



HCPSS CONTINUUM OF SPECIAL EDUCATION SERVICES

2026–2027

SCHOOL YEAR



ABOUT THIS GUIDE

The **2026–2027 Howard County Public School System (HCPSS) Continuum of Special Education Services** represents the service delivery models that will be implemented during the 2026–2027 school year. This continuum reflects HCPSS's current programming and our ongoing commitment to providing high-quality, individualized services in the least restrictive environment. As we continue to strengthen inclusive practices and refine our programs, this continuum will evolve to meet the changing needs of our students and school communities.

PURPOSE

This guide provides an overview of the special education service models available across HCPSS. It is intended to serve as a reference for educators, administrators, related service providers, families, and other members of Individualized Education Program (IEP) teams by promoting a shared understanding of each model's instructional focus, student profile, and implementation. By providing consistent information about available service models, this guide supports informed, collaborative decision-making in the development and implementation of each student's IEP.

INDIVIDUALIZED SERVICES

The descriptions included in this guide provide a general overview of each service model. Placement decisions are made collaboratively by the IEP team based on each student's unique strengths, needs, and educational goals.

Related services, including speech-language pathology, occupational therapy, physical therapy, vision services, hearing services, counseling, and other services as appropriate, are available within every service model and are provided in accordance with each student's IEP.

LOOKING AHEAD

HCPSS remains committed to continuously improving our continuum of services. As our practices evolve and new opportunities emerge, this guide will be updated to reflect enhancements that strengthen outcomes for students with disabilities.

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Services by Level • SY 2026–2027

Early Childhood Services

Service	Level	Description	Location
Infants and Toddlers	Birth–Age 3	Early intervention services are provided to infants and toddlers younger than age 3 and their families. Services outlined through an Individualized Family Service Plan (IFSP) are delivered in natural environments, including home and community settings. Special educators and related service providers deliver services through a Primary Service Provider model with reflective coaching, designed to build the capacity of parents and caregivers to support their child's growth and development.	Regional: Home and community settings; staff based at FRES, MWES, RBES, RockES, VES
Promoting All Learners' Success PALS	Preschool (Age 3–5)	Promoting All Learners' Success (PALS) provides IEP services for 3- and 4-year-old children within Howard County community programs selected by families. Services may include special education, speech-language therapy, and/or occupational therapy and are provided through direct services and/or consultation. Registered home daycares may also be considered if they are Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE)-accredited, willing to partner with HCPSS, and able to implement the child's IEP goals with support from PALS providers.	Regional: Community-based programs; staff based at Ascend One
Preschool	Preschool (Age 3–5)	The Preschool model serves 3-year-old children through a 2.5-hour model, 4 days per week. Students receive classroom instruction aligned with the HCPSS early childhood curriculum in an inclusive setting. Preschool students demonstrate skills similar to their same-age peers in many areas, with IEP needs addressed within daily classroom routines and activities. Additionally, the model offers monthly family support to address family and student needs.	Regional: AES, BSES, BBES, BPES, DOES, DRES, DLES, EES, FES, GCES, HHES, IES, PRES, RBES, SFES, SES, TSES, VES, WatES, WavES (20 schools)
Prekindergarten (Pre-K)	Age 4 (Children turning 4 by September 1)	The Prekindergarten (Pre-K) model serves students who are 4 years old by September 1 through a full-day, inclusive model, 5 days per week. Students receive classroom instruction aligned with the HCPSS early childhood curriculum. Pre-K model students demonstrate skills similar to their same-age peers in many areas, and IEP needs are addressed within the classroom routines and activities. Additionally, this model offers family support, as needed, to address family and student needs.	Regional: AES, BSES, BBES, BWES, BPES, CCES, CLES, CRES, DOES, DRES, DLES, EES, FRES, FES, GCES, GES, HHES, IES, JHES, LWES, LoES, PLES, PRES, RES, RBES, SFES, SES, TSES, TRES, VES, WatES, WavES, WoES (32 schools)
Multiple Intense Needs Class – Preschool MINC-PS	Age 3	The Multiple Intense Needs Class–Preschool (MINC-PS) model serves 3-year-old students with significant learning needs through a 2.5-hour model, 4 days per week. Classroom instruction follows the HCPSS early childhood curriculum with necessary modifications in an inclusive setting. MINC-PS students have multiple needs across many areas of development. Instruction includes large and small groups, along with individualized, structured teaching opportunities based on evidence-based strategies, such as, applied behavior analysis. Additionally, this model offers monthly family support to address family and student needs.	Regional: BSES, BBES, BPES, CRES, DLES, FRES, FES, GCES, HHES, IES, PLES, PRES, RES, RBES, SES, TSES, VES, WatES, WavES, WoES (20 schools)
Multiple Intense Needs Class – Prekindergarten MINC-PK	Age 4 (Pre-K students)	The Multiple Intense Needs Class–Prekindergarten (MINC-PK) model serves students who are 4 years old by September 1 with significant learning needs through a full-day model, 5 days per week. Classroom instruction follows the HCPSS early childhood curriculum with necessary modifications in an inclusive setting. MINC-PK students have multiple needs across many areas of development. Instruction includes large- and small-group learning, along with individualized, structured teaching opportunities based on evidence-based strategies, such as applied behavior analysis. Additionally, this model offers family support, as needed, to address family and student needs.	Regional: BSES, BBES, BPES, CLES, CRES, DOES, DRES, DLES, FRES, FES, GES, GCES, HHES, IES, JHES, LoES, PRES, RES, RBES, SES, TSES, VES, WatES, WavES, WoES (25 schools)

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Early Childhood Services			
Service	Level	Description	Location
Multiple Intense Needs Class – Early Learner <i>MINC-EL</i>	Age 3–4	The Multiple Intense Needs Class–Early Learner (MINC-EL) model serves 3- and 4-year-old children through a full-day model, 4 days per week. Classroom instruction follows the HCPSS early childhood curriculum with necessary modifications in an inclusive setting. MINC-EL students demonstrate significant learning needs that require novel skills to be introduced using most-to-least prompting, where errors are prevented when possible. Students require direct instruction focusing on building foundational skills across many developmental areas, with frequent practice and systematic generalization of skills to real-life settings. The MINC-EL model IEP team has determined that the student's needs cannot be met in a less restrictive environment based on data analysis. Additionally, this model offers monthly family support to address family and student needs.	Regional: BBES, BPES, DOES, DRES, LWES, RES, TSES, VES (8 schools)
Multiple Intense Needs Class – Functional Learner <i>MINC-FL</i>	Age 3–4	The Multiple Intense Needs Class–Functional Learner (MINC-FL) model serves 3- and 4-year-old students through a full-day model, 4 days per week. Classroom instruction aligns with selected aspects of the HCPSS early childhood curriculum and is individualized to ensure every student can access learning at their own pace. MINC-FL students have needs in multiple areas of development, with a focus on communication, mobility, fine motor skills, self-regulation, and self-help. Students in this model require direct instruction that emphasizes functional skills, generalization, and curriculum access. The model includes comprehensive medical support and integrated related services to support skill acquisition and implementation in the early childhood special education classroom setting. Opportunities to learn in an inclusive setting are individualized and based on IEP needs and services.	Regional: Countywide program at FES

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Elementary School Services			
Service	Level	Description	Location
Elementary School Resource	Grades K–5	The Elementary School Resource model provides an inclusive instructional model located within a student's home school. Students in Grades K–5 receive instruction aligned with the Maryland College and Career Readiness Standards (MCCRS) within the general education classroom. Aligned with each student's IEP, this model serves students with all disabilities and addresses specific needs across academics, language, communication, behavior, and sensory processing. Small-group instructional services are provided as determined through the student's IEP. Students may work towards either a diploma or certificate through this model.	Comprehensive: All HCPSS Elementary Schools
Primary Transition	Grades K–2	The Primary Transition model provides an inclusive instructional model located within a student's home school. Students in Grades K–2 receive instruction aligned with the Maryland College and Career Readiness Standards (MCCRS) within the general education classroom. This model allows students to practice grade-level skills in a smaller learning environment while receiving enhanced, Specially Designed Instruction (SDI) and support in a highly structured setting. Aligned with each student's IEP, this model addresses specific needs across academics, language, communication, behavior, and sensory processing. By fostering these essential skills in an inclusive environment, the Primary Transition model prepares students for long-term success, empowering them to achieve greater independence within their school community.	Comprehensive: All HCPSS Elementary Schools
Home Academic Life Skills <i>Home ALS</i>	Grades 3–5	The Home Academic Life Skills (Home ALS) model provides an inclusive instructional model within a student's home school. Students in Grades 3–5 served through this model receive high-quality Tier 1 instruction aligned with the Alternate Academic Achievement Standards (AAAs) within the general education classroom. This setting allows students to practice their skills in a less restrictive environment while receiving enhanced, Specially Designed Instruction (SDI) and support in a more structured setting. Aligned with each student's IEP, this model addresses specific needs across academics, language, communication, behavior, and sensory processing. By fostering these essential skills in an inclusive environment, the Home ALS model prepares students for long-term success, empowering them to achieve greater independence within their school community.	Comprehensive: All HCPSS Elementary Schools
Elementary Primary Learner <i>PL</i>	Grades K–2	The Primary Learner (PL) model supports students in Grades K–2 using specific intensive teaching strategies to teach and generalize new skills. PL students require focused, systematic teaching of academics, communication, social skills, and behavior. Students participate with their general education peers for lunch, recess, related arts, and other classroom activities as outlined in their IEP. This model serves students with a developmental delay and/or autism working toward a diploma.	Regional: BBES, BSES, DOES, IES, PRES, WavES (6 schools)
Elementary Upper Learner <i>UL</i>	Grades 3–5	The Upper Learner (UL) model supports students in Grades 3–5 using specific intensive teaching strategies to teach and generalize new skills. UL students require focused, systematic teaching of academics, communication, social skills, and behavior. Students participate with their general education peers for lunch, recess, related arts, and other classroom activities as outlined in their IEP. These models serves students with a developmental delay and/or autism working toward a diploma.	Regional: BSES, DOES, IES

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Elementary School Services

Service	Level	Description	Location
Regional Academic Life Skills <i>RALS</i>	Grades K–5	The Regional Academic Life Skills (RALS) model serves students in Grades K–5 who require a small, structured learning environment. Instruction is individualized to focus on academics, functional communication, and daily living skills, with behavioral support provided as needed. Students participate with their general education peers for lunch, recess, related arts, and other classroom activities as outlined in their IEP. This model serves students with autism, intellectual disabilities, and/or multiple disabilities; students in Grades 3–5 are working toward a certificate of completion.	Regional: BPES, CES, DLES, GCES, LFES, PRES, RES, SES, WatES, WavES, WoES
RALS – Elementary Focus <i>RALS-Elem</i>	Grades K–5	The RALS–Elementary Focus (RALS-Elem) model provides intensive, highly individualized behavior supports within a self-contained special education setting. It is designed to help students in Grades K–2 build the social, emotional, and behavioral skills needed for school success. Students require a focused and consistent environment, including intensive supports for communication and self-regulation needs, and direct, systematic, individualized instruction. As students demonstrate readiness in their learning behaviors, they participate in the general education classroom as individually appropriate. This model serves students with autism, intellectual disabilities, and/or multiple disabilities; students in Grades 3–5 are working toward a certificate of completion.	Regional: GCES
RALS – Complex Learner Class <i>RALS-CLC</i>	Grades K–5	The RALS–Complex Learner Class (RALS-CLC) model supports students in Grades K–5 with multiple needs across multiple areas of development. This model provides a safe and supportive environment for students that emphasizes communication, mobility, independence, and social interaction. RALS-CLC students require routines-based instruction built around consistent daily routines using manipulatives, concrete objects, and experiential opportunities. Instruction is personalized to ensure every student can access learning at their own pace. Students participate with their general education peers for lunch, recess, related arts, and other classroom activities as outlined in their IEP. This model serves students with intellectual disabilities and/or multiple disabilities; students in Grades 3–5 are working toward a certificate of completion.	Regional: BWES, CES, WoES
RALS – Graduated Guidance <i>RALS-GG</i>	Grades K–5	The RALS–Graduated Guidance (RALS-GG) model provides a systematic, hands-on approach to learning for students Grades 3–5. Students in this model require instruction at a highly modified pace, repeated practice, and learning embedded in real-life activities. The model focuses on daily living skills, practical academics, communication, and social growth. Students receive extra time to practice skills and individualized support, including guided participation, in related arts. Students participate with their general education peers for lunch, recess, related arts, and other classroom activities as outlined in their IEP. All related services are provided based on each student's specific IEP. This model serves students with autism, intellectual disabilities, and/or multiple disabilities; students in Grades 3–5 are working toward a certificate of completion.	Regional: BPES, PRES, WoES
RALS – Structured Practice for Academic Readiness and Communication <i>RALS-SPARC</i>	Grades K–5	The RALS–Structured Practice for Academic Readiness and Communication (RALS-SPARC) model supports learners with complex academic and communication needs. Instruction takes place in a highly structured, self-contained special education classroom and emphasizes communication, sensory regulation, and school readiness. Students require practical academic instruction tailored to their unique learning styles, with all related services provided based on their IEP. As students demonstrate readiness in their learning behaviors, they participate in the general education classroom as individually appropriate. This model serves students with autism and intellectual disabilities; students in Grades 3–5 are working toward a certificate of completion.	Regional: BPES, BWES

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Elementary School Services (Continued)			
Service	Level	Description	Location
Creating Opportunities to Manage Progress, Self Regulate, and Achieve Success <i>COMPASS</i>	Grades K–5	The Creating Opportunities to Manage Progress, Self Regulate, and Achieve Success (COMPASS) model provides academic, behavioral, and explicit social-emotional support to students Grades K–5. Students require the support of a small, self-contained special education classroom in order to access predictable environment and positive behavioral strategies. COMPASS is directly supported by licensed mental health and behavioral providers. Every student has opportunities to participate in general education classes and activities as determined by their IEP. This model serves students with emotional disabilities, other health impairments, and autism working toward a diploma.	Regional: HHES, VES
COMPASS – Kindergarten Focus <i>COMPASS-K</i>	Kindergarten	The COMPASS–Kindergarten Focus (COMPASS-K) model is a highly supportive approach for kindergarten students with learning and social-emotional needs that are not met in other special education settings at the kindergarten level. COMPASS-K students require focused instruction and support to develop communication skills, social-emotional skills, and classroom readiness behaviors. Students receive specialized instruction in a self-contained special education classroom, with opportunities to join general education classes as outlined in their IEP. This model serves students with developmental delay, autism, and/or other health impairments working toward a diploma.	Regional: TSES
COMPASS – Enhanced Therapeutic <i>COMPASS-ET</i>	Grades K–5 (Varies by site)	The COMPASS–Enhanced Therapeutic (COMPASS-ET) model provides an enhanced approach including dedicated mental health and behavioral support for students with urgent needs. Academic, behavioral, and explicit social-emotional support is provided within a trauma-informed framework. Students require the support of a small, self-contained special education classroom to access a predictable environment and positive behavioral strategies. This model is directly supported by a team of licensed mental health and behavioral providers. Every student has opportunities to participate in general education classes and activities as determined by their IEP. This model serves students with emotional disabilities, other health impairments, and autism working toward a diploma.	Regional: THES
Regulation, Instruction, and Sensory Engagement <i>RISE</i>	Grades K–5	The Regulation, Instruction, and Sensory Engagement (RISE) model provides specialized academic, behavioral, and social-emotional instruction and support. RISE students require intensive, specialized instruction to develop social skills, self-regulation skills, and address behavioral needs impacted by foundational pragmatic language and cognitive flexibility challenges. Students learn these skills in a small, highly structured setting that includes embedded sensory regulation strategies and have supported opportunities to apply learned skills in broader school environments. RISE students access the general education curriculum with accommodations and participate in the general education setting as outlined in their IEP. This model serves students with autism working toward a diploma.	Regional: DRES, HHES, TRES

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Middle School Services

Service	Level	Description	Location
Middle School Resource	Grades 6–8	The Middle School Resource model serves students with IEPs in grades 6–8 who are instructed and assessed on grade-level curriculum aligned with the Maryland College and Career Readiness Standards (MCCRS) and participate in the Maryland Comprehensive Assessment Program (MCAP). Students receive most instruction in the general education classroom with specially designed instruction, accommodations, and small-group interventions in reading, writing, and math to support IEP goals. Instructional support may be provided in or out of the general education setting.	Comprehensive: All HCPSS Middle Schools
Home Academic Life Skills <i>Home ALS</i>	Grades 6–8	The Home Academic Life Skills (Home ALS) model provides Specially Designed Instruction (SDI) in reading, writing, and math aligned with the Alternate Assessment Achievement Standards (AAAs). Students participate with their general education peers for lunch, recess, related arts, and other classes as outlined in their IEP. This model serves students with significant cognitive disabilities working towards a certificate of completion.	Comprehensive: All HCPSS Middle Schools
Middle School Intensive Resource <i>IR</i>	Grades 6–8	The Middle School Intensive Resource (IR) model serves students that require intensive academic support to access grade-level curriculum. The IR model provides consistent and coordinated direct instruction that is integrated to support students in the general education curriculum. Students in this model require Specially Designed Instruction (SDI) in the areas of reading (comprehension and/or foundational reading skills), mathematics, and written language. This model includes academic interventions to allow students to progress on grade-level content standards and has a strong focus on academics. Based on the IEP, services may be inside or outside of general education classroom. Students participate with their general education peers as outlined in their IEP. This model serves students working towards a diploma.	Comprehensive: Bonnie Branch MS, Lime Kiln MS, Patuxent Valley MS (adding a new Grade 6 class; will serve Grade 6 and Grade 7)
Middle School Regional Academic Life Skills <i>RALS</i>	Grades 6–8	The Middle School Regional Academic Life Skills (RALS) model serves students who require a small, structured learning environment. Instruction is individualized to focus on academics, functional communication, and daily living skills, with behavioral support provided as needed. Students participate with their general education peers for lunch, recess, related arts, and other courses as outlined in their IEP. This model serves students with autism, intellectual disabilities, and/or multiple disabilities working toward a certificate of completion.	Regional: Elkridge Landing MS, Folly Quarter MS, Oakland Mills MS, Wilde Lake MS
RALS – Differentiated <i>RALS-Differentiated</i>	Grades 6–8	The RALS–Differentiated model serves students who require a small, structured learning environment. Instruction is individualized to focus on academics, functional communication, and daily living skills, with personal hygiene support provided as needed. Students participate with their general education peers for lunch, recess, related arts, and other courses as outlined in their IEP. This model serves students with significant cognitive disabilities, including, autism, intellectual disabilities, and/or multiple disabilities, working toward a certificate of completion.	Regional: Middle school sites (Additional Grade 6/7 classroom planned for SY 2026–27)
Creating Opportunities to Manage Progress, Self Regulate, and Achieve Success <i>COMPASS</i>	Grades 6–8	The Creating Opportunities to Manage Progress, Self Regulate, and Achieve Success (COMPASS) model provides academic, behavioral, and explicit social-emotional support. Students require the support of a small, self-contained special education classroom in order to access a predictable environment and positive behavioral strategies. COMPASS is directly supported by licensed mental health and behavioral providers. Every student has opportunities to participate in general education classes and activities as determined by their IEP. This model serves students with emotional disabilities, other health impairments, and autism working toward a diploma.	Comprehensive: Glenwood MS, Ellicott Mills MS, Murray Hill MS

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High School Services			
Service	Level	Description	Location
High School Resource	Grades 9–12	The High School Resource model serves students with IEPs in Grades 9–12 who are instructed and assessed on grade-level curriculum aligned with the Maryland College and Career Readiness Standards (MCCRS) and participate in the Maryland Comprehensive Assessment Program (MCAP). Students receive most instruction in the general education classroom with specially designed instruction, accommodations, and small-group interventions in reading, writing, and math to support IEP goals. Instructional support may be provided in or out of the general education setting.	Comprehensive: All HCPSS High Schools
Home Academic Life Skills <i>Home ALS</i>	Grades 9–12 (through age 21)	The Home Academic Life Skills (Home ALS) model provides Specially Designed Instruction (SDI) in reading, writing, and mathematics aligned with the Alternate Academic Achievement Standards (AAAs). Students participate with their general education peers as outlined in their IEP. This model serves students with significant cognitive disabilities working towards a certificate of completion.	Comprehensive: All HCPSS High Schools
High School Intensive Resource <i>IR</i>	Grades 9–12	The High School Intensive Resource (IR) model serves students that require intensive academic support to access grade-level curriculum. The IR model provides consistent and coordinated direct instruction, that is integrated to support students in the general education curriculum. Students in this model require Specially Designed Instruction (SDI) in the areas of reading (comprehension and/or foundational reading skills), mathematics, and written language. This model includes academic interventions to allow students to progress on grade-level content standards and has a strong focus on academics. Based on the IEP, services may be inside or outside of the general education classroom. Students participate with their general education peers as outlined in their IEP. This model serves students working towards a diploma.	Comprehensive: Howard HS
High School Regional Academic Life Skills <i>RALS</i>	Grades 9–12 (through age 21)	The High School Regional Academic Life Skills (RALS) model serves students who require a small, structured learning environment. Instruction is individualized to focus on academics, functional communication, daily living skills, and significant behavioral support. Students can participate with their general education peers as outlined in their IEP. Students can participate in any after-school programming, including Allied Sports, clubs, and other activities. In addition to academic instruction, students participate in employment and life skills activities that can occur at school, in the community, or at a work site. Students in this model are working towards a certificate of completion.	Regional: Atholton HS, Oakland Mills HS
Creating Opportunities to Manage Progress, Self Regulate, and Achieve Success <i>COMPASS</i>	Grades 9–12	The Creating Opportunities to Manage Progress, Self Regulate, and Achieve Success (COMPASS) model provides academic, behavioral, and explicit social-emotional support. Students require the support of a small, self-contained special education classroom. Every student participates in general education classes and activities and has access to crisis support throughout the day, as needed. COMPASS is directly supported by licensed mental health and behavioral providers. This model serves students with emotional disabilities, other health impairments, and autism working toward a diploma.	Comprehensive: Hammond HS, Mt. Hebron HS

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Public Separate Day Services			
Service	Level	Description	Location
Bridges Program	Middle & High School	The Bridges Program at the Homewood Center is a public separate day model for middle and high school students with IEPs. The model provides a supportive, therapeutic environment for students who can not be supported within their comprehensive school environment. Students have access to spaces to complete work with reduced distractions, regulate emotions, and receive individualized support. Staff prioritize relationship building and partner with students to meet their educational needs with compassion and care. Mental health and counseling services are provided in multiple formats, including individual and group support. The Bridges Program is designed for students whose educational performance is impacted by mental health needs, such as, anxiety, depression, and other mood disorders, or neurological conditions, including autism spectrum disorder. Many students benefit from support in developing social skills and effective strategies for managing school and personal challenges. As a community school, the Homewood Center offers additional resources and supports that benefit the whole child, including free breakfast and lunch, vocational experiences, and access to medical and psychological care. Therapeutic staff collaborate with community providers, as needed, to support students and families. Family involvement is highly encouraged, and opportunities to build relationships and collaborate as members of a multidisciplinary team help ensure students receive the supports needed to meet graduation requirements.	Public Separate Day Service: Homewood Center
Cedar Lane School	Elementary, Middle & High School (Ages 5–21)	The Cedar Lane School is Public Separate Day School for students age 5 through 21 whose needs are so complex that they require a specialized, comprehensive model in a separate school setting. Instruction is provided for students who are developmentally delayed or have multiple disabilities, behavioral challenges in school and community settings, or medical fragility.	Public Separate Day School: Cedar Lane School

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Transition Services			
Service	Level	Description	Location
Career and Community Exploration CCE	Transition (Ages 16+ / Grade 11+)	Career and Community Exploration (CCE) is a community-based work and career exploration program for students who: (a) are seeking a certificate of completion; (b) are 16 or older and/or in Grade 11 or above; and (c) may require a higher degree of support or supervision. CCE involves group work sites supervised by special education personnel, providing a transition from school to independent work experiences. The intent of the CCE model is to provide students with opportunities to explore a variety of work experiences, demonstrate their ability to apply learned skills in different settings, and ultimately use these skills in an independent work experience.	Comprehensive: All HCPSS High Schools
Work Study	Transition (Ages 16+)	Designed for students age 16 and older who are seeking a certificate of completion, the Work Study model is a customized employment model directly related to the student's interests and transition goals identified in their IEP. With a focus on career exploration and work readiness skills, the Work Study model provides a structured, supervised work experience in a business or other community organization. A teacher works closely with the student and the employer to support successful job performance.	Comprehensive: All HCPSS High Schools
Community Connection	Transition	Community Connection is a community-inclusive transition program located on the Howard Community College campus, designed for students seeking a certificate of completion to develop the skills essential for success in work, social, and community environments. Students develop these skills while working and participating in the community, with guidance and support from Community Connections staff.	Community-Based: Howard Community College
Project SEARCH: Howard County	Transition (Final Year of High School)	Project SEARCH: Howard County is a one-year, 30-week transition program designed for students with intellectual and developmental disabilities who are in their final year of high school. It is a competitive model with 12 student placements available each year. Applications are accepted during the winter, with interviews conducted in the spring. The model is designed for students whose primary goal is employment and who will benefit from full-time career exploration in a business setting. The Project SEARCH model involves an extensive period of training and career exploration, innovative adaptations, long-term job coaching, and continuous feedback from teachers, job coaches, and employers. As a result of this training, students obtain employment in non-traditional, complex, and rewarding jobs.	Community-Based: Howard County Government

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Services Across Levels • SY 2026–2027

Service Coverage Matrix by School Level						
Service	Early Childhood	Elementary School	Middle School	High School	Public Separate Day	Transition
Early Childhood Special Education Services						
Infants and Toddlers	●					
Promoting All Learners' Success (PALS)	●					
Preschool	●					
Prekindergarten (Pre-K)	●					
Multiple Intense Needs Class–Preschool (MINC-PS)	●					
Multiple Intense Needs Class–Prekindergarten (MINC-PK)	●					
Multiple Intense Needs Class–Early Learner (MINC-EL)	●					
Multiple Intense Needs Class–Functional Learner (MINC-FL)	●					
Alternative Framework Services						
Home Academic Life Skills (Home ALS)		●	●	●		
Regional Academic Life Skills (RALS)		●	●	●		
Regional Academic Life Skills–Elementary Focus (RALS-Elem)		●				
Regional Academic Life Skills–Complex Learner Class (RALS-CLC)		●				
Regional Academic Life Skills–Graduated Guidance (RALS-GG)		●				
Regional Academic Life Skills–Structured Practice for Academic Readiness and Communication (RALS-SPARC)		●				
Regional Academic Life Skills–Differentiated (RALS-Differentiated)			●			
Public Separate Day Services						
Cedar Lane School					●	
Bridges Program					●	
Maryland College and Career Standards						
Resource		●	●	●		
Primary Transition		●				
Creating Opportunities to Manage Progress, Self Regulate, and Achieve Success (COMPASS)		●	●	●		
COMPASS–Kindergarten Focus (COMPASS-K)		●				
COMPASS–Enhanced Therapeutic (COMPASS-ET)		●				
Regulation, Instruction, and Sensory Engagement (RISE)		●				
Elementary Primary Learner (EPL)		●				
Elementary Upper Learner (EUL)		●				
Intensive Resource (IR)			●	●		
Secondary and Transition Services						
Career and Community Exploration (CCE)						●
Work Study						●
Community Connection						●
Project SEARCH: Howard County						●
Other Services						
Speech Only Walk-In Service	●	●				

*This special education service continuum is intended to illustrate the range of service delivery options available to support the IEP process within Howard County Public School System (HCPSS). In accordance with IDEA, COMAR 13A.05.01, and MSDE guidance, final determination of placement is an IEP team decision based on the individual student's needs and consideration of the least restrictive environment.

