

Department of Special Education – Budget Summary

Overview of the Division

The Department of Special Education (DSE) is in the Division of Academics. The role of this Department is to ensure students with disabilities, birth to age 21, receive high-quality services within their homes, community, and/or school settings to improve outcomes for learners who receive early intervention and special education services.

The services of this Department are delivered through the budgets of the following programs:

- Countywide Services
- Speech, Language, and Hearing Services
- Special Education School-Based Services
- Birth-Five Early Intervention Services
- Cedar Lane
- Special Education Summer Services
- Special Education Compliance and Nonpublic Services
- Special Education- Central Office

The Department of Special Education (DSE) promotes Equity in Action by ensuring that students with disabilities receive a free, appropriate public education that meets individual learner needs in the least restrictive environment. The DSE is committed to providing high-quality early intervention and special education services to improve outcomes for learners, birth to age 21. DSE leaders value and promote open, transparent, and accessible communication so that all stakeholders become partners in the work.

Over the past few years, the Department has reduced spending on materials, and worked toward maximizing staffing allocations, increasing professional learning opportunities, and decreasing case management workload through a variety of approaches. While striving to address all legal service hour requirements under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), the DSE continues to experience constraints in creating comprehensive programs and supports that could meet more complex student needs and reduce the potential for rising nonpublic placement costs due to lack of options within the existing continuum of services.

Summary of Major Budget Changes for FY 2025

HCPSS faces the financial pressures of a structural deficit due to declining revenues and increasing costs. The budget strategy for FY 2025 rethinks the development of this budget to manage the pressure the structural deficit places on the request for new funding. This was done to align with Board of Education and county requests to bring forward a budget that presents clear choices to reallocate funding from existing services to meet our fiscal obligations for FY 2025. As a result, while the budget includes an increase in funding for mandates, commitments, and priorities, reductions are included in program budgets to offset the overall growth of the budget.

The Department of Special Education budget includes:

- Budget additions of \$13.2 million and 86.50 FTE positions.
- Budget reductions of \$(3.2) million and (6.00) FTE positions.

Department of Special Education – Budget Summary

- In total, the net changes to the budget are \$10.0 million more than the current FY 2024 approved budget and 80.50 FTE positions.
- Year over year, the department's budget is increasing by 6.08 percent.

More specific information on these budget changes is explained in the sections below which is followed by schedules summarizing the division budget, budget additions and budget reductions by program.

Budget Additions

Budget additions are grouped as Mandates, Commitments, and Priorities.

- Mandates are budget changes necessary to meet a specific legal requirement. The mandated cost changes in this year's budget support the continued implementation of the Blueprint for Maryland's Future.
- Commitments are changes made in the budget to support the costs for existing obligations such as contracts and prior negotiated pay and benefits.
- Priorities represent those budget items to support existing policy, Superintendent or Board defined goals and objectives, and specific issues.

Sub-groupings for each of these are provided to summarize the budget dollars and positions included across programs and divisions. The Factors Influencing in the Executive Summary section of the budget book provides the combined summary of budget additions for all divisions and by state category.

The Department of Special Education budget includes new budget cost additions of \$13.2 million and 86.5 FTE positions. A summary of budget additions by grouping is provided below:

Mandates

- \$1.7 million and 35.00 FTE positions – Blueprint costs requirements related to Prekindergarten expansion.
- \$278,800 – Blueprint cost requirements for National Board Certification pay for teachers.

Commitments

- \$(1.5) million – Year-over-Year Personnel Cost Change. This adjustment will appear in all program budgets that have budgeted personnel. A complete explanation for these changes is included in the Factors Influencing in the Executive Summary section of the budget book.
- \$600 for financial obligations.

Priorities

- \$5.3 million – marker for negotiated employee compensation increases.
- \$4.8 million – to cover the cost of students in Nonpublic Schools and to provide compensatory services entitlements for some students due to COVID-19 instructional impacts.
- \$200,000 – to cover increased costs of providing Extended School Year Services for students with IEPs.
- \$907,800 and 15.50 FTE positions – increase in staffing for Multiple Intense Needs Preschool and Preschool classrooms (6.0 FTE Teachers and 6.0 FTE Paraeducators). In addition, funds are included to

Department of Special Education – Budget Summary

add 1.00 FTE Speech Language Pathologist, 1.00 FTE Physical Therapist, and 1.50 FTE Teacher positions for the Infants and Toddlers programs.

- \$1.4 million and 36.0 FTE positions – to cover enrollment growth in students aged 5 through 21 (11.00 FTE Teachers, 11.00 FTE Paraeducators and 14.0 OFTE Student Assistants).
- \$4,000 – Other costs increase for mileage reimbursement.
- \$100,000 – to cover costs for consultant services to perform a comprehensive review of Special Education.

Budget Reductions

Each division and department budget includes reductions to offset the expenditure increases in this budget. For each division, department, and its programs, these reductions are grouped as Programmatic School-Based and Programmatic Non-School-Based.

- Programmatic School-Based are budget reduction directly affecting the classroom and schools. The reductions are sub-grouped by certain programmatic areas and services to summarize where budget dollars and positions are being reduced across programs and divisions.
- Programmatic Non-School-Based are reductions to Central Office services and systemwide costs that support students, staff, and the operation of schools. These reductions are sub-grouped into reductions affecting personnel and non-personnel reductions.

The Factors Influencing and Summary of the Budget in the Executive Summary section of the budget book provides a combined summary of budget reductions by group and sub-group for all divisions and by state category.

A high-level overview of major reductions and the service impact(s) for the Department of Special Education budget are shown below.

The Department of Special Education budget includes reductions of \$(3.2) million and (6.00) FTE positions.

Programmatic School-Based

Curricular Field Trips

- \$(12,600) – Program 3321 Special Education School Based Services: Reduction in transportation
 - Impact: Restoration of 50 percent of all curricular field trip funding is requested in the Board's Budget request to the county. The restoration is reflected in Program 3202 Academic Support for Schools for staff in Academics to evaluate the use of these funds based on individual program need. Some field trips and extracurricular transportation within various programs in the Division of Academics will no longer be funded or only partially funded in the operating budget.

Special Education

- \$(27,540) and (1.00) FTE position – Program 3320 Countywide Services: Elimination of 1.00 Physical Therapy Paraeducator

Department of Special Education – Budget Summary

- Impact: This reduction will decrease the capacity of the Physical Therapy (PT) office to divide case management among PT service providers for students who require school-based services. Additional case management responsibilities will be placed on the remaining Physical Therapy staff.
- \$(53,501) – Program 3320 Countywide Services: Reduction of supplies and technology
 - Impact: This reduction will decrease materials, specialized equipment, and technology available for students.
- \$(2.3 million) – Program 3321 Special Education School-Based Services: Reduction of contracted labor
 - Impact: This reduction will eliminate temporary personnel designated for students who require adult supervision per the IEP. Existing staff must provide this supplementary aid and service as described in each IFSP or IEP.
- \$(41,568) – Program 3321 Special Education School-Based Services: Reduction of supplies and wages
 - Impact: This reduction will decrease supplemental materials purchased for instruction and workshop wages that support staff attendance in professional learning.
- \$(7,017) – Program 3322 Cedar Lane: Reduction of supplies
 - This reduction will decrease materials available for students.
- \$(100,000) – Program 3324 Birth-Five Early Intervention Services: Reduction of contracted labor
 - Impact: This reduction will eliminate temporary personnel designated for students who require adult supervision per the IEP. Existing staff must provide this supplementary aid and service as described in each IFSP or IEP.
- \$(4,955) – Program 3326 Special Education Summer Services (\$3,530) and Program 3325 Speech, Language, and Hearing Services (\$1,425): Reduction of supplies and technology
 - This reduction will decrease materials, specialized equipment, and technology available for students.

Programmatic Non-School Based

Personnel

- \$(242,313) and (2.00) FTE positions – Program 3324 Birth-Five Early Intervention Services: Elimination of 2.00 Early Intervention Resource Teachers
 - Impact: Teachers, as well as administrators and other members of the school staff will receive less direct support, training technical assistance for instruction and other compliance matters; IFSP and IEP teams, inclusive of parents, will have limited access to support before, during, and after IFSP/IEP team meetings and related conferences about compliance matters; Mentoring of new staff will be diminished.
- \$(57,120) and (1.00) FTE position – Program 3325 Speech Language, and Hearing Services: Elimination of 1.00 Program Head
 - Impact: Hinders interpreters' access to having role-alike leadership equipped to provide direct support and guidance on all matters related to student services, staff consultations, and parent questions and needs that pertain to students.
- \$(150,000) and (1.00) FTE position – Program 3325 Speech, Language, and Hearing Services: Elimination of 1.00 Instructional Facilitator

Department of Special Education – Budget Summary

- Impact: Speech Language Pathologists, as well as administrators and other members of the school staff, will receive less direct support, training, and technical assistance/guidance for therapy related questions and needs as well as other compliance matters; IEP teams, inclusive of parents, will have limited access to support during the IEP team meetings and related conferences about special education matters; capacity to conduct observations as part of the SLP evaluation cycle will be diminished.
- \$(122,400) and (1.00) FTE position – Program 3330 Special Education–Central Office: Elimination of 1.00 Instructional Facilitator
 - Impact: Teachers, as well as administrators and other members of the school staff will receive less direct support and guidance for instruction and other compliance matters; IEP teams, inclusive of parents, will have limited access to this resource; Oversight for the development, implementation, and evaluation of professional learning for designing instruction will be compromised.

Non-Personnel

- \$(139,745) – Program 3330 Special Education–Central Office (\$138,845) and Program 3328 Special Education Compliance and Nonpublic Services (\$900): Reduction to wages, supplies, and travel-mileage
 - Impact: Will decrease office supplies and workshop wages for professional learning, preparation for legal proceedings, and collaborative planning, and case management support for staff.

Position Reduction List

Division/Dept	Program	Classification Job Title	FTE Count
Academics-SPED	Birth-Five Early Intervention Services-3324	TEACHER RESOURCE	(2.00)
	Countywide Services-3320	PARAEDUCATOR	(1.00)
	Special Education - Central Office-3330	INSTRUCTIONAL FACILITATOR	(1.00)
	Speech, Language, and Hearing Services-3325	INSTRUCTIONAL FACILITATOR	(1.00)
		INTERPRETER-EDUCATIONAL	(1.00)
Academics-SPED Total			(6.00)

Department of Special Education – Budget Summary

SUMMARY OF FY 2025 REQUESTED BUDGET									
Program	Program Number	Approved Budget FY 2024	Total Additions	Total Reductions	Net Budget Changes FTE	Board of Education Requested FY 2025	\$ Change From FY 2024	% Change from FY 2024	
Countywide Services	3320	\$ 11,571,795	\$ 259,274	\$ (81,041)	(1.00)	\$ 11,750,028	\$ 178,233	1.54%	
Special Education School-Based Services	3321	82,380,247	3,414,217	(2,315,548)	36.00	83,478,916	1,098,669	1.33%	
Cedar Lane	3322	5,933,528	154,387	(7,107)	-	6,080,808	147,280	2.48%	
Birth-Five Early Intervention Services	3324	27,420,002	3,722,731	(342,313)	48.50	30,800,420	3,380,418	12.33%	
Speech, Language, and Hearing Services	3325	14,290,425	238,053	(210,650)	(2.00)	14,317,828	27,403	0.19%	
Special Education Summer Services	3326	2,262,385	209,778	(1,425)	-	2,470,738	208,353	9.21%	
Special Education Compliance and Nonpublic Services	3328	18,029,368	4,836,317	(900)	-	22,864,785	4,835,417	26.82%	
Special Education - Central Office	3330	2,855,582	397,975	(261,245)	(1.00)	2,992,312	136,730	4.79%	
Special Education Total		\$ 164,743,332	\$ 13,232,732	\$ (3,220,229)	80.50	\$ 174,755,835	\$ 10,012,503	6.08%	

Department of Special Education – Budget Summary

Requested FY 2025 Budget Changes														FY 2025 Requested	
BUDGET ADDITIONS	Program Number	Program	Mandates			Commitments			Priorities			Total Additions	Total Additions FTE		
			Blueprint-PreK FTE	Blueprint-PreK National Board Certification	Year over Year Personnel Cost Change	Financial Obligations	Employee Compensation Marker	Special Education	Special Education FTE	Other					
	3320	Countywide Services	-	-	\$ -	\$ -	300	\$ 376,679	\$ -	-	-	\$ -	-	\$ 259,274	-
	3321	Special Education School-Based Services	-	173,880	(1,301,741)	300	3,124,998	1,416,780	36.00	-	-	-	3,414,217	36.00	
	3322	Cedar Lane	-	13,600	(67,867)	-	208,654	-	-	-	-	-	154,387	-	
	3324	Birth-Five Early Intervention Services	1,730,388	91,320	44,533	-	948,690	907,800	15.50	-	-	-	3,722,731	50.50	
	3325	Speech, Language, and Hearing Services	-	-	(248,905)	-	486,958	-	-	-	-	-	238,053	-	
	3326	Special Education Summer Services	-	-	4,619	-	5,159	200,000	-	-	-	-	209,778	-	
	3328	Special Education Compliance and Nonpublic Services	-	-	13,541	-	22,776	4,800,000	-	-	-	-	4,836,317	-	
	3330	Special Education - Central Office	-	-	216,132	-	77,843	100,000	-	-	-	-	397,975	-	
		Special Education Total	\$ 1,730,388	\$ 278,800	\$ (1,457,393)	\$ 600	\$ 5,251,757	\$ 7,424,580	51.50	\$ 4,000	\$ 13,232,732	86.50			

Department of Special Education – Budget Summary

BUDGET REDUCTIONS		Requested FY 2025 Budget Changes						FY 2025 Requested	
		Programmatic- School Based		Programmatic-Non School Based Special Education Services		Total Reductions	Total Reductions		
Program Number	Curricular Field Trips	Special Education	Special Education FTE	Personnel	Personnel FTE	Non- Personnel	Total Reductions	Total Reductions FTE	
Countywide Services									
3320	\$ -	\$ (81,041)	(1.00)	\$ -	-	\$ -	\$ (81,041)	(1.00)	
Special Education School-Based Services									
3321	(12,600)	(2,302,948)	-	-	-	-	(2,315,548)	-	
Cedar Lane									
3322	-	(7,107)	-	-	-	-	(7,107)	-	
Birth-Five Early Intervention Services									
3324	-	(100,000)	-	(242,313)	(2.00)	-	(342,313)	(2.00)	
Speech, Language, and Hearing Services									
3325	-	(3,530)	-	(207,120)	(2.00)	-	(210,650)	(2.00)	
Special Education Summer Services									
3326	-	(1,425)	-	-	-	-	(1,425)	-	
Special Education Compliance and Nonpublic Services									
3328	-	-	-	-	-	(900)	(900)	-	
Special Education - Central Office									
3330	-	-	-	(122,400)	(1.00)	(138,845)	(261,245)	(1.00)	
Special Education Total	\$ (12,600)	\$ (2,496,051)	(1.00)	\$ (571,833)	(5.00)	\$ (139,745)	\$ (3,220,229)	(6.00)	