

# Blueprint for Maryland's Future Special Education Workgroup

Workgroup Meeting #8

**Division of Early Intervention and Special  
Education Services**

April 24, 2024

CO-CHAIRS

---

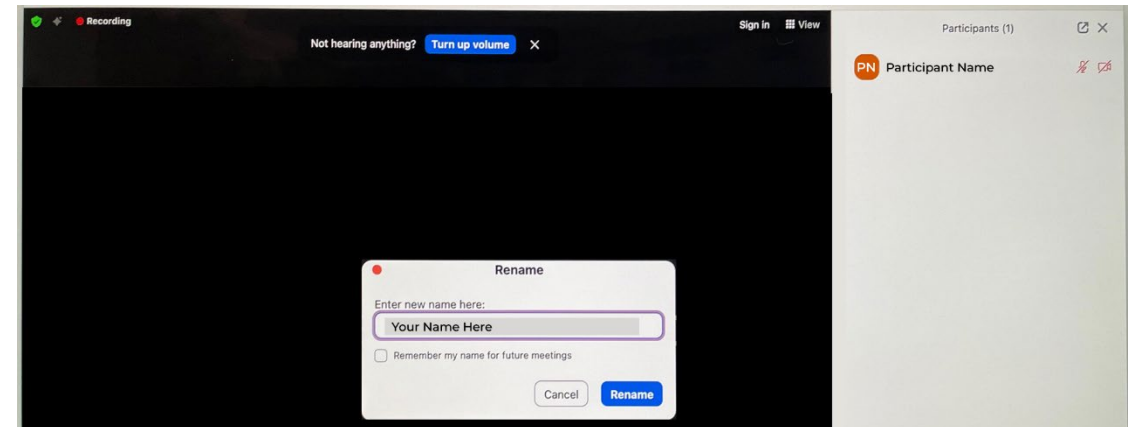
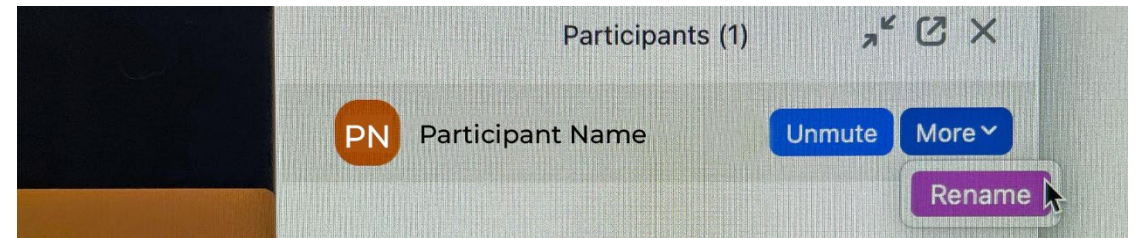
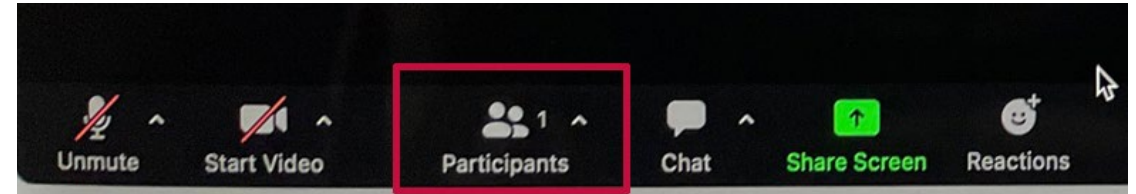
Dr. Carey Wright, Interim State Superintendent of Schools  
Liz Zogby, Special Education Policy & Advocacy

# Privacy and Confidentiality Statement

Attendees of this meeting should be aware that there are known and potential privacy and confidentiality issues with the Zoom System (Cloud Service, Web application, and/or Application). While every effort has been made to ensure the security of this meeting, factors out of the State's control introduce risk. Participants should evaluate the risk associated with the application and platform and determine if the risks preclude the use of the service. The State provides no warranty regarding the security of the application, confidentiality of the information discussed, or the privacy of information collected by the application and/or service. Security events impacting the confidentiality, integrity, or availability of a meeting (e.g., ZoomBombing) must be reported to the State Security Operations Center ([soc.info@maryland.gov](mailto:soc.info@maryland.gov)).

# Please Ensure Your Name Appears Correctly

1. Select Participants, located in the bottom toolbar of the meeting window
2. Hover over your name and select More (desktop) or tap your name (mobile)
3. Click or tap Rename
4. Enter your desired name and click Rename (desktop) or Done (mobile)

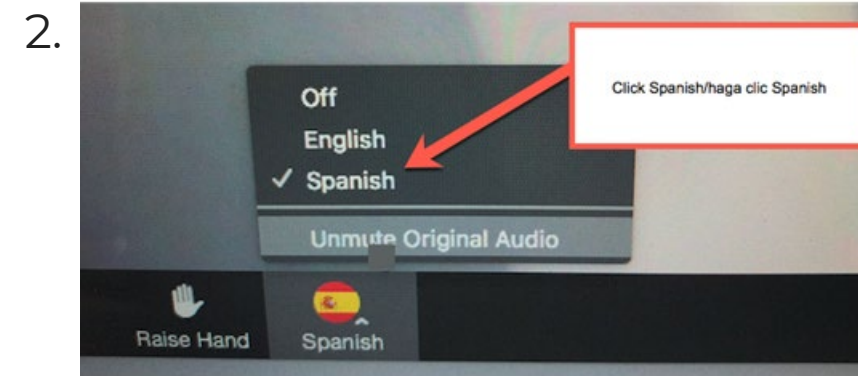
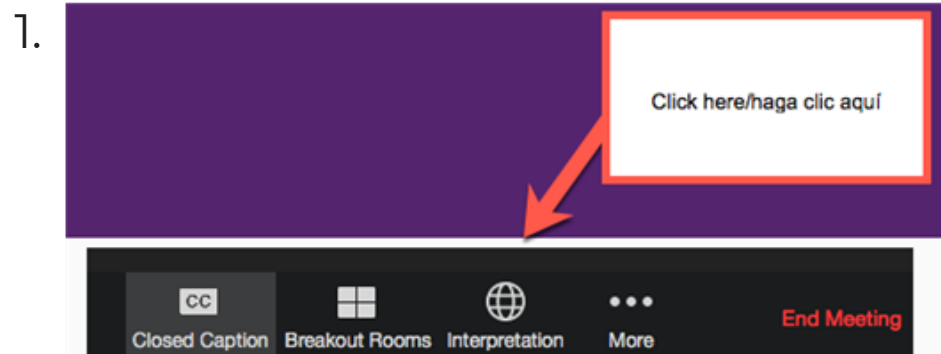


# Note to Attendees

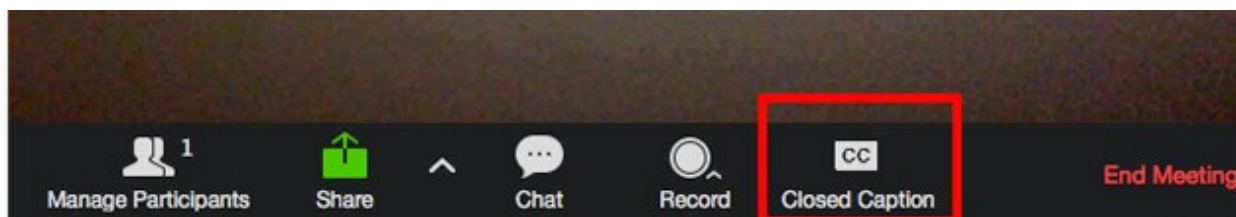
<https://youtube.com/live/6bpLNwoEWyc?feature=share>

This meeting is being recorded and livestreamed via MSDE's YouTube channel:

¿Español?



Closed Captioning





## Presentation Outline

1. Welcome/Introductions
2. Public Comment
3. Highlights from March 20th
4. Discussion of Potential Recommendations
5. Current MSDE Practices - Staffing and Service Delivery
6. Breakout Groups
7. Special Education Blueprint Report Update
8. Exit Ticket Reflections
9. Wrap Up/Closing

# Blueprint Special Education Workgroup

## Meeting #8

### Guiding Question(s)

What evidence-based staffing models aligned with service delivery models for special education and related services could be implemented that would improve student achievement, be sustainable, improve working conditions, and encourage retention of educators?



1. Welcome/Introductions
- 2. Public Comment**
3. Highlights from March 20th
4. Discussion of Potential Recommendations
5. Current MSDE Practices - Staffing and Service Delivery
6. Breakout Groups
7. Special Education Blueprint Report Update
8. Exit Ticket Reflections
9. Wrap Up/Closing

## Public Comment

Hear from Registered Guests – Public Comment Period



1. Welcome/Introductions
2. Public Comment
- 3. Highlights from March 20th**
4. Discussion of Potential Recommendations
5. Current MSDE Practices - Staffing and Service Delivery
6. Breakout Groups
7. Special Education Blueprint Report Update
8. Exit Ticket Reflections
9. Wrap Up/Closing

## Highlights from March 20th

Summary of Workgroup Feedback and Input



# Knowledge, Skills, Expertise

## **Both General and Special Educators**

- Instruction and frameworks (Universal Design for Learning, differentiation, co-teaching)
- Behavioral principles/practices (positive supports, behavior as communication)
- Trauma-informed
- Communication and Collaboration

## **Special Educators**

- Advanced knowledge of differentiation, individualized instruction, behavior support
- Special education practices, documentation, accountability

## **General Educators**

- More knowledge about disability and special education
- Advanced knowledge of content/pedagogy of Tier 1 instruction, classroom management, curriculum development

## Educator Preparation Programs (EPP) & Licensure Requirements

### EPP/Role of Institutes of Higher Ed. (IHE)

- More hands-on experiences for students
- Courses explicitly about disability/special education for general education students
- Address disincentive of 5 year/special education programs

### Licensure/Role of MSDE

- Recertification emphasis on disability, special education, differentiation
- Support LEAs in professional learning

### Role of Local Education Agency (LEA)

- Professional learning to develop shared knowledge base for all educators, emphasizing students with disabilities, pedagogy
- Wrap-around instructional support and mentoring/coaching

### Collaboration of LEAs, IHEs and MSDE

- Pay student teachers
- Feedback loop to IHEs about missing competencies
- Integrating “common trunk” content into courses

# Recruitment & Retention

## Recruitment/Supply

- School to Teacher Pipeline
- Paraprofessionals and daycare providers
- Rebranding of special education
- Pay student teachers

## Retention

- Review paperwork requirements
- School culture
- Support for early career teachers
- Support for all teachers (coaching, pay, time)



1. Welcome/Introductions
2. Public Comment
3. Highlights from March 20th

**4. Discussion of Potential Recommendations**

5. Current MSDE Practices – Staffing and Service Delivery
6. Breakout Groups
7. Special Education Blueprint Report Update
8. Exit Ticket Reflections
9. Wrap Up/Closing

## Discussion of Potential Recommendations

Review and Discussion on Proposed Recommendation(s)

## Recommendation #1 for Discussion

MSDE should develop a plan for a plan with tasks and timelines within 60 days to ensure that general and special educators have the knowledge, skills, and expertise needed to effectively teach students with disabilities (as compiled by the Workgroup).

The plan should consider:

1. A **review and revision of COMAR** to align standards and competencies, clinical experiences, and entrance and exit requirements for educator preparation programs (EPPs) and the requirements for initial licensure and renewal of licensure for educators and administrators with the knowledge, skills, and expertise needed to effectively teach students with disabilities.
2. A **review in collaboration with IHEs of current EPPs**, focusing on the development of general and special education teacher candidates who can effectively teach students with disabilities.
3. Developing **standards** in collaboration with LEAs and IHEs **for systemic support of early career teachers** (e.g., IHE faculty in schools as coaches).
4. Developing **standards** in collaboration with LEAs **for professional learning and ongoing support, coaching, and mentoring** of general and special education teachers and related service providers to effectively teach students with disabilities.

## Recommendation #2 for Discussion

MSDE should develop a plan for a plan with tasks and timelines within 60 days to enhance supply and encourage retention of general and special educators.

The plan should consider:

1. Development of **innovative recruitment proposals** in collaboration with MHEC/IHEs and LEAs (e.g., dual certification programs; programs for general educators to add special education licensure; School to Teacher pipeline/recruitment of HS students, Grow Your Own programs, paid student teaching, and loan forgiveness).
2. Developing a **rebranding strategy** for special education.
3. Developing teacher **career ladders** in collaboration with LEAs that provide adequate **co-planning and noninstructional time**, provide **equal opportunity** to special education teachers, and consider **innovative proposals** for additional training (e.g., teacher sabbaticals; paid summer training programs).
4. Determining if **paperwork** can be **reduced** for teachers and related service providers.
5. Developing **professional learning for principals** in collaboration with LEAs on developing inclusive mindsets and high expectations in school communities, and improving school culture, including more respect and support for educators.



1. Welcome/Introductions
2. Public Comment
3. Highlights from March 20th
4. Discussion of Potential Recommendations

**5. Current MSDE Practices - Staffing and Service Delivery**

6. Breakout Groups
7. Special Education Blueprint Report Update
8. Exit Ticket Reflections
9. Wrap Up/Closing

# Current MSDE Practices

Current MSDE Practices on Staffing and Service Delivery

# COMAR Requirements

## Md. Code Regs. 13A.05.02.13

### D. Staffing Plan

1. A public agency shall develop a staffing plan consistent with the procedures provided by the Department to ensure that personnel and other resources are available to provide FAPE to each student with a disability in the least restrictive environment as determined by an IEP team.
2. The local board shall approve the staffing plan.

<https://dsd.maryland.gov/regulations/Pages/13A.05.02.13.aspx>



# Staffing Plan Review Guide (2018-2019)

The required elements of a staffing plan are:

1. Evidence of public input;
2. Evidence of maintenance of effort within the meaning of 34 CFR §300.231, Maintenance of Effort, and COMAR 13A.02.05, Maintenance of Effort;
3. Staffing patterns of services 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 child with a disability in the least restrictive environment (LRE);

## Staffing Plan Review Guide (2018–2019) continued

The required elements of a staffing plan are:

5. An explanation of 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 for each child with a disability in the LRE;
6. The number of current vacancies by position reported within the jurisdiction and how FAPE is provided when vacancies occur; and
7. Evaluation: the process the public agency will use to assess the effectiveness of its efforts to drive system change and to improve child outcomes.

# Planning Considerations

- Staffing plans are approved by the local board prior to submission to MSDE by September 30th
- Roles and responsibilities for like positions vary based on agreements with local unions and historic designations
- The variability of each local plan and allocated resources limits the comparison of data across LEAs/PAs



1. Welcome/Introductions
2. Public Comment
3. Highlights from March 20th
4. Discussion of Potential Recommendations
5. Current MSDE Practices - Staffing and Service Delivery

## **6. Breakout Groups**

7. Special Education Blueprint Report Update
8. Exit Ticket Reflections
9. Wrap Up/Closing

# Breakout Groups

Small Breakout Groups and Large Group Report Out

# Small Group Breakout Sessions

- We are altering the breakout groups to Random Grouping to ensure everyone has an equal chance to participate, **ensure like-sized groups with diverse perspectives**, and to save time by automating the grouping process.
  - You will **automatically be assigned a group to move to**
  - When you receive a notification asking if you would like to move to a breakout group – please click “**move to breakout.**”
- Please **use the chat** if you have additional comments so that your feedback can be recorded.
- Breakout Group #1 will be live streamed and all will be recorded and posted on the MSDE website.
- Each person in the Workgroup will be moved to a breakout session.
  - NOTE: Sign language** interpreters will remain in **breakout room #1** and will be live streamed.
- Each breakout group is assigned an **MSDE staff** as a **notetaker**.
- Each breakout group is asked to please **identify** a:
  - Facilitator
  - Timekeeper
  - Reporter to share out 2 – 3 minute highlights of the discussion

# Small Group Breakout Sessions

## Group Norms:

- **Speak with care:**
  - Speak from your own experience and be mindful of how your comments may impact others.
  - Use “I” statements and avoid speaking for or generalizing whole groups.
- **Listen respectfully:**
  - Avoid interrupting the person speaking and talk that evaluates/judges their comments.
  - Limit your comments to 1 – 2 minutes.
  - Understand that there are no right or wrong answers.
- **Lean in/Lean back:**
  - Give your input and make space for others to do the same.
  - Be aware of your talk time and try to stay on topic.

# Small Group Breakout Sessions

## Questions

1. What evidence-based standards for staffing should MSDE require annually in LEA Staffing Plans?
2. What guidance, if any, should MSDE provide to LEAs on class sizes in general and special education classrooms and proportions of students with and without disabilities in general education classrooms, at different grade levels?
3. What evidence-based standards or guidance for teacher/provider-student ratios under various service delivery models should be adopted by MSDE?
4. What workload standards based on best practices or professional judgment could MSDE set?
5. What staffing standards and guidance could MSDE define to support alignment of staffing with service delivery models?
6. What standards for hiring, training, and utilizing paraprofessionals as part of students' IEPs could be established by MSDE to ensure that appropriately trained and supervised personnel positively impact student learning? What strategies could be employed to reduce overreliance on paraprofessionals?

# Large Group Report Out

## Questions

1. What evidence-based standards for staffing should MSDE require annually in LEA Staffing Plans?
2. What guidance, if any, should MSDE provide to LEAs on class sizes in general and special education classrooms and proportions of students with and without disabilities in general education classrooms, at different grade levels?
3. What evidence-based standards or guidance for teacher/provider-student ratios under various service delivery models should be adopted by MSDE?
4. What workload standards based on best practices or professional judgment could MSDE set?
5. What staffing standards and guidance could MSDE define to support alignment of staffing with service delivery models?
6. What standards for hiring, training, and utilizing paraprofessionals as part of students' IEPs could be established by MSDE to ensure that appropriately trained and supervised personnel positively impact student learning? What strategies could be employed to reduce overreliance on paraprofessionals?





1. Welcome/Introductions
2. Public Comment
3. Highlights from March 20th
4. Discussion of Potential Recommendations
5. Current MSDE Practices - Staffing and Service Delivery
6. Breakout Groups
- 7. Special Education Blueprint Report Update**
8. Exit Ticket Reflections
9. Wrap Up/Closing

# Special Education Blueprint Report Update

Timeline and Outline Template for Submission of the Workgroup Report

# Blueprint Special Education Workgroup Report Timeline


Task	Due Date
Report Outline	April 24, 2024
First Draft Complete	May 1, 2024
Share Draft with Workgroup	May 6, 2024
Receive Feedback from Workgroup	May 20, 2024
Address Comments/Revisions	May 20 – May 31, 2024
Share Final Draft Report with Executive Team	May 31, 2024
Submit Final Draft to MSDE Leadership	June 5, 2024
Address Revisions	June 20 – June 28, 2024
Submit to Workgroup and AIB	July 1, 2024

# Interim Report Outline--DRAFT

This Workgroup's initial report provided background information, data, national best practices, and research, as well as initial findings and recommendations to the Governor and General Assembly by 12/1/23.

An interim report will build on that report and be submitted by 7/1/24.

- I. Note from the Co-Chairs
- II. Executive Summary
- III. Overview of Meetings (guiding questions, material covered, and exit ticket results)
- IV. Recommendations & Next Steps
  - Standards and Expectations Under IDEA for SWDs to Achieve (Recommendations 1 – 5)
  - Integrating General and Special Education to Better Meet the Needs of Students (Recommendations 6 – 7)
  - Specially Designed Instruction (Recommendation 8)
- V. Appendices

- 
1. Welcome/Introductions
  2. Public Comment
  3. Highlights from March 20th
  4. Discussion of Potential Recommendations
  5. Current MSDE Practices - Staffing and Service Delivery
  6. Breakout Groups
  7. Special Education Blueprint Report Update
  - 8. Exit Ticket Reflections**
  9. Wrap Up/Closing

# Exit Ticket Reflections

Exit Ticket Reflections

## Exit Ticket

1. What evidence-based standards for staffing should MSDE require annually in LEA Staffing Plans?
2. What guidance, if any, should MSDE provide to LEAs on class sizes in general and special education classrooms and proportions of students with and without disabilities in general education classrooms, at different grade levels?
3. What evidence-based standards or guidance for teacher/provider-student ratios under various service delivery models should be adopted by MSDE?
4. What workload standards based on best practices or professional judgment could MSDE set?
5. What staffing standards and guidance could MSDE define to support alignment of staffing with service delivery models?
6. What standards for hiring, training, and utilizing paraprofessionals as part of students' IEPs could be established by MSDE to ensure that appropriately trained and supervised personnel positively impact student learning? What strategies could be employed to reduce overreliance on paraprofessionals?



1. Welcome/Introductions
2. Public Comment
3. Highlights from March 20th
4. Discussion of Potential Recommendations
5. Current MSDE Practices - Staffing and Service Delivery
6. Breakout Groups
7. Special Education Blueprint Report Update
8. Exit Ticket Reflections

**9. Wrap Up/Closing**

# Wrap Up/Closing

Moving the Work Forward

# Next Steps and Resources

## Next Meeting

- **May 29, 2024** from 4pm to 6pm in a virtual format for all participants.

## Topic: Adequate Funding

- **Guiding Question:** Is funding for special education adequate? How can MSDE require LEAs to use special education funding under the Blueprint to supplement (not supplant) funding for special education services? What are options for short-term funding increases?
- **Forthcoming:**
  - Takeaways
  - Reading recommendations
  - Requested data and supporting analysis (as applicable)

## MSDE Blueprint Special Education Workgroup Webpage:

[Blueprint.MarylandPublicSchools.org/Special-Education-Workgroup](https://Blueprint.MarylandPublicSchools.org/Special-Education-Workgroup)

# Future Meeting Dates

Date	Time
Wednesday, May 29, 2024	4:00 – 6:00 pm
Wednesday, June 26, 2024	4:00 – 6:00 pm
Wednesday, July 31, 2024	4:00 – 6:00 pm
Wednesday, August 21, 2024	4:00 – 6:00 pm
Wednesday, September 25, 2024	4:00 – 6:00 pm
Wednesday, October 16, 2024	4:00 – 6:00 pm
Thursday, November 21, 2024	4:00 – 6:00 pm
Wednesday, December 18, 2024	4:00 – 6:00 pm



# BLUEPRINT

FOR MARYLAND'S FUTURE

More information can be found on MSDE's Blueprint webpage:

**[Blueprint.MarylandPublicSchools.org](https://Blueprint.MarylandPublicSchools.org)**