

2021-2022 Special Education Staffing Plan

Worcester County Public Schools



Prepared by Rae N. Record, Supervisor of Special Education Services

Submitted to Mr. Louis H. Taylor, Superintendent of Schools and the Worcester County Board of Education Members on August 17th at the August Board Meeting.

WORCESTER COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS
SPECIAL EDUCATION STAFFING PLAN FOR SY 2021-2022

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Introduction

The Worcester County Public Schools (WCPS) Special Education Staffing Plan for 2021-2022 ensures that personnel and other resources are available to provide a free, appropriate, public education (FAPE) to each student with a disability in the least restrictive environment as determined by an Individualized Education Program (IEP) team. WCPS will use the Staffing Plan to meet the federal and state requirements for the annual development, review, and evaluation of the plan for special education. In accordance with The Code of Maryland Regulations, COMAR 13A.05.02.13D; this staffing plan includes the following:

1. Evidence of public input.
2. Evidence of maintenance of effort within the meaning of 34 C.F.R. 300.231 and COMAR 13A.02.05.
3. Staffing patterns of service providers of special education and related services, including paraprofessionals.
4. The number and type of service providers needed to provide a free appropriate public education (FAPE) to each student with a disability in the least restrictive environment (LRE).
5. How the public agency will use the staffing plan to monitor the assignment of personnel to ensure personnel and other resources are available to provide FAPE to each student with a disability in the LRE.
6. The number of current vacancies by positions reported within the jurisdiction and how FAPE is provided when vacancies occur.

Guiding Principles

The special education staffing plan was developed based upon the following guiding principles:

- All children can learn and achieve academic standards through high quality instruction.
- Due to the unique needs of individual learners, children must be provided with positive learning opportunities that are supported, when necessary and appropriate, with special education and related services that are specifically directed at the individual education needs of students with disabilities.
- The Special Education Strategic Plan must support ongoing school improvement efforts as developed in School Improvement Plans that are embedded in the Worcester County Strategic Plan and the Bridge to Excellence Master Plan.
- All children must be provided access to the general curriculum and special education services provided in the least restrictive environment, as appropriate.
- A full continuum of special education and related support services must be available to students both inside and outside of the classroom as appropriate.
- It is vital that parents or guardians participate in a child's educational program and in the development and implementation of an Individualized Education Program for their child. Parent involvement will be a regular part of the special education program and school activities.

- When making special education staffing decisions and determining special education teacher caseloads, priority must be placed on providing the services necessary to fully implement the IEP of every student with a disability.
- Special education teacher caseloads and staffing decisions should be based on providing the services a student needs to be successful, rather than on a specific category of disability or severity of disability.
- The special education services required by the student's Individualized Education Program (IEP) are crucial factors in determining caseloads.
- There must be flexibility in special education staffing to address changes that may occur in a student's educational needs throughout the school year.
- Special education staffing must be compliant with Federal and State laws, regulations and policies governing special education.

Development of the Plan

In making decisions about special education services, school teams must consider each student's needs and supports and services necessary to provide access to the general education curriculum. Worcester County Public Schools is committed to ensuring that every student graduate with the skills necessary to successfully enter higher education or the global workforce. To reach this goal, staffing in each school must be sufficient to meet the needs of the learner. In accordance with federal and state requirements, students identified as having a disability are provided a free appropriate public education (FAPE) in the least restrictive environment (LRE.) Students with disabilities that have an educational need and require specially designed instruction are required to have an Individualized Education Program (IEP.) All students have the right to access the general education curriculum at all levels and across various content areas. Special education teachers and general education teachers collaborate during curricular planning time to plan for instruction, instructional and testing accommodations, and supplementary aids, supports and modifications to the curriculum. Students with disabilities are included and provided access to interventions and enrichment programs that are available to general education students. Schools implement the Integrated Tiered Systems of Support (ITSS) model in which students receive their core instruction in the classroom and tiers of support are provided to students who need more time and support. Specially Designed Instruction is embedded in each tier of support. Teachers use a variety of evidence-based teaching strategies that strengthen the learning for all students. With Universal Design for Learning (UDL) barriers are removed in instruction and appropriate supports and accommodations are provided while maintaining rigor and a high level of expectation for all learners. Specially Designed Instruction is provided to students with disabilities for them to meet grade level standards.

WCPS ensures that professional development of general education teachers incorporates skills and strategies to enable educators to make the curriculum and environment accessible for all students. The Bridge to Excellence Master Plan, the Worcester Strategic Direction, School Improvement Plans, and the Special Education Strategic Plan are all aligned with narrowing the gap as the focus.

Ratios act only as a guide in determining caseloads. Staffing patterns are formulated based on the data regarding the total special education instruction and supports needed to implement the IEP of the

students in the least restrictive environment. Services are determined to ensure students are educated with non-disabled peers as appropriate. WCPS believes that students who receive special education services should be educated with non-disabled peers in the general education setting to every extent possible. Local determination data results indicate that over 84% of students with disabilities spend more than 80% of their day in a general education setting. Typically, special education teachers are assigned at each grade level in the elementary schools depending on the caseload and services required for the students, on each team at the middle school grades and in each core content area at the high school depending. Typically, the special education teacher is responsible for implementing the IEP including accommodations, modifications, and specially designed instruction. When making placement decisions regarding a student, the IEP team makes every effort to provide needed supports within the general education setting for the student to meet with success. Caseloads are carefully monitored by the special education supervisor throughout the school year.

The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act 2004 (IDEA) focuses on each state's accountability on State Performance Plan (SPP) indicators defined by the Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP) which, in turn, determines the levels of intervention needed by OSEP. The four levels of determination are: Meets Requirements, Needs Assistance, Needs Intervention, or Needs Substantial Intervention. The MSDE, Division of Special Education/Early Intervention Services, use a results-based rubric on specific indicators to rate each public agency's performance in meeting the State's targets as defined by the SPP for Part B (ages 3 to 21.) The following Part B indicators are included in assigning determinations:

Results Indicators

- Graduation with a Maryland High School Diploma
- Dropout
- State Assessment Results
- LRE for Students Ages 6-21

Compliance Indicators

- Disproportionality: because of inappropriate identification and based on race
- Disproportionality: because of inappropriate identification and based on race and disability
- Initial Evaluation Timeline
- Part C to Part B Transition
- Secondary Transition
- Timely Correction of Noncompliance
- Timely, Valid and Reliable Data

Based on the available data, as well as information obtained through monitoring and state complaint investigations, Worcester County Public Schools' results from the data of the Worcester County's annual data on Part B Indicators for the period of July 1, 2019, to June 30, 2020, determined that WCPS continues to receive the Meets Requirements status.

Special Education Citizens Advisory Committee (SECAC)

A Special Education Citizens Advisory Committee (SECAC) is a committee comprised of parents, community partners, service providers, educators, and administrators to provide meaningful input on local issues relative to the provision of a free appropriate public education (FAPE) and the

achievement of students with disabilities. To work most effectively, a SECAC operates as a partnership between parents and families, community leaders and organizations, educators, and administrators at the local level. A local SECAC enables a local director of special education to collaborate with others on local issues and facilitate positive changes in the delivery of special education services and the achievement of students with disabilities.

Public Input

Through a budget process, public input is sought annually in developing the fiscal year budget plan. Considerable planning, discussion, and collaboration went into developing the Worcester County FY 2022 Operating Budget. The importance of comments and input from staff, parents, and citizens was recognized. The annual budget was created through the input of our parents, School Improvement Advisory Committees, School Improvement Teams, Parent/Teacher Associations, students, teachers, administrators and interested citizens. Additionally, the Special Education Citizens Advisory Committee (SECAC) has provided input regarding the accomplishments, challenges and needs of the special education program. To ensure that all parents have an opportunity to participate in the budget process, a parent survey was sent to the home of every student in the Worcester County Public School System. Results of this survey were compiled and shared with school administrators, teachers, and parents. The superintendent along with the Executive Team met with each School Improvement Advisory Council (SIAC) to review the budget process and hear concerns from the committee. In addition, the recommendations and comments of parents and staff were heard in public meetings conducted by the Board of Education in December and County Commissioners in May. Documentation of public input and summary of comments is provided on the Worcester County Public Schools website @ <http://www.worcesterk12.org>.

Chart of meeting dates for committees, Board review and approval, School Improvement team meetings

Committee	Meeting Dates	Location
Early Childhood Advisory Committee (ECAC)	Quarterly	Board office
Special Education Advisory Committee (SECAC)	Quarterly	Board of Education
Inter-Agency Coordinating Council	Monthly	Board office
Special Education Strategic Planning Teams	Quarterly	Board Office
Worcester County Board of Education	Third Tuesday of each month	Board of Education
School Improvement Teams	Monthly, posted on school website and newsletters	Individual School locations
Individual Student IEP Meetings	Ongoing throughout the school year	Individual School locations

The resulting FY 2022 Operating Budget reflects the Board of Education's commitment to seek the funds that are necessary (from local, state, and federal government, and other sources) for the continued support, development, and improvement of educational services provided to the students in the Worcester County Public School System.

Budget Process

- In the fall of each year, principals meet with their School Improvement Advisory Committees (SIAC) to develop a budget that includes any proposed new services or positions for the Superintendent and Board review.
- The Superintendent meets with each principal to clarify the needs of each school.
- Each proposed school budget is shared with the Superintendent and Board of Education in public session.
- A summary of school budgets and staffing requests is provided to the Supervisor of Special Education for review and comment. The Supervisor of Special Education compiles data from the Special Services Information System (SSIS) child count to calculate the projected number of special education students at each school. Data is also collected from the Child Find and Infants and Toddlers Facilitator regarding projected enrollment in early childhood and pre-k programs. The information is compared with current caseloads and staffing information and reviewed with the Chief Academic Officers and Superintendent. Special education staffing allocations are determined based on a comparison of this information and the school requests based on the needs of each individual student and the services needed to ensure FAPE.
- Results of the parent survey are shared with the Special Education Citizens Advisory Committee (SECAC) and input from them is gathered.
- Teachers' schedules are also reviewed annually to ensure that they have sufficient time to plan, provide instruction, evaluate student progress, collaborate with general education teachers and parents, and fulfill other administrative responsibilities. The teachers' Negotiated Agreement establishes minimum planning time.
- The special education supervisor and coordinator are available as resources throughout the school year to assist school teams in developing appropriate schedules to ensure that Individualized Education Programs (IEPs) are being fully implemented and that teachers are provided with adequate planning time and time to complete the paperwork IDEA mandates.
- The central office special education staff regularly visits schools throughout the year evaluating the needs of students and determining the need for additional/expanded programs.
- The Principals and Supervisor of Special Education continuously reassess staffing needs to ensure that a free and appropriate public education (FAPE) is provided to all students with disabilities. Student/teacher ratios are monitored to ensure sufficient staff is in place to fully implement Individualized Education Programs (IEPs) and support students with disabilities during high quality Tier 1 instruction. Adjustments in staffing are made as necessary to address identified concerns. Unique individual student needs are addressed on a case-by-case basis. Students are served in the general education environment to the maximum extent appropriate. A continuum of services is provided based on the needs of the individual student.
- Professional Learning is provided for highly qualified teachers in an Integrated-Tiered Systems of Supports to narrow the achieved gap for students with disabilities.

Evidence of Maintenance of Effort within the meaning of 34 C.F.R. §300.231 and COMAR 13A.02.05.

The Finance and Special Education Departments ensure that Special Education funds are used to supplement and increase special education services to students with disabilities and are not used to displace State or local funds. These two offices also ensure that local and State funds expended for the current year 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 expenditure summary. When developing the operating budget, the following is carefully considered:

- Recruitment and retention of highly qualified employees
- Strategies to improve academic achievement for all students
- Increased enrollment impact
- Technology needs
- Efficient use of resources
- Areas of need as identified by the Special Education Supervisor

Maintenance of effort is monitored and demonstrated through budget documentation and financial reporting which confirm that audited expenditures for special education in the Worcester County Public Schools equal or exceed funds expended in the prior year. The approved FY22 unrestricted budget for special education, including fixed charges totals is documented in the FY202 operating budget.

	APPROVED FY20	APPROVED FY21	APPROVED FY22
TOTAL SPECIAL ED.	\$10,757,602	\$11,224,881	\$11,529,989

Staffing Patterns for Service Providers

Key Factors and Considerations

A review of the State Performance Plan (SPP) indicators is a key factor in determining adequate staffing to meet the required indicators set by MSDE. The following data points support the need for adequate staffing:

- The percent of youth with IEPs graduating from high school with a regular diploma
- The percent of year with IEPs dropping out of high school
- The percent of children with IEPs aged 6 through 21 who:

- Inside general education 80% or more of the day
 - Inside the general education less than 40% of the day
 - Served in a public separate school, residential placements, or homebound or hospital placements.
- The percent of students aged 3-5 with IEPs who receive services:
 - inside general education most of the day.
 - inside a separate school or class
- The percent of preschool children with IEPs who demonstrate
 - positive social emotional skills
 - appropriate behavior to meet their needs
 - acquisition and use of knowledge and skills

Co-Teaching and Collaborative Instruction

Specially designed instruction is embedded in an integrated system of supports. Over 84% of our students with disabilities spend more than 80% of their time in the general education setting. Worcester County has developed best practices and guiding principles when scheduling students in classrooms in the general education setting. General education and special education teachers are chosen for co-teaching classrooms by their principal or individuals responsible for developing the master schedule. Principals are provided with the flexibility to place staff where they deem appropriate. In addition, at the high school level, special education teachers are typically paired with general education teachers based on their content knowledge background or “comfort” level. For example, if a special education teacher is proficient in Algebra, then this teacher is usually placed in Algebra classrooms. In addition, these teachers are provided with co-planning time to plan and gather the necessary materials for their daily lessons and to review formative and summative data to make decisions about students during their PLC (Professional Learning Community). If co-planning time does not occur, the teams try to meet after or before school. Special education teachers and general education teachers attend professional development and training opportunities together. Many times, principals attempt to have the same team-teaching pairs work together yearly to establish continuity with each other and the content of the curriculum.

Service Delivery Models

To meet the needs of students with disabilities, Worcester County Public Schools provides a continuum of services and programs. The Individualized Education Program, (IEP) team, which includes the parent(s), determines the appropriate specialized and/or related services that are required to meet the needs of the individual student in the least restrictive environment.

Consultation (Indirect) Services

Provide the general educator with guidance from the special education teacher and/or related service provider on appropriate strategies for instruction, behavior management, data collection, observation, and feedback in the general education setting.

- Facilitate service delivery through ongoing communication between general and special educators and related service providers.
- Assist in completing functional behavioral assessment (FBA) and developing a behavioral intervention plan (BIP) to address areas of concern.

Direct Services

Inside the general education setting:

- Direct special education instruction within the least restrictive environment of the general education classroom through co-teaching and collaborative instructional models.
- Direct support for individual students by the special education teacher, general educator and/or education assistant providing accommodations and/or modifications to the general education curriculum.
- Individualized or small group instruction to meet the academic and behavioral needs of the student, either within the general education classroom or with pull-out services for specific skill development and interventions.

Outside the general education setting:

- Direct intensive or multi-sensory instruction utilizing specialized strategies and techniques in a small group, self-contained environment with an alternative curriculum when necessary.
- More specific skill training in remediation of academic skill deficits or in the social, emotional, and behavioral areas.
- Supports that address behavioral difficulties that interfere with the student's learning or the learning of other students.

Special Education Services and Programs

Programs for Students Birth to Kindergarten

Services in the Natural Environment

- Working in collaboration with families, Worcester County Public Schools (WCPS) provides special instruction and related services in a coaching model in the home, childcare centers, or at Head Start centers. Coaching and direct services focuses on meeting child outcomes described in the student's Individualized Family Service Plan (IFSP).

Itinerant Services

- Parents bring their child to their neighborhood school to receive services such as speech and language therapy.

Services at Head Start

- Children who attend Head Start receiving services at their program sites. Children with more intensive needs can receive transportation to attend a half-day program at Head Start and a half-day program at the inclusive preschool classroom in each of the five elementary schools.

Services in Prek3, Prek-4 or Kindergarten

- WCPS students in general education pre-k 3 and 4 or kindergarten programs receive special instruction and/or related services during the school day. IEP goals and objectives become part of daily classroom routines and instruction. Services are provided inside or outside the general education classroom, in accordance with each child's IEP.

Programs for Students Ages 6-21

Services in Grades 1-12

- WCPS students in general education programs receive special instruction and/or related services during the school day. IEP goals and objectives become part of daily classroom routines and instruction. Services are provided in or outside the general education classroom, in accordance with each child's IEP.

RISE PROGRAM

- The RISE PROGRAM is designed to provide academic, behavioral, social, and structured therapeutic supports to increase students' availability for learning by enhancing coping skills. Key features of the program include a small structured therapeutic learning environment with individualized behavioral supports including individual or group therapy by a social worker.

Community Work Experience Transition Program- (Facilitated by the Secondary Transition Facilitator)

- Worcester County Public Schools, in conjunction with Stephen Decatur, Snow Hill, Pocomoke High Schools, and Cedar Chapel Special School, offers a comprehensive, two-tiered transition program for students with disabilities: Community Work Experience (CWE). The two programs provide secondary and post-secondary (18-21) students, who are eligible for special education services, a variety of activities that are geared toward future employability and independence. A newly introduced Project Search at Atlantic General Hospital offers students in their senior year 3 work experience internships throughout the hospital setting.

- Based at Worcester Technical High School and Wor-Wic Community College (18-21), participants are given the opportunity to explore various career fields and develop numerous social, academic, and vocational skills in an age-appropriate, inclusive setting. Learners can participate in several career programs such as childcare, culinary arts, cosmetology, agricultural science, graphic arts, and carpentry. Students develop employability skills at a job site based on student interests, skills, and program of study. When consistent with student goals and interests, this experience integrates academic and occupational learning and comprises a structured “course of study” designed to lead to successful transition outcomes and future employment options. The post-secondary programs for 18-21-year-old students are a collaborative effort of Wor-Wic Community College and the three lower shore school systems: Worcester, Wicomico, and Somerset.
- Job coach services in Worcester County are provided to students that need support in employment opportunities and are a part of transition services. Job coach interventions provide one-on-one or small-group support to students and employers in the job setting in the local community until more natural supports are developed. The increased supervision assists the student in developing appropriate work behaviors and interpersonal communication skills. Many of our business partners hire our students at the end of the experience.

Separate Public Day School

- When the severity or nature of students' disabilities affects their performance and academic success within their community-based school setting, placement in a separate public day school may be appropriate, as determined by an IEP team. Cedar Chapel Special School, a separate public day school, provides programming, facilities, and specialized staff to meet students' needs.

Nonpublic Schools

- For the limited number of students whose needs exceed the services and programs provided by WCPS, the IEP team or another agency may recommend a nonpublic school approved by the Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE). The nature and severity of the student’s disability, which has a significant impact on education performance may necessitate more intensive resources and may require a more therapeutic segregated setting for a student to receive an appropriate educational program.

2021-2022 Special Education Staffing	# Of Providers
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Provider	
Special Education Classroom Teachers	85
Teacher of the Blind and Visually Impaired	1
Assistive Technology Teacher	1
Teacher of the Deaf and Hard of Hearing	1
Adaptive Physical Education Teacher	1
Infant Toddler Home Educator (Teacher)	1
Secondary Transition Facilitator	1
Speech-Language Pathologist	12.2
Physical Therapist	2
Occupational Therapist/COTA	5+1 COTA
Educational Assistants	110
Early Childhood Behavioral Health Coach-Social Worker	1
Social Workers (funded by special ed.)	2
Sign-Language Interpreters	5
Behavior Certified Behavioral Analyst	1
Orientation and Mobility Teacher (contracted)	
Audiologist (contracted as needed)	
School Psychologist	4
Nurses (Special School)	2
Private Duty Nurses (Special School) contracted	4
Special Education Instructional Coaches	2

Process for Monitoring and Evaluating the Staffing Plan

Process for Monitoring Caseloads and Vacancies to Ensure Implementation of IEP to Address Concerns/Adjustments

Should a concern arise during the school year regarding staffing, a process is in place to address that concern. If additional special education staff or services appear to be needed to accommodate a child or program, the school administrator contacts the Supervisor of Special Education and staffing concerns are shared. The supervisor may conduct a school visit to review additional information. The information is compiled and reviewed with the Superintendent. After review, should additional staffing be warranted or a vacancy occurs, it is provided to the school, usually as a contracted position or a long-term substitute for the remainder of the year. A determination is then made when planning the next fiscal year budget as to whether the position needs to become a permanent position. If a permanent position is needed the position is advertised through a vacancy announcement and Human Resources processes are followed. All vacancy positions were filled and there was no need to move students due to unavailability of staff. Substitutes were used for teachers who were out on medical leave and were assigned a mentor to assist with the IEP process and planning.

Process for Evaluating the Effectiveness of the Local Staffing Plan

The effectiveness of the 20120-2021 Staffing Plan was assessed by reviewing our local determination data, the goals on the strategic plan, caseload information and input from school administrators and staff, department of special education staff, and appropriate stakeholders in the community. The leadership team reviews the plan annually and revised on an annual basis.

2021Staffing Plan Evaluation

Strengths

The Local Staffing Plan was effective as evidenced by the services provided. Students with disabilities were served in a manner likely to result in meaningful educational progress in the least restrictive environment. A very favorable ratio of special education staff to WCPS students with disabilities is provided. Special education staff has been included in general curriculum content professional development activities and specially designed instruction professional development. No students were denied a free and appropriate public education (FAPE) due to a lack of highly qualified teachers or other service providers. No students were moved to other classrooms or other schools due to the unavailability of staff in 2020-2021 school year. During school closures due to COVID 19, the county provided virtual learning and the IEPs were implemented through an individual contingency plan for each student. When the students returned to school, a process was put into place to determine if Covid Compensatory Services were needed for the student. Compensatory services were provided during, after school tutoring and summer school. We will continue to address the needs of the students in the fall and determine Covid Compensatory Services as students continue to return to face-to-face instruction.

The effectiveness of the staffing plan is reflected by the high percentage of special education students served in general education settings for 80% or more of the school day (LRE A). A review of the least restrictive environment data provided by MSDE demonstrates that Worcester County has exceeded the state target since the baseline year in 2004. Professional development is conducted to provide special educators, general education teachers, and paraprofessionals with the skills needed to appropriately serve students with disabilities in the least restrictive environment. The planning process for professional development includes integrating and selecting activities in accordance with the Bridge to Excellence Master Plan, the WCPS Strategic Direction and the Special Education Strategic Plan. The Special Education Strategic Plan directly correlates to the Maryland Special Education Strategic Plan. Special education and general education teachers receive professional development and follow-up coaching on the use of evidence-based strategies to support students with disabilities in their Least Restrictive Environment. These strategies include Universal Design for Learning, specialized instruction, co-teaching, multi-tiered systems of support to provide learning opportunities and build capacity in teachers. Resources and tools, such as Goalbook Toolkit and Goalbook Pathways, are provided to support general and special educators in using Universal Design for Learning principles and differentiated instruction. This professional development, coaching and resources support teachers in delivering high-quality Tier 1 instruction to students with disabilities in the general education classrooms. In addition, Worcester County, once again was awarded the State Systemic Improvement Grant (SSIP) of \$100,000.00 to continue the work with narrowing the gap in mathematics for students with disabilities in grades 4 and 5.

There currently were no vacancies in special education. There were no short-term or long-term staff employed due to shortage of staff.

Needs

It was decided that the staff duplicate the High Road Program and created a Program that will meet the needs of the students. As a result of ending the contract with High Road, the funding for the contract was reallocated to hire four educational assistants and a social worker to implement the Program locally in the next school year.

An additional special education teacher will be added for the 2021-2022 school year at Buckingham Elementary to meet the needs of the students who require more intensive supports and services. Without adding additional funds, the principal filled a general education teacher vacancy caused by a retirement with a special education teacher by devolving the position held by the general educator.

There has been a need to increase occupational therapy services, in the elementary schools. Approval was obtained to hire the part time COTA for a full-time position. An additional special education teacher was added to Buckingham Elementary to meet the needs of the students who require more intensive supports. Without adding additional funds, the principal filled a general education teacher vacancy through a retirement with a special education teacher by devolving the position held by the general educator.

An ongoing need for all special education teachers is to provide them with sufficient time allotted to consult with one another during PLCs or common planning. With site-based management in our schools this has been a struggle. We are charged with strongly suggesting to principals to allot time for such, and we have seen an increase in PLC planning throughout the county. However, it is not at the level I would like to see.

Evaluation of the Plan

The evaluation of the Staffing Plan is the responsibility of the Supervisor of Special Education. The effectiveness of the plan will be assessed on an ongoing basis by reviewing measures of local determination, student achievement, caseload information and input from school administrators and staff and appropriate stakeholders in the community. Information is gathered through parent forums, letters, emails, and written requests. No students are being moved to other classrooms or other schools due to unavailability of staff. General and special education instructional staff members conduct a review of the Bridge to Excellence Master Plan. The evaluation of the current staffing plan will occur in the spring however, the preliminary plan will begin after the budget input meeting held in December. The evaluation will also include if there was any short-term or long-term staff employed due to shortage of staff.

The Worcester County Public School System is committed to providing a high-quality educational experience for every student. Worcester County's assessment results are used plan for interventions and staffing when planning for special education staffing. Recognizing that every student has unique learning needs; diversified learning strategies are provided in every classroom. Learning opportunities are enhanced with supplemental programs and services both inside and outside of the classroom.

Special education and related services are made available to provide specialized instruction and therapies to ensure that students with disabilities are provided the same rigorous instruction as their non-disabled peers to be college, career, and community ready upon graduation.

The Supervisor of Special Education monitors the schedules and caseloads of special education teachers and related services in each of the schools. Time is built in within the schedules to provide teachers, related service providers, and others the ability to consult with each other and families. Parent conferences, PTA meetings, back to school events and IEP meetings are scheduled times throughout the school year to consult with families. Teacher planning, team meetings, professional development and PLC are times that time is built in to provide teachers the ability to consult with each other. Consultation occurs during team meetings, planning time, professional development, and school activities.

A key element in the provision of a free, appropriate public education (FAPE) for students with disabilities is the availability of highly qualified teachers and support staff to implement each student's Individualized Education Program (IEP). The Worcester County Public School's staffing plan is a vehicle to ensure that appropriate personnel are available to deliver the services and instruction required to fully implement student IEPs. Ongoing professional development and training is provided for school personnel after reviewing assessments and determining the needs of students. These trainings and professional development opportunities include both the requirements and intent of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) and professional learning goals that align with the Worcester County Public Schools Bridge to Excellence Master Plan.

**Appendix A
 Constituents Involved in Public Input Process
 Special Education Staffing Plan**

Name	Title
Tawes, Jessica	Special Education Advisory Committee Chairperson/ Family Support Facilitator
Phillips, Mrs. Windy	Coordinator of Instruction – Special Education
Record, Mrs. Rae N.	Supervisor of Special Education
Jones, Kimberly	Special Education Advisory Committee Parent
Mrs. Pellingier	Special Education Advisory Committee Parent
Monica Perella	Special Education Advisory Committee Parent

Prince, Kim	Special Education Advisory Committee Parent
Green, Pam	Special Education Advisory Committee Parent
Allison Lucas	Special Education Advisory Committee Parent
Bess Cropper	Infants and Toddlers Facilitator
Monica Smith	Special Education Advisory Committee Parent
Simulis, Anna	Early Childhood Behavioral Coach-Social Worker
Lewandowski, Jennifer	Occupational Therapist and Parent
Taylor, Mr. Louis	Superintendent of Schools
Tolbert, Mr. Vincent	Chief Financial Officer
Ms. Denise Shorts Dr. Annette Wallace	Chief Academic Officers-Assistant Superintendent for Instruction