encouraged to incorporate these data points and recommendations into their school improvement plan as appropriate to encourage schoolwide growth.

Federal and State guidelines hold LEAs to strict expectations regarding the delivery of services in the Least Restrictive Guidelines. AACPS tracks progress on the MSDE driven State Performance Plan (SPP) throughout each school year as reflected on the following **SAMPLE of the SPP trend chart** depicting growth and regression:

FFY 2019 (SFY2020) Part C Indicators											
SPP/APB Indicators		Previous Results							FFY 2019		
		+ = Met Target      X = Did Not Meet Target									
Results Indicator	Compliance Indicator	FFY 2012	FFY 2013	FFY 2014	FFY 2015	FFY 2016	FFY 2017	FFY 2018	Local Results	Target Met	State Target
4A	Families who report EIS helped them know their rights 20 U.S.C. 1416a(3)(A) and 1442	92.9%	96.3% +	95.3%	97.5% +	96.79% +	97.1%	96.77%	92.31%	Not Met	93%
4B	Families who report EIS helped them communicate their child's needs 20 U.S.C. 1416a(3)(A) and 1442	93.3%	95.5% +	95%	96.9% +	97.19% +	97.34%	97.55%	97.09%	Met	92.50%
4C	Families who report EIS helped them help their children develop and learn 20 U.S.C. 1416a(3)(A) and 1442	92.3%	95.7% +	95.4% +	97.9% +	97.53% +	97.34%	97.48%	94.06%	Met	92%
5	Children birth to one served as a percentage of the population birth to one COMAR 13A.13.02.04	1.37%	1.46% x	1.98% x	1.6% +	1.44% x	1.55%	1.56%	1.41%	Not Met	1.56%
6	Children birth to three served as a percentage of the population birth to 3 COMAR 13A.13.02.04	4.17%	3.86% +	4.21% +	4.25% +	4.53% +	4.64%	4.80%	5.19%	Met	3.90%
1	Timely Delivery of IFSP Services COMAR 13A.13.01.07	100%	99.5% x	99.15% x	98.76% x	99.81% x	99.83%	100.00%	100.00%	Met	100%
7	Percentage of Toddlers for whom the evaluation and the initial IFSP was within 45 days from the date of referral	99.6%	99.43% x	99.27% x	99.71% x	98.97% x	100%	99.91%	100.00%	Met	100%

Based on the most recent SPP data, it is recommended to expand the system's continuum of services in the following prioritized manner:

- Increase inclusive opportunities to meet the individual needs of children with disabilities in early childhood programs.
- Increase the number of staff available in comprehensive schools to provide services to those whose IEP reflects the need for only some portions of their instruction (typically math and language arts) to be delivered outside the general education setting.
- Establish programs to provide services for students with autism and exhibiting challenging behaviors, who are pursuing a diploma.
- Increase the number of crisis staff available to support students receiving services to address their significant and complex academic, communication, and social/emotional/behavioral needs.

## **STAFFING GUIDELINES**

The following principles guide the development of the AACPS Special Education Staffing Model:

- Appropriate supports and related services are available to meet student's needs in order to be successful in the Least Restrictive Environment.
- Services and support as outlined in the student's IEP are able to be delivered.
- Federal and State laws, regulations and policies are upheld.
- Parents have the opportunity to play an active and contributing role in planning for their child's education.

Student to teacher ratios, teacher caseloads, and IEP service hours are analyzed quarterly and, in some cases, monthly in an effort to ensure that appropriate staffing is in place in all schools to meet the demands of the IEPs. In preparing

budget documents and for future allocations, the Special Education Directors and Leadership team meet to complete an analysis and consideration of all staffing needs countywide. To ensure necessary staffing for itinerant teachers and technicians, a formula is used to incorporate travel needs.

<b>SERVICE DELIVERY MODELS</b>	
<b>SERVICE:</b> AT = ASSISTIVE TECHNOLOGY H = HEARING OT = OCCUPATIONAL THERAPY PT = PHYSICAL THERAPY SDI = Specially Designed Instruction SL = Speech Language V = Vision	<b>SUGGESTED RATIO</b>
<b>INFANT and TODDLER SERVICES</b> Early childhood service providers foster development in young children through partnership with staff, families, and community members. Year-round services are provided, serving children from birth to 3 who are at risk for developmental delay or medical condition. A coordinated, transdisciplinary, interagency system of services for infants, toddlers and their families. Providing year-round services in natural environments. Services may include specialized instruction, auditory and vision instruction, physical and occupational therapy, and speech-language services. These services are based on the philosophy that a parent or caregiver can be the child's most effective teacher, coaching and adult learning are the essential components of this program.  SERVICE DELIVERY MODEL: offered in natural environments: SDI; PT; OT; AT; SL; V; H;	<b>1P: 30 students</b>
<b>COMMUNITY BASED SERVICES</b> Specially designed instruction (SDI) delivered in an inclusive setting for up to approximately 3 hours of service(s) to address needs within the possible areas of speech and language, early learning, gross motor, fine motor, vision, orientation and mobility, hearing, and/or social-emotional skills.  Instruction within a community-based childcare and pre-school setting. Direct services in addition to Reflective Coaching adult learning principles employed to support community pre-school instruction in the areas of communication, early learning skills, social/emotional skills.  SERVICE DELIVERY MODEL: offered in natural environments: SDI; PT; OT; AT; SL; V; H	<b>1P: 1Tech 30 students</b>
<b>EARLY CHILDHOOD SPECIAL EDUCATION CLASSROOM</b> Specially designed instruction (SDI) within a self-contained AACPS pre-school setting outside of general education. Opportunities for inclusion can take place in the general education prekindergarten program to maximize instruction and participation with peers of the same age. Early Childhood Intervention is designed to meet the needs of students with severe intellectual, physical, emotional, hearing, vision, health, and/or learning disabilities.  SERVICE DELIVERY MODEL: offered half – full day within comprehensive schools and developmental centers: SDI; PT; OT; AT; SL; V; H	<b>1T+1TA+1TSA: 24 students</b>
<b>FULL DAY COTAUGHT SPECIAL EDUCATION PREKINDERGARTEN</b> Specially designed instruction (SDI) delivered in a comprehensive co-taught classroom to address needs within the possible areas of speech and language, early learning, gross motor, fine motor, vision, orientation and mobility, hearing, and/or social-emotional skills.  Instruction within a comprehensive co-taught classroom. Direct services for developmental deficits in any of the early learning domains in a full day classroom.  SERVICE DELIVERY MODEL: offered within comprehensive schools and developmental centers: SDI; PT; OT; AT; SL; V; H	<b>1 Gen Ed T+1 Gen Ed TA+ Sp Ed T+1 Sp Ed TA: 20 students</b>
<b>CHILD FIND SERVICES</b>	<b>1P 150 assessments</b>



## SERVICE DELIVERY MODELS

<b>SERVICE:</b> AT = ASSISTIVE TECHNOLOGY H = HEARING OT = OCCUPATIONAL THERAPY PT = PHYSICAL THERAPY SDI = SPECIALLY DESIGNED INSTRUCTION SL = SPEECH LANGUAGE V = VISION	<b>SUGGESTED RATIO</b>
<p><b>SCHOOL AGED CO-TAUGHT SPECIALIZED INSTRUCTION</b></p> <p>AACPS maintains its commitment to serving students in the Least Restrictive Environment. Students needing this support have a variety of disabilities and multiple needs. Services may include specially designed instruction, consultation with general educators, modifications and accommodations, and may include small group support including push-in and possibly pull-out.</p> <p>The staff supporting the co-taught setting are expected to do the following in addition to providing specially designed instruction and meeting compliance expectations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Complete screenings and assessments for students who are not identified as having a special need/disability</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Ensuring that students receive any intervention that has been prescribed</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Possibly acting as a member of the school's behavioral support team</li> </ul> <p>SERVICE DELIVERY MODEL: offered in the students' "home" school: SDI; PT; OT; AT; SL; V; H</p>	<p><b>1T:</b>  <b>12 students or 60 hours</b></p>
<p><b>SELF-CONTAINED INSTRUCTION</b></p> <p>Most students receiving services for a mild to moderate disability successfully receive services within the general education setting. However, occasionally, a student's IEP calls for some services to be delivered within a smaller setting through intensive Specially Designed Instruction. A student's IEP may prescribe self-contained services (or "Outside General Education") for just a portion of one content, for all that content, or throughout a variety of content areas. These services are available in 12 of our 80 elementary schools and in all middle and high schools.</p> <p>SERVICE DELIVERY MODEL: offered in the students' "home" school or the setting closest to it: SDI; PT; OT; AT; SL; V; H</p>	<p><b>1T+1TA: 10 students</b></p>
<p><b>ALTERNATE CURRICULUM CLASSROOMS</b></p> <p>Alternate Curriculum Classrooms (ACC) are available in 13 of our 80 elementary schools, 14 of our 19 middle schools, and in all of our high schools. These classes are designed to deliver intensive academic specially designed instruction to students who are pursuing an alternate pathway to a diploma. This program serves students with a variety of disabilities, but whose profile depicts a student in need of significantly modified curriculum. The student's communication, academic and social skills inform the supports and services available in these classrooms. Students in these classrooms are integrated with their non-disabled peers as much as allowable by their IEP.</p> <p>SERVICE DELIVERY MODEL: offered in the students' "home" school or the setting closest to it: SDI; PT; OT; AT; SL; V; H</p>	<p><b>1T+ 2TAs: 8 students</b></p>
<p><b>REGIONAL PROGRAMS for STUDENTS WITH EMOTIONAL DISABILITIES and OTHER BEHAVIORALLY RELATED DISORDERS</b></p> <p>Many students with emotional disabilities or related issues successfully receive their education within the general education setting in their home school. There are also regionally based classrooms located within a designated comprehensive school. In these settings, students have the opportunity to access the type of therapeutic support needed as they try to generalize skills in the less restrictive environments as they make progress. These programs are designed to transition students back to their home school as soon as possible.</p> <p>SERVICE DELIVERY MODEL: offered at the setting closest to the student's "home school": SDI; PT; OT; AT; SL; V; H</p>	<p><b>1T+2TAs+CI: 6 students</b></p>

<b>SERVICE:</b> AT = ASSISTIVE TECHNOLOGY H = HEARING OT = OCCUPATIONAL THERAPY PT = PHYSICAL THERAPY SDI = Specially Designed Instruction SL = Speech Language V = Vision	<b>SUGGESTED RATIO</b>
<p><b>THE PHOENIX ACADEMY for STUDENTS WITH EMOTIONAL DISABILITIES and OTHER BEHAVIORALLY RELATED DISORDERS</b></p> <p>The Phoenix Academy serves students in grades Kdgn to 12 who exhibit severe behavioral disabilities who have been unsuccessful in a regional program and are in need of a more therapeutic environment. Students who have been in non-public settings but are showing progress and are ready to try a less restrictive setting might also attend Phoenix.</p> <p>SERVICE DELIVERY MODEL: offered in the students' "home" school or the setting closest to it: SDI; PT; OT; AT; SL; V; H</p>	<b>1T+2TAs+CI: 6 students</b>
<p><b>SERVICES FOR STUDENTS on the AUTISM SPECTRUM and RELATED DISORDERS</b></p> <p>Students needing these resources typically exhibit a need for social communication support and have complex communication, socialization and learning needs. They tend to need support with managing social and emotional interactions, applying executive functioning skills, responding to sensory integration, dealing with social settings and managing adaptive behavior. This program delivers intensely structured learning environments, a focus on language and communication development, the use of visual tools, and the development of socially appropriate behaviors.</p> <p>SERVICE DELIVERY MODEL: offered in the students' "home" school or the setting closest to it: SDI; PT; OT; AT; SL; V; H</p>	<b>1T+2TA+1CI: 7 students</b>
<p><b>DEVELOPMENTAL CENTERS – SEPARATE SPECIAL EDUCATION SCHOOL</b></p> <p>Serves students ages 3-21, with moderate to severe intellectual disabilities. Alternate learning outcomes which are aligned to the general curriculum are utilized to provide students with skills in the areas of communication, mobility, self-help, independence, job, functional academics and transition.</p> <p>SERVICE DELIVERY MODEL: offered in a separate school closest to the student's home school: SDI; PT; OT; AT; SL; V; H</p>	<b>1T+2TA+CI: 6 students</b>
<p><b>INSTRUCTION for STUDENTS WHO ARE DEAF/HARD-OF-HEARING</b></p> <p>A Deaf/Hard of Hearing teacher provides services to students identified as deaf and/or hard of hearing. The services may include assessment, auditory training skills, literacy skills and learning behavior skills.</p> <p>SERVICE DELIVERY MODEL: offered in a centrally located comprehensive elementary school: SDI; PT; OT; AT; SL; V; H</p>	<p><b>CLASSROOM</b>  <b>1T+1TA: 8 students</b></p> <p><b>ITINERANT</b>  <b>1:18 students</b></p> <p><b>AUDIOLOGIST</b>  <b>Health Dept as needed</b></p>
<p><b>INSTRUCTION for STUDENTS WHO ARE BLIND/VISUALLY IMPAIRED</b></p> <p>An itinerant Vision teacher provides services to students identified with significant visual impairments or blindness. The services may include assessment, visual utilization, visual efficiency, specially designed instruction in reading and writing using Braille/Nemeth, and assistive technology.</p> <p>SERVICE DELIVERY MODEL: offered in the students' "home" school: SDI; PT; OT; AT; SL; V</p>	<p><b>ITINERANT</b>  <b>1:35 students</b></p>
<p><b>FOR STUDENTS in need of ORIENTATION &amp; MOBILITY SERVICES</b></p> <p>An orientation and mobility specialist provides services to students identified with a visual impairment. The services may include developing an awareness of their environment and skills and strategies to navigate their environment.</p> <p>SERVICE DELIVERY MODEL: offered in the students' "home" school: SDI; PT; OT; AT; SL; V</p>	<b>1:40 students</b>



<b>SERVICE:</b> AT = ASSISTIVE TECHNOLOGY H = HEARING OT = OCCUPATIONAL THERAPY PT = PHYSICAL THERAPY SDI = Specially Designed Instruction SL = Speech Language V = Vision	<b>SUGGESTED RATIO</b>
<b>ADAPTED PHYSICAL EDUCATION</b> Physical education resource staff provide support to school-based P.E. teachers through a collaborative model. The collaborative model may include assisting with assessment, planning, implementing, and evaluating specially designed instruction aligned to curriculum for students with gross motor delays.  SERVICE DELIVERY MODEL: OFFERED IN THE STUDENTS' "HOME" SCHOOL: SDI; P; V	<b>1:35 students</b>
<b>ASSISTIVE TECHNOLOGY SUPPORT SERVICES</b> The assistive technology specialists and technicians provide support to staff, students and families for students who require technology to access the curriculum and/or to participate in their educational environment.  SERVICE DELIVERY MODEL: OFFERED IN THE STUDENTS' "HOME" SCHOOL: SDI; AT	<b>1:200 services</b>
<b>OCCUPATIONAL THERAPY</b> These services are delivered to students, school teams and families. They may include identifying strategies and aids to improve school performance, activities to develop improved fine motor control, self-care skills or to promote body awareness, postural control and eye-hand coordination.  SERVICE DELIVERY MODEL: OFFERED IN THE STUDENTS' "HOME" SCHOOL: SDI; OT	<b>1:30 students</b> <b>1: 40 hours</b>
<b>PHYSICAL THERAPY</b> This service enables students with physical or health related disabilities to access their school program. Services are provided as direct therapy to students and/or as consultation to classroom and schoolwide staff.  SERVICE DELIVERY MODEL: OFFERED IN THE STUDENTS' "HOME" SCHOOL: SDI; PT	<b>1:30 students</b> <b>1:40 hours</b>
<b>SPEECH LANGUAGE SERVICES</b> These services allow for the identification and providing of support to students who exhibit communication deficits that affect their ability to access the curriculum. This may be done through direct or consultative services to the student, collaboration with families and school staff, or in working as a team with instructional staff within the classroom.  These services allow for the identification and treatment of communication deficits that affect a student's ability to access their curriculum. Services can be direct or consultative in nature and may involve therapeutic intervention, collaboration with families and school staff, and/or working as a team with instructional staff within the classroom.  SERVICE DELIVERY MODEL: offered in the students' "home" school: SDI; SL; AT	<b>1:40 students</b>
<b>NON-PUBLIC AND INTERAGENCY SERVICES</b> This program supports students enrolled in private separate day schools due to the complexity of their needs and the inability for the system to appropriately program for them based on their IEP needs. These staff oversee the delivery of effective instruction, facilitate multiple IEP meetings per student, participate in due process and mediation hearings and work closely with multiple stakeholders which includes families, students, outside agencies and schools.  SERVICE DELIVERY MODEL: offered in the student's assigned school: SDI; PT; OT; AT; SL; V; H; TB, C	<b>1: 100 students</b>

<b>SERVICE:</b> AT = ASSISTIVE TECHNOLOGY   H = HEARING   OT = OCCUPATIONAL THERAPY   PT = PHYSICAL THERAPY SDI = Specially Designed Instruction   SL = Speech Language   V = Vision		<b>SUGGESTED RATIO</b>
<b>TRANSITION SERVICES</b> Transition services are a coordinated set of activities designed to reflect the students' desires for post-school activities. Middle and high school teachers collaborate with assigned Transition Facilitators to ensure progress toward the successful implementation of the transition plan. During transition planning the student identifies the desired post-school outcomes, and the team assists the student in achieving that goal. This team oversees multiple initiatives including the Community Vocational Program, Supported Employment Program, Project Search; and the On Campus Transition Program. In addition, they support students with disabilities who need internships or work-based learning opportunities for their completer program graduation requirements.  SERVICE DELIVERY MODEL: OFFERED IN THE STUDENTS "HOME" SCHOOL: SDI; PT; OT; AT; SL; V; H		<b>1 Facilitator:</b> <b>2HS + Feedings schools</b>
<b>ON CAMPUS TRANSITION PROGRAM at AACC</b> A two-year program at Anne Arundel Community College for students who have been identified with a developmental disability and are within their last two years of entitlement with AACPS. The OCTP allows learning opportunities and experiences with age-appropriate peers by participating in selected community college courses and campus activities. Life skills, functional academic, and self-determination instruction are provided by an AACPS Special Education teacher and supported by AACPS teaching assistants. Course selections will vary from year to year but are typically in the areas of art, health, and physical education.  SERVICE DELIVERY MODEL: SDI; AT		<b>1T+2TA: 12 students</b>
<b>PROJECT SEARCH</b> A one-year, business-led transition program that takes place entirely at the host business for students in their last year of entitlement with AACPS. Project SEARCH provides real-life work experiences to help students make successful transitions from school to employment. Total workplace immersion facilitates a seamless combination of classroom instruction, career exploration, and relevant job-skills training through strategically designed internships. Project SEARCH is an international trademarked and copyrighted program model, which focuses solely on employment for Project SEARCH interns.		

### **Parentally Placed Students in Private and Religious Schools**

The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) requires public school systems to provide child find for children unilaterally placed in private or religious affiliated schools by their parents. Within Anne Arundel County, all private and religious schools' representatives from each school are invited to attend an annual meeting. AACPS shares information about how Federal IDEA Funds can be used by non-public schools at the annual meeting. Comments and concerns are invited. After consultation with the private and religious school representatives, AACPS determines what services will be provided. Direct speech services will be provided to those students whose speech impairments adversely affect their educational performance. IDEA does not include students who are participating in a home instruction program.

### **Number and Type of Service Providers**

Anne Arundel County Public Schools works collaboratively with the Health Department in securing related service providers for the domains of Nursing Services and Health Assistants. Assignments are made on a school-by-school basis and are aligned with IEPs.



Vision and Hearing Itinerants, Speech-Language Pathologists, Occupational Therapists/COTAs, Physical Therapists, and Psychologists/LCSWs are employees of Anne Arundel County Public Schools unless concerns over FAPE drive a contractual agreement. Assignments for county personnel are also made on a school-by-school basis and are aligned with IEP hours.

<b>CURRENT STAFFING ALLOCATIONS 2023 – 2024 SY</b>			
<b>PROGRAM/SERVICE</b>	<b>NON INSTRUCT/ SUPPORT</b>	<b>TEACHER(S)</b>	<b>TEACHING ASST/ TECHNICIANS</b>
<b>INFANT and TODDLER SERVICES</b>	.25 Bilingual Fac 2.6 Behavior Specialists 1 Secretary	24.3 Teachers 16.6 SLPs 7.3 OTs 10.2 PTs 1 Hearing 1 Resource Teacher	4.5 TAs 1 Technician
<b>COMMUNITY BASED SERVICES</b>	.25 Bilingual Fac 1 IEP Clerk .5 Secretary	9 Teachers 16.4 SLPs	18 Technicians
<b>EARLY CHILDHOOD SPECIAL EDUCATION SERVICES</b>	.25 Bilingual Fac	31.5 Teachers 1 Resource Teachers	31.4 TAs
<b>CHILD FIND SERVICES</b>	25 Bilingual Fac 1 IEP Clerk	6 Teachers (Diagnostic) 6 SLPs	1 TA 1 Technician
<b>SCHOOL AGED CO-TAUGHT SPECIALIZED INSTRUCTION (PK – 12)</b>	33 Department Chairs 24.2 IEP Facilitators 38 IEP Clerks	509.84 Teachers	160.35 TAs
<b>SELF-CONTAINED INSTRUCTION</b>		21 Teachers (Elementary)  22 Teachers (Middle)  9.5 Teachers (High)	4 TAs (Elementary)  3.5 TAs (Middle)  6 TAs (High)
<b>ALTERNATE CURRICULUM CLASSROOMS</b>	1 AP	78 Teachers K- 12	82 TAs
<b>REGIONAL PROGRAMS for STUDENTS WITH EMOTIONAL DISABILITIES and OTHER BEHAVIORALLY RELATED DISORDERS</b>	5 APs 1 IEP Facilitator 3 Secretaries	33.25 Teachers K - 12	35 TAs 1 Technician 3 Crisis Interventionists
<b>THE PHOENIX ACADEMY for STUDENTS WITH EMOTIONAL DISABILITIES and OTHER BEHAVIORALLY RELATED DISORDERS</b>	.5 Principal 2 APs 1 Department Chair 1 IEP Facilitator 1 IEP Clerk 1 Secretary	17 Teachers K - 12	4 TAs 13 Technicians 3 Crisis Interventionists 1 Perm Sub
<b>SERVICES FOR STUDENTS on the AUTISM SPECTRUM and RELATED DISORDERS</b>	1.0 APs 1.0 IEP Facilitator	15 Teachers K- 12	20 TAs
<b>DEVELOPMENTAL CENTERS – SEPARATE SPECIAL EDUCATION SCHOOL (Central Special, Marley Glen, Ruth Parker Eason)</b>	3 Principals 3 Assistant Principals 1.6 Department Chair 3 IEP Facilitators 1.0 IEP Clerk 6 Secretaries	46 Teachers K - 21 14.2 Cultural Arts	81.5 TAs 3 Crisis Interventionists 14 Perm Sub

**CURRENT STAFFING ALLOCATIONS  
2023 – 2024 SY**

PROGRAM/SERVICE	NON INSTRUCT/ SUPPORT	TEACHER(S)	TEACHING ASST/ TECHNICIANS
PROGRAM for STUDENTS WHO ARE DEAF or HARD OF HEARING	1 Specialist	1 Teacher 5 Itinerant Teachers	1 TA
PROGRAMS for STUDENTS with VISUAL IMPAIRMENTS		5 Itinerant Teachers	3 TAs
PROGRAMS for STUDENTS in need of ORIENTATION & MOBILITY		1 Itinerant Teacher	
ADAPTED PHYSICAL EDUCATION	1 Specialist	.9 Teacher	
ASSISTIVE TECHNOLOGY SUPPORT SERVICES	6 Specialists		2 Technicians
OCCUPATIONAL THERAPY		7.3 Infant & Toddler 42.07 Pk - 21	
PHYSICAL THERAPY		10.2 Infant & Toddler 13.9 Pk - 21	
SPEECH LANGUAGE SERVICES		30 Birth to Five 5.2 Itinerant 116.6 Pk - 21	
NON-PUBLIC AND INTERAGENCY SERVICES		5 Specialists 1 IEP Facilitator	3 Technicians
TRANSITION SERVICES		1 Specialist 8 Facilitator	6 Technicians
ON CAMPUS TRANSITION PROGRAM at AACC		1 Teacher	3 TAs
PSYCHOLOGIST	97 Positions		
SOCIAL WORKER (LCSW)	56.3 Positions		
NURSING &NURSING RELATED SERVICES	Contractual as needed		
AUDIOLOGIST	Contractual as needed		

**ASSESSMENT OF STAFFING REQUIREMENTS TO MEET THE NEEDS OF STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES**

Staffing analysis is done a year in advance through the budget process, spring staffing allocations, and then re-evaluated periodically throughout the year through data and service analysis. Staffing allocations, although initially earmarked based on multiple data points, may be altered prior to the school year's initiation. Additionally, temporary support assistants (TSAs) are assigned throughout the year in response to student needs and educational requirements of children. It is recognized, especially with the development of medically fragile group homes, DSS & DJS community residential settings, Fort Meade housing in Anne Arundel County, proximity to D.C., and Baltimore City student transfers that mobility can affect the staffing allocation at any particular school at any time during the year.

If it is determined that services cannot be provided within the student's home school, service options at regional programs (e.g. ACC, Autism ED Specialty programs, and elementary self-contained) are then examined within the continuum to determine the appropriate location where the student's needs can be met. The focus is the implementation of a service model that incorporates consultation, teaming, and on-going collaborative planning among the managers, special education resource teachers (SERT) and specialists within the Department of Special Education. The goal is a community approach to meet student needs with decreasing removal from neighborhood facilities or servicing students outside of the general education classroom.



Data and data collection activities conducted throughout the year provide information for the monitoring and evaluation of current caseloads, the county's staffing plan and future needs. The Department of Special Education has also fostered a hands-on and statistical approach to the data and service analysis through the creation of the Statistical Summary. The Statistical Summary examines and compares school enrollment, number of special education students, IEP classroom instruction hours (inside and outside general education), number of teachers and TAs. Averages for teacher caseload and classroom instruction hours are calculated and compared to national averages. This data is updated during the year and is reviewed by the Directors, Coordinators, Managers, SERTs and specialists within the Department of Special Education. Staffing allocations for Speech Therapists, Occupational Therapists, and Physical Therapists are reviewed separately on an ongoing basis by Directors, Coordinators, and Managers.

SDI Coordinators, Special Education Resource Teachers, Program Specialists and Behavior Specialists are aligned elementary/secondary (K-12) with the thirteen feeder systems. They work closely with the Regional Assistant Superintendents and Office of School Performance Directors to ensure on-going attention to the needs of students with disabilities within each feeder. Throughout the year, Department of Special Education staff are visiting classrooms, collaborating with teachers and related service providers about caseloads, and maintaining communication with general educators, special educators and administrators.

### **PROCESS FOR ENSURING AVAILABLE RESOURCES IN THE PROVISION OF FAPE**

Every fall a request for staffing is prepared for the local budget. Comprehensive planning and open discussions with the Budget Office, Department fiscal and programmatic leaders support the annual budget development. Input is also obtained from the Office of School Performance, Division of Curriculum & Instruction, principals, teachers, and the Special Education Citizens' Advisory Committee (SECAC).

Each fall, Statistical Summary reports are compiled which identify student enrollments. These documents specify the number of required service hours provided to students along with the number of special education students exiting from a school. The Department of Special Education uses this information along with the October Child Count to calculate the projected number of special education students at each school and the number of hours of specialized services required for the upcoming school year. Special education staffing allocations are determined based on this information. Central Office staff compile current data and projections for the coming year on a semesterized basis. This information is reviewed by the leadership team in order to ensure appropriate current staffing and to plan for the coming year.

General education teachers are critical providers in the implementation of specialized instruction and the delivery of interventions. They also actively participate throughout the IEP Team process as constituted IEP Team members in the development of Individualized Education Programs. General education teachers receive information about the needs of students with disabilities, including IEP goals, supplemental aids and services and accommodations and modifications through articulation meetings and receipt of the Snapshot IEP. Furthermore, efforts are made to provide collaborative planning time for special education and general education co-teachers through grant and other funding sources throughout the school year as this is considered a critical feature in effective Co-teaching success. This has been reinforced with the provision of the Differentiated Instruction Site posted on the Brightspace Learning Management System.

Special education central office staff regularly visit classrooms throughout the school system. They also participate in IEP Team meetings as needed; are active members in the development of curriculum; assist with IEP development and periodically review the delivery of student's services to ensure that FAPE is being provided. Additionally, special education resource teachers are available throughout the school year to assist school teams in developing and implementing instructional schedules that promote access, engagement and IEP integration. For the 2023-2024 school year, areas of focus include:



- Fidelity of IEP implementation.
- Increased implementation of specially designed instruction.
- Improved customer service to families and guests.
- Support to schools identified as CSI/ATSI.
- Support of all new or revised curriculum.
- Support the social, emotional, and behavioral needs of early learners with disabilities.
- Individual, pair, or small group coaching as identified in collaboration with building administrators; and
- As needed, Professional Learning Opportunities are offered at specific schools or to specific feeder systems or within certain clusters.

Furthermore, special education central office staff are in schools evaluating the needs of students and determining the need for additional programs and staffing. For any question a parent, teacher or school administrator may have regarding the need for additional staff, contact is made through the school administrator to the appropriate special education Coordinator. Those inquiring are informed as to how staffing allocation decisions have been formed, including specific data used to drive the decisions.

The Department's Handbook is an on-line resource. The Partners for Success staff are also available for technical assistance, training and IEP Team process navigation for parents seeking information or experiencing a specific concern.

General education teachers provide direct instruction to special education students through the county's Co-teaching model. In this educational environment, general educators are the "teacher of record". Together the general educator and special educator collaborate to provide direct instruction in specific content and ensure appropriate implementation of differentiated instruction, specially designed instruction, accommodations, and modifications. These individuals work directly with curriculum writers throughout the year to ensure that UDL, differentiation and specially designed instruction examples and options are embedded in the system curriculum.

Hiring depends upon a pool of accredited candidates. The Department of Special Education works diligently with the Department of Human Resources to enhance the talent pool through communications, social media, participation in recruiting trips and county job fairs, and active participation in the screening and interview process. The goal is always recruit, hire, and retain, educators, related service providers, and support staff to support the implementation of a free appropriate public education (FAPE) that emphasizes special education and related services designed to meet the child's unique needs.

In addition to participation in on-going recruitment with the Department of Human Resources, Anne Arundel County Public Schools has completed the recruitment and interview process for Resident Teacher Certificate (RTC) cohorts. These have been highly successful programs in Anne Arundel County and enhance retention and teacher satisfaction.

As with national trends, historically Anne Arundel County Public Schools has had to contract with outside vendors especially in the areas of vision, occupational therapy, and physical therapy. In the last two years, AACPS has had to increasingly work with contract agencies to ensure the provision of FAPE to hire teachers, teaching assistants, and qualified related service providers. Creatively, AACPS has established a county floater system with internal part-time staff during times of need to minimize service delays.

When vacancies occur in special education or related services, every effort is made to recruit certified special education teachers or therapists. The Department of Special Education works closely with the Department of Human Resources and the building principal in this recruitment. When a certified substitute cannot be identified, Central Office Resource staff consult with school staff and the substitute on lesson planning, IEP implementation, effective instruction, and classroom management.



Additionally, if vacancies occur for a significant period of time, compensatory services will be discussed and coordinated with families through the IEP Team process.

### **Dealing with Changes in Staffing Needs and Vacancies**

Central Office support staff work continuously with school leadership to adjust staffing and scheduling as needed. Administrators receive notification of the coming year's staffing allocations along with their general education information in March. Any Principal who is being considered for a decrease in staffing is contacted in person prior to the distribution of allocations to discuss the potential impact on their school and the reasoning stimulating the possible decrease. Any principal who is slated for a potential increase in staffing dependent upon the FINAL June budget approval, is notified in person that this may happen, but the increase does not show on their allocations. If the increase is funded in June, a new allocation is sent to them showing the increased staffing.

Temporary Support Assistants (TSA) may be assigned to support students with disabilities on a temporary basis, with the purpose of increasing student independence and fading support. The TSA could support one or more students with varying levels of abilities, across potentially a variety of educational settings (e.g., self-contained, resource, inclusion, etc.), throughout the school day. Each school meets with their Special Education Resource Teacher in late spring to analyze their needs for the coming year. Once the requests are submitted, the program and behavior specialists meet with the SDI Coordinators to determine the best allocations possible given the amount of funding available. Schools are informed of their preliminary allocations in early July with final allocations given in August. Throughout the year, as new students move into the county or are identified as needing this support, additional funding may be allocated.

### **PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT**

Professional growth opportunities for school personnel in the requirements of the *Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act 2004* (IDEIA) include:

- Access to general curriculum
- Collaborative development of Curriculum and Assessments that integrate UDL/DI

All newly hired Special Education Teachers, including RTC (Resident Teacher Certification) teachers, participate in a 4-day, mandated professional development focusing on the components of Specially Designed Instruction (SDI), entitled: Specially Designed Instruction – Start to Finish. The purpose of this professional development series is to improve the implementation of specially designed instruction (SDI) by connecting the main components of the special education process. Beginning with the administration of standardized assessments, participants will then move into analyzing and using the data, along with county and state performance measures, to develop instructionally sound Individualized Education Programs (IEPs) that will inform SDI in the classroom. As a result of these classes, special educators will provide improved and targeted SDI, helping to narrow the gap between the performance of students with disabilities and their nondisabled peers.

Acknowledging that substitutes have not been as easily attainable as they have been in the past, the 4-day training is offered in two sessions that run on different days. This allows those requiring training to coordinate schedules within the building to ensure coverage needs are not a barrier to participation. Should multiple teachers in a building need training, the administration would work to ensure they are sent to different sessions of the training so that all special educators are not out on the same day.

Through the Internal Monitoring process, select schools are targeted to have two IEPs for each special educator reviewed and scored based on a rubric aligned to the Maryland State Department of Education comprehensive monitoring process. Teachers receive feedback based on the review of their IEPs to ensure that IEPs meets the unique



needs of a student with a disability and are both instructionally appropriate and meet compliance standards. Individualized and small group coaching and professional development will occur as needed.

In addition to the four days of training, the Department offers after-school follow-up workshops for those who recognize a need for some re-teaching or additional guided practice, such as:

- Data Collection and Progress Report Writing
- Equity in Action: Leveraging Universal Design for Learning for Access and Inclusion
- Specially Designed Instruction for General Education Teachers
- Summer Behavior Institute
- Transition Activities and Progress Monitoring
- WIAT 4 Test Administration Training for Special Education Teachers
- Woodcock Johnson IV Test of Achievement Assessment Training for Special Educators
- Writing Quality IEP Goals and Objectives

The Department of Special Education offers a four-day symposium on co-teaching. The goal of the Co-Teaching Academy is for co-teaching partners to apply the learned knowledge and skills to design, deliver, monitor, and evaluate instruction for a diverse group of students.

Three cohorts for co-teaching pairs are offered: - Elementary Cohort - Secondary Reading and Writing Cohort - Secondary Math Cohort. Each strand begins their co-teaching journey learning about Effective Co-Teaching Partnerships and Disability Awareness. During Effective Co-Teaching Partnerships teams learn strategies to plan collaboratively and promote best practices in a shared learning environment. Through Disability Awareness, teams learn more about the characteristics of high incidence disabilities and impact on student achievement. All teachers also participate in Understanding the Role of the General Education Teacher, Culturally Responsive & Inclusive Classrooms, and UDL- Utilizing Assistive Technology/Instructional Technology in Co-Taught Classrooms.

For elementary co-teachers, participants complete the following sessions: SDI in Elementary Reading, SDI in Elementary Math, and Utilizing Co-Taught Models within the Curriculum (Reading & Math). In SDI in Elementary Reading, co-teachers deepen their understanding of the 5 Pillars of Reading, review the process for planning for SDI, and implement core knowledge into future reading plans. During SDI in Elementary Math, participants use evidence-based strategies to specially design instruction and create math lessons using multi-sensory practices to increase student engagement and improve the achievement of students with disabilities. During Utilizing Co-Taught Models within the Curriculum (Reading & Math) participants explore ways to use the five co-teaching models for engaging and accessible reading and math instruction using the AACPS curriculum and plan activities to use in future lessons.

Secondary co-teachers participate in a Reading/Writing strand or a Math focused strand depending on content preference. Co-teaching pairs who want to build their knowledge of co-teaching in reading and writing, attend the following sessions: SDI in Secondary Reading, SDI in Secondary Writing, and Utilizing Co-Teaching within AACPS Curriculum (Secondary Reading). In SDI in Secondary Reading co-teachers deepen their understanding of the 5 Pillars of Reading, review the process for planning for SDI, and implement core knowledge into future reading plans. During SDI in Secondary Writing participants practice collaborative planning and instruction, focusing on each step of the writing process to build student success through scaffolding and SDI. During Utilizing Co-Teaching within AACPS Curriculum (Secondary Reading) co-teachers collaborate during a modeled double-plan lesson planning process using AACPS curriculum. Co-teachers also review methods of data collection and explore supplemental resources available to them to support all student achievement.

Co-teaching pairs who want to build their understanding of co-teaching in math at the secondary level, attend the following sessions: Factors that Influence Math Problem Solving, Utilizing Co-teaching Models within AACPS Curriculum- Secondary Math and SDI in Secondary Math. In Factors that Influence Math Problem Solving participants learn how



students' executive functioning can impact learning during math lessons. Strategies for overcoming learning differences are explored and resources shared to support future lesson plans. During Utilizing Co-teaching Models within AACPS Curriculum- Secondary Math, participants explore best practices for planning for and implementing co-teaching models during math lessons using AACPS math curriculum to increase student achievement. During SDI in Secondary Math co-teachers use evidence-based strategies to specially design instruction and create math lessons using multi-sensory practices to increase student engagement and improve the achievement of students with disabilities.

The Special Education Department in AACPS opens all their Professional Growth Opportunities to general educators.

## **MONITORING AND EVALUATION**

The provision of Special Educations services in AACPS is reviewed throughout the year and annually in conjunction with the Local Application for Federal Funds (LAFF) and Consolidated Local Implementation Grant (CLIG). The primary focus is on improving educational results and outcomes for students with disabilities. Three performance indicators focus on the provision of special education services in the LRE (see chart below for the percentage of students, ages 6 – 21, by the LRE code). For each indicator, MSDE has set a measurable and rigorous target to be met:

- $\geq 71.00\%$  of students with disabilities, ages 6 – 21, receive special education services inside the regular education classroom 80% or more of the day (LRE A);
- $\leq 11.75\%$  of students with disabilities, ages 6 – 21, receive special education services inside the regular education classroom  $< 40\%$  of the day (LRE C);
- $\leq 6.25\%$  students with disabilities, ages 6 – 21, receive special education services in public or private separate day schools, residential placements, or homebound or hospital services.

Three performance indicators focus on the provision of special education services in the LRE (see chart below for the percentage of students, ages 3-5, by the LRE code). For each indicator, MSDE has set a measurable and rigorous target to be met:

- $\geq 62.00\%$  of students aged 3-5 LRE: Services in regular early childhood setting the majority of the day;
- $\leq 20.00\%$  of students aged 3-5 LRE: Separate School or Class;
- $\leq .33\%$  of students aged 3-5 LRE: Home.

Annual Data on SPP/APR Part B Indicators for the period July 1, 2021 – June 30, 2022 (the most recent data available) indicate the following:

	State Target	Local Results 7/1/21 – 6/30/22
Students aged 6-21 whose LRE is $\geq 80\%$ of the day (MD SSIS LRE A)	$\geq 71.00\%$	74.6%
Students aged 6-21 whose LRE is $\geq 80\%$ of the day (MD SSIS LRE A)	$\leq 11.75\%$	8.6%
Students aged 6-21 whose LRE is separate public/private day and residential	$\leq 6.25\%$	7.8%
Students aged 3-5 LRE: Services in regular early childhood setting the majority of the day	$\geq 62.00\%$	47.62%
Students aged 3-5 LRE: Separate School or Class	$\leq 20.00\%$	29.73%
Students aged 3-5 LRE: Home	0.33%	0.30%

The LRE data for AACPS indicate the need to improve the continuum of special education services available to students, especially for students ages 3 -5. Upon review and reflection, it appears that current instructional models lack the ability to appropriately address the special needs of students, especially in providing services in the least restrictive environment appropriate for the student.

The Department of Human Resources reported vacancies for special education teachers, teacher assistants, related service providers, and Department of Special Education resource staff at the beginning of the 2023-2024 school year. Due to recruitment efforts and additional incentives to retain staff, the number of reported vacancies was less than the 2022-2023 school year.

Anne Arundel County Public Schools will continue to review special education staffing requirements in each school through an ongoing process related to improving student performance, by central office review, focused on improving student outcomes, legal compliance, and program effectiveness in order to efficiently utilize the staff that we have.

Based on a review of the 2022- 2023 staffing plan and feedback obtained throughout the school year, the following issues needed to be considered in the provision of special education and related services for the 2023 – 2024 school year:

- Request additional special education teacher positions to account for increased number of students with disabilities and an improved continuum of services.
- Request additional IEP clerk positions to provide clerical support for special education to allow special education teachers additional time to provide special education services.
- Request positions to maintain special education support to students attending Virtual Academy.
- Request additional positions to support early childhood special education services to students in inclusive settings, in alignment with the expansion prekindergarten classes.

#### **Enhanced Staffing Request for FY '24**

<b>FY24 BUDGET ENHANCEMENT REQUESTS COUNTYWIDE - BIRTH TO 21</b>			
<b>POSITION TYPE</b>	<b>Superintendent Recommended</b>	<b>Board Request</b>	<b>Final Allocation</b>
Special Education – Comprehensive	70.2	70.2	0.0
Special Education- Specialty Sites	35.0	35.0	0.0
Special Education- ECI Conversion to Prekindergarten (4 Sites)	1.0	1.0	0.0
Special Education- Birth to Five Staffing, Registrar	1.0	1.0	0.0
Special Education- Non-Public IEP Clerk	1.0	1.0	0.0
Special Education- Office of Special Services, Speech Pathologist	7.0	7.0	0.0
Virtual Academy	11.5	11.5	11.5
Prekindergarten	9.0	9.0	9.0
RISE	1.0	1.0	1.0



### **ADDITIONAL TIMELINE CONSIDERATIONS:**

October	October 30 <sup>th</sup> Child Count finalized and submitted to MSDE
October – November	Current staffing trends are assessed based on enrollments after September 30 <sup>th</sup> /October 1 <sup>st</sup> Special Education Leadership Team, Department Chairpersons and Lead Teachers provide input regarding staffing/service needs Special Education Citizens' Advisory Committee provides input regarding staffing/service needs
January – February	Statistical Summary reports with updated information are analyzed
March – April	Schools receive staffing allocations
Summer	June 30th exit data finalized and submitted to MSDE

