

Department of Special Education

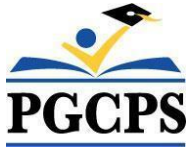
Staffing Plan

2021-2022



Prince George's County Public Schools

**Approved by Board of Education
on August 12, 2021**



Prince George's County Board of Education

Juanita Miller, Ed.D., Chair

Sonya Williams, Vice Chair, District 9

David Murray, District 1

Joshua M. Thomas, District 2

Pamela Boozer-Strother, District 3

Shayla Adams-Stafford, District 4

Raaheela Ahmed, District 5

Belinda Queen, District 6

Kenneth F. Harris II, District 7

Edward Burroughs III, District 8

D. Paul Monteiro Jr., Appointed

Curtis Valentine, M.P.P., Appointed

Alvaro Ceron-Ruiz, Student Board Member

Monica E. Goldson, Ed.D., Chief Executive Officer and
Secretary/Treasurer

TABLE OF CONTENTS

I. Overview.....	5
A. Assurance.....	5
B. Background.....	5
C. Mission Statement.....	5
D. Vision Statement.....	5
E. County Demographics.....	6
II. Evidence of Public Input.....	7
III. Maintenance of Effort.....	9
IV. Staffing Patterns of Service Providers.....	9
V. Settings Along the Continuum.....	10
VI. Service Delivery Settings in Prince George's County Schools.....	13
A. Students in Elementary School.....	14
B. Students in Middle School.....	14
C. Students in High School.....	15
D. Early Childhood Program.....	15
E. Students with Intensive Needs.....	16
VII. Staffing Guidelines for Service Providers.....	16
A. Staffing Guidelines for Children Ages Birth through Five.....	16
B. Staffing Guidelines for Students in Elementary Schools.....	17
C. Staffing Guidelines for Students in Middle Schools.....	17
D. Staffing Guidelines for Students in K-8 Boundary Schools.....	18
E. Staffing Guidelines for Students in K-8 Lottery/Specialty Schools and Charter Schools.....	19
F. Staffing Guidelines for Students in High Schools.....	20
G. Alternative Schools Staffing.....	21
H. Staffing Guidelines for Students in Specialized Programs in Comprehensive Schools.....	21
I. Staffing Guidelines for Students in the Regional School Programs	23
J. Staffing Guidelines for Related Services.....	23
K. Additional Staff Distribution.....	26

VIII. Number and Type of Service Providers..... 26
IX. Professional Learning..... 27
X. Evaluation of the Local Staffing Plan..... 31

APPENDICES

A. Process Guide Chapter 13: Staff Vacancies – What to Do..... 33
B. Frequently Asked Questions About Vacancies..... 35
C. Vacancies Checklist..... 36

Prince George's County Public Schools
Department of Special Education Staffing Plan
SY 2021 – 2022

I. OVERVIEW

A. Assurance

This Staffing Plan is submitted consistent with the procedures provided by the Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE) for documenting the process that each jurisdiction uses to determine the numbers and types of service providers to ensure provision of a Free Appropriate Public Education (FAPE) to each student with a disability in the Least Restrictive Environment (LRE). It includes:

- Evidence of public input;
- Evidence of maintenance of effort within the meaning of 34 CFR §300.231, Maintenance of Effort, and COMAR 13A.02.05, Maintenance of Effort;
- Staffing patterns and the types of providers needed; and
- Description of how state regulatory requirements will be met.

B. Background

Public agencies are required to submit a staffing plan to MSDE along with their annual Local Application for Federal Funds. The plan documents the data input procedures used by the school system to determine the numbers and types of service providers needed to ensure provision of FAPE to each student with a disability in the LRE. It describes the process that will be used to staff schools to meet the special education service needs of students in the upcoming school year. The staffing plan provides a procedural framework to ensure that MSDE requirements are met, including any Corrective Action Plans (CAPs) related to the provision of services for students with disabilities.

C. Mission Statement

The mission of the Department of Special Education (DSE) is to:

- provide specially-designed instruction and related services through a continuum of services to children and students with disabilities from birth to age 21;
- ensure that the rights of students with disabilities are protected and that federal and state regulatory requirements are met; and
- provide resources to parents, guardians, and families of children and students with disabilities.

D. Vision Statement

To ensure that students with disabilities graduate college, career and community-ready.

E. County Demographics

The official October 1, 2020, count for students with disabilities ages 3-21 receiving special education services in Prince George's County Public Schools was 14,956 or 11.35% of the total enrollment of 131,657 students. A six-year enrollment trend of the count of these students is below.

Table 1 – Snapshot of October Child Count for Each Year

2015-2016	2016-2017	2017-2018	2018-2019	2019-2020	2020-2021
14,668	14,887	14,999	15,120	15,323	14,956

Table 2 – Students with Disabilities by Disability – October 2020 Child Count*

**Does not include 110 Eligibility 6 students (on an Extended Individualized Family Service Plan)*

	Total Special Education	Intellectual Disability		Hearing Impairment		Deaf		Speech/ Language	
		Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
PGCPS	14,956	812	5.43	58	0.39	27	0.18	914	6.11

	Total Special Education	Visual Impairments		Emotionally Disabled		Orthopedically Impaired		Other Health Impaired	
		Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
PGCPS	14,956	36	0.24	735	4.91	26	0.17	1853	12.39

	Total Special Education	Specific Learning Disability		Deaf/Blind		Multiple Disabilities	
		Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
PGCPS	14,956	5,456	36.48	0	0	652	4.36

	Total Special Education	Autism		Traumatic Brain Injury		Developmental Delay	
		Total	%	Total	%	Total	%

PGCPS	14,956	2,167	14.49	27	0.18	2193	14.66
-------	--------	-------	-------	----	------	------	-------

II. EVIDENCE OF PUBLIC INPUT

The Communications Office provides notification of the Board of Education schedule for the development and approval of the Annual Operating Budget. The schedule is posted on the school system’s website. The dates for public hearings and work sessions on the proposed operating budget for the next fiscal year are also distributed. The schedule is listed below.

Table 4 – Public Input Information

Event	Related Budget	Date
CEO’s Budget Presentation to the Board of Education	Operating	December 10, 2020
Budget Public Hearing	Operating	January 2021
Budget Work Session	Operating	January 2021
Budget Public Hearing	Operating	February 2021
Budget Work Session	Operating	February 2021
Adoption of Board Requested Budget	Operating	February 25, 2021
Board’s Requested Budget submitted to the County Executive	Operating	March 1, 2021
County Executive submits requested budget to the County Council	Operating	March 2021
Maryland State Legislature adopts its final budget, including school funded amounts	Operating	April 2021
County Council holds two budget hearings	Operating	April/May 2021
County Council approves budget for Prince George’s County	Operating	May 2021
Board of Education reconciles to the County’s approved budget	Operating	June 2021
Board of Education Budget Adoption	Operating	June 24, 2021
Fiscal Year 2022 Budget Takes Effect	Operating	July 1, 2021

Additionally, the proposed staffing plan is presented to the Special Education Citizens Advisory Committee (SECAC) for review and input. The Department of Special Education currently has a cross-functional staffing plan committee. The goal of the committee is to ensure staffing levels for students with disabilities are in line with meeting Free and Appropriate Public Education (FAPE) in the least restrictive environment (LRE). The committee consists of community stakeholders, Principals,

Special Education Coordinators, teachers, Department of Special Education staff members, and other central office staff. The Staffing Plan Committee is working to review the current 2022 Staffing Plan, receive information regarding the 2022 PGCPs Special Education budget allocations, and make recommendations for revisions and additions to the 2023 Staffing Plan and Operating Budget.

Below is a list of the departments and school-based staff members who are represented on the Department of Special Education Cross-Functional Staffing Committee:

School-Based Staff Members:
Principal from a High School
Principal from a Middle School
Principal from an Elementary School
Principal Regional School
Comprehensive Special Education Program Coordinator
Special Education Department Chair
Special Education Resource Teacher
Budget Management Services:
Budget Director
Budget Analyst for the Department of Special Education
Special Education Business Operations Staff:
Business Operations Coordinator
Supervisor, Data Management, Department of Special Education
Fiscal Analyst Department of Special Education
Human Resources:
Director of Human Resources and Staffing
Central Office:
Associate Superintendent, Department of Special Education
Instructional Director
Coordinating Supervisor, Assessment and Accountability/Instructional Supports
Coordinating Supervisor, K-12 Instruction
Special Education Supervisor, Elementary Schools
Special Education Supervisor, Secondary Schools
Coordinating Supervisor, Early Childhood
Autism Specialist
Employee Performance and Evaluation Specialist
Community Members:
Special Education Citizens Advisory Committee Member
Learning Disability Association of Maryland
PGCEA Representation, Chair of the Special Education Committee

III. MAINTENANCE OF EFFORT

The Chief Executive Officer for Prince George’s County Public Schools (PGCPS) provides signed assurance that Part B funds will be used only to supplement, and not supplant, State and Local funds used for the education of students with disabilities. Staff members from all offices ensure that State and Local funds are expended for the current fiscal year and are equal to or greater than the amount spent in the previous fiscal year. The table below documents State and Local funds expended and/or allocated to the special education program and documents Maintenance of Effort.

FY 2017 Actual	FY 2018 Actual	FY 2019 Actual
309,081,719	315,364,051	333,949,566
FY 2020 Actual	FY 2021 Project Actual	FY 2022 Budgeted Request
341,430,715	343,418,179	371,672,320

IV. STAFFING PATTERNS OF SERVICE PROVIDERS

The Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) Consolidated Strategic Plan for Prince George’s County Public Schools guides the system’s efforts to prepare students for college, career and community readiness. The ESSA Consolidated Strategic Plan reflects the mission of the school system and addresses three priority goal areas. It is intended to provide coordination and focus for major initiatives and funding sources. The three area goals are designed to improve student achievement, student growth and school quality, and student success. Each goal area includes strategies that reflect the school system’s ongoing commitment to the development of inclusive learning opportunities to ensure that students with disabilities have access to the general education curriculum. The Department of Special Education collaborates with the Department of Student Services, the Department of Curriculum and Instruction, and the Department of Talent Development to plan collaboratively for students and staff members.

This collaboration occurs in accordance with the definition of LRE as defined in the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) Title I/B/612 (5) (A), which reads:

To the maximum extent appropriate, children with disabilities, including children in public or private institutions or other care facilities, are educated

with children who are not disabled, and special classes, separate schooling, or other removal of children with disabilities from the regular educational environment occurs only when the nature or severity of the disability of a child is such that education in regular classes with the use of supplementary aids and services cannot be achieved satisfactorily.

The Department of Special Education has reviewed staffing ratios and instructional delivery models, in accordance with Board directives, to determine how best to serve increased numbers of students in the LRE. Staffing needs for the 2021-2022 school year were addressed in the budget request submitted by the Department of Special Education in the fall of 2020.

V. SETTINGS ALONG THE CONTINUUM

PGCPS students with Individualized Education Programs (IEPs) receive special education and related services in a full continuum, which have been designed to meet their needs. The various settings along the continuum are expressed in terms of LRE codes.

The following LRE codes may be used for ages 6 - 21:

A = INSIDE GENERAL EDUCATION SETTINGS 80% OR MORE

6 – 21-year-old enrolled in a comprehensive school who receives special education and related services INSIDE GENERAL EDUCATION SETTING for 80% or more of the school day.

B = INSIDE GENERAL EDUCATION SETTINGS BETWEEN 40% AND 79%

6 – 21-year-old student enrolled in a comprehensive school who receives special education and related services INSIDE GENERAL EDUCATION SETTING at least 40%, but no more than 79% of the school day.

C = INSIDE GENERAL EDUCATION SETTINGS LESS THAN 40%

6 – 21-year-old enrolled in a comprehensive school who receives special education and related services INSIDE GENERAL EDUCATION SETTING less than 40% of the school day.

D = HOMEBOUND PLACEMENT

6 – 21-year-old who receives special education instruction at home.

E = HOSPITAL PLACEMENT

6 – 21-year-old who receives special education in a medical treatment facility on an in-patient basis.

F = PUBLIC SEPARATE DAY SCHOOL

6 – 21-year-old who receives special education and related services for greater than 50% of the school day in a public separate day facility that does not house programs for students without disabilities.

G = PRIVATE SEPARATE DAY SCHOOL

6 – 21-year-old who receives special education and related services greater than 50% of the school day in a private separate day facility that does not house programs for students without disabilities.

H = PUBLIC RESIDENTIAL FACILITY

6 – 21-year-old who receives special education and related services greater than 50% of the school day in a public residential facility.

I = PRIVATE RESIDENTIAL FACILITY

6 – 21-year-old who receives Special education and related services for greater than 50% of the school day in a private residential facility.

U = CORRECTIONAL FACILITIES

6 – 21-year-old who receives special education in correctional facilities:

- *Short term detention facilities (community-based or residential), or*
- *Correctional facilities.*

V = PARENTAL PLACEMENT IN PRIVATE SCHOOLS

6 – 21-year-old enrolled by their parents or guardians in regular parochial or other private schools, whose basic education is paid through private resources, and who receive special education and related services at public expense from a local educational agency or intermediate educational unit under a service plan.

The following LRE codes may be used for ages 3 - 5 only:

A Regular Early Childhood Program is a program that includes a majority (at least 50% percent of nondisabled children (i.e., children not on IEPs). This category may include but is not limited to Kindergarten, public or private; preschool classes, public or private; group child development centers; or child care.

W = IN THE REGULAR EDUCATION PROGRAM AT LEAST 10 HOURS PER WEEK

3 – 5-year-old who receives special education and related services in

the regular education program at least 10 hours per week.

X = IN THE REGULAR EDUCATION PROGRAM AT LEAST 10 HOURS PER WEEK

3 – 5-year-old who receives special education and related services with the majority of services in other locations.

Y = IN THE REGULAR EDUCATION PROGRAM LESS THAN 10 HOURS PER WEEK

3 – 5-year-old who receives special education and related services in the regular education program less than 10 hours per week.

Z = IN THE REGULAR EDUCATION PROGRAM LESS THAN 10 HOURS PER WEEK

3 – 5-year-old who receives special education and related with majority of services in other locations.

A special education classroom serves children with disabilities. This category may include, but is not limited to, programs in regular school buildings, trailers, portables, child care facilities, hospital facilities – outpatient, other community-based settings; separate school designed for children with disabilities; and residential school or medical facility – inpatient.

S = SPECIAL EDUCATION CLASS

3 – 5-year-old who receives special education and related services in a separate class.

F = SEPARATE SCHOOL

3 – 5-year-old who receives special education and related services in a separate school.

G = RESIDENTIAL FACILITY

3 – 5-year-old who receives special education and related services in a residential facility.

J = HOME

3 – 5-year-old who receives their special education and related services in the home.

T = SERVICE PROVIDER LOCATION OR SOME OTHER LOCATION THAT IS NOT IN ANY OTHER CATEGORY

- *Private clinicians' offices;*
- *Clinicians' offices located in school buildings;*

- *Hospital facilities on an outpatient basis; and*
- *Libraries and other public locations.*

LRE Codes by Student Count and Percentages

LRE 3-5	Count	Percentage
S	258	23.8%
T	11	1.0%
W	374	34.5%
X	88	8.1%
Y	195	18.0%
Z	157	14.5%
Grand Total	1,083	100.0%

LRE 6-21	Count	Percentage
A	10,102	72.8%
B	505	3.6%
C	1,978	14.3%
D	6	0.0%
E	1	0.0%
F	303	2.2%
G	921	6.6%
H	1	0.0%
I	3	0.0%
U	2	0.0%
V	51	0.4%
Grand Total	13,873	100.0%

VI. SERVICE DELIVERY SETTINGS IN PGCPs

It should be noted that specific considerations for staffing patterns and designated allocations are based not only on certification requirements but also on the ability to match identified areas of provider expertise with the needs of the population to be served. This is necessary to ensure appropriate implementation of IEP services as mandated by IDEA regulations. The DSE reviews staffing annually and makes

determinations as appropriate. In addition, the DSE may realign staff to accommodate changes in student enrollment and/or special education services during the rebalancing process in the fall.

A. Students in Elementary School

Students attending elementary school who qualify for special education services receive these services in a variety of settings, based on the needs identified on the IEP. Services may be delivered in one or a combination of the following settings:

- General education class settings with supports and services provided by special education resource teachers, related service providers, or other staff members as appropriate. Models of service delivery can include pullout services, push-in services, or co-teaching. Services consist of specially designed instruction per IEP goal area. Instruction follows the grade level Maryland College and Career Ready Standards with accommodations and modifications to the general education curriculum outlined on the IEP. The focus is to support academic, independence, or social skills within the grade level curriculum and provide direct instruction in identified goal areas. Instruction will be provided in general and or special education resource rooms.
- Some schools have specialized programs (e.g., Autism, Comprehensive Special Education Program, Community Referenced Instruction, Regional, Behavior and Social-Emotional Supports/Transition, Deaf and Hard of Hearing) that deliver services in a separate class setting. Separate class settings provide services for students who require small group instruction for a major portion of the school day. Special education teachers, related service providers, or other staff members as appropriate provide supports and services.

B. Students in Middle School

Most middle school students with IEPs receive special education services within the general education classroom. Special education service providers monitor students, co-teach with a general educator, and provide small group instruction inside the general education setting and/or academic resources. Some schools have specialized programs (e.g., Autism, Community Referenced Instruction, Regional, Behavior and Social-Emotional Support Programs, Deaf and Hard of Hearing,) where services are delivered in a separate class setting. Each comprehensive middle school has a special education department chairperson who helps to coordinate the overall special education program.

- Three types of Academic Resource Classes are available in all middle schools for students with specific/targeted needs, including twice-exceptional and autism supports, and other students with IEPs. Select classes may also include general education students with specific/targeted needs.
- Transition services are available to all students with IEPs ages 14 to 21.

C. Students in High School

The high school service delivery model is comparable to the middle school model in that most high school students with IEPs receive special education services in general education classroom settings. Special education service providers monitor students, co-teach with a general educator, and provide small group instruction inside the general education setting and/or academic resource. Some schools have specialized programs (e.g., Autism, Community Referenced Instruction, Regional, Behavior Social-Emotional Support Programs, Deaf and Hard of Hearing, etc.). Additionally, the following service options are available at the high school level:

- The College and Career Research and Development is a complete option for students with disabilities who are educated with their non-disabled peers.
- Academic Resource Classes are available in all high schools for students with specific/targeted needs, including twice exceptional and autism supports and other students with IEPs. Select classes may also include general education students with specific/targeted needs.
- Transition services are available to all students with IEPs ages 14 to 21.

D. Early Childhood Programs

Infants and Toddlers Program

This program is a collaborative effort between the public and community partners with PGCPs as the Lead Agency. The Infants and Toddlers Program provides services to children birth through age 4 and their families. Early intervention services are provided in natural environments that include the home, child care, community sites and early childhood centers. An Individual Family Service Plan (IFSP) or Extended Individual Family Service Plan (EIFSP) identifies the services and supports the child and family will receive. A team that includes the family, a service coordinator and Infant Toddler service providers develop this document.

Preschool Program

Early Childhood Special Education Programs provide early intervention, special education services, along with related services for children age 3 through 4 (prior to kindergarten). Early Childhood Services include evaluation and specially designed instruction for young children with special needs. Students ages 3 and 4 receive early intervention services in a variety of settings that may include accredited and licensed child care centers, community-based programs, public preschool programs, and early childhood centers. Collaborative efforts between the Department of Special Education, Early Childhood Program, and the Division of Teaching and Learning have resulted in a commitment to provide increased opportunities for inclusion, participation in joint professional development, and utilization of common curriculum resources and positive behavioral supports. An IEP identifies the services and supports the child will receive. A team that includes the family and the preschool providers develops this document. Students with IEPs, enrolled in Pre-K and community programs, receive special education and related services inside their respective preschool program.

E. Students with Intensive Needs

Students with significant cognitive disabilities require specialized instruction based on alternate academic achievement standards and assessments. Within PGCPs, students with significant cognitive disabilities are educated in the LRE. This might include, but is not limited to, an inclusive Early Childhood setting, Regional School setting, a comprehensive elementary comprehensive school setting, a comprehensive middle school setting, or a comprehensive high school setting. Some students with intensive educational needs may be educated in Community Referenced Instruction (CRI) classes that are located at designated elementary, middle and high schools throughout the school district.

VII. STAFFING GUIDELINES FOR SERVICE PROVIDERS

It should be noted that specific considerations for staffing patterns and designated allocations are based not only on certification requirements but also on the ability to match identified areas of provider expertise with the needs of the population to be served. This is necessary to ensure appropriate implementation of IEP services as mandated by IDEA. This Staffing Plan supports early intervention and provides special education staff members with dedicated time for such activities as consultation and IEP planning with general educators.

A. Staffing Guidelines for Children Ages Birth through Five:

Preschool Program	Ratio Students/Teacher, Support Staff
--------------------------	--

3-year-old, special education/inclusive opportunities, half day	18:2 (two sessions of 9) with a range of 8 to 11 children
3-year-old, half day, special education	18:2 (two sessions of 9) with a range of 8 to 10 children
3-year-old, half-day Autism	6:3 with a range of 5 to 7 children
3-year-old, Intensive Needs, half day	6:3 with a range of 5 to 7 children
3-year-old, half-day Parent Infant Program (PIP) inclusive opportunities	9:2 student teacher ratio per communication method with range of 8-11
4-year-old, full day, Special Education	9:2 with a range of 8 to 10 children
4-year-old, full day, Autism	6:3 with a range of 5 to 7 children
4-year-old, full day, Intensive Needs	6:3 with a range of 5 to 7 children
4-year-old, full-day PIP inclusive opportunities	9:2 student teacher ratio per communication method with a range of 8-11
Pre-K full day	10:2
Pre-K half day	20:2 (two sessions of 10)
Consult/Direct Boundary and Community-Based	Caseload Hours: 50 caseload hours/ 1 FTE
Infant Toddler	64 caseload hours/1FTE Central Location

B. Staffing Guidelines for Students in Elementary Schools

The staffing guidelines used for students in Comprehensive Elementary Schools are based on the total number of projected student IEP hours of service. These services can be provided using co-teaching, push-in, and/or pullout service delivery models.

POSITIONS	IEP HOURS		POSITIONS	IEP HOURS
*	0-30		3T 2 S	189-257
1T	31-45		3T 3 S	258-326
1T, 1 S	46-60		4T 2 S	327-397
1T, 2 S	61-75		4T 3 S	398-476
2T 1 S	76-119		5T 3 S	477-545
2T 2 S	120-188		5T 4 S	546-614

Key: T = Teacher S = Paraprofessional or ISEA

*If IEP service hours are less than or equal to 30 and student count is less than 10, a part-time teaching position will be allocated.

C. Staffing Guidelines for Students in Middle Schools

Staffing is determined by calculating the number of mods (periods) taught by special education personnel, as indicated below:

- Five (5) mod day A/B day – One (1) FTE teacher is assigned eight (8) teaching sections where two additional sections are reserved for planning, IEP development and associated responsibilities.
- Six (6) mod day A/B day – (One) (1) FTE teacher is assigned 10 teaching sections where two additional sections are reserved for planning, IEP development and associated responsibilities.
- Each section consists of 10-15 students with a disability and serves as the basis for calculating the sections. Models of delivery can include but are not limited to co-teaching services, supported inclusion and intensive resource services.
- One (1) Special Education teacher is assigned to each comprehensive middle school to serve as a Special Education Department Chairperson for all special education programs on-site and is not assigned a teaching load.
- Special Education Transition programs are staffed with a Special Education Coordinator.
- The recommended caseload count for middle school special education case managers ranges from 15 to 25 special education students.
- The Department of Special Education only provides allocated staffing for the courses listed below:
 - English 6, 7 and 8 (Co-Taught and Supported Inclusion)
 - Math 6, Math 7 and Math 8 (Co-Taught and Supported Inclusion)
 - Science 6, 7, 8 (Co-Taught)
 - Social Studies 6, 7, 8 (Co-Taught/every other day)
 - Academic Resource
 - Reading Intervention
- The Department of Special Education currently provides double blocking to support English, Mathematics and Science; however, the Department of Special Education does not allocate staffing for double blocking for Social Studies.

D. Staffing Guidelines for Students in K-8 Boundary Schools

- Elementary grades will follow the same staffing guidelines as comprehensive elementary schools.

- Middle school grades staffing is determined by calculating the number of mods (periods) taught by special education personnel, as indicated below:
 - Five (5) mod day A/B day – One (1) FTE teacher is assigned eight (8) teaching sections where two additional sections are reserved for planning, IEP development and associated responsibilities.
 - Six (6) mod day A/B day – One (1) FTE teacher is assigned 10 teaching sections where two additional sections are reserved for planning, IEP development and associated responsibilities.
 - Each section consists of 10-15 students with a disability and serves as the basis for calculating the sections. Models of delivery include co-teaching and supported inclusion.
 - One (1) Special Education teacher is assigned to serve as a Special Education Department Chairperson and is not assigned a teaching load when the K-8 boundary academy middle school special education population exceeds 50 special education students.
 - The Department of Special Education only provides allocated staffing for the courses listed below:
 - English 6, 7 and 8 (Co-Taught and Supported Inclusion)
 - Math 6, Math 7, Math 8 (Co-Taught and Supported Inclusion)
 - Science 6, 7 and 8 (Co-Taught)
 - Social Studies 6, 7 and 8 (Co-Taught/every other day)
 - Academic Resource
 - Reading Intervention
 - Staffing guidelines used for students in immersion programs are based on the total number of projected IEP hours of service. These services can be provided using co-teaching, push-in and/or pullout service delivery models. Please refer to the elementary IEP service hour chart in section B.

E. Staffing Guidelines for Students in K-8 Lottery/Specialty Schools and Charter Schools

Elementary grades will follow the same staffing guidelines as comprehensive elementary schools.

- Secondary grades (6-12) follows the chart below:

Positions	Number of Students
1 Teacher	1-8 students
1 Teacher and 1 Paraprofessional or ISEA	9-16 students
2 Teachers	17-24 students
2 Teacher and 1 Paraprofessional or ISEA	25-32 students
3 Teachers	33-40 students
3 Teacher and 1 Paraprofessional or ISEA	41-48+ students

F. Staffing Guidelines for Students in High Schools

High school's staffing is determined by calculating the number of periods taught by special education personnel based on an A/B day schedule, as indicated below:

- Four (4) period days on both A/B days – One (1) FTE is assigned to six teaching sections. The seventh and eighth sections are reserved for planning, IEP development and associated responsibilities.
- Five (5) period days on both A/B days – One (1) FTE is assigned eight teaching sections. The ninth and tenth periods are reserved for planning, IEP development, and associated responsibilities.
- Eight (8) period days – One (1) FTE is assigned six (6) teaching sections. The seventh is reserved for lunch, and the eighth section is reserved for planning, IEP development and associated responsibilities.
- All comprehensive high schools will be provided with a minimum of eight (8) teachers to account for union contracts of three (3) preps and coverage for all required courses.
- Each class period consists of a range of 10-15 students with a disability. The service delivery model may include but is not limited to co-teaching and supported inclusion.
- A special education high school teacher who is identified as the work-study coordinator will be assigned two sections for job development, agency connections, and monitoring students in the workplace environment. This is in addition to teaching the allocated courses for career research and development or other assigned courses.
- One (1) Special Education Department Chairperson assigned to each comprehensive high school to serve as a department chairperson for all special education programs on-site and is not assigned a teaching load.

- Some students are fully included in the general education setting and their services are monitored by a special education case manager.
- The recommended caseload count for high school special education case managers ranges from 15 to 25 special education students.
- The Department of Special Education only provides allocated staffing for the courses listed below:
 - English 9, 10, 11, 12 (Co-Taught and Supported Inclusion)
 - Algebra I, Geometry, Quantitative Modeling, Algebra II (Co-Taught and Supported Inclusion)
 - Biology, Biogeochemical Systems, Environmental Science (Co-Taught)
 - US History, LSN Government, World History (Co-Taught)
 - Academic Resource
 - Reading Intervention
 - Career Research & Development (CRD)

Please note: Staffing allocations do not allow for double blocking any courses.

G. Alternative Schools Staffing:

Positions	Number of Students
One (1) Teacher and One (1) Paraprofessional	1-15 Students
Two (2) Teachers and One (1) Paraprofessional	16-30 Students
Consideration by the Department of Special Education for Additional Staff	31 + Students

Please note FAPE locations: Green Valley and Annapolis Road are allocated for an additional teacher.

H. Staffing Guidelines for Students in Specialized Programs in Comprehensive Schools

Special education specialized services are located in designated sites throughout the school district. The staffing guidelines for elementary, middle and high school specialized programs consist of recommended student-to-teacher ratios based on special education models of best practices. The optimal staffing guidelines are paired with a recommended low/high range for the number of students per classroom. It should be noted that the following charts serve as a guiding reference for staffing these programs.

Elementary School Specialized Programs

Specialized Program	Optimal Staffing (Students/Adults)	Low/High Range (For Students)
Autism Grades K, 1, 2 and 3*	6:3	5-7
Autism Grades 4 - 6*	6:2	5-8
Community Referenced Instruction (CRI)	9:2	6-10
Comprehensive Special Education Program (CSEP)	9:2	6-10
Behavior and Social-Emotional Support**	7:2	6-8
Deaf and Hard of Hearing (DHOH)	7:2	5-9

*All elementary autism programs are staffed with support from a Crisis Intervention Resource Teacher.

**All elementary behavior and social-emotional support programs are staffed with a Special Education Coordinator and Crisis Intervention Resource Teachers.

Some schools may require additional staff to support students with orthopedic needs.

Phase-out of Comprehensive Special Education Program (CSEP)

During the 2017-2018 school year, the Department of Special Education (DSE) began phasing out CSEP program sites by transitioning students from ECCs to neighborhood schools. As a part of the CSEP phase-out plan, the DSE determines resources, professional learning and additional staffing for each school receiving phase-out students in order to support the transition.

Middle School Specialized Programs

Specialized Program	Optimal Staffing (Students/Adults)	Low/High Range (For Students)
Autism	10:2	9-11
Community Referenced Instruction (CRI)	9:2	8-11
Behavior and Social-Emotional Support *	10:2	8-11
Deaf and Hard of Hearing (DHOH)	7:2	5-9

*All middle school behavior and social-emotional support programs are staffed with a Special Education Coordinator and Crisis Intervention Resource Teacher.

Staffing guidelines also consider the PGCEA Union Negotiated Contract regarding teacher preps. Some schools may require additional staff to support students with orthopedic needs.

High School Specialized Programs

Program	Optimal Staffing (Students/Adults)	Low/High Range (For Students)
Autism	10:2	9-11
Community Referenced Instruction (CRI)	10:2	9-11
Behavior and Social-Emotional Support *	10:2	9-11
Deaf and Hard of Hearing (DHOH)	7:2	5-9

*All high school behavior and social-emotional support programs are staffed with a Special Education Coordinator and Crisis Intervention Resource Teacher.

*Staffing guidelines also consider PGCEA Union Negotiated Contract regarding teacher preps.

Some schools may require additional staff to support students with orthopedic needs.

I. Staffing Guidelines for Students in the Regional School Program

The Regional School Program serves students with significant cognitive disabilities ranging in age from 5 - 21 years. There are ten (10) Regional Program locations in Prince George's County. Students access the general education curriculum with significant instructional modifications and adaptations. The expectation for each student is to obtain progress/mastery for each of his or her Individualized Education Program Plan goals and objectives. Students in the Regional Programs are working toward a Certificate of Program Completion upon their graduation at the age of 21.

Program	Optimal Staffing Students/Teachers/Paras	Low/High Range (For Students)
Regional Program	6:3 (1 Teacher, 2 Paras)	6-8

J. Staffing Guidelines for Related Services

A workload approach to staffing is recommended by the professional organizations of the related service providers (ASHA, AOTA and APTA). A workload approach supports all of the roles and responsibilities required of related service personnel by IDEA 2004 to support any student with an IEP who requires the service in order to benefit from special education instruction. Services may be needed in one or more of the following areas:

occupational therapy (OT), physical therapy (PT), motor development/adapted physical education, speech/language, audiology/hearing, vision, school health, psychological/counseling, orientation/mobility training and assistive technology. Needs are identified and the unique expertise of one (or more) of the related service(s) necessary for students to access, participate and make progress in their educational program is recommended and documented on the IEP.

Speech/Language Services

These services are delineated by program area.

- Speech and Language Pathologists assigned to K-12 Schools and Early Childhood Centers in a full-time position will deliver 60 hours of direct/indirect/evaluative services per month.
- Therapists assigned to the Infant/Toddler program provide transdisciplinary services in the home, community, or a center-based setting. They have a maximum of 64 caseload hours per month, which includes direct/indirect/evaluative services.
- It is recommended that a therapist's caseload not exceed 45 students.

Occupational and Physical Therapy Services

These services are delineated by program area:

- Therapists providing services in a full-time position assigned to K-12 schools and Early Childhood Centers will deliver 60 hours of direct/indirect/evaluative services per month.
- Therapists assigned to the Infant/Toddler program provide transdisciplinary services in the home, community, or a center-based setting. They have a maximum of 64 service units per month. These service units consist of direct services to children and families and include assessments, interventions and documentation.
- It is recommended that a therapist's caseload not exceed 45 students. Consideration is given to the number of students, the number of assigned schools, and provider accrued driving time between schools.

Adapted Physical Education (APE) – Motor Development Services

The number of special education classes requiring physical education (class load) and the number of students that have Physical Education indicated on students' IEPs (caseload) determines the staffing needs.

- Adapted Physical Education Teachers assigned to K-12 Schools and Early Childhood Centers in a full-time position will deliver 60 hours of direct/indirect/evaluative services per month.

- It is recommended that an APE teacher's caseload not exceed 45 students.

Audiology Services

Audiologists assigned to a school-based program for the Deaf/Hard of Hearing provide services on a direct and indirect basis. These services include time-intensive early intervention to infants/toddlers and Early Childhood students using a transdisciplinary approach. Caseloads are based on the intensity of child and family needs when hearing loss is initially identified, maintenance of equipment with infants and toddlers, and current workload requirements. Provider duties include assessments as well as direct and consult services. Audiologists assigned to Early Childhood programs caseloads should not exceed 60 students, while workloads stay within 60 hours per month for direct and indirect services.

School-based audiologists assigned to K-12 schools provides direct and indirect services, on an itinerant basis, to students who qualify under IDEA and 504. Based on caseload models with considerations to workload, caseloads should not exceed 80 students while workloads stay within 60 hours per month for direct and indirect services.

Vision Services

Teachers of the Blind/Visually Impaired provide individual instruction to students on an itinerant basis. Caseloads should not exceed 60 hours per month of service to include direct services, consult services and assessments. Consideration is given for the number of students, schools/driving time and the number of braille readers.

Orientation/Mobility Training Services

Orientation and Mobility Specialists provide individual instruction to students in school, home and community environments. Caseloads should not exceed 60 hours per month of service to include direct services, consult services, and assessments. Consideration is given to the number of students and schools/driving time.

School Health Services/Medical Services for Diagnostic and Evaluation Purposes

Registered nurses (RNs) or licensed practical nurses (LPNs), employed by the school system, provide these services. In addition, medical services are provided on an individual basis for diagnostic or evaluation purposes through contract providers.

Assistive Technology Services

Assistive Technology Service provides countywide support to students and IEP Teams through assessment, consultation, and training to teams, and families on the use of devices, strategies, techniques, purchasing, management, and maintenance of assistive technology devices.

Bilingual Assessment Team

The Bilingual Assessment Team (BAT) provides consultations and assessments to IEP team members to determine the valid assessments of English Language Learners (ELL). The BAT is currently staffed with an Instructional Specialist (1.0), Diagnostician (1.0), Resource Teacher Special Education (1.0), Dual Language Teacher Specialist (3.0), and Speech-Language Pathologists (1.0). The maximum caseload for evaluators should not exceed 120 students per annual.

Early Identification and Assessment (Pre-school Child Find)

Early identification and assessment services are provided through the Infants and Toddlers program for children birth to age 3. The Early Childhood Preschool Testing Team provides this service for preschool students, ages 3-5, who are suspected of having a disability.

K. Additional Staff Distribution

In addition to the related services positions indicated above, special education staffing is provided at the school level for the following areas:

- **Crisis Intervention Resource Teachers:** Provides technical assistance and professional development for staff members on evidence-based behavioral intervention strategies and behavioral management techniques.
- **Paraprofessionals:** Provide support to both students and teachers; assist teachers by providing direct small group instruction to students.
- **Itinerant Special Education Assistants:** Performs tasks in schools that support the teaching and learning process for an individual student, students, or small group of students with disabilities.
- **Dedicated Assistants:** Provides one-on-one support to an identified student throughout the instructional process.
- **Program Coordinators:** These school-based administrators provide overall guidance and coordination for specialized programs.
- **Deaf Hard of Hearing (DHOH) Itinerants** support the needs of students through direct/indirect and consultative services. DHOH Itinerants in a full-time position assigned to K-12 schools will deliver 60 hours of direct, indirect and evaluative services per month.

VIII. NUMBER AND TYPE OF SERVICE PROVIDERS

The PGCPSS system uses general and special educators, related service personnel, paraprofessionals, contractual service providers, building administrators, and central office staff members to provide special education and related services to students with disabilities. The roles and responsibilities for the provision of FAPE with respect to school-based staff members are described below:

- **Building Administrators:** Responsible for providing general supervision of special education in the school, chairing IEP team meetings, and

overseeing the instructional program for all students in the building. The administrator assumes responsibility for staff assignments and responsibilities and is involved in pre-referral meetings. In their role as the IEP team chairperson, principals have the authority to allocate school system resources.

- **Special Educators:** Provide specially designed instruction and case management to students with disabilities. Special educators also participate in IEP meetings, conduct educational assessments, provide input for the development of IEPs, and ensure that regulatory requirements are met for their students. Special educators provide direct instruction, instructional accommodations, and testing accommodations.
- **General Educators:** Participate in Response to Intervention and pre-referral meetings. General educators provide direct instruction; implement universal design for learning strategies, differentiated instruction, instructional accommodations, and testing accommodations. General educators collaborate with the special educators and related service providers to implement IEPs to support required access to grade level instruction. They attend IEP meetings, as appropriate, and team with special educators to provide co-taught instructional services.

IX. PROFESSIONAL LEARNING

The vision of PGcps paints a future where all students, regardless of background or experiences, have access to high-quality learning environments, a broad array of educational opportunities, and effective support systems that equip them to graduate college, career and community ready. <http://www1.pgcps.org/promise/>

The goals of the PGcps Department of Special Education align with this vision by working to:

- Improve achievement for all students with disabilities;
- Deliver comprehensive services to students with disabilities;
- Ensure access to PGcps curriculum;
- Provide the necessary resources and interventions to improve educational results for children with disabilities; and
- Ensure the rights of children with disabilities are protected.

PGcps DSE conducts extensive professional learning opportunities (PLO) throughout the school year and in the summer that are designed to provide, administrators, special educators, general educators, related service providers, and additional support staff with the skills and knowledge essential to provide quality services and case management to students with disabilities in their Least Restrictive Environment (LRE). Professional learning activities are determined from a careful review of school and student data along with feedback from teachers,

administrators, and DSE staff. The DSE realizes the importance of PLOs in providing teachers and support staff with the necessary skills and resources needed to achieve a highly productive workforce.

The focus of PLOs at the Early Childhood level is to ensure supports and resources are in place to implement evidence-based instructional practices and services in PGCPS that will address school readiness for Kindergarten and the social foundations of young children with special needs. Special education teachers receive targeted PLOs and materials related to school readiness topics with the goal of narrowing the achievement between students with disabilities and their typical peers while allowing opportunities that are inclusive.

To increase K-12 students with disabilities access to, and progress in, the general education curriculum, the DSE recognizes the significance of co-development, co-implementation, and co-evaluation of IEPs by knowledgeable and skillful general education teachers, special education teachers, related service providers, administrators, and support staff. As such, the professional learning for educators emphasizes specially designed instruction, core curriculum content and co-teaching best practices. This emphasis is on creating environments that are inclusive by building the capacity of the staff to address the unique needs of students with disabilities. Included in the Department of Special Education professional learning are opportunities for stakeholder groups to increase their knowledge and implementation of evidence-based practices and interventions for supporting students in our comprehensive and special programs.

The Department of Special Education is committed to providing tiered support to schools meeting their unique needs as it relates to Specially Designed Instruction and special education processes. The Department offers in-person, virtual, pre-recorded, and live professional learning opportunities in a variety of formats, designed to build the capacity and meet the needs of multiple stakeholders:

- Workshop/Make and Take: Participants create materials that will be used in their work environment (e.g., create classroom materials, write an IEP, etc.);
- Coaching/Hands-on Demonstration: Participants experience a demonstration of a strategy or practice, have the chance to practice, and receive immediate feedback;
- Lecture/Presentation: Participants experience an interactive presentation with a speaker/facilitator and various strategies for active audience engagement; and
- Question & Answer /Panel Discussion: Participants learn from the experiences, knowledge and perspectives of a specific group of people, and ask targeted questions in an individual, small group, or whole group setting.

The DSE partners with multiple offices to ensure (1) students with disabilities make progress on postsecondary outcomes, state assessments, and State Performance Plan targets, and (2) special education services are implemented across all school settings with fidelity. Collaborative activities include learning walks, co-presenting professional learning on interventions and evidence-based strategies, inviting other offices to attend DSE meetings and trainings, attending meetings and trainings facilitated by other offices, collaborating on grant activities, and coaching. With respect to the implementation of interventions and evidence-based strategies, the DSE provides targeted assistance to schools to refine the selection, implementation, and monitoring process for student participation, support IEP goal progress, and ensure instructional and testing accommodations are implemented with fidelity. The support consists of content-specific training, training and coaching on the implementation of interventions and evidence-based strategies, data capture and analysis, and master schedule alignment.

Another area of focus for the Department is on building the communicative competency of students who have special communication needs in Prince George’s County Public Schools. An interdisciplinary team continues to support and train on evidence-based practices to ensure IEP teams utilize assistive technology (AT) strategies and devices that provide access for students with documented communication needs. This includes the use of Core Vocabulary for students who are non-verbal or experience a communication delay as an essential component of the student’s communication. Communication tool kits and training have been provided for all educators of students with significant cognitive disabilities in our Community Referenced Instruction Program and Regional Program as part of the professional learning. Speech/Language Pathologists in these programs work closely with the classroom teachers and paraprofessionals as part of a transdisciplinary team approach used to integrate services and communication skills building within the classroom, which promotes the generalization of skills across educational settings. The continued communicative competency focus supports students having greater access to the general education curriculum and environments.

In addition, the DSE has established resources and training to ensure all youth with IEPs, ages 14 and above, have an IEP that includes appropriate measurable postsecondary goals. These supports provide educators with the guidance and information needed to ensure that IEPs are annually updated and based upon an age-appropriate transition assessment and transition services that will reasonably enable the student to meet those postsecondary goals, and annual IEP goals related to the student’s transition needs.

An overview of the total number of proposed positions funded in the FY 2022 budget is as follows: Positions are only requested – they have not been approved.

School-Based Positions	FTE
------------------------	-----

Adaptive Equipment Resource Teacher	1
Assistant Principal (Early Childhood Centers)	2
Audiologist	2
Hearing Interpreter	4
ISEA	449.6
Occupational Therapist	39.61
Paraprofessional Educator	864
Physical Therapist	30.7
Principal (Regional Schools and Early Childhood Centers)	8
Professional School Counselor	8
School Psychologist	8
School Social Worker (SPED , Medicaid)	14
Secretary & Clerks	33.5
Special Education Teacher	1,703.2
Specialized Program Coordinator	34
Speech Therapist	100.2
TOTAL SCHOOL-BASED	3,301.81

Non-School-Based Positions	FTEs (SPED)
Administrative Support Technician (Medicaid)	1
Assistant Supervisor	4
Associate Superintendent	1
Braille Transcriber	1
Clerk (SPED, Medicaid)	23
Coordinating Supervisor	4
Diagnostician	1
Early Intervention Liaison	14
Fiscal Analyst	1
Instructional Assistant (Child Find)	1
Instructional Specialist	61.6
Instructional Supervisor	7
Medicaid Analyst	2
Orientation and Mobility Instructor	3
Paralegal	1
Professional School Counselor	2
Program Coordinator (Coordinated Early Intervening Services)	2
Program Liaison (Bilingual-Parent Center and Medicaid)	4
Program Manager (Medicaid)	1
Program Specialist (Extended School Year)	1

Program Specialist (Inclusion, Behavior, Program, Research Grant, Assistive Technology, Medicaid)	10.8
Registrar (Nonpublic)	1
School Psychologist Coordinator	1
Secretary (SPED, Medicaid)	11
Special Education Business Operations Coordinator	1
Special Education Compliance Liaison	1
Special Education Teacher	3
Support Supervisor (Data Management & Technology)	1
Technology Resource Analyst	4
Total Non-School-Based Staff	169.4

Special Education Staffing Summary:

Type	Number	Percentage
School-Based Special Education Staff	3,301.81	95.12%
Non-School-Based Special Education Staff	169.4	4.88%
Grand Total	3,471.21	100%

In addition, the following temporary or part-time service providers and/or vendors are utilized based upon student needs as outlined on their IEPs:

- Dedicated Assistants (DAs): These staff members are assigned to individual students and/or groups of students to provide behavioral, personal care or transition supports to student (s).
- Contractual Speech-Language Pathologists
- Contractual Private Duty Nurses
- Contractual sign language interpreters
- Foreign language interpreters

X. EVALUATION OF THE LOCAL STAFFING PLAN

The staffing plan is evaluated and monitored annually through frequent caseload reviews. Schools and Department of Special Education central office staff members are asked on a regular basis to provide updated projection and caseload count forms that list the service hours on the IEPs of the students in each school. In addition, the Department of Special Education Data Management Office provides IEP service hour reports to assist in the staffing process. The practice of using caseload count forms along with MD IEP Service Hour reports ensures accurate teacher caseload and student service hour data is being used to make informed staffing decisions. The Department of Special Education Articulation and Staffing Timeline accountability chart below indicates the staffing process used by the Department of Special Education to ensure the frequent evaluation and monitoring

of the Staffing Plan.

Department of Special Education Articulation and Staffing Timeline:

ACTION	DATE DUE
Case managers/chairpersons complete <i>Caseload Count forms</i> electronically. Data Management office will run service hour reports by school and Special Education Program student reports.	January 20, 2021
Department of Special Education Specialists (SEIS) and Supervisors will sort the <i>Caseload Count Report</i> by receiving schools.	January 21-29, 2021
Receiving SEISs will distribute Caseload Count Form reports to the receiving schools' chairpersons.	February 1-5, 2021
SEISs/Chairpersons complete Scheduling Needs Form and discuss staffing with the designated supervisor. SEISs will complete Staffing Summary for all assigned schools and attach scheduling the needs form for each school.	February 1-5, 2021
Supervisors meet with Associate Superintendent-Special Education to review staffing needs.	February 9-11, 2021
Department of Special Education submits staffing recommendations to the Budget Office.	February 22, 2021
Principals' receive staffing allocations.	March 1, 2021
Complete feeder school visits.	April-May 2021
SEISs and Supervisors meet with Principals and submit critical staffing needs forms to the Department of Special Education for staffing allocation adjustments for the 2021-2022 school year.	April-May 2021
Department of Special Education reviews critical staffing needs forms with updated caseload count forms and MD IEP Online service hour reports.	June 2021
Staffing adjustments sent to Budget Office.	June 2021
Staff balancing and realignment review	September 2021

Chapter 13 of the Special Education Process Guide outlines the procedures to be used when a vacancy occurs in a school.

APPENDIX A

CHAPTER 13: STAFF VACANCIES – WHAT TO DO

1. Introduction

When a student with a disability is impacted by a staff vacancy *or an interruption of IEP services*, the IEP Team and all service providers must ensure that the student's program is continued and that notification and other procedures are followed as addressed in this chapter. *A student must receive services as indicated in his or her IEP, unless the student is absent or the school is not in session.* The procedures to be followed *in the case of a vacancy or interruption in service* are outlined in this chapter.

2. Notification to Parents

Parents must receive written notification of any vacancy that may impact their child with special needs. This includes the extended absence of a special education teacher or other service providers. The written notice must be sent by the school's principal and inform parents of the impacted children of the vacancy, plans for coverage, efforts to secure another service provider, and their right to convene an IEP Team meeting to discuss any adverse impact on the student as a result of the vacancy. The school must maintain copies of the letters.

3. Recruitment Efforts

The school administration must ensure that Human Resources is aware of the vacancy, and must work closely with that department and the Special Education Department to secure a qualified replacement. The school administration must also hire a qualified substitute to ensure that students continue to receive services. If a vacancy is anticipated, the school should proactively address the issue before the position becomes vacant. *School administration must also ensure that staffing needs are identified and addressed through the Special Education Staffing Plan.*

4. Services to Students

In some cases, it is appropriate for an IEP Team to consider a transdisciplinary approach to service delivery when developing a student's IEP. In that way, multiple service providers are aware of the student's goals and are reinforcing the instruction throughout the school day. A student is less likely to be adversely impacted by a vacancy of one service provider if the classroom teacher, special educator and related service provider (among others) work collaboratively to implement a student's IEP.

Second, the school should ensure that a qualified service provider (itinerant special

educator, speech pathologist, Special Education Instructional Specialist, or other specialist) provides training and oversight for the substitute and other service providers continuing to implement the IEP. A qualified service provider must assist with the preparation of progress reports and the development of the student's IEP. The school should also consult with the Special Education Department concerning options for staffing during the vacancy. Finally, parents should be informed of the plan to continue services for impacted students.

5. Determining Educational Impact

The IEP Team must convene quarterly to determine whether a student is adversely impacted by a *vacancy or interruption of service*. It is important that this process take place with some regularity, particularly in the case of an extended vacancy, so that alternative strategies and compensatory services can be considered before the end of the school year. Before progress reporting time, Principals must convene an IEP Team meeting to discuss if there has been any negative academic impact on the student because of not receiving special education and/or related services. The IEP Team must include an Area office special educator and/or related service provider. The classroom teacher must complete the impact questionnaire (see Appendix B) and provide this data to the IEP Team for discussion.

If the student has been adversely impacted by a vacancy, the IEP Team must determine appropriate compensatory services. The Compliance Office must participate in IEP Team meetings in which compensatory services are determined.

The IEP Team should also consider whether a student continues to need a service, or the same amount of the service, if he or she has *not been* adversely educationally impacted by a vacancy. Lack of educational impact may be evidence that the student can make progress in the general curriculum without the service. Such decisions, however, must be made on a case-by-case basis and be based on evaluation data.

APPENDIX B

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS ABOUT VACANCIES

Question 1: *How can the IEP Team determine whether a student has been adversely impacted by a vacancy?*

The IEP Team should consider progress reports, work samples, results on state and district-wide assessments, reports from teachers, and parent input when determining educational impact. The team may also consider administering updated assessments and comparing the results to determine whether the student has been adversely impacted.

Question 2: *What if the parent disagrees with the IEP Team's determination about the adverse educational impact or the need for compensatory services?*

As with all disagreements, the actions proposed or rejected by the IEP Team must be documented in the MD Online IEP, along with the rationale. Parents may pursue their rights under the Procedural Safeguards if there is such a dispute.

Question 3: *Are there times when services can be excused?*

Services must be provided in accordance with the frequency, location and duration indicated in a student's IEP. Services can only be excused when a student is absent from school, or the school is closed for all students. A student who experiences frequent absences due to a health-related problem associated with the disability should be referred to the IEP Team to determine if it is necessary to modify the student's current program.

APPENDIX C

VACANCIES CHECKLIST

- _____ Parents provided written notification of the vacancy.

- _____ Human Resources and Department of Special Education notified of the vacancy.

- _____ Recruitment efforts pursued with Human Resources.

- _____ Qualified substitute hired.

- _____ Itinerant or other qualified service provider consulted.

- _____ Student's progress reviewed periodically to determine educational impact.

- _____ Compliance Office contacted if compensatory services to be discussed at IEP Team meeting.