



*Department of Special Education  
Strategic Plan  
2017-2020*



## Key Points for Discussion:

**NOTE: THIS PLAN WILL BE UPDATED TO REFLECT THE STRATEGIC PLAN DEVELOPMENT PROCESS IN THE WEEKS AHEAD. THESE UPDATES WILL BE REFLECTED IN THE FIRST SEVERAL PAGES OF THE PLAN. ADDITIONAL UPDATES WILL BE MADE TO CLARIFY MEASURES AND BASELINE AS NEEDED. REVISION DATES WILL BE INCLUDED. OTHER CHANGES MAY BE MADE TO THE INITIATIVES AND STRATEGIES AS IMPLEMENTATION OCCURS. ANY CHANGES TO THESE ITEMS WOULD OCCUR AS A PART OF OUR EFFORTS TO MAINTAIN A FLUID DOCUMENT TO GUIDE THE WORK AS MENTIONED BELOW. -TLS**

- Implementation and strategic planning work will be carried out by committees, focus groups and work groups.
- Communication and updates will be provided to parents, community, teachers, staff, and BOE.
- Key measures will be tracked and monitored on a monthly, quarterly, and annual basis. Types of key measures of success include:
  - Leading indicators – showing progress and tracking the work to completion
  - Lagging indicators – evaluating the results of the work and the overall impact
- The strategic plan is a roadmap for the work and priorities of the Department of Special Education. It is important to maintain a level of fluidity and flexibility to allow for continuous improvement opportunities and unforeseen changes in the system and resources

HCPSS DEPARTMENT OF SPECIAL EDUCATION MEASURES OF SUCCESS								
	Measures of Success	MSDE			HCPSS			
		Baseline (2015-16)	2018	2020	Baseline	2018	2020	
EARLY CHILDHOOD ACTION IMPERATIVE	Birth to Kindergarten Child Outcomes: The percentage of children who receive early intervention services or preschool special education services and substantially increased their rate of growth by the time they exited the program							
	Ealy intervention Services	Positive social-emotional skills	58%	60%	62%	62%		
	Birth - 4 (IFSP & Extended IFSP)	Acquisition and use of knowledge and skills	61%	63%	65%	65%		
		Use of appropriate behaviors to meet needs	68%	70%	72%	70%		
	Preschool Special Education Services Ages 3-5 (IEP)	Positive social-emotional skills	69%	71%	73%	81%		
		Acquisition and use of knowledge and skills	66%	68%	70%	79%		
	Use of appropriate behaviors to meet needs	66%	68%	70%	79%			
	Service Delivery:							
	Natural Environment Birth - 4 (IFSP & Extended IFSP)	The percentage of children, ages birth - 4 who primarily receive early intervention services in the home or in a program for typically developing children	97.50%	97.75%	98%	100%		
	Least Restrictive Environment Ages 3-5 (IEP)	The percentage of children, age 3-5 years, who attend a regular early childhood program, and receive the majority of their special education and related services in a regular early childhood program	60%	64%	70%	84%		
MSDE DSE/EIS STRATEGIC PLAN ACCESS, EQUITY, PROGRESS ACTION IMPERATIVE	Measures of Success							
	Access to General Education	School age students with disabilities are educated in general education classes 80% or more of the time	68.95% (2015-16)	72%	75%	80%		
	Equity in Education	No LSS will disproportionately identify students with disabilities by race or ethnicity (< 2.0 risk ratio)	11 school systems (2014-15)	5 school systems	2 school systems	Met <2.0 risk ratio		
		No LSS will disproportionately place students in separate special education programs and schools by race or ethnicity (< 2.0 risk ratio)	6 school systems (2014-15)	4 school systems	2 school systems	Met <2.0 risk ratio		
		No LSS will disproportionately suspend or expel students with disabilities by race or ethnicity (< 2.0 risk ratio)	3 school systems (2014-15)	2 school systems	0 school systems	Met <2.0 risk ratio		
	Progress	The gap in reading performance of elementary and middle school-age children with disabilities will be narrowed. (PARCC)	28-34 points (2015-16)	23-29 points	20-25 points	TBD		
		The gap in math performance of elementary and middle school-age children with disabilities will be narrowed. (PARCC)	20-33 points (2015-16)	18-30 points	15-25 points	TBD		
		The performance of students who take the alternate assessment based on alternate achievement standards will improve. (MSAA)	29% ELA 34% Math (2015-16)	5% over baseline	10% over baseline	TBD		
	SECONDARY TRANSITION ACTION IMPERATIVE	Measures of Success						
		Graduation	An increasing percent of students with disabilities will graduate with a Diploma in 4 years of high school	63.93%	66%	68%	63.87%	
An increasing percent of students with disabilities will graduate with a Diploma in 5 years of high school			69.33%	72%	74%	70.59%		
Drop Out		Fewer students with disabilities will drop out of high school	4.73%	4.25%	3.75%	3.11%		
Post-secondary Outcomes		An increasing percent of students with disabilities will participate in paid employment, post-secondary education, and/or employment training	56.23%	60%	64%	74.61%		

In November 2016, the MDSE Division of Special Education/Early Intervention Services (DSE/EIS) Rolled out a new strategic plan, Moving Maryland Forward – Sharpening the Focus for 2020. HCPSS will align our work to the three Action Imperatives described in the plan. We will use the Measures of Success established in the plan to monitor our performance at a district level.

INSTRUCTIONAL PRACTICES/DATA DRIVEN RESULTS

Initiatives	#	Strategies	Key Measure	Goal	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21
Offer training on specialized instruction including evidence-based practices that are required to meet the needs of most students (e.g., structured literacy training)	1	Improve professional learning sessions for specialized instructors, including: accommodations, modifications, and technology	Participant Training Feedback Forms (Target 4 and above)	4 and above				
	2	Provide opportunities for gaining knowledge and skills for specialized instruction (e.g., phonics-based approaches/multisensory approaches/Orton-Gillingham, Specialists, Autism, etc.)	Number of educators trained in interventions Participant Training Feedback Forms (Target 4 and above)	Trained educators for each intervention 4 and above				
Implement evidenced-based interventions aligned to student need and taught with fidelity.	3	Deliver training for instructional interventions with an emphasis on fidelity of implementation	Number of educators trained in interventions Participant Training Feedback Forms (Target 4 and above)	Trained educators for each intervention 4 and above				
	4	Increase access to evidence based-practices and instructional interventions in English Language Arts	Number of reading interventions	#				
	5	Increase access to evidence based-practices and instructional interventions in Math	Number of math interventions	#				
	6	Utilize fidelity checklists to ensure consistency of implementation for interventions and provide on-going training for staff	Completion fidelity checklists	100%				
	7	Co-develop a systemic tool for student growth and time in intervention	Intervention Tracker developed	Completion	○	●	●	
	8	Increase access to evidence-based practices for specialized programs in areas of English Language Arts for students receiving instruction aligned to alternative education framework	Number of evidenced based practices for ELA	#				
	9	Increase access to evidence-based practices for specialized programs in areas of Math for students receiving instruction aligned to alternative education framework standards	Number of evidenced based practices for math	#				
Implement the use of instructional materials for students being instructed on the alternate education framework	10	Create parent pages for each level with access to information and expectations to the curriculum	# of Pages available for ES	Completion	○	●	●	●
	# Pages available for MS		Completion	○	●	●	●	
	# Pages available for HS		Completion	○	●	●	●	
Build capacity of assistive technology implementation with students, staff, and families	11	Identify Instructional Access Coaches at all schools	Number of school based coaches	One in each school	62 (2015-16)			
	12	Evaluate the systematic process for determining assistive technology needs of students to improve system practices	Survey students, staff and parents	TBD	Survey results	Survey results	Survey results	Survey results
	13	Provide professional learning for students on use of their assistive technology tools/devices	Device users trained	100%				
	14	Provide professional learning for staff and parents on assistive technology tools/devices	Participant Training Feedback Forms (Target 4 and above) Participant Training Feedback Forms (Target 4 and above)	4 and above 4 and above				
Expand opportunities for collaborative planning with special and general educators	15	Provide guidance to administrators to create schedules for special education staff collaboration time	Guidelines for scheduling created	Completion	○	●●		
	16	Provide long range planning resources for general educator and special educator	Teacher satisfaction Feedback	NA				
	17	Identify special educators to participate on curriculum writing teams for summer planning wages	Number of special educators identified % Participation on Teams	# 100%				

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HCPSS STRATEGIC PLAN		SOCIAL SKILLS						
Initiatives	#	Strategies	Key Measure	Goal	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21
Provide differentiated training for all staff, students and parents on social competencies across all levels and in a variety of settings and environments	18		Training Matrix to track type of training, school, and person trained		OT, PT, SLP, Vision, Hearing, APE, ITLS, , full staff	Paraedcator groups and Admins	General Ed	General Ed
		Provide awareness training for school staff on social competencies, classroom management, and restorative justice	Participant Training Feedback Forms	4 and above				
	19	A. Provide awareness training and mentoring for student leaders across a variety of student groups and activities.	Number of student groups mentored	One in each school	Student leaders	School clubs and teams	School clubs and teams	Curriculum
B. Provide awareness training and mentoring for parents		Parent participation in training	#	Baseline collection	20% increase	10% increase	10% increase	
Develop an integrated and developmentally appropriate social competencies curriculum linked to growth of skills across levels and connected to the state standards and general education curriculum.	20	Review what is currently being done within the HCPSS Curriculum office and through the Alternate Education Office, and benchmark other school districts for social competency curriculum	Average of curriculum quality criteria	Project Complete	○	●	●	
	21	Create differentiated social competencies curriculum, explicit and integrated, provided across all levels.	Implementation timeline	Project Complete	○	●	●	●
	22	Determine success rate of new curriculum	Suspension data for disrespect and bullying referrals	Decrease suspension rates				
Expand social skills programs and opportunities to students with special needs	23	Review all current resources, materials, and programs currently being used in HCPSS related to social skills, social emotional learning, and extra curricular activities.	Evaluation of resources completed	Project Complete	○ ●	●●		
	24	Create a resource guide on what is available in the county and who is using specific materials and resources.	Resource guide created	Project Complete	○●	●●		
	25	Expand extra-curricular activities for all students in middle school (Best Buddies, Allied Sports, and modified programs)	# of programs offered at MS level	#	Baseline - Current # of	At least 2 programs in each MS	3 programs in each	4 program s in each

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Initiatives		#	Strategies	Key Measure	Goal	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21
Build capacity of school administrators and special education team leaders, and other case managers		26	Provide compliance and procedural training to Instructional Team Leaders (ITLs) to ensure consistency with all schools for compliance	% schools compliant (Tienet)	100%				
				Number of ITLs trained	100%				
		27	Provide compliance and procedural training to administrators (ensuring consistency with all schools for compliance)	IEP data from Tienet					
Establish a highly effective data collection system to enable the Department of Special Education to collect, analyze, take action, and report compliance data		28	Ensure all case managers have access to a data collection system and provide professional learning for data analysis to inform instruction	IEP data from Tienet					
		29	Leverage the capabilities of TIENET to maximize the capability for data collection, sending reminders for compliance, and creating reports	Dashboards developed	Project Complete	○●	●●		
		30	Research already existing data collection systems from other school systems for best practices	Assessment of systems available	Project Complete	○●	●●		
Track, monitor, and communicate compliance data for the IEP process		31	Develop a multi-faceted monitoring tool for IEP compliance and IEP quality	Tool in place with metrics	Project Complete	●	●	●	
		32	Establish a system for data collection and analysis to track IEP compliance at the individual, school and district levels	Dashboards created to review data	Project Complete	●	●	●	
Improve communication among and between all members of the IEP Team and evaluate special education IEP process for parents		33	Improve communication with parents before, during, after meeting from all members of the IEP Team.	MSDE Indicator 8 Parent Survey (Q9)	Target 80%	79% (20016-17)			
		34	Develop templates for communication (e.g., Medical Assistance letter, welcome letter, IEP Team expectations, agendas, etc.)	Toolkit for IEP Meetings Created	Project Complete	●	●	●	
		35	Review parent feedback to ensure consistency for sharing IEP progress with parents	MSDE Indicator 8 Parent Survey (Q21)	Target 80%	69% (2016-17)			
		36	Provide highly effective IEP Team training to all members of IEP teams in each school	Participant Training Feedback	4 and above				

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HCPSS DSE STRATEGIC PLAN		TRAINING						
Initiatives	#	Strategies	Key Measure	Goal	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21
Provide access to timely, meaningful, consistent, and ongoing professional learning to all paraprofessionals (includes: paraeducators, student assistants and temporary employees)	37	Develop pre-service modules to include a variety of relevant topics for ITLs and Central Office DSE Team to utilize for training (e.g., confidentiality, understanding IEP, supporting instruction, building relationships, etc.)	Modules developed	Project Complete	○○	●●		
	38	Offer differentiated professional learning for all paraprofessionals including accommodations, modifications, principles of Applied Behavior Analysis	Participant Training Feedback Forms	4 and above				
	39	Provide resources to special education ITLs to utilize for paraprofessional training	Resources available for training	Resources complete	○	●●	●	
Establish professional learning for all general educators on the most prevalent disabilities and suggest effective teaching strategies that best meet the needs of these students.	40	Develop or enhance professional learning materials for disability awareness to support common learner characteristics/needs (e.g., attention, memory, visual processing, other areas of executive functioning)	Professional learning materials updated	Project Complete	○○	●●		
	41	Provide professional learning for all educators (including related arts teachers)	Participant Training Feedback Forms	4 and above			●	
Identification of students with Specific Learning Disabilities in the primary years (RECC-Gr 3)	42	Provide procedural training on Specific Learning Disability awareness and learner characteristics. Include psychologists, special educators, general educators, and parents for procedural training.	Participant Training Feedback Forms	4 and above				
Develop systemwide behavior training sessions for administrators, general educators, special educators, related service providers, parents and other members of the IEP team to learn about ABA bases techniques and other approaches (e.g., restorative practices, Life Space Crisis Intervention)	43	Create professional learning for special education teachers to support students across all environments	Professional learning materials created	Project Complete	○○	●●		
	44	Create professional learning for general education teachers to support students in general education environments	Professional learning materials created	Project Complete	○○	●●		
	45	Provide resource teams to structure meetings (weekly, bi-weekly) for essential members of the IEP services team	Track meetings	number of meetings held				
	46	Establish mandatory session for all new Special Educator hires to receive basic behavior training	% of new hires trained	100%				
	47	Provide paraprofessionals (paraeducators, student assistants and temporary employees) behavior training	% paras trained	100%				
	48	Provide professional learning for administrators and other support staff (e.g., psychologists, mental health technicians, alternative education teachers, pupil personnel workers) to learn about ABA-based techniques	Participant Training Feedback Forms	4 and above				
	49	Provide professional learning opportunities and follow up with staff in specialized programs/classrooms that must acquire knowledge in ABA-based/other research-based strategies (e.g., instructional sequences, reinforcer assessments)	Participant Training Feedback Forms	4 and above				

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CASE MANAGEMENT/CONTINUUM	Initiatives	#	Strategies	Key Measure	Goal	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	
	Conduct research to inform the expansion of continuum of services for students with autism and other disabilities and ensure consistency for program implementation	50	Evaluate the elementary Academic Life Skills programs for instructional consistency	IEPs implemented	100%					
		51	Review and analyze data on students placed in non-public schools by disability, age, and level in order to determine gaps in curriculum and develop action plan	Number of students in non-public schools	#					
		52	Assess needs for other programs or flexible delivery models at the MS level	Number of students of each disability in each programs	#					
		53	Assess needs for other programs or flexible delivery models at the HS level	Number of students of each disability in each programs	#					
		54	Investigate researched-based best practices for instructing for students with ADHD, autism, twice exceptional, etc.	Recommendations from research	Project Complete	○○	●●			
	Develop guidelines to assist administrators in prioritizing and developing schedules to ensure the intensity of needs of students is considered when placing students in general education classes	55	Establish scheduling guidelines in collaboration School Management and Instruction Leadership to assist administrators with setting up class composition, opportunities for collaborative planning time for co-teachers	Guidelines Developed	Project Complete	○○	●●			
		56	Monitor the number of students with disabilities (SWDs) placed in general education classes, considering intensity of student needs, teacher expertise, available support staff, and specific training to general education teachers as needed.	Percentage of schools utilizing ITLs for scheduling	100%					
				Percent of students with IEPs	TBD					
				Number of students with IEPs in classrooms	#					

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STAFFING	Initiatives	#	Strategies	Key Measure	Goal	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21
	Evaluate and revise the current staffing plan/formula for all service providers to reflect number of students, intensity of needs of the students and hours of service	57	Review current staffing plan and formula in order to make necessary revisions to ensure consideration of intensity of needs of students when staffing.	New staffing plan in place	Project Complete	○	●●	●	
	Evaluate and revise the current staffing plan/formula for all service providers to reflect number of students, intensity of needs of the students and hours of service	58	Create a long range plan to increase the number of paraeducator/student assistants in order to decrease the number of temporary employees.	Percentage of Temporary employees	%				
	Create a staffing build out plan to support the population growth for student with all types of disabilities	59	Identify a resource to review material, upload, lead design of curriculum material and ensure consistency	Identify resource and track progress	TBD	Create job description	Identify resource	Progress tracker for instructional material	
		60	Expand Instructional Access team (e.g., special educator)	Number of resources added over the next 4 years	TBD	2 Spec Educator, 2 SLPs, 2 TAs	1 additional educator or service provider		
		61	Hire staff to collect and analyze data, and train staff on how to use data for goal setting, analysis, and reporting	Hire data analyst	Position filled	0	0	Hire data analyst	
	Expand the compliance team within the current Office of Nonpublic Services and Compliance	62	Increase staff to support nonpublic services	Hire 1 Instructional Facilitator	Position filled			Add 1 Instructional Facilitator	
		63	Identify 3 special education compliance resource teachers and consider alignment (e.g., by level or area Community Superintendents)	3 resource teachers	Positions filled	Collecting baseline data	Define roles and resp.	Assess Needs	Hire resource teachers
	Each school will have a non-teaching Instructional team leader	64	Formulate a recommendation for prioritizing schools based on need, number of programs, etc for non-teaching ITLs in schools	# of schools with non-teaching ITLs	Positions filled	12 HS and 5 MS	12 HS and 5 MS	4-5 more	4-5 more
		65	Partner with the Department of Human Resources to develop job descriptions for nonteaching ITLs to include a focus on areas such as, student performance data, training, and compliance (no lunch and bus duties, etc.)	New job description in place	Project Complete	○	●●	●	

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