

# 2016 MSEA SPECIAL EDUCATION TASK FORCE REPORT

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## **SPECIAL EDUCATION TASK FORCE**

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**MARYLAND STATE EDUCATION ASSOCIATION (MSEA)**  
**SPECIAL EDUCATION TASK FORCE REPORT**

**Background**

The students served by special education professionals are some of the most vulnerable, and in many cases, most fragile members of the student population. The Individuals with Disabilities Act (IDEA), created 41 years ago, mandates that the federal government ensures students with disabilities receive a high-quality education to become successful citizens. Special educators work to implement those ideals by providing specific accommodations and modifications to support students and IDEA's lofty goals.

Although there are few who question the efforts, commitment, and time devoted by *all* educators to provide a high quality, relevant education for students, there has been an increased concern by special educators regarding the dual priorities of the position.

The vast majority of special educators endeavor to complete two jobs, one as a special educator, delivering specialized instruction, and the second, as a case manager, requiring meticulous compliance and compilation of time-consuming paperwork. Special education teachers have expressed deep concerns about the amount of time and stress associated with the case management segment, its encroachment on the instructional planning and the negative impact on delivery of services in the instructional segment.

In response to a widespread expression of concern and to better study these issues, NBI 14-13 was proposed and supported by the delegate members at the MSEA Representative Assembly, in October 2014, to create the MSEA Special Education Task Force. The task force was continued through NBI 15-16 in October 2015. The charges included collecting both data for assessing the degree of this issue and existing contractual language in use around the state.

A survey was created and disseminated to special education members in November 2015 in order to clarify and gather data to inform the work of the task force. Surveyed members included educators involved in special education as teachers, paraprofessionals, related service providers, and a sampling of general educators. Over 1,200 responses to specific questions, coupled with anecdotal comments were analyzed. While at first glance the comments look varied, the issues identified were interrelated, in that they all speak to **a disproportionate level of resources to address the needs of students with disabilities**. Educator concerns regarding this lack of resources manifests as a lack of time and insufficient staffing. Some of the deficit can be attributed to a lack of funding, some to the demands from inappropriate and over-zealous testing.

## **Dual Priorities, Dual Responsibilities**

The terms “special educator” and “case manager” are often used interchangeably because the two distinct job descriptions are held by the same individual. The divergent dual responsibilities are conflicting and competing priorities. The moral and professional responsibility to provide instruction and services to special needs students, are in conflict with maintaining compliance to the law.

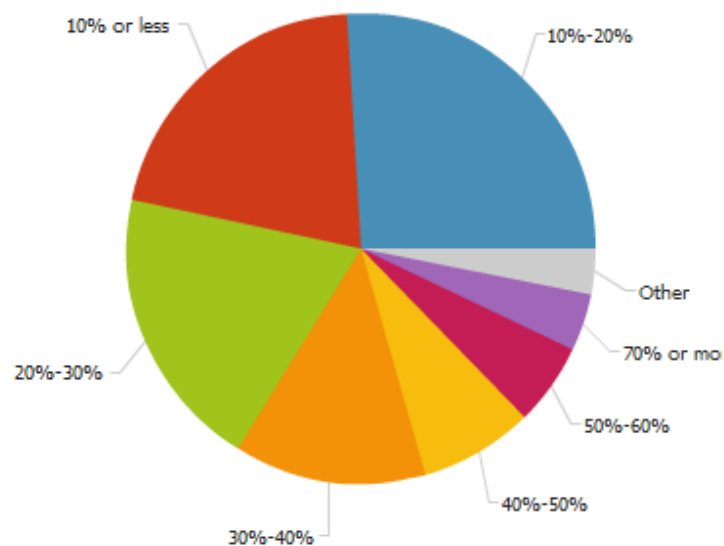
### **Instructional Duties and Compliance Responsibilities**

The instructional tasks of designing, planning, delivering and evaluating the lessons, interventions, accommodations and assessments every teacher needs to perform as part of their job description is at the heart of what special educators do to nurture and educate students with special needs. However, the paperwork required to substantiate compliance with Code of Maryland Regulations (COMAR) and IDEA, has become an overwhelmingly significant part of the special educators’ job. IEPs are constantly audited to ensure compliance.

Recently, members have reported being tasked with completing new and redundant documentation to substantiate the accuracy of what is in a student’s Individualized Education Plan (IEP). (See Appendix A and B) In addition, *optional* accommodation documentation, created by Partnership for Assessment of Readiness for College and Careers (PARCC) has been rebranded by the Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE) and made mandatory. (See Appendix C) With each additional page of paperwork, less and less time is available to attend to instructional processes.

When asked, “What percent of your time do you spend on compliance paperwork?” over half of special education respondents, indicated spending 20% or more of their time completing compliance paperwork, with over a third reporting 30% or more.

Percent of time spent on compliance paperwork



Special educators were surveyed about time spent on instructional duties. Almost 40% indicated they spend less than half of their duty day completing tasks related to instruction.

#### Sampling of Educator Comments:

“The paperwork piece of special education has gotten out of control and no longer allows teachers to teach. High caseloads and excessive paperwork leave no time for good instruction.”

“The amount of data collection and paperwork really takes time away from planning differentiated instruction for special education students and time away from instruction.”

“The time I spend on paperwork would be a lot more productive working with students!”

“Just about every special educator I know constantly feels like they are drowning on a daily basis. We are tired of worrying so much about compliance and paperwork and would like to TEACH and work with kids. Our creativity is being stifled under the mounds of paperwork that is expected from us on a daily basis. And it is the students who suffer when our lessons and instruction is mediocre because the paperwork has become the top priority over quality of instruction.”

“I feel like all I do is paperwork. I don’t feel like an educator...”

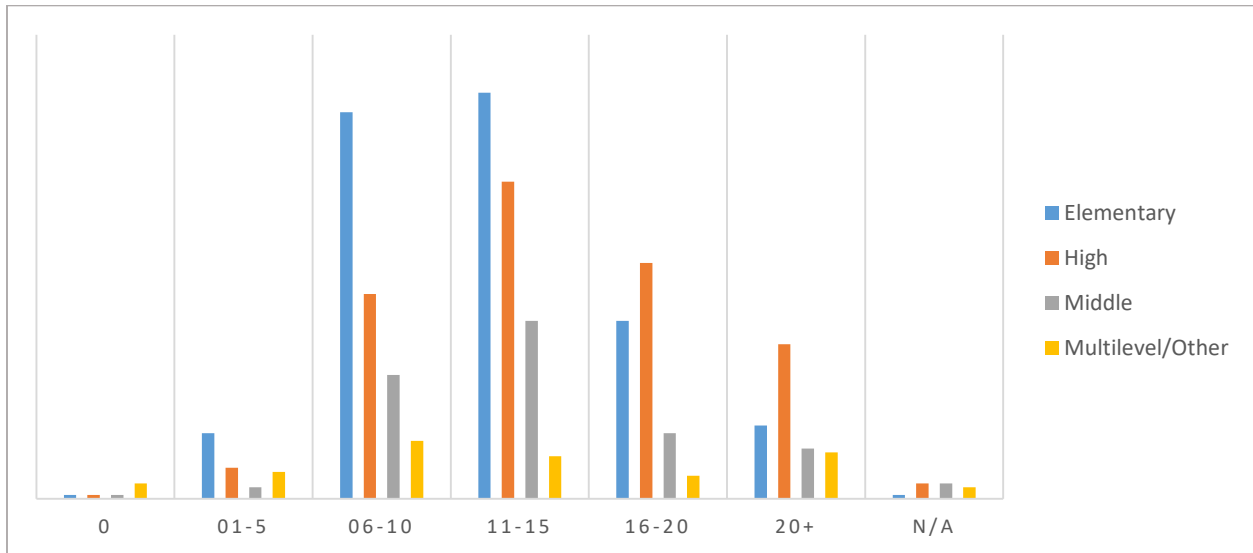
“The Special Education Administrators at the county and state level need to stop creating more paperwork and require excessive levels of documentation. These newly created documents go way beyond what is required and necessary.”

### **Workload and Caseload**

Special education teachers/case managers are legally bound to adhere to the rules and regulations imposed on them and their school district by federal laws, such as the IDEA of 2004. Each special education student has an IEP customized to his/her disability. The special education teacher/case manager serves on the IEP team, along with parents, administrators, school counselors, related service providers, as well as, general educators, to see that IEP services are provided, and that the IEP goals are addressed. Specific responsibilities and tasks vary from case manager to case manager, depending on the number and complexity of their assigned students; and may vary greatly from month to month, depending on parental requests for testing and student mobility.

**Caseload** is often determined by the number of students with IEPs assigned to the special educator. This may be a convenient but over simplistic calculation. Data from the survey results indicate that as students get older, the ratio of students to staff goes up dramatically.

## Annual number of students assigned to you for case management



*The range of numbers at the bottom of the graph indicate the number of students on those teachers' caseload.*

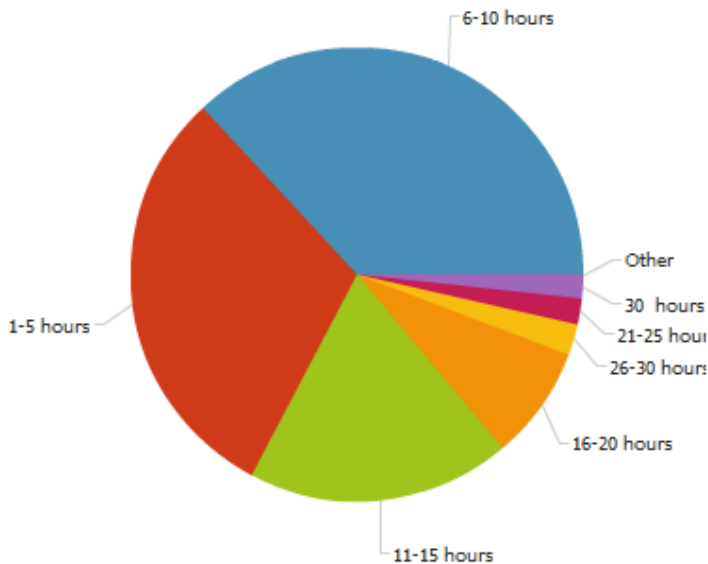
For each student a special educator is assigned to manage, many tasks are associated with compliance of federal, state, and local school district polices and laws. To better understand the scope of case management duties, members of the special education task force interviewed members to define this segment of the job. The following is a compilation of responses:

Case management for the special educator or related service provider includes the organization and coordination of special education supports for a student to ensure that Free Appropriate Public Education (FAPE) under Section 504 is being implemented. It also entails the compilation and completion components relating to a student's IEP; including but not limited to: IEP updates, writing new IEP's, data analysis, reviewing student files, student records and student assessments, completing required paperwork (federal, state and local), filing paperwork and coordinating and documenting services for a student with an IEP.

Case management duties frequently have no, or minimal, dedicated time contractually specified (i.e., one day a quarter). Special educators must complete case management duties, such as those listed above, outside of the duty day when instructional planning time is used for planning instructional delivery and work with colleagues and co-teachers.

The survey asked special educators to identify the average weekly amount of time spent on case management duties outside the workday. Nearly 70% indicated they spent 6 or more hours and over a third reported spending 11 to 30 hours a week beyond their contractual days to complete these responsibilities.

## Average weekly amount of time spent on case management duties outside the work day



Special Educators are committed and required to meet the needs of students. The amount of personal time dedicated to paperwork is evidence of that commitment. Typically, teachers spend time during the school day delivering direct services to students and collaborating with co-teachers, para-professionals and parents, leaving mandatory compliance paperwork for afterhours.

Rather than looking solely at a ratio, **workload** is a more accurate representation of the demands on a special educator based on the complexity of the accommodations, modifications, and the needs of the individual students on that educator's caseload.

As described in a Special Education Workload Model proposed by NEA (see Appendix D), workload considerations include direct instruction and indirect services needed to meet IEP goals, inclusionary practices and IEP management. "Given the transition to more inclusionary practices, such as co-teaching and supported instruction in the general education setting, thinking in terms of workload, more accurately addresses the service demands of special educators..."

In support of this workload model, NEA President, Lily Eskelsen Garcia, wrote in the April 6, 2016 eNewsletter, *Lily's Blackboard*:

"We're advocating a shift in how schools and districts account for these professionals' work. Typically, districts use "caseload data": the number of students assigned to an educator, without regard to what services the educator is providing. That's like reading only excerpts of a book. Raw numbers give you a paragraph or maybe even a chapter, but they don't tell you the whole story."

Comments directed to this issue in the survey were passionate.

*Sampling of Educator Comments:*

“Much of the day is spent testing and providing services so there is little time during the working business day to complete the IEP process and case management paperwork. This work ultimately gets taken home to be completed.

“If our work is to be completed within specified federally mandated guidelines, it needs to be taken home.”

“It is a very frustrating situation when you must take work home with you on a daily basis not out of want but out of need. It is also frustrating to know that students could likely be making more progress if you had more time to meaningfully plan, collaborate with teachers and tier lessons and prepare flexible grouping than participate in an average of 8 IEP meetings a week.”

“It is ridiculous that it takes 5 or more hours to write one typical special education student’s IEP (online). This does not include data collection in order to determine their current levels of performance, interviewing the student and giving a transition assessment to determine their transition needs (high school only), and preparing 5 day before and after letters to send to parents prior to the IEP meeting, and then again after the IEP meeting.

“I need an extra uninterrupted planning period to complete paperwork, reach out to parents, observe students, etc. I cannot, but am expected to, do the job of two full time teachers. There is not a single responsibility of a general education teacher that I don’t also have, yet I have a caseload to manage, and legal requirements to fulfill. I use my planning period to plan curriculum with and for my content specific cohort. Case management and paperwork by default become my afterschool/evening/weekend job.”

“I bring home a great deal of work to try and complete and I am usually working until 11pm to 12AM. Or I am getting up one to two hours before my alarm to get more work done.”

“Coincidentally, a colleague and I sat down last night to estimate how many hours that it would take outside of our contract day to complete our required duties, and we conservatively estimated that (if we take our contracted 30 minute duty-free lunch, which we never do because there is no time!) we have an average of 79 hours a month required extra work, which translates into about 20 extra hours a week, or roughly an additional 3 days of work per week!.....That also includes a conservative estimate of 30 minutes per school day to deal with emails, ....but does not include before school duty or after-school staff or department meetings, SLO development, data collection or conferences, or hall duty in between classes.

“Special educators are expected to co-teach which means they have a full time teaching job which includes planning, prepping, teaching and grading, as well as a full time special education job which demands additional planning, and teaching, and finally, the job of case management. It is not realistic that a single employee fulfills all of these duties at any level of proficiency. Regretfully, the students who need our time, suffer.”

To inform the conversation on resolving this demand on educators’ time outside the duty day, is to conduct a workload analysis, such as the one proposed by the NEA. If a school district can predict that each of three special educators at a school needs an additional 12 hours past the school day to comply with case management duties, it would be clear that an additional special

education staffing position is needed. With a reduced caseload for each educator, students would receive the targeted instruction, interventions and accommodations that would best meet their needs.

### **Time and Testing**

Time is a variable resource that can be examined through the lens of both students and teachers. Often, when educators commented about the lack of instructional time to meet the needs of special education students, the concerns involved testing. In some cases, the concerns reflected students being pulled from classes specified in their IEP to take mandatory assessments. One general educator observed,

“In the spring, my colleagues who are special ed teachers go for weeks at a time without providing direct instruction to their students due to the demands of administering PARCC and other district tests.”

Combine the time for the administration of tests with the time to address student frustration in developmentally inappropriate assessments and the reduction in instructional time is compounded. This is clearly summarized by another educator who wrote,

“Stop forcing students with cognitive levels comparable to a toddler to be assessed on 10<sup>th</sup> and 11<sup>th</sup> grade content. Tests like Alt-MSA and NCSC are farcical, self-serving instruments which do NOTHING to benefit students. The teacher planning time that they waste means fewer quality lessons and materials for instruction that will help students with their greatest needs. The student instructional time that they waste means fewer skills acquired.”

Pulling special educators from instructional duties to administer test accommodations and other tasks happens frequently. Education support professionals assigned to special education classes were asked how often they cover classes when the teacher is pulled. Over a third said that this occurs at least once a week, with 12% indicating as much as 3 to 4 times a week, on average.

Understanding the duality of the special educator’s job is essential to identifying and addressing the issue at hand. When time constraints are applied to staff, educator concerns fell into two distinct categories:

- instructional duties and compliance responsibilities
- workload vs. caseload

### **Staffing**

MSEA has long endorsed adequate time and staffing to address the needs of students and the educators who plan, prepare and deliver the services prescribed in an IEP. The foundation of MSEA Resolution B.3, Mainstreaming and Inclusion, is that “... making every effort to provide learning experiences and appropriate placements for all students” is a core belief. This resolution includes nearly a dozen considerations that should be met to provide for the

effective inclusion of students with disabilities; including appropriate instructional materials and supportive services, such as hiring of qualified paraprofessional personnel..." (B.3.f) and "adequate funding and resources provided exclusively for the inclusion model "(B.3.j).

Likewise, NEA supports the adequate staffing of special education programs. In her April 6, 2016 eNewsletter, *Lily's Blackboard*, NEA President, Lily Eskelsen Garcia, points out that, "Schools are often making these decisions based on what works for budgets, not for students."

*Sampling of Educator Comments:*

"How can we help the student be successful when we continue to stack the deck against them with decreasing staffing and an increase in testing?"

"We often are pulled for testing, covering classes, and attending meetings, so our students end up losing service and we all suffer."

"The special education population is rising; we need more special educators to provide service."

"I believe that staffing needs to be allocated based on the needs of students as opposed to the number of students. It is not appropriate to ignore the fact that some students need very intensive support throughout the day, across all settings."

Not only does the disparity in staffing and resources directly affect the quality of services provided to special needs students, but the overwhelming workload on special education teachers and related service providers attributes to an acceleration in teacher burnout. As special educators leave the profession, the relationships and trust forged with their vulnerable students are disrupted. It often takes a special educator a long time to build trust with a student who comes to school with many fears formed after years of receiving messages regarding their inadequacies. When teachers leave due to lack of resources of time, staff, etc., a bond is broken that must be rekindled with a new educator – if one can be found. Every school district in Maryland reports difficulties in retaining and recruiting highly qualified special educators. The result is fewer teachers addressing the needs of the ever growing special education student population and shifting and increasing the caseload to those remaining. This vicious cycle makes it harder and harder to provide the services these students need and deserve.

*Sampling of Educator Comments:*

"The number of special educators that we have and their caseloads are not realistic in terms of ensuring that students truly get the services that they need based on their IEPs... New students are always absorbed into the current teachers' caseloads. I often question how much longer we'll be able to keep the people we have. We lose great staff members due to burnout all the time."

"We need time. I want time to teach and time to do paperwork... I love teaching. I love the kids. I love helping parents to help their kids. But all this paperwork and compliance issues and being scared I will be out of compliance and have to go to mediation and collecting data and writing IEPs that will hold up in court is EXHAUSTING... I am practically out the door."

## **Professional Development**

Survey respondents were asked a final open ended question regarding areas of need for professional development. Of those who answered, many asked that if required to attend training, that it be relevant to their responsibilities. They pointed out that it was another task pulling them away from working with students and collaborating with colleagues on relevant issues.

The most striking request for a specific, additional training for themselves and all school-based staff, was on dealing with an increasing number of students displaying outlier behavior associated with mental illness – and at a younger and younger age. The observations of these educators reflect the concern of society at large and as one educator stated, “...this is coming from those on the front line.”

Additional top requests included assistance with modifying and altering instructional activities to meet current Maryland College and Career Readiness State Standards and efficiently streamlining compliance paperwork.

### *Sampling of Educator Comments:*

“How to deal with the increase of violent and aggressive students in classroom settings... The need for ESP’s to have some kind of training in psychology since we are dealing with an ever growing population of students with mental illness...”

“Management of aggressive behaviors due to testing preparation and testing.”

“We have students with significant mental health issues, and nowhere to get them help. The same statements can be said for students with drug/alcohol problems. How can we deal with these issues in our schools?”

“I have no idea. The situation is so bleak many of us are so overwhelmed we just want to give up.”

“I don’t want more trainings. I want time to work with students in small group or one-on-one environments where they will best learn and develop skills and confidence.”

## **Recommendations**

The success of special needs students requires the resources and instructional supports of dedicated educators across the profession. The survey points to a continued deficit in the key resources of time and funding impacting the instructional process. The increase in standardized testing has exacerbated this deficit by pulling both students and teachers from the instructional setting.

The MSEA Special Education Task Force proposes the following recommendations:

1. **STAFFING/TIME:** MSEA work with educators involved in the Special Education Task Force to draft and pass legislation in the 2017 General Assembly session to create a task force to recommend how the Special Education Workload Model be implemented statewide, or at first as a pilot. The task force should also examine the state IEP format and recommend changes to make it more efficient.
2. **TESTING:** MSEA put forward recommendations for an MSEA proposal on reforming standardized testing for special education students, and pursue the passage of that proposal at the appropriate level of government. This should include district policies (MSEA should distribute model language) that special educators only be used as test proctors as a last resort.
3. **RETENTION:** MSEA work with early special educators to develop recommendations for improved professional development, mentoring, and support to help increase retention in the first three years, and train UniServ Directors on advocating for those changes either through bargaining or school board policy.

Special educators are dedicated professionals who are devoted to their students and their school community. They need adequate staffing and resources in order to do their job.

# Maryland Guidance for Individualized Education Program (IEP) Teams on Participation Decisions for the Alternate Assessments

MARYLAND STATE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION  
Division of Special Education/Early Intervention Services

January 2016



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# Maryland Guidance for IEP Teams on Participation Decisions for the Alternate Assessments

## Introduction

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This document is intended to help guide Individualized Education Program (IEP) teams as they determine whether the Maryland Alternate Assessments, assessments based on alternate academic achievement standards, are the appropriate assessments for individual students. These assessments were developed to ensure that all students, including students with significant cognitive disabilities, are able to participate in an assessment that is a measure of what they know and can do in relation to the grade level Maryland College and Career-Ready Standards (MCCRS), Maryland Standards State Curriculum (SC), and the National Center and State Collaborative (NCSC) Core Content Connectors (CCC). The Maryland Alternate Assessments are part of a system of curriculum, instructional, and assessment tools for students with significant cognitive disabilities who cannot participate in general assessments even with accommodations. 34 CFR § 300.160(c)(1). IEP teams must consider a student's individual characteristics when determining whether a student with a disability should participate in the general assessment with or without accommodations, or in the Maryland Alternate Assessments keeping in mind that students with a "significant cognitive disability" are represented by a small number of Maryland students. COMAR 13A.05.01.09A(1)(f) & (g).

This document outlines steps that an IEP team must take in determining whether the Maryland Alternate Assessments are appropriate for a student. These include (a) reviewing student records and important information across multiple school years and settings (e.g., school, home, community) and (b) determining whether the student fits all of the criteria for participating in the Maryland Alternate Assessments as outlined in this document.

A student who participates in the Maryland Alternate Assessments participates in all content areas of English Language Arts, Mathematics, and Science. The likelihood of a student fulfilling graduation requirements to earn a diploma decreases as a student continues to participate in the Maryland Alternative Assessments. Therefore, it is critical for the IEP team to revisit assessment decisions in regards to student progress. A student's IEP must be reviewed at least once within a calendar year during the annual review. Additional IEP team meetings to develop, review, or revise the student's IEP may occur during the calendar year of the current IEP. During the IEP team meeting, as part of the IEP process, the IEP team is required to plan for the student's participation in assessments to be administered during the term of the current IEP.

## Assessment Design and Administration in English Language Arts and Mathematics

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The Maryland Alternate Assessments for English Language Arts (reading and writing) and Mathematics are given in grades 3 through 8 and 11. It is an online assessment (with paper and

pencil option) of approximately 30 test items that assess approximately ten prioritized content targets per grade level. These content targets were identified for each grade based on learning progressions and alignment to the grade level MCCRS. The assessment includes multiple-choice items and constructed response items. Each content target is assessed by items that have been carefully and intentionally designed to assess a range of ability and performance.

The assessment design includes allowances for flexibility in administration (for example, a student may respond to administrator-presented item stimuli rather than to the item stimuli on the computer). A trained testing administrator familiar to the student (e.g., the student's teacher) facilitates the administration, presenting items via paper or manipulatives as appropriate for the student. Items are administered over the course of one or more testing sessions as needed. Testing sessions are scheduled within a testing window of approximately two months, scheduled by the State.

The assessment uses an adaptive approach, meaning that each student answers questions that have been determined to be an appropriate level of challenge. Classroom data provided prior to the assessment help determine the test questions or items a student will be presented with. The administration script provides flexibility in the ways in which a student may interact with questions or items, so that what is being measured is not changed.

## Assessment Design and Administration in Science

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The Maryland Alternate Assessment for Science measures a participating student's progress on attainment of Science Mastery Objectives in grades 5, 8, and 10. The assessment is a portfolio assessment in which teachers select grade level Science content aligned and linked with grade-level Maryland Standards State Curriculum and Core Learning Goals. Students in grades 5 and 8 are assessed in five Science content standards: Earth/Space Science, Life Science, Chemistry, Physics, and Environmental Science. In grade 10, students are assessed in just one Science content standard: Biology.

At each grade level, students will be required to complete ten mastery objectives with an artifact for each aligned with Science. Once mastery objectives in Science have been established for each student, the student's instructional team teaches and assesses each student. When the student masters a mastery objective, the evidence of mastery is placed in a notebook or portfolio. To allow mastery objectives to be taught over time and to make instructional adjustments to support student learning in Science, the testing window for Maryland's Alternate Assessment in Science allows for four full months of instruction and assessment between November and February.

## Guidance for Participation Decisions

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*Maryland's Alternate Assessments Participation Criteria and Checklist* is provided in Appendix A. IEP teams must use the guidelines to determine whether a student participates in Maryland's Alternate Assessments. As reflected in the guidelines, to participate in the Maryland Alternate Assessment in English Language Arts, Mathematics, and Science, a student must have an Individualized Education Program (IEP) and meet all three of the following criteria:

1. The student has a “significant cognitive disability.”

**AND**

2. The student is learning content derived from the Maryland College and Career-Ready Standards (MCCRS) in English Language Arts and Mathematics and the Maryland Standards State Curriculum and Core Learning Goals in Science.

**AND**

3. The student requires extensive, direct, individualized, and repeated instruction and substantial supports to achieve measurable gains in adapted and modified curriculum aligned with grade level content standards.

## Participation Descriptions

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The student has a “significant cognitive disability.” A review of student records indicates a disability or multiple disabilities that significantly impact cognitive functioning and adaptive behavior. Adaptive behavior is defined as a collection of behaviors, including conceptual, social, interpersonal, and practical skills, essential for someone to live independently and to function safely in daily life.

Having a significant cognitive disability is not determined by just an IQ test score, but rather a holistic understanding of a student. The term “significant cognitive disability” is a designation given to a small number of Maryland students with disabilities for purposes of their participation in the statewide assessment program. Students eligible to be assessed based on alternate academic achievement standards may be from any of the disability categories listed in the IDEA. 34 CFR 200.1(f)(2).

When IEP teams are making a decision as to whether a student is a student with a “significant cognitive disability” for participation in an alternate assessment, IEP teams must review and discuss multiple sources of information, including for example, psychological assessments, assessments of adaptive skills, classroom observations, formal and informal assessment data, curricular content for evidence of a significant cognitive disability, and the participation guidelines for the alternate assessment. The IEP team must also document why the general assessment is inappropriate even with accommodations; how the student will be assessed; and why the alternate assessment is appropriate. COMAR 13A.05.01.09A(1)(g).

The student is learning content derived from the Maryland College and Career-Ready Standards (MCCRS) in English Language Arts and Mathematics and the Maryland Standards State Curriculum (SC) Content and Core Learning Goals in Science. The student’s disability or multiple disabilities affect how the student learns curriculum derived from the MCCRS and SC. The alternate academic achievement standards are derived from the MCCRS English Language Arts and Mathematics and are called the Core Content Connectors (CCC). A CCC is a representation of the essential “core” or big ideas of the content standard in the MCCRS. Each CCC was identified by examining hypothesized learning progressions, developed by the National Center and State Collaborative (NCSC), aligned with the MCCRS to determine the critical content for students with significant cognitive disabilities. For information on NCSC and the CCCs, visit the NCSC resource site at [https://wiki.ncscpartners.org/index.php/All Resources](https://wiki.ncscpartners.org/index.php/All_Resources).

The student requires extensive, direct, individualized, and repeated instruction and substantial supports to achieve measurable gains in adapted and modified curriculum aligned with grade level content standards. The student's need for extensive, individualized, repeated, and direct instruction is not temporary or transient. His or her need for substantial adaptations and supports in order to access and achieve linked grade and age-appropriate standards requires substantially adapted materials and customized methods of accessing information in alternative ways to acquire, maintain, generalize, demonstrate, and transfer skills across multiple settings.

**The IEP team must annually consider the following information** to determine whether the Maryland Alternate Assessments are appropriate for an individual student:

- Description of the student's instruction, including data on progress
- Classroom work samples and data
- Examples of performance on assessment tasks to compare with classroom work
- Results of district-wide assessments
- Results of individualized English Language Arts, Mathematics, and Science assessments
- IEP information including:
  - Present levels of academic achievement and functional performance, goals, and short-term objectives.
  - Considerations for students with individualized and substantial communication needs or modes (from multiple data sources).
  - Considerations for students who may be learning English as a second or other language (i.e., English Language Learners) that may interfere with an accurate assessment of his or her academic, social, or adaptive abilities.

## What Not to Use as Criteria for Participation Decisions

In addition to the three criteria for determining participation, there are other issues that may affect a student's learning experience and his/her ability to learn that are **not** appropriate to consider during the decision-making process for the Maryland Alternate Assessments. These include:

- A disability category or label
- Poor attendance or extended absences
- Native language/social/cultural or economic differences
- Expected poor performance on the general education assessment
- Academic and other services the student receives
- Educational environment or instructional setting
- Percent of time receiving special education services
- English Language Learner (ELL) status
- Low reading and mathematics achievement level
- Anticipated disruptive behavior
- Impact of test scores on accountability system
- Administrator decision
- Anticipated emotional distress
- Need for accommodations (e.g., assistive technology/augmentative and alternate communication devices) to participate in assessment

## Participation Tools

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There are several tools that may be helpful to IEP teams as they collect and organize evidence before making a decision about whether a student meets the eligibility criteria set forth in this document for participation in the Maryland Alternate Assessments. Participation forms and other tools designed to assist teams in collecting and reviewing evidence to determine whether it is appropriate for an individual student to participate in Maryland's Alternate Assessments in English Language Arts, Mathematics, and Science are provided in the appendices.

- **Appendix A Participation Criteria and Checklist:** This is a form that includes the participation guidelines and a way to indicate the evidence that was used in making decisions and the considerations that should not be the basis of making decisions.
- **Appendix B Decision Flowchart for Participation:** This shows the sequence of decisions made by the student's IEP team when determining whether a student should participate in the Maryland Alternate Assessments.

This manual and the tools are supported by a set of training materials that are available at [www.altmsa.org](http://www.altmsa.org). Included among the training materials are several sample student profiles, with explanation of how decisions were made about their participation in the Maryland Alternate Assessments.

## Frequently Asked Questions Regarding Participation for the Alternate Assessments

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1. ***Who decides whether a student should participate in the Maryland Alternate Assessments?***  
The IEP team makes the determination of how a student will participate in statewide assessments. The IEP team must follow Maryland Guidance for IEP Teams on Participation Decisions for the Alternate Assessments when determining a student's eligibility to participate in the Maryland Alternate Assessments. No one member of the IEP Team makes this decision. Parents, teachers, administrators, and the student (as appropriate) make the decision based on evidence and adherence to Maryland Guidance for IEP Teams on Participation Decisions for the Alternate Assessments. All participation decisions for statewide assessments must be made on an annual basis by the student's IEP Team.
2. ***How do we know that a student has a "significant cognitive disability"?***  
Maryland does not define "significant cognitive disability" in terms of a "cut off" IQ score. Most students with significant cognitive disabilities have intellectual disabilities, multiple disabilities, or autism, but not all do. Furthermore, not all students with these disabilities are considered to have a "significant cognitive disability." Many students eligible to receive special education and related services under these categorical labels may be able to participate in general assessments, with or without accommodations. A significant cognitive disability is pervasive, affecting student learning across all content areas and in social and community settings. Students demonstrating academic deficits or difficulties solely due to specific learning disabilities, speech-language impairments, other health impairments and emotional-behavioral disabilities do not qualify for participation in the Maryland Alternate Assessments. Students, however, may be from any of the disability categories listed in the IDEA, 34 CFR 200.1(f)(2).

Performing three to four grade levels below peers without disabilities is not, by itself, evidence of a significant cognitive disability. Academic deficits or difficulties alone do not indicate that a student has a significant cognitive disability.

Determinations for student participation in statewide assessments must be evidence-based and made individually for each student by the IEP team using the criteria set forth in this document. A student who is eligible for the alternate assessment is one for whom the general assessment is inappropriate even with accommodations. Students demonstrating mild to moderate cognitive disabilities may be more appropriately placed in the general assessment system with or without accommodations. Anticipated or past low achievement on the general assessment does not mean the student should be taking the Maryland Alternate Assessments.

**3. *How do I know if the Maryland Alternate Assessments are appropriate for an English Language Learner (ELL) with an IEP whose language proficiency makes it difficult to assess content knowledge and skills?***

An ELL should be considered for the alternate assessments if his/her intellectual functioning indicates a significant cognitive disability using assessments in his/her spoken language as appropriate and he/she meets the other participation guidelines for the Maryland Alternate Assessments. Assessments of adaptive behavior and communication should take into account linguistic and sociocultural factors for valid interpretation of these assessments, alongside progress on goals and objectives in the student's IEP used to determine what may or may not be a significant cognitive disability. If an ELL with an IEP does not meet the criteria for the alternate assessments, he/she should take the general assessment with or without accommodations as appropriate. ELL status alone is not appropriate to consider as a criteria for participation in the alternate assessment.

**4. *What if it is impossible to assess a student because the student does not appear to communicate?***

All attempts should be made to find a mode of communication with the student as soon as he or she is enrolled in school. If various approaches and technologies do not appear to demonstrate a consistent mode of communication, then consider that all behavior that the student exhibits is a form of communication, and use this as the starting point. A critical element in assessing all students is a focus on communicative competence as the base for student access to the MCCRS. Best practice is that students have a communication system in place that allows them to demonstrate an understanding of academic concepts prior to participation in statewide accountability assessments. However, students must still participate in the Maryland Alternate Assessments with or without a communication system. Each IEP team should continue to provide the necessary supports in order to develop a communication system for a student.

**5. *If a student has been tested in the past on an alternate assessment, but the current IEP team determines that the student does not meet the criteria set forth in the Maryland Guidance for IEP Teams on Participation Decisions for the Alternate Assessments, can the student participate in the general assessment?***

Yes. The IEP Team must ensure that the student receives appropriate instruction on the MCCRS and participates in the required general assessments for their current grade level with or without accommodations.

**6. *Is it possible that a decision to participate in an alternate assessment based on alternate academic achievement standards could change as a student gets older?***

Yes. Participating in the Maryland Alternate Assessments requires that the student has a significant cognitive disability and is instructed using content that has been significantly modified from that which is provided to the student's typically developing peers. Even though students with significant cognitive disabilities may be identified early, sometimes prior to starting school, they may be able to participate in the general assessment during their elementary grades. IEP teams should be especially cautious about students with significant cognitive disabilities participating in an alternate assessment in their early school years. When the level of support needed for the student to participate in the breadth of the MCCRS and the general assessment increases, the IEP Team may determine that participation in the Maryland Alternate Assessments is appropriate.

**7. *What is the relationship between the Maryland Alternate Assessments and a Maryland High School Diploma?***

In order to earn a Maryland High School Diploma, a student must meet a number of requirements, including passing the standard State assessments (i.e. PARCC assessments) or completing the Bridge Plan for Academic Validation. COMAR 13A.03.02.09B. If a student with a disability cannot meet the requirements for a diploma, but has met other criteria, the student will be awarded a Maryland High School Certificate of Program Completion. COMAR 13A.03.02.09E. The vast majority of students with disabilities will participate in the PARCC assessments and/or Bridge Plan for Academic Validation, even if they are eventually unable to meet the requirements for a diploma and are awarded a certificate instead. For example, the student must pass all required courses, must pass the end-of-year assessment assigned to each required course, and must pass the required standard State assessments (PARCC or HSA). During this time of transition to the PARCC assessments, graduation criteria may change depending upon State Board decisions regarding graduation requirements and statewide assessments.

Assessment and instruction drive each other. Anytime an IEP team determines that the Maryland Alternate Assessments are appropriate for a particular student, the IEP team is determining that, during the current school year, the student requires instruction based on alternate academic achievement standards. A student with a significant cognitive disability may not meet the requirements for a diploma if the student participates in alternate State assessments and continues to receive instruction based on alternate achievement standards through high school. COMAR 13A.03.02.09E(4). Thus, the IEP team is also determining that the student is, during the current school year, pursuing a certificate rather than a diploma.

A student who is taking the Maryland Alternate Assessments could eventually earn a diploma by meeting all graduation requirements. The IEP team must continually monitor the student's progress to determine if and when that is a possibility, before making the final decision to award a certificate during the student's last year in high school. COMAR 13A.03.02.09E(3). Because the likelihood of fulfilling the requirements to earn a diploma decreases as a student continues to participate in the Maryland Alternate Assessments, however, it is critical for the IEP team to revisit its assessment decisions in light of student progress.

**8. *What process should be followed if the parent/guardian or student disagrees with the IEP Team's decision for the student to participate in the Maryland Alternate Assessment?***

As a member of the IEP team, the parent/guardian, and student, as appropriate, participates in

the IEP decision-making process. Every effort should be made by the IEP team to resolve any disagreements. However, if a parent/guardian or student continues to disagree with the decision(s) of the IEP team and believes his/her rights under IDEA have been violated, his/her concerns may be resolved in a variety of ways, including advocacy and partnering with the school system. The parent/guardian or student should, however, be aware that there are several formal ways in which families and school systems can resolve their differences. There is mediation, due process hearings and formal complaints which may be filed with the Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE). While disputes are in place, the current IEP should remain in effect. Mediation is a process where a trained mediator helps a parent/guardian and school system to reach an agreement. All parties must be willing to participate since the mediation process is voluntary.

A parent/guardian also has the right to file for a due process hearing. This is a more formal way to resolve disputes between families and school systems, and the hearing is conducted by an administrative law judge through the State Office of Administrative Hearings. A parent/guardian may request a due process hearing by submitting the request forms found on the MSDE website at [www.marylandpublicschools.org](http://www.marylandpublicschools.org). A parent/guardian may also file a State complaint with the MSDE.

Should a parent/guardian decide to file a complaint, the complaint must be submitted to the Assistant State Superintendent, Division of Special Education/Early Intervention Services, Maryland State Department of Education, 200 West Baltimore Street, 9th Floor Baltimore, Maryland, 21201. A copy of the completed complaint form must also be sent to the Director of Special Education for the school system where the student is attending. Additional information concerning the filing of a State complaint, including the form for filing the complaint, can also be found by visiting the MSDE website, above. Please be aware that although there is not a requirement that the form be used, all of the information that is requested on the form must be provided in order for the MSDE, DSE/EIS to initiate a complaint investigation.

- 9. Who may we contact with questions about the assessment and this important decision?**  
Please contact the Maryland State Department of Education for additional information.

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

*Karla Marty, M.Ed.*, Chief, Accommodations and Assessment Section  
Phone: 410-767-0256 | Email: [karla.marty@maryland.gov](mailto:karla.marty@maryland.gov)

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**Division of Curriculum, Assessment and Accountability**

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## Glossary

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- **Alternate Academic Achievement Standards:** Performance standards which are based on a limited sample of content that is linked to grade-level content standard. This content, however, may not fully represent grade-level content and may include content, which is substantially simplified.
- **AAC:** Augmentative and Alternative Communication (e.g., communication generating devices such as text-to- speech communication aids, picture or symbol boards, etc.)
- **Accommodation:** A change in materials or procedures that facilitates access during instruction and assessment. Accommodations do not change the construct or intent of what is being taught or measured. Assessment accommodations are intended to allow the student to participate in the assessment and to produce valid results that indicate what a student knows and can do.
- **Adaptive behavior:** A collection of behaviors, including conceptual, social, interpersonal, and practical skills, defined as essential for someone to live independently and to function safely in daily life.
- **Maryland College and Career-Ready Standards (MCCRS):** A set of content standards that define what students are expected to learn at each grade in order to leave school ready for college or careers. For information on the MCCRS, visit online at—  
<http://www.mdk12.org/instruction/commoncore/index.html>
- **Communicative competence:** A consistent, meaningful, and reliable means of expressing thoughts, needs, wants, and ideas.
- **Constructed response item:** A type of question that asks students to compose their own answer to the question or prompt.
- **Content target:** Content standards that are the focus of the assessment. For the Maryland Alternate Assessment the content targets are defined by the Core Content Connectors in English Language Arts and Mathematics.
- **Core Content Connector (CCC):** A representation of the essential “core” content of a standard in the MCCRS. Each CCC was identified by examining hypothesized learning progressions aligned with the MCCRS to determine the critical content for students with significant cognitive disabilities. For information, visit online at—  
[https://wiki.ncscpartners.org/index.php/All\\_Resources](https://wiki.ncscpartners.org/index.php/All_Resources)
- **Participation criteria descriptor:** Information about the characteristics students possess in order to meet the participation criteria for the Maryland Alternate Assessments.
- **English Language Learner (ELL):** A student whose native language is a language other than English or a student who comes from an environment where a language other than English has had a significant impact on the individual’s level of English language proficiency. An ELL’s difficulties in speaking, reading, writing, or understanding the

English language may be a barrier to learning in classrooms instructed in English and to performance on assessments presented in English.

- **Evidence:** Specific and measurable sources of information being used to identify student characteristics that either meet or do not meet the participation criteria.
- **Extensive, individualized, repeated, and direct instruction:** Concentrated instruction designed for and provided to an individual student. This type of instruction is needed by students with significant cognitive disabilities to acquire knowledge and skills in content. Students with significant cognitive disabilities are likely to need this to apply knowledge and skills in multiple contexts.
- **Learning progression:** A description of the way in which typically developing students may develop and build academic competencies over time. Learning progressions are used by teachers to determine where a student is in the process of learning a specific skill or understanding a concept.
- **Modification:** A change in materials or procedures during instruction and assessment that changes the learning expectations of the grade level content. Modifications during instruction may be appropriate on a temporary basis for scaffolding the student's understanding and skills. Assessment modifications result in invalid measures of a student's knowledge and skills and thus should be avoided.
- **Pervasive:** Present across academic content areas and across multiple settings including school, home, and community.
- **Selected response items:** Assessment items that are structured for students to respond by choosing an answer (e.g., multiple choice, true or false, etc.).
- **Substantial supports:** Support from the teachers and others (e.g., resource teacher, co-teacher, aide) and various material supports within the student's environment. Examples include adapting text for assessments and learning, and extensive scaffolding of content to support learning.
- **Substantially adapted materials:** Various classroom and other materials that have been altered in appearance and content from the materials that peers without disabilities use for instruction or assessment. Examples include significantly shortening the length of passages, or using raised dots and hand-over-hand counting when identifying a matching number in math.

# Appendix A

## Participation Criteria and Checklist

### *Maryland Guidance for IEP Teams on Participation Decisions for the Alternate Assessments*

MARYLAND STATE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION  
Division of Special Education/Early Intervention Services



Date \_\_\_\_\_  
 Student Name \_\_\_\_\_ Disability Code \_\_\_\_\_ DOB \_\_\_\_\_  
 Residence School \_\_\_\_\_ Service School: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Service County \_\_\_\_\_ Grade \_\_\_\_\_  
 SASSID# \_\_\_\_\_ LEA Number \_\_\_\_\_

IEP Team Chair: \_\_\_\_\_ Signature \_\_\_\_\_  
 (Team Chair signature verifies that all established criteria were considered.)

**Team Members: Each participant should print name, provide title, and sign/date below:**

Name (Please Print)	Title	Signature	Date

*\* If the parent does not attend the meeting and does not sign this form, attach documentation of parent notification and informed consent for the meeting along with notification of the decisions of the IEP Team that were provided to the parent.*

**Parent Understanding:**

*I have been informed that if my child is determined eligible to participate in Maryland Alternate Assessments through the IEP Team Decision-Making Process:*

- 1. My child will be progressing toward a Maryland Certificate of Program Completion. If my child continues to participate in the Maryland Alternate Assessments, he/she may not be eligible for a Maryland High School Diploma. His/her continued participation in the Maryland Alternate Assessments will not prepare him/her to meet the high school diploma requirements. \_\_\_\_\_ (Parent/Guardian Initials)*
- 2. The decision for my child to participate in the Maryland Alternate Assessments must be made annually. \_\_\_\_\_ (Parent/Guardian Initials)*

IEP Teams are encouraged to use this eligibility tool when identifying students with a "significant cognitive disability" for participation in the Maryland Alternate Assessments. In order for the student to be eligible to participate in the alternate assessments, the IEP Team must answer **AGREE** to **ALL** of the criteria items. **If the IEP Team disagrees, responding with a DISAGREE for one or more questions, the IEP Team should stop using this form and consider the student eligible for participation in the general PARCC Assessment with or without accommodations.** The IEP Team must use multiple sources of information, such as the current IEP, results from formal and informal assessments, data gathered from classroom assessments, and information gathered from parent/student that document academic achievement to guide the decision-making process for participation in the appropriate statewide assessment.

The student may participate in the Maryland Alternate Assessments in English Language Arts, Mathematics, and Science if the IEP Team answers **AGREE** to **ALL** participation criteria outlined below.

Maryland Alternate Assessment Participation Criteria	Maryland Alternate Assessment Participation Criteria Descriptors	Sources of Evidence [check if used]
<p>1. The student has an Individualized Education Program (IEP).</p> <p>Agree <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>Disagree <input type="checkbox"/></p>		
<p>2. The student has a significant cognitive disability.</p> <p>Agree <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>Disagree <input type="checkbox"/></p>	<p>Review of student records indicates a disability or multiple disabilities that significantly impact intellectual functioning and adaptive behavior.</p> <p><i>*Adaptive behavior is defined as essential for someone to live independently and to function safely in daily life. See Glossary, page 11.</i></p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> Results of Individual Cognitive Ability Test</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Results of Adaptive Behavior Skills Assessment</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Results of individual and group administered achievement tests</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Results of informal assessments</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Results of individual English Language Arts, Science, and Mathematics assessments</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Results of district-wide alternate assessments</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Results of language assessments including English Language Learner (ELL) language assessments if applicable</p>
<p>3. The student is learning content derived from the Maryland College and Career-Ready Standards (MCCRS).</p> <p>Agree <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>Disagree <input type="checkbox"/></p>	<p>Goals and objectives listed in the IEP for this student are linked to the enrolled grade-level MCCRS and address knowledge and skills that are appropriate and challenging for this student. The grade level curriculum is significantly adapted in order for the student to access knowledge and skills that are appropriate.</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> Examples of curriculum, instructional objectives and materials, including work samples</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Present levels of academic and functional performance, goals and objectives from the IEP</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Data from scientific research-based interventions</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Progress monitoring data</p>

<p>4. The student requires extensive, direct, repeated, and individualized instruction and substantial supports to achieve measurable gains in the grade-and age-appropriate curriculum.</p> <p>Agree <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>Disagree <input type="checkbox"/></p>	<p>The student (a) requires extensive, repeated, individualized instruction and support that is not of temporary or transient nature and (b) uses substantially adapted materials and individualized methods of accessing information in alternative ways to acquire, maintain, generalize, demonstrate and transfer skills across academic content.</p>	<p>___ Examples of curriculum, instructional objectives, and materials including work samples from both school and community-based instruction</p> <p>___ Teacher collected data and checklists</p> <p>___ Present levels of academic and functional performance, goals and objectives, and post school outcomes from the IEP and the Transition Plan for students age 14 and older unless State policy or the IEP team determines a younger age is appropriate.</p>
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**The criteria for participation in the Maryland Alternate Assessments reflect the pervasive nature of a significant cognitive disability. All content areas should be considered when determining who should participate in this assessment. A student who participates in the Maryland Alternate Assessments participates in this assessment for all content areas of English Language Arts, Mathematics, and Science.**

**Complete the following Evaluation Review of Cognitive/Adaptive Ability:**

**Individual Cognitive Ability Assessment:** \_\_\_\_\_

Name and Title of Examiner: \_\_\_\_\_

Most Recent Test Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Cognitive Test: \_\_\_\_\_

Score(s): \_\_\_\_\_

Assessment Comments:  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

**Educational Assessment:** \_\_\_\_\_

Name and Title of Examiner: \_\_\_\_\_

Most Recent Test Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Cognitive Test: \_\_\_\_\_

Score(s): \_\_\_\_\_

Assessment Comments:  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

**Adaptive Skills Assessment:** \_\_\_\_\_

Name and Title of Examiner: \_\_\_\_\_

Most Recent Test Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Cognitive Test: \_\_\_\_\_

Score(s): \_\_\_\_\_

Please use this space to include any additional assessment data/scores that guide the IEP Team discussion (optional):

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\*All Standard and Composite Scores shall be considered when reviewing multiple sources of data. **If documentation in one of the requested areas is not available, a detailed explanation is required below.** Please include any medical or other information that may have prevented administration of the assessment in the requested areas.

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***Evidence shows that the decision for participating in the Maryland Alternate Assessments was not based on the list below.***  
 To consider a student eligible for participation in alternate assessments, The IEP Team must also answer **AGREE** to **ALL** of the items listed below. **NOTE: A DISAGREE** response indicates the student did not meet the eligibility criteria for Maryland Alternate Assessments and, therefore, the student will participate in the MSA or PARCC assessments with or without accommodations, as appropriate, based on his/her IEP. Please refer to the Maryland Accommodations Manual for more information about accommodations and Maryland assessments.

1. A disability category or label.	<input type="checkbox"/> Agree <input type="checkbox"/> Disagree
2. Poor attendance or extended absences.	<input type="checkbox"/> Agree <input type="checkbox"/> Disagree
3. Native language/social/cultural or economic differences.	<input type="checkbox"/> Agree <input type="checkbox"/> Disagree
4. Expected poor performance on the general education assessment.	<input type="checkbox"/> Agree <input type="checkbox"/> Disagree
5. Academic and other services the student receives	<input type="checkbox"/> Agree <input type="checkbox"/> Disagree
6. Educational environment or instructional setting.	<input type="checkbox"/> Agree <input type="checkbox"/> Disagree
7. Percent of time receiving special education services.	<input type="checkbox"/> Agree <input type="checkbox"/> Disagree
8. English Language Learner (ELL) status.	<input type="checkbox"/> Agree <input type="checkbox"/> Disagree
9. Low reading and mathematics achievement level.	<input type="checkbox"/> Agree <input type="checkbox"/> Disagree
10. Anticipated disruptive behavior.	<input type="checkbox"/> Agree <input type="checkbox"/> Disagree
11. The impact of test scores on accountability system.	<input type="checkbox"/> Agree <input type="checkbox"/> Disagree
12. Administrator decision.	<input type="checkbox"/> Agree <input type="checkbox"/> Disagree
13. Anticipated emotional stress.	<input type="checkbox"/> Agree <input type="checkbox"/> Disagree
14. Need for accommodations, e.g. assistive technology/ACC to participate in the assessment process.	<input type="checkbox"/> Agree <input type="checkbox"/> Disagree

**IEP Team Statement of Assurance:** *Our decision was based on multiple pieces of evidence that, when taken together, demonstrated that the Maryland Alternate Assessments are the appropriate assessments for this student; that his/her academic instruction will be based on the CCCs linked to the MCCRS; that the additional considerations listed above were not used to make this decision; and that any additional implications of this decision were discussed thoroughly, including disqualification for a regular high school diploma. 34 CFR § 300.160.d.*

Name	Position		
		<input type="checkbox"/> Agree	<input type="checkbox"/> Disagree
		<input type="checkbox"/> Agree	<input type="checkbox"/> Disagree
		<input type="checkbox"/> Agree	<input type="checkbox"/> Disagree
		<input type="checkbox"/> Agree	<input type="checkbox"/> Disagree
		<input type="checkbox"/> Agree	<input type="checkbox"/> Disagree
		<input type="checkbox"/> Agree	<input type="checkbox"/> Disagree
		<input type="checkbox"/> Agree	<input type="checkbox"/> Disagree
		<input type="checkbox"/> Agree	<input type="checkbox"/> Disagree
		<input type="checkbox"/> Agree	<input type="checkbox"/> Disagree

**Eligibility Criteria:** As documented through the eligibility criteria and additional requirements listed above, it has been determined that the student is learning a sample of content that is linked to grade-level content standards, which does not fully represent grade level content as assessed on the MSA, HSA, or PARCC assessments. Therefore, the student cannot participate in general assessments even with the provision of accommodations.

Agree

Disagree

If the IEP Team checked Disagree above, the student **does not meet the eligibility criteria for the Maryland Alternate Assessments** as listed above and, therefore, the student will participate in the MSA, HSA, or PARCC assessment, with or without accommodations, as appropriate, based on his/her IEP. Refer to the Maryland Accommodations Manual for more information about accommodations and Maryland’s assessments.

**Assessment Participation:** The IEP Team agreed that the student met all criteria listed on this eligibility tool; therefore, the IEP Team determined the student **eligible** to participate in the Maryland Alternate Assessments.

Yes/Agree

No/Disagree

Do the historical data (current and longitudinal across multiple settings) justify the IEP Team's decision for the student to participate in the Maryland Alternate Assessments?

Yes

No

Please use the space below to provide justification of the IEP Team decision.

Please use the space below to document any disagreement with this decision by any IEP Team member.

A large, empty rectangular box with a black border, intended for documenting any disagreements with the decision by any IEP Team member.

## Appendix B

# The Maryland Alternate Assessments Participation Decision Flowchart

*Maryland Guidance for IEP Teams*  
on Participation Decisions for the  
Alternate Assessments

MARYLAND STATE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION  
Division of Special Education/Early Intervention Services

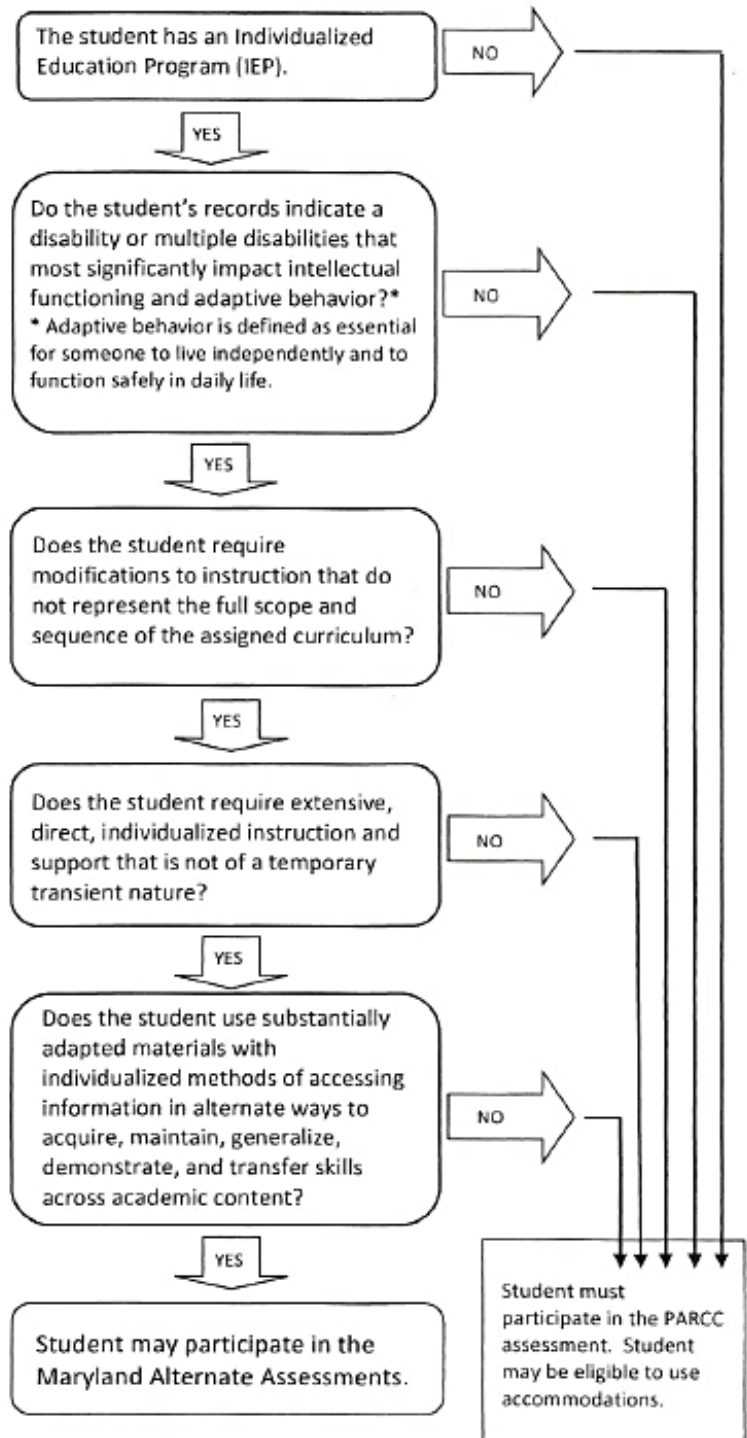


## Maryland Alternate Assessments Participation Decision Flowchart

**Consider These:**

- Anecdotal parent input
- Individual Cognitive Ability tests
- Adaptive Behavior Skills Assessment
- Individual/group administered achievement tests
- District-wide alternate assessments
- English language proficiency assessment (if applicable)
- Data from scientific research-based interventions
- Progress monitoring data
- Results of informal assessments
- Teacher collected data and checklists
- Examples of curriculum, instructional materials, and work samples from community-based instruction
- Present levels of academic and functional performance, goals and objectives, and post school outcomes from the IEP and Transition Plan

**This flowchart must be used in conjunction with Appendix A: *Participation Criteria and Checklist*.**



## **Maryland Guidance for Individualized Education Program (IEP) Teams on Participation Decisions for the Alternate Assessments**

### **Contact Information**

Please contact the Maryland State Department of Education if you have questions about participation decision making for the Maryland Alternate Assessments.

#### **Division of Special Education/Early Intervention Services**

Karla Marty, M.Ed.  
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#### **Division of Curriculum, Assessment and Accountability**

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January 2016

**Maryland Guidance for Individualized Education Program (IEP) Teams on Participation Decisions for the Alternate Assessments**

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**Appendix D: Text-to-Speech, Screen Reader, ASL Video, or Human Reader/Human Signer Guidance for English Language Arts/Literacy Assessments**

*Individualized Education Program (IEP) or 504 Plan Decision-Making Tool*

Directions: This tool has been developed to assist IEP teams and 504 plan coordinators in identifying students who may be appropriate candidates to receive the accommodation for text-to-speech (computer-based), ASL video (computer-based), or human reader/human signer (paper-based) for the PARCC ELA/literacy summative. PARCC states will each determine whether this tool is optional or required, based on their individual state policies or practices. This tool must be reviewed and completed at the student’s annual IEP meeting.

**Student’s Name:** [Click here to enter text.](#) **D.O.B:** [Click here to enter text.](#) **Grade:** [Click here to enter text.](#)

**School/Program:** [Click here to enter text.](#) **State ID #/Local ID#:** [Click here to enter text.](#)

**District/LEA:** [Click here to enter text.](#) **State:** [Click here to enter text.](#)

IEP Team Members or 504 Plan Coordinator/Staff		
Title	Print Participant Name, Participant Must Initial	Date
IEP Team Chairperson or 504 Coordinator:	<a href="#">Click here to enter text.</a>	<a href="#">Click here to enter text.</a>
Special Education Teacher(s):	<a href="#">Click here to enter text.</a>	<a href="#">Click here to enter text.</a>
General Education Teacher(s):	<a href="#">Click here to enter text.</a>	<a href="#">Click here to enter text.</a>
IEP Team member(s) qualified to interpret reading evaluation results: :	<a href="#">Click here to enter text.</a>	<a href="#">Click here to enter text.</a>
Parent(s)/Guardian: *	<a href="#">Click here to enter text.</a>	<a href="#">Click here to enter text.</a>
Student (if a team participant):	<a href="#">Click here to enter text.</a>	<a href="#">Click here to enter text.</a>
Other IEP team member(s): <a href="#">Click here to enter text.</a>	<a href="#">Click here to enter text.</a>	<a href="#">Click here to enter text.</a>
<b>Verification of Parent/Guardian Notification (optional): *</b> _____ <i>(Parent/Guardian Initials)</i> <i>I have been informed by my child’s school that my child will receive a text-to-speech, ASL video or human reader/human signer accommodation for a PARCC English language arts/literacy assessment.</i>		

- \* If the parent/guardian does not initial this form, the school should attach documentation of notification to the parent and date of notification to this form regarding the decision to provide the text-to-speech, screen reader, ASL video, or human reader/human signer accommodation to the student, and keep this form with the student’s records.



If all guidelines listed are met, and the student is given the **text-to-speech, ASL video, or human reader/human signer accommodation** for the PARCC English language arts/literacy assessment, he/she will receive a valid score on the assessment. If all guidelines are not met, and the student is given the **text-to-speech, ASL video, or human reader/human signer accommodation** on a PARCC English language arts/literacy assessment, the student's assessment score may be invalidated and the score would not be counted in the overall assessment results; i.e., the student would be considered a "non-participant" for the English language arts/literacy assessment. The Maryland State Department of Education will continue to evaluate through the monitoring process if and when an invalidation of a student's test score will occur.

Guidelines for IEP or 504 Team Consideration	Additional Guidance	Agree/Disagree
The student has an Individualized Education Program (IEP) or 504 plan.	Student has an approved IEP or current 504 plan.	<input type="checkbox"/> Agree <input type="checkbox"/> Disagree
<p>In making decisions whether to provide the student with this accommodation, IEP and 504 teams are instructed to consider whether the student has:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Blindness or a visual impairment and has not learned (or is unable to use) braille;</li> </ul> <p>OR</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A disability that severely limits or prevents him/her from accessing printed text, even after varied and repeated attempts to teach the student to do so (e.g., student is unable to decode printed text);</li> </ul> <p>OR</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Deafness or a hearing impairment and is severely limited or prevented from decoding text due to a documented history of early and prolonged language deprivation</li> </ul>	<p>For the screen reader accommodation, the IEP team or 504 plan coordinator must determine whether the student is blind or has a visual impairment and has not yet learned (or is unable to use) braille.</p> <p>For the <b>text-to-speech, ASL video, or human reader/human signer accommodation</b>, the IEP team or 504 plan coordinator must determine whether the student has a disability that severely limits or prevents him or her from decoding text.</p> <p>This accommodation is not intended for a student reading somewhat (i.e., moderately) below grade level.</p> <p>The IEP or 504 plan must document objective evidence from a variety of sources (including state assessments, district assessments, AND one or more locally-administered diagnostic assessments or other evaluation) that indicate that the student's ability to decode text is severely limited or prevented or that the student is blind or visually impaired and has not yet learned (or is unable to use) braille.</p> <p>States may provide additional guidance for their respective states based on state policy or practice.</p> <p><b><u>Maryland's Guidance:</u></b> IEPs team must use multiple data sources to document a student's decoding deficient. IEP team must first review the Maryland College and Career Ready Standards in the areas of decoding to determine where a student's skills are in approximation to the state standards. IEP teams must understand the issues that may signal that a student has a significant decoding deficit (i.e. difficulty matching sounds and letters or trouble spelling phonetically).</p>	<input type="checkbox"/> Agree <input type="checkbox"/> Disagree



<p>Before listing the accommodation in the student's IEP or 504 plan, teams and plan coordinators should also consider whether:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The student has access to printed text during routine instruction through a reader or other spoken-text audio format, or interpreter;</li> <li>• The student's inability to decode printed text or read braille is documented in evaluation summaries from locally-administered diagnostic assessments; or</li> <li>• The student receives ongoing, intensive instruction and/or interventions in the foundational reading skills to continue to attain the important college and career-ready skill of independent reading.</li> </ul>	<p>States may provide additional guidance for their respective states in order to define intensive instruction and interventions based on state policy or practice.</p> <p><b>Maryland's Guidance:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>A student must be receiving research or evidenced-based intervention at the time the accommodation decision is made.</b></li> <li>• All intervention services a student receives must be in addition to the core instruction.</li> <li>• All interventions must be in place for at least two years.</li> <li>• Research-based interventions are established on multiple, systematic investigations, including testing and evaluations, and are designed to develop or contribute to generalized knowledge.</li> <li>• Evidence-based refers to an instructional program or collection of practices that have been tested and shown to have a record of success. That is, reliable, trustworthy, and valid evidence indicates that when that program or set of practices is used, students can be expected to make adequate gains in academic achievement.</li> </ul>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> Agree <input type="checkbox"/> Disagree</p>
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List the data and/or evaluation sources that were used to document the decision to give the text-to-speech, ASL video, or human reader/human signer accommodation to the student on the English language arts/literacy assessment(s):

1.) Name of Diagnostic Evaluation or Educational Assessment (Note: the most current assessment used cannot be more than two years old): [Click here to enter text.](#)

Name and Title of Test Administrator: [Click here to enter text.](#)

Most Recent Testing Date: [Click here to enter text.](#)

Score(s): [Click here to enter text.](#)

Provide a Summary of the Results: [Click here to enter text.](#)



2.) Name of Diagnostic Evaluation or Educational Assessment: [Click here to enter text.](#)

Name and Title of Test Administrator: [Click here to enter text.](#)

Most Recent Testing Date: [Click here to enter text.](#)

Score(s): [Click here to enter text.](#)

Provide a Summary of the Results: [Click here to enter text.](#)

3.) Name of Diagnostic Evaluation or Educational Assessment: [Click here to enter text.](#)

Name and Title of Test Administrator: [Click here to enter text.](#)

Most Recent Testing Date: [Click here to enter text.](#)

Score(s): [Click here to enter text.](#)

Provide a Summary of the Results: [Click here to enter text.](#)

4.) Name of Diagnostic Evaluation or Educational Assessment: [Click here to enter text.](#)

Name and Title of Test Administrator: [Click here to enter text.](#)

Most Recent Testing Date: [Click here to enter text.](#)

Score(s): [Click here to enter text.](#)

Provide a Summary of the Results:

5.) List any additional assessment data, scores, and/or evaluation results that were used to guide the decision-making process for IEP teams or 504 plan coordinators regarding **the text-to-speech, ASL video, or human reader/human signer** accommodation for the PARCC English language arts/literacy assessment(s):

[Click here to enter text.](#)

6.) List the instructional interventions and supports specifically related to reading that are currently provided to the student as well as those interventions provided in the most recent school years:

- Intensive reading interventions have been provided to the student for [Click here to enter text.](#) years. Intensive reading intervention is one where the frequency, duration and monitoring of progress occurs weekly.
- List interventions in chronological order beginning with the current school year.

School Year	Name of Intervention	Description	Frequency (number of minutes and number of days per week)
<a href="#">Click here to enter text.</a>	<a href="#">Click here to enter text.</a>	<a href="#">Click here to enter text.</a>	<a href="#">Click here to enter text.</a>
<a href="#">Click here to enter text.</a>	<a href="#">Click here to enter text.</a>	<a href="#">Click here to enter text.</a>	<a href="#">Click here to enter text.</a>
<a href="#">Click here to enter text.</a>	<a href="#">Click here to enter text.</a>	<a href="#">Click here to enter text.</a>	<a href="#">Click here to enter text.</a>
<a href="#">Click here to enter text.</a>	<a href="#">Click here to enter text.</a>	<a href="#">Click here to enter text.</a>	<a href="#">Click here to enter text.</a>
<a href="#">Click here to enter text.</a>	<a href="#">Click here to enter text.</a>	<a href="#">Click here to enter text.</a>	<a href="#">Click here to enter text.</a>



**List any additional relevant information regarding the student:**

[Click here to enter text.](#)

## **BACKGROUND:**

# **SPECIAL EDUCATION WORKLOAD ANALYSIS MODEL**

**T**raditionally, providers of services to students with disabilities talk in terms of the number of students on their caseloads. Caseload data are based on the number of students with Individualized Education Programs (IEPs) assigned to the educator without consideration for the intensity of services needed by the student or the amount of time needed to provide those services.

Given the transition to more inclusionary practices such as coteaching and supported instruction in the general education setting, thinking in terms of workload more accurately addresses the service demands of special education teachers, paraeducators (paras), and specialized instructional support personnel (SISP). Workload data take into consideration the supports and services, both direct and indirect, provided by teachers, paras, and SISP.

This workload analysis model is intended as a framework to adapt to the changing responsibilities of special education service providers.

### **Workload Considerations**

1. Specially Designed Instruction
  - a. Direct instruction to meet IEP goals/objectives
  - b. Indirect services
    - i. Consultation with general education teachers
    - ii. Adaptation of curricular materials
    - iii. Coordinating with other service providers
    - iv. Collaboration time among special education service providers to discuss progress and next steps for individual students
      1. Teacher of record and general education teacher
      2. Teacher of record and paras
      3. Teacher of record and SISP
      4. SISP and para
    - v. Dedicated planning time for coteaching
2. Inclusionary practices
  - a. Coteaching (two or more certificated providers)
  - b. Supported instruction (paraeducator supporting general education teacher)
  - c. Push-in services/specialized services provided in general education setting (e.g., speech-language pathologist providing lesson in general education setting)
3. Individual Education Program Management
  - a. Coordination of paperwork relative to IEP meetings
  - b. Development of the IEP
  - c. Progress monitoring and reporting on IEP goals
  - d. Annual review/triennial review
  - e. Initial evaluation/re-evaluation
  - f. Functional behavior assessments/behavioral intervention plans
  - g. Agency service coordination and documentation (Medicaid, VocRehab, etc.)

## Calculating Workload

### A. Calculate Workload Considerations (as minutes per week)

- a. Analyze IEPs on caseload to determine services as per documentation
- b. Assigned inclusionary practices responsibilities
- c. Determine time needed for IEP management (consider time needed throughout year and divide to determine weekly average)

### B. Determine available instructional minutes per week (minutes in day x 5)

- a. Minutes in a student day (start of day to end of day for student) x 5 to determine minutes per week
- b. Subtract teacher minutes in the week
  - i. Duty-free lunch
  - ii. Guaranteed contractual preparation time
  - iii. Travel/drive time between service delivery sites

### C. Determine difference between "A" and "B" to determine if there are enough available minutes in the week to complete the necessary duties of this teacher

## Calculation Examples

### Desirable allocation of time:

A: Workload Considerations		Minutes	B: Available Time		Minutes
Specially Designed Instruction: Direct instruction		415	Student day (8:00-3:10)	$430 \times 5 =$	2150
Specially Designed Instruction: Indirect services		125	Teacher time		-500
Inclusionary Practices		575			
IEP Management		480			
Weekly workload time		1595	Weekly available time		1650
<b>C: Difference <math>1650 - 1595 = 55</math> minutes available beyond current workload</b>					

With 55 minutes per week unallocated, there is time for the unexpected (parent consult, student emergency, newly enrolled student, etc.)

### More typical example based on conversations with members:

A: Workload Considerations		Minutes	B: Available Time		Minutes
Specially Designed Instruction: Direct instruction		815	Student day (8:00-3:10)	$430 \times 5 =$	2150
Specially Designed Instruction: Indirect services		150	Teacher time		-500
Inclusionary Practices		550			
IEP Management		480			
Weekly workload time		1995	Weekly available time		1650
<b>C: Difference <math>1650 - 1995 = -345</math> minutes beyond available needed to complete IEP needs</b>					

This example indicates there is a need to consider additional staffing.

The following comments are written in response to the two optional open-ended questions that were in the Special Education Task Force Survey. Responses for Question 2 begin on page 106.

**(1) What ideas do you have for improvements to be made so you can address the needs of your special education students and improve your working conditions?**

- In the elementary setting we no longer have traditional self-contained (ALS) classes so students who cannot meet the requirements of the inclusion setting are pulled and taught by the special educator. This keeps the special educator from meeting the needs of those on her caseload who are fully included. Secondly, in my school, two special educators share one classroom meaning that for most of the day we are running 4 grade levels in one classroom at one time. This means that we are unable to meet the "reduced distractions" accommodation on each of their IEPs. It also limited our ability to use resources due to space constraints. We are unable to use our projector because it cannot be placed in the room so that the students are sitting in front of it blocking the board. We do not have either a mimeo or ELMO. As a paraeducator I am working with a group as their primary educator for half of their ELA period which seems inappropriate.
- More time for collaboration
- I need to have more planning time during the day. We have lunch duty every day and this takes away from our planning time.
- **\*\*One half day per month to catch up on paperwork- students off the schedule; \*\*testing/write up of testing and generation of progress reports to be considered part of the intervention for students, (i.e., OK to complete this paperwork during scheduled therapy time rather than seeing the student for therapy);**
- Prep time and some type of monetary budget for supplies. Compensation for degreed staff.
- They tend to put all IEPs and 504s into a class, which ends up being 33 kids with over half needing accommodations. Class sizes need to be reduced to a max of 25 when it's an inclusion class. Moreover, we are understaffed in Special Education, therefore the current staff has overwhelming caseloads, and are unable to fully make modifications/ accommodations for the amount of kids we have. No planning time is available for special educators and myself.
- Sessions that are missed due to field trips should not need to be made up. Related service providers should not be pulled for other responsibilities if it will interfere with therapy sessions. If the provider is pulled for a child's IEP, that time should count towards the child's services as indirect services.
- My idea is to leave special education. The job is not worth the bitterness I feel. The expectations on my shoulders are for 2 jobs, being a teacher and a case manager. These jobs only overlap 25% (or less) of the time, and there is no way I can do both jobs to the best of my ability within the duty day consistently. I resent that my job makes me feel inadequate because I am not given the time to provide for my students the way I know I could. Besides, even if I was given the time, there is not enough money to compensate me for the extra hours it would require for me to do both jobs every day.
- Decrease paperwork affiliated with documentation of services and creating IEP documents.
- Special Ed students are just placed in your room. You have to use your personal or planning time to meet with the special educator.
- Have designated SLP's provide makeup services. Designated helpers in the building complete paperwork responsibilities. Filing, copies, other paperwork duties.

- At my school, our special educators are pulled to be substitutes and therefore their services aren't always being provided. Within our school district it is not directly the SLPs responsibility (but the counties) to make up missed sessions, however most of us make them up anyway. We make them up by having larger groups and not the most ideal situations.
- Smaller caseloads and less time spent on other duties like testing accommodations
- More pay for certified speech language pathologists - subs for speech language pathologists
- Please include a special educator or a paraprofessional in my class. I am required to assign grades to students in Related Arts and I teach every child in my school. Often these students have overlaying emotional needs which are very hard to meet in a 45 minute class when these students are grouped with general education students.
- Hire more educators. We need qualified people to assist students with their needs. Many of the issues are social, therefore computers are not able to assist with extensive communication issues.
- Reduce number of students on the speech-language caseload
- Caseload size as it related to staffing. I currently have 50+ students on my caseload and would benefit from having a .2 or part time SLP to support the caseload so I have time to provide higher quality services
- I think the inclusion model is not the most ideal model for meeting the needs of all students, but particularly the special education students. Many behavior problems are a direct result of these students feeling frustrated.
- I have such a high number of IEP and 504 students that I am constantly being invited to attend the meetings. Students lose out when I have to be out of the room to attend these meetings. Especially in a science class, I have labs and things that make planning difficult. Inclusion classes need to be spread out among teachers instead of one getting all of that prep. More fair scheduling of meetings or meetings after school during the duty day.
- (1) Clarify acceptable case load limits. (2) Provide case managers with an additional stipend for extra duty time spent writing reports, preparing IEP paperwork, managing compliance with accommodations, and progress monitoring.
- If caseloads cannot be reduced, more time should be allotted for necessary paperwork so it can be completed during the duty day. Case managers should be exempt from extra duties (bus duty, car duty, lunch duty) to ensure that time is given during the regular school hours.
- Special ed needs more funds for technologies such as tablets. We are understaffed to meet the needs of all of our students.
- I am a Speech Pathologist. It is impossible to miss time at school because if I miss one day, that is 14-15 kids whose sessions have to be made up by me. My schedule is already packed full so it is not easy to make any services up. Therefore, I work when I am sick and I miss important family matters so that I do not have to miss work. This is an enormous burden which causes me to want to leave the profession each year. Also, no time is allotted in my schedule to plan with general education or special education teachers. I just do it as I can find them before/after school or sometimes for 2 minutes at the copier. If I could be included in the planning meetings at least some of the time, I could be much more useful to teachers and special educators alike. Not being included in planning meetings reduces the effectiveness of my services. I have lots of ideas but don't always get the chance to share them due to packed schedule and not being given opportunity to plan/brainstorm with teachers.
- More time built into our SLP schedules for collaboration with teachers and other special educators

- Administrators need to be held accountable when special education service hours are not provided. Special educators should have an official way to log the hours they are providing (like related service providers have to) to ensure compliance with IEP mandated special education instruction. In the spring, my colleagues who are special ed teachers go for weeks at a time without providing direct instruction to their students due to the demands of administering PARCC and other district tests.
- There needs to be a closer look at how CAS (Close Adult Supervision) and one-on-one situations are handled. Just today I found out that the reason our student did not get a one-on-one was because we weren't using visuals consistently. I reviewed the BIP again and started to realize...the BIP cannot be fully adhered to without a one-on-one. So in effect, there is a vicious cycle of denying one-on-ones for our most needy ALS students. It really makes me mad to be honest. I feel like the school system is putting money before safety of students and staff. We were also told that our school had the right "ratio" for us to handle the student. I have no clue how they calculate need, but this is not working. There are more detailed IEP's and BIP's than in previous years but less staff to handle putting the LEGALLY BINDING documents to full use. I love my job, but like any abusive relationship...this is just getting worse. The more we put up with the more they think we will just deal with it. I don't want to break up from the school system...I would miss my students. PLEASE HELP ADDRESS HOW CAS AND ONE-ON-ONE SITUATIONS ARE DETERMINED. I've never seen any formula on paper for how it's determined and that bothers me. If there is no limit to how many needy students a staff member is responsible for...then there needs to be one ASAP! The safety of staff and students should come before raking in federal money for having a surplus of special needs students in our school system.
- More staff at school. Lower caseloads. More prep and paperwork time.
- Hire more qualified staff to reduce workload increase salaries
- We need more time for compliance duties, less redundant paperwork, and more time for collaborating with teachers and other staff. The requirement for 100% compliance with IEP services is unrealistic and unreachable. Make-up policies for missed days of service are entirely too strict and place undue stress on providers for situations over which they have little control. The requirements for compliance and paperwork grow each year and are pushing out strong SLP's who do not want to continue to add unpaid hours of work to their jobs.
- Planning time with educators. Decreased "duty" responsibilities.
- Accommodations are abused and handed out to everyone encouraging laziness among students
- The ability to have substitutes for related service providers is a definite need. As a county, we do not have regular availability for a floater or substitute to assist with makeup sessions. So, when I am out for any reason, services are canceled and must be made up by me during planning times.
- The caseloads are much too large for special educators and related service providers. Also other responsibilities within the building should be waived for special educators and related service providers.
- As a related service provider I do 90% or more of my paperwork compliance (ie logs, assessment reports, IEPs, etc.) outside of my work day. I am a .8 employee and spend weekends and many hours on my "day off" doing the paperwork to keep up. If I am pulled to provide support at a team or a meeting outside the building, or if I am sick I am required to make up the therapy sessions which is difficult when you have a full schedule. I know we are directed not to use planning or lunch time, however that is not always realistic. It is just very unfair to place the make-up time on the therapist and still be docked for sick time. More time for compliance paperwork should be built into the school day for SLPs and being released from make-up sessions would improve working conditions.

- Better coordination of representatives from different school programs to consult in special cases of which we have had more than 4 this first marking period). More flexibility for alternate meeting days- More special ed para support
- Less paperwork Time to complete paperwork
- Give grade book access to special education teachers.
- Less testing- intermediate students miss a lot with all of the testing.
- Assistance for testing student being evaluated, reduced amount of time pulled for PARCC accommodations
- More time to collaborate with colleagues about students. In addition, less paperwork or having a system of documentation that is easy and quick to use. For example, maybe a computer program that is able to track student progress as well as session data.
- An online system to complete MA forms would be very useful and cut down on the amount of time it takes to complete them each month. We need lower caseloads all together to ensure that we have enough time to complete paperwork and still provide quality services to our students. I may only case-manage 9 this year, but I serve over 50 speech-language students. Less standardized testing would be optimal in terms of being able to meet students' IEP minutes.
- Less paperwork!!!! Stop changing the computer programs (Canvas), allow time for teachers to be with the kids/students and not bogged down in paperwork and having to justify what they do.
- SLPs should not be required to do school duties such as arrival duty and dismissal duty as this cuts into our already limited time to complete paperwork and planning. Also, I feel that there should be substitute SLPs who can sub when an SLP is out sick, just like a general education teacher is able to get a sub. It is also very stressful when we are required to go to a professional development meeting, but then we have to do make-up sessions for all the students we didn't see that day due to the required professional development.
- Improve ratios of special educators and paraprofessionals.
- Smaller caseloads so that there is time to prepare better for sessions and more time to do paperwork so that there is not so much take-home work.
- Skills classes that support the gen ed curriculum made available (and required) special education students. Because of testing restrictions and accommodations interfere with equality of education, alternative times should be created for special education students to complete graded activities. Because national testing pressures drive our teaching foci, classroom testing should be the same as the national testing (no testing modifications).
- There is still a shortage of speech pathologists in the schools. Our county has addressed this by hiring contract people, but then the supervisors have been under a lot of scrutiny for caseload division because of the increased costs to the county.
- Smaller caseloads for speech-language pathologists. Current caseloads require large, mixed groups. This limits the ability to collaborate with general education teachers and work with students in their classroom setting (least restrictive environment). Smaller IEP caseloads would also allow me to provide more support prior to referral for students with possible speech-language needs.
- Safety of staff and students is my primary concern right now.
- Better workload compensation for difference in students -- case management vs. related service, students in need of testing, students with devices or significant impairments, etc. Also more support to provide RTI Level 1-2 services to prevent unnecessary bloating of caseload.

- If students are going to be included in the general education classroom you need more than ONE special educator to meet the needs in six grade levels. Instead of spending money on electronics hire more special educators! In our school we have instructional assistants or general education teachers implementing the entire IEP! This is not right and out of compliance! Parents assume their child is being serviced by a special education teacher but unless they ask and push they are being misled!!!! Impossible for one special educator to meet the needs of students from grades K through 5th with any amount of credibility! Also, related service providers have been told to group students with extremely significant needs so as to deliver the services and meet the service hours on the IEP. Some of these children have severe autism, with minimal attention or communication. Grouping them looks good on the schedule and meets compliance but does NOT meet the needs of the students. Again, parents believe their child is receiving an hour of speech, OT, or PT but is less than that when you are required to group students. Grouping works fine with students who have mild to moderate disabilities, but these students are significantly impaired.
- Each Sped teacher assigned to classes must have a para to help in his/her absence.
- Speech language pathologists (SLPs) don't get the protections or designated planning times the way teachers do. I've been watching closely since I returned to MCPS 8 years ago ( I started in MCPS in 1981-- through 1995). The caseloads are almost the same as they were 25-30 years ago with three times the paperwork. Improve the working conditions by decreasing caseloads to allow for mandated paperwork. This will also allow for quality planning/service to students.
- Our special education department needs to also work with general education students, but they often don't/refuse to. If a student needs a quiet environment to take a test, even if they don't have accommodations, special education resource refuses to take them in. Also, if the class eats a different lunch than what the special education teachers do, they refuse to eat on a different lunch and work with their student.
- Removing extra duties and bringing in others to help with testing accommodations.
- Set suggestions for staffing or caseload relative to the level of intensity needed for my students. I need to spend more time with a complex-communicator or preschooler than I do with an articulation only student. However, the case management can be incredibly long for even simple problems.
- Smaller classes and not mixed in with students of much higher ability. Separate curriculum for Students requiring more than 2 grade levels below.
- My class was moved to a much smaller classroom to make room for a Summit program. When doing this they now say we need a vented stove after 10 years and we now go to the teachers' lounge and use a stove that is a lot worse and conduct a life skills class with people walking in and out eating lunch with an answer about the stove it's been ordered that makes it 6 mo. without.
- Less meetings
- Caseload reduction Time to collaboratively teaching with special educators
- Special education full time substitute
- Staffing should not just be based on caseload. Additional special education staffing would allow for co-teaching and increased collaboration to aid general educators when provided differentiated instruction.
- More time with support staff to assist in service delivery; organization of meetings; less duties outside of my professional responsibilities

- Students need to be weaned from their IEPs if possible -never see anything being done to prepare students for the real IEP free world
- There need to be substitutes for Speech-Language Pathologists. If I am in a meeting that runs long or need to be absent which causes me to miss a scheduled service I then need to make that up. It causes other services to be moved and missed causing a constant catch-up game having to be played. If a teacher can be absent and still have those hours taught through the use of a sub then an SLP, which is part of the union, should be granted the same right. It's unacceptable that if I am sick I am at a disadvantage and must either chose my health or if I want to have make-ups. For example, my husband required a surgery that caused me to be home for 3 days, I now have to find time to make up those three days on top of managing my own caseload of 50+ students, making my own materials to support student's IEP's, writing effective reports which take on average 2 hours to write, maintaining compliance of IEPs through services delivered, input data from daily sessions, collaborate with teachers and parents, manage screenings and referrals, and write annual reports. Moving toward a system which uses a pool of SLPs similar to how substitute teachers are used would allow for less services to be missed, increased continuity in student's schedules, improved work performance on behalf of full-time SLP, and an overall increase in work place moral for the school-based SLPs. If subs were utilized it really would have a big effect. The fact that I am part of MSEA yet my job, responsibilities, expectations, and supports are completely different than a teacher upset me. It makes me NOT want to be part of a union that doesn't value my individual professional role in the schools. I am working in a school with teachers but I am not a teacher. I have a master's degree that required 2 1/2 years of intense schooling and clinical placements. I should be able to attend a meeting or be sick without the worry and stress of having to make up sessions missed because my union doesn't understand my role. I feel SLPs have long been thought of as "speech teachers", we are not. I appreciate the current supports given by MSEA but want to move toward a true understanding of the SLPs role in the schools and have that reflected in the way we are utilized and treated in the schools. I also believe the MSEA should work to support case load caps on a SLPs schedule. I currently have 51 students which I am responsible for providing service to in the schools. Working with the school-based SLPs to determine a "manageable" case load size then fighting to uphold that in the schools would also cause less SLP turn-over due to burn-out and more effective services delivered. I feel creating an SLP substitute system and creating an SLP case load cap are two very important steps that MSEA NEEDS to help with to support its over 200 school based SLPs in the Baltimore County Schools.
- I would like to be included in any meetings or discussions about the students I work with. I would like to know what the classroom teacher has planned for the day/week and how can I help the student learn and complete tasks.
- Students with special needs cannot be pulled out in "small groups" of 13. It's unrealistic to believe that that's an okay small group of reduced distractions. I would rather have 3-5 special education students in a class of 28 and no paraprofessional/co-teacher than a packed class of 33 with 10-15 special education students.
- General education teachers and special education teachers seem to have differing ideas on "who does what" and "who is responsible for what" when it comes to providing service hours for the neediest students (those with the highest number of support hours on their IEP). Speech, OT, PT are relatively easy to gauge as specialists pull the students for those hours of services. What is a general education teacher to do when multiple students within a classroom need 6-8hours a week of reading support and service providers are only available 3-4 days a week? As a classroom teacher, I alone cannot provide the necessary support to those students within the time frame of our scheduled day and still meet with all of the other students. There needs to be clarification on how and who supports these neediest children in an inclusion setting.

- I think that more money needs to be put into the budget to hire more special education teachers. The number of special educators that we have and their caseloads are not realistic in terms of ensuring that students truly get the services that they need based upon their IEPs. It seems like the mantra continues to be do more with less. For example, throughout the course of the school year we often qualify more students for services, but that I've never seen it increase the number of special educators we have in the building. The new students are always just absorbed into the current teachers' caseloads. It's really ridiculous, and I often question how much longer we'll be able to keep the people we have. We lose great staff members due to burnout all the time.
- Having a special education teacher in the room is not enough. I need to know what adaptations and tweaks I can make to lessons to better serve my special Ed students. Common planning is vital to doing that.
- There should be more training to engage these students on their level and more planning for parallel lessons. The head of the special ed group should have some experience and "not learning on the job". This is a disservice to the staff and their young charges.
- All stakeholders in school, namely administrators, and teachers, must understand and respect that paraprofessionals are NOT just paper pushers or baby monitors for troublesome students.
- Case managers should have assigned duties commensurate with caseload assignments including consideration of intensity of service needs as opposed to number of students related service providers should not be required to carry a case management load in addition to their service load which can be upwards of 250 students
- Compliance with federal mandates regarding language access for students who are Deaf and hard of hearing, appropriate classification of related service providers of sign language interpretation and translation services, appropriate contractual language that addresses the need of credentials, professional growth and development, and upward mobility, recognition of industry standards not just for contracted service providers/vendors.
- Clerical support would allow case managers and service providers to see students, and plan with other teachers. Providing additional staffing to schedule meetings especially annual reviews, print paperwork and send it home both before and after meetings, file paperwork following meetings and quarterly, and schedule exams and accommodations would make a significant difference. In some schools the RTSE helps with this in others they don't help at all.
- smaller amounts of special ed kids in one room
- As a school psychologist, I am not a case manager, but spend a ton of time working on IEP compliance issues. The IEP paperwork must start to become more streamlined and the IEP meetings need to be shorter - a substantial portion of my week is working on compliance issues/meetings and not seeing any students, supporting teachers etc. The paperwork and procedures must be reduced.
- Case management is an additional job that is tacked onto the regular teaching job of the special educator. It only seems fair to compensate teachers for this extra task by eliminating at least 1 instructional period. As a transition specialist, I am not supposed to have a caseload, but I feel so sorry for the teachers in my department who have between 16-21 on their caseload, that I have agreed to have a small caseload myself.
- There is a huge need to provide substitutes for Speech Language Pathologists. We have to make up service time missed for IEP/parent meetings, doing IEP related assessments, absences, and even professional activities in our already overloaded schedules. This time can really add up. The stress level is overwhelming!
- Have a working session with the ITL and or the case manager once a month.

- Caseload of speech-language pathologists, physical therapists, and occupational therapists should be lowered. There should be times built into student schedules for pullout services. Laws should be reviewed with an eye to reducing paperwork. Speech-language pathologists, physical therapists, and occupational therapists should be evaluated by a person in their own field.
- Re classifying Paraprofessionals
- As a related-service provider (OT), teach handwriting when it's developmentally appropriate, do not expect students to learn how to form, space, and align letters prior to kindergarten and then tell them to do their best and try to figure it out when they ask how to do it. Introduce keyboarding training in early elementary school so students are familiar with key location and 10-/multi-finger typing. Teach formation of shapes and cutting skills. Include pencil grasp. Lack of proper instruction and supervised opportunities for practice negatively impact students when writing demands increase in secondary schools.
- Speech language pathologists should not have to make up sessions that students missed because of field trips and assemblies. IEP team meetings should be scheduled for allotted times so that sessions won't be missed.
- -Smaller caseloads (for special educators and related service providers) -More time for paper work (including for related service providers)
- Gen ed and SpEd teachers need adapted curriculum for students who are 3-5 yrs behind grade level but in inclusion classes. It is not fair or possible for teachers in a school to create adapted materials for every class for students that far behind. Counties should be providing that or creating a Wiki where teachers could share what they've done. Each year our school has 3-4 students per grade who would qualify to be certificate bound but choose to keep their student diploma track. I worry that by not doing hall duty or bus duty it reflects poorly on me and makes me look like I'm not a team player. I don't want that held against me when evaluated.
- The special educator should only be assigned to one class in order for the true inclusion to be successful.
- Special Education students should not be lump into inclusion classes that contain a large number of students with behavior issues. I believe that scheduler and administrator believe that the interventions and strategies used with SPED students appropriately cross-over to behavior issues. This presents major challenges when it comes to providing SPED students with the appropriate accommodations. It is also frustrating to the teacher. I cannot teach and differentiate while playing referee and warden. -SPED students should be included in classes with students who of proficient performers and/or GATE in order to maximize on peer teaching opportunities. -Regular Education teachers should have a limit of SPED students in one class and they should not be group with other special population students like ESOL. - The IEP at a Glance needs more details like strategies. - Lastly, a Co-teacher should be provided for classes like Health Education.
- The amount of data collection and paper work really takes time away from planning differentiated instruction for special education students and time away from instruction. Time to collaborate with team members needs to be increased and paperwork stream lined to take less time. Related service providers should not have to make up session they missed due to field trips, testing, their own illness, etc.
- Increase speech therapy staffing. Use time spent in IEP team and service to student.
- Stop doing paperwork for the sole purpose of not being sued by a parent. Paperwork that is connected to the students' improvement is fine
- Ask us what things we need to improve our skills not make up what they think we need!

- Reduce workload. Reduce the number of assigned students Reduce the paper work
- I would like to have more direct mentoring. It would be helpful to have someone in the classroom to observe student behaviors and make recommendations for improvements.
- Decrease the amount or streamline the testing process. Simplify the process of obtaining student specific equipment.
- I am a behavior tech in a Regional program. I am involved in testing proctoring and tech for our computer set up and troubleshooting. I finalize and check all Medicaid billing, keep all behavior data which often requires me past my duty time. While all of this is important, improve my working conditions by paying me what I'm worth. I made more money in a comprehensive school in a dmr room. I left to care for a sick child for 3 tears and came back for less pay to do more work. There is too much testing that cuts into everything else.
- Better training for paraeducators and more planning time with para.
- I have a special education teacher assigned to my class but she is split between two grades. I have either the special educator or a para for only an hour and a half a day. Two of the students need a lot of assistance in the classroom. One student has academic and behavioral needs while the other has only academic. Plus I have three other students that have IEPs. The staff hours may be reflective of what is written on the IEPs but I feel that all of my students needs are not being met. Children are not a piece of paper. More responsibility is being placed on the general educator. That is not fair to the kids or the staff. I think that each grade should have a special educator especially for the primary grades. There are many students that could benefit from early intervention and it is so hard for kids to qualify at an early age unless they have severe needs. We would have less kids in special ed in the intermediate grades if we could assist them more in the primary years. Finally, I think allowing for a periodic check on students that have been dismissed would be beneficial.
- The increase of special needs students in the fully included classrooms continues to rise (MCIE), but an ever decreasing number of ESP's are available to support the students. How can we help the student be successful when we continue to stack the deck against them with decreasing staffing and an increase in testing? And this goes right along with the pressure on teachers to be held accountable for testing scores. It is a no win situation for all involved. I'd like to know/see/hear MSEA's position on the increasing violence in classrooms by students to fellow students and staff, especially in relation to ESP's, as we are most often the ones who work closely with these students. What can be done to help alleviate the rapid "burn-out" that ESP's are experiencing from dealing with such an increasing population of students with such high needs.
- Common planning time. Group like needs into same class. Share ideas more willingly without making the other feel less valuable.
- Keep meeting times to a minimum. As of now, meetings/annual reviews may take between an hour and a half to 2 hours. Longer if there are any behavioral issues, medical issues, advocates, lawyers, etc.
- It would be nice if when you receive a child from another county that you have more time to write a new IEP so that way you get to know the child and determine if they need service hours or not.
- Alternative Assessment NCSC need to be reconsidered for some populations of special education students. I work with students who are medically fragile, have complex bodies and complex communication needs. As a speech/language pathologist I am working with these students to develop basic communication skills using alternate communication systems. We are working toward understanding and using early language functions. They're progress on any given day is based upon their medical status which is fluid. I would invite and challenge ANY member at the

state level who designs testing to accompany me on a home visit and explain the appropriateness of the assessments administered. Additionally, the volume of paperwork needs to be addressed. I complete medical assistance paperwork which only continues to increase and continues to be more time consuming.

- Make IEP for three years instead of one year
- More support!!!!!!
- Less assessment, less staff development that is centered around standardized test scores, less endless meetings after duty hours, less pages of paper wasted on IEPs and related information that no one has time to read, less IEP meetings that go on forever, less degrading remarks in regard to rules for teachers and comments on all of the things that teachers are doing wrong, less telling us how to accommodate everyone who comes to the US and refuses to learn English.
- More staff, streamline paperwork, FIX IDEA, most of my time is actually spent in endless meetings and doing eligibility testing.
- The number of students on the caseload varies significantly by year due to the transient nature of our population as we are the first county school on the city line (e.g., one year 60 will be on the caseload and the following year only 45). Many of our parents begin the IEP process during the school year, which increases the workload without compensation to the already identified student IEP hours. Much of the day is spent testing and providing services so there is little time during the working business day to complete IEP process and case management paperwork. This work ultimately gets taken home to be completed. Planning for upcoming sessions is typically done outside of the school day as well. Work to rule is never an option for special education teachers or related service providers who work with students with special needs. If our work is to be completed within specified federally mandated guidelines, it needs to be taken home. Related service personnel are not given substitutes when we are in IEP meetings all day, which take away from therapy time. It is a very frustrating situation when you must take work home with you on a daily basis not out of want but out of need. It also is frustrating to know that students could likely be making more progress if you had more time to meaningfully plan, collaborate with teachers and tier lessons and prepare flexible groupings than participate in an average of 8 IEP meetings a week.
- Higher staffing to reduce caseloads, IEP meetings spread throughout the year rather than concentrated in first 3 months of school, half-day per week for therapy logs so they don't have to be done at home, more time to attend treatment team or staff meetings with regular educators, access to printers and other tech that's needed
- Bottom line is that paperwork needs for each child continues to increase while Caseloads also increase. Paperwork time allotted is constantly filled with meetings. I work in infant toddler and always overlooked in school system, even special Ed because these? We're geared towards older children. No one knows we exist and hence taken advantage of more
- Time must be allotted during the school day to complete paper work related to compliance, attend IEP meeting without missing sessions, and plan with other staff and for services. This is the only way quality services will be achieved for our students. In my estimation, that could mean doubling the number of speech staff available. This would create another problem of staffing shortages. I believe that this issue could be helped by increasing the ability of the classroom teacher to differentiate instruction for all students. We also need educational programs which address the interests and needs of our students. All students are not college bound and we are missing an opportunity for them to be successfully employed when they leave high school by mandating that everyone has to take the same courses and pass the same tests.
- Last year one of my schools was able to hire a part-time special educator who was able to provide service hours to students, but had no case management duties. IEPs were in compliance,

students were receiving quality service, and the case managers were able to complete paperwork (Read: IEP and M.A.) on time, and even had time to plan within the duty day. Now because of a slight shifting in student numbers we've lost that position entirely this year and the burden of providing service, completing IEP paperwork, planning, and M.A. paperwork, testing, etc., is taking a toll on our special education team, and in some cases, perhaps even quality of service.

- Group students by abilities.
- The special education departments in early childhood need to transition their students into elementary schools by holding some sort of transition meeting before sending students. Special educators need time in their schedule to be able to meet with general educators for planning purposes.
- I would like more support for my SpEd students who are also English Learners. In my schools there is a lot of support for SpEd students but NONE for ELs. As an ESOL teacher, I have a class where 50% of my ELs have an IEP, but I get no support for them. I think that in my school district there are too many SpEd teachers.
- Caseload and workload reductions to include time in daily schedule for consultation, compliance, collaboration and planning improved understanding of school based related services for parents and faculty a change in the make-up policy so that related service providers are not "penalized" when they are out or when students are unavailable for therapy increased respect for related service providers so that they feel valued , respected and heard ( physical space , access to resources)
- Reasonable caseload --- need to take in to consideration mostly that you are consulting with staff/parents on non-IEP kids or IEP kids with no-OT on their IEP at least one school at some point during the week. My caseload/schedule does not allow for this. Best practice is to help these students by helping staff and parents. So I bring home caseload duties (documentation, planning, IEP paperwork, etc.) rather than getting those done in my work day. The demand to help for non-IEP or non-OT kids has risen dramatically over the past 4 years and when you are at 5 schools in 3 days that is a lot of extra time warranted since you are trying to help a lot of teachers. Also other activities like consulting/collaborating with other OTs/PTs that may not be with you at your school, or at your school the same time as you, occurs outside of the work day. This is what I use the Professional FLEX time for and go over the hours required in a school year. I just stop documenting once I've met the requirement. Wish the budget would change so we can hire more OTs and help with caseload size! That seems to be a stark change in the past 2 years.
- I am a related service provider - so this does not really apply to me - I manage a caseload of over 40 students - providing legally mandated services. I travel to multiple schools per week to provide these services. The week(s) of PAARC testing greatly impact student services for me, as I cannot see my students during that week - cannot hold IEP meetings, as many needed staff members are busy implementing assessments and modifications.
- The 90-day timeline for reevaluations and 60/90 day timeline needs to be changed so now only business days or school days are counted. As it presently stands now in Maryland, it is a tremendous and stressful time burden for these timelines to be counting while schools are closed during the Thanksgiving and Winter Breaks.
- Provide substitutes for teams and absences, the same as teachers.
- More Parental Involvement to have a true Parent - Teacher Partnership
- I work as a one on three. I do not feel I can properly serve all three. One on one can do a much better job of serving the students' needs. Some of these special ed. students need basic life skills

but are thrown into regular ed classes and become very frustrated. I do not believe in total inclusion.

- Much less paperwork. It had become unbearable.
- Reduced caseloads would allow for more adequate preparation. The amount of time for compliance is extreme; secretaries could do some of this work. There have been some improvements with documentation as it is on the internet. Substitutes need to be available for related service providers.
- Provide adequate planning time or assign one position for compliance paperwork
- Special educators to work with only one grade level provided equitable planning time - in Carroll County elementary special educators are provided 60% of the planning time that other educators are provided - TOTALLY UNFAIR, but in the contract increased staff is the only resolution!!!!
- More training, time to complete paperwork
- We just need more staff. If there was more staff, there would be time to collaborate, train, perform clerical duties, get breaks, work with students, etc! SE duties should be in a job description and they should be broken down by level or grade you teach (early learning, grades 1-3, grades 4-5, etc.) what you need to know in an elementary school is very different than a middle school, etc.
- Given time to collaborate daily. It makes it hard to considering para educators have lunch, specials etc with students. A lot of information is shared with us but the meaning sometimes is very unfamiliar. Be included in parent/teacher conferences while we spend most of the time with the students.
- One thing would be to have enough staff in place to take care of issues that arise daily with these students. Train ALL staff in how to deal with Special Ed students. Make sure everyone that could be involved with the students receives the BIP or IEP at a glance, somehow the general ed para never gets them and has to ask for them. It would be a good idea to not cluster the students in 1 or 2 classrooms depending in the number. This year we have 2 classrooms dedicated to special ed and that makes 3 or 4 students in each class that has 23 or 24 students total in them. Classes that have special ed students in them, especially in the earlier grades, need smaller class size to be able to manage the needs of ALL students.
- Provide planning time separate from normal planning time to complete case management duties.
- Cooperation of special educators to help modify materials of instruction
- The questions concerning PARCC testing and being pulled for accommodations do not apply. Although I answered the questions (since there was no N/A option available), the answers are not correct. My students do not take PARCC. This year they will take Alt-MSA Science and NCSC.
- I would like to have a small quiet space to work with my students.
- Communication needs to take the front seat to grade level academic instruction in students with severe needs. If communicative competence is a priority, then instruction on communicative competence needs to be the priority. There is no way to truly assess the knowledge of students who are not competent communicators with a full vocabulary. Therefore, having standards that align to ensuring nonverbal students with intellectual and multiple disabilities learn to communicate with a vocabulary closer to their grade level peers is imperative if we want to assess their learning of the academic based standards of their grade level peers.
- More PD on how to juggle demands of the gen ed with students IEP goals

- More time for planning with my general ed teacher and instructional assistance more time to assess students on IEP goals and objectives
- I am actually a special educator in a self-contained classroom, so I do not get pulled for accommodations or special duties.
- More time is needed in order to do required paperwork. I do most of it at home on my personal time without compensation. The paperwork can't be done during the school day because of teaching responsibilities. If paperwork was completed during the school day there is no time to teach.
- There needs to be more planning time. The planning periods I have are so short, I rarely have enough time to actually start and finish a task. Also, being a self-container teacher, the time I spend with students during arrival and dismissal cuts into planning time. While all general education students in my school wait outside their classrooms until arrival, mine need assistance from the moment they get off the bus to the moment they get back on.
- More time to be able to appropriately plan to meet the needs of my students. Proper staffing so that I do not lose the previous planning time as frequently as I already do. Proper funding so that I am not having to purchase so much out of my own pocket (over 2,000 since the beginning of school considering I am in year 8 being paid as a second/ third year teacher. Time to actually work on writing academic reports/ write IEPs/ Medicaid/ progress reports etc.
- 1. I need a full day per week to do paper work only and not be involved in anything else as a special educator. 2. Cut down on number of meetings that don't contribute much to student learning. 3. Administrators should use their heads to implement policies in a way that they respect teachers' expertise and not treat them like apprentices/student teachers. 4. The so-called teacher observations of experienced teachers are simply insulting to the teaching profession and don't really help but discourage most teachers.
- \*Hire more teachers and assistants \*No lunch and bus duty would give me about one more hour to help with paperwork. \*Better trained assistants and TSA's \* IEP Clerk \* stop PARCC testing of special ed students.... they have Evaluations every 3 years, progress reports, and the tests are not appropriate for these students= we already know they are at least 2 years behind. No accommodation makes up for that. \*Give special ed a designated day for doing paperwork. See students 4 days a week. Have an assigned substitute to see the students and assist teacher so to "get to know" their sped students. (Then gen ed teachers won't show up to meetings and say "I never see Johnny") I could go on and on, but I have to get my IEPs, assessments, done
- Providing the staff with behavior modification methods and insight into IEPs and FBAs.
- I would suggest that we follow the laws and provide students and parents a continuum of placement so that they are being serviced in their least restrictive environment. As far as the inclusion setting goes, I think our Supervisor of Special Education needs to be retrained on what true inclusion is. Placing a special education teacher in a class with a general education teacher is NOT true inclusion. Currently, my county does not provide a continuum of services for special education students, and, a result there are many students receiving services in an "inclusion" setting because "These are the only placement options we have and since the student is verbal, self-contained is not the correct placement option."
- Teachers are given some planning time weekly. As a case manager, I should be given additional time to work on writing the IEP, sending out notices to the IEP meeting attendees, recording correspondent in official documents, assessing students formally, grading students, writing reports , trying to meet with general educators, paraprofessional and other team members. Medicaid time for billing should also be built into the schedule monthly. If I'm required to attend IEP meetings weekly or bi-weekly, a certified teacher should be mandated to cover my service hours for the students. At the end of the quarter, special educators should be given one

full day to aggregate data and write responses to the quarter progress reports under case management duties. Knowing that this day is not nearly enough, but can off-set some of off the clock time I'm using to get paperwork and quarter data sheets aggregate and write comments on the goals and objectives progress. In the beginning of the year, special educators should be given additional non duty work days to review records, set up data sheets, create communication systems or communication boards for students as well as pencil in the year to date IEP meetings schedule.

- Need additional staff/IEP clerk to manage and schedule IEP meetings and stay on top of compliance issues. Need at least two full time SPED Teachers, maybe three, regardless of number of students at a school. SPED teachers do more than just service their students. They Screen students and test students for special education services. They go to EMT and 504 meetings. More staff is needed to ensure students' needs are being met.
- IEPs need to be manageable
- As a new special education teacher, I would love to have a time to meet regularly with my team to learn exactly how to write IEPs, conduct meetings, etc. All the training is awesome but when you are in the middle of doing, it's a bit different.
- Reduced special education paperwork; more instructional time to plan and do paperwork associated with special education; more resources like supplies or online resources for special needs students - and that those resources would be approved by counties so our students can have access to them; duty free time to work on paperwork; and more special education resource teachers at school to assist with questions, concerns, and legality of situations that arise. At this point we have resource teachers who have several schools. Therefore, questions, concerns or other matters may not be addressed as quickly as they need or should.
- More special educators to reduce caseload. More planning time during instructional day and during the year instead of professional development.
- Hire more special ed teachers
- More time to be able to collaborate with our SPED Teachers and Paraprofessionals to be on the same page of the students' IEP goals and progression through the system. I would also try to have more trainings on coping techniques that we can model for our students if they shut down often and do not want to learn.
- Our workload needs to have compensatory time. It is impossible to fully address the needs of our students when we (special educators) are pulled for hall duty, lunch duty and no coverage during IEP meetings. My students are just left to manage on their own. Those hours are never made up. General ed gets the coverage, not us.
- More prep-time and collaboration with grade level team
- Smaller caseload with time to complete required tasks such as assessments, writing IEPs, attending IEP meetings, and co-planning with teachers and assistants.
- -IEP clerks at every school to help with clerical duties, -provide subs to cover special educators when they must attend meetings, test students, score reports, etc.
- I think it would be beneficial to have time set aside for case management as well as for IEP meetings. Right now I have to find coverage for myself and my co teacher in order to attend IEP meetings. It would also be helpful to have someone do the meeting notices and paperwork side of the job which would leave instruction and IEP goals and implementation to me.
- Less students with severe disabilities and severe behavior issues in elementary schools - they should stay in our Special Education Centers. Also, additional time allowed weekly for IEP paperwork, testing, and meeting with my TA & TSAs with coverage provided for my room. Also

coverage provided for my room while I am in an IEP meeting. I would also like to see TSAs get more training (and it be paid for) like CPI and trainings exclusive for ACC classrooms. I would like TSAs in ACC rooms to receive more pay - considering how hard it is to work in our type of classroom it is only fair that they are compensated for that.

- Hire reading interventionists. A large chunk of our special educators' and TAs' days are spent planning for and teaching reading interventions, which do not count toward our service hours.
- There needs to be a closer look at high transient school populations (e.g. military.) Its unfair that highly transient schools receive tons of special ed students throughout the year but are not given the correct amount of staff or time to test these students.
- We need someone to just do Special Ed paperwork
- Smaller caseloads and reduce amount of non-instructional duties
- The data entry process for creating IEPs should be made more efficient. Examples include: -The special considerations and accommodations page can take up to 2 hours to enter properly and in detail; -saving pages can take a full minute; -pages cannot be saved if they are partially filled so if the phone rings, the teacher needs to go work with students, etc. the page could time out and all is lost (work-arounds exist but these are extraneous steps); -essentially the IEP could be written as a Word Document in about one-third of the time. 2. Some items could be streamlined on the IEP. For legal reasons I am not sure how this would happen but the same information is repeated throughout the document making mistakes more likely (thinking I have already addressed the information). Some IEPs are 50 plus pages which seems (Sorry, no data tracking for this!) twice as long as when I began teaching special education about 9 years ago. 3. In general, this job could easily be made into two. An IEP takes about six hours door-to-door, double for a comprehensive review. Planning with general educators and instructional assistants is typically on the fly or after school. The compliance paperwork is best completed, for me at least, after school when interruptions are minimal to none.
- I am in early children childhood/self-contained. Please disregard my responses to PARCC as they don't apply. ECSC was not an option. Ideas? Improve Maryland Online IEP --More bandwidth. It's SLOW especially on planning days when we're all on at the same time. If we need to document everything online, we need to have the proper resources to use our time wisely. -- Drop down boxes per school. sifting through 250 names each time I want to add a service provider on an invitation also wastes my time. --Automatic saves. MANY people, myself included, have lost pages and pages of documents due to timing out etc. That wastes my time.
- Reinstate the positions that were pulled from our Center that are available in the gen ed settings: Principal, Assistant Principal, School Counselor, 2 full time Secretaries, all Para Educator positions should be 7 hours to cover the full student day and there should be a minimum of 2 full time Para Educators assigned per 5 students in each class for students with severe and profound multiple disabilities (intellectual, fine motor, gross motor, communication, health and sensory).
- Possibly a special education secretary for filing papers once completed so I can use my time to be with my students and implement their IEP's
- More time to work on specific goals rather than the general education curriculum.
- I am part time but work full time because of the paper work. Maybe it would be best to have a separate case manager and special ed. teacher because they really are two different jobs.
- I don't know how but less paperwork or maybe having someone assigned at school to only do paperwork, like a coordinator.
- More substitute time. Less assessments.

- There are not enough resources for the special education population at my school. I teach an autistic population. We have no textbook or reading materials everything is printed off the internet.
- Split the departmental planning time and use part of the time for Special Education paperwork. Give us a day a month/quarter to work on Special Ed. paperwork.
- It would be great to have one special educator for each grade. More time set aside for us to complete paperwork.
- We should have sub money to cover when we have IEP meetings and when we have to give assessments.
- Special Educators need time to create IEP. A work week should consist of 4 days a week in the classroom working with students and one day to do paperwork--instead during our IEP meeting days, we are covering classes. I do not get any caseload paperwork done during my planning time as I am required to plan with gen ed teachers and attend all of the same meetings gen ed teachers go to.
- General Ed teachers are provided sub time to attend IEP meetings. Special educators should be provided sub time to write assessment reports and IEPs
- Less paper work
- Have a substitute or substitutes on staff to cover when a staff member/members have to leave unexpectedly or a position does not fill. Supply special educators with the same equipment that is provided to general education teachers (smart boards, laptops, iPads) for student use/education.
- Limit caseloads. I am a .5 and should have a .5 caseload.
- Depending on ability, some students should be put into a resource class instead of inclusion classes (due to behavioral issues) as it takes away the educational rights of the other students to take care of the behavioral issues.
- I think providing more training for instructional assistants who are expected to provide instruction in the absence of the teacher.
- Related services are often not provided during general ed testing.
- More time!! It seems every year we have more requirements and time isn't provided during the contractual day to get it done.
- Not be told to do make up testing or testing for ELL students and students with 504s. Be provided IEP paperwork time during the school day. Be provided time to meet and plan with Gen Ed teachers and instructional assistants.
- Each SPED teacher should have a para as a team partner
- More funding more funding more funding. We can only do so much, we are all tapped out completely.
- More realistic staffing formulas
- More special ed teachers per building so that we can effectively plan and co-teach
- Allow for collaboration with veteran special education teachers and less experienced special education teachers in order to ask questions related to implementation of lessons. Allow for teachers to observe other self-contained classes to view how groups are designed and the set-up of the classroom

- IEP testing for reevaluation or initials done by other personnel Medicaid done by other personnel IEP scheduling done by others. Fount as and Pinnell testing done by retired reading teachers not gen Ed or sped teachers Time to plan time for collaborative planning No lunch duties am or pm duties
- Extra compensation working 11 months
- More special educators per school so that they caseloads are smaller.
- Have special educator teach fewer subjects-in other words have the special educators departmentalize like the general educators due. There is too much curriculum for one elementary special educator to teach. Math in all grades, reading comprehension in all grades, Wilson instruction in all grades. Changing it to one subject per teacher allows better instruction and understanding of curriculum. Common Core is too much curriculum for one special education teacher to develop enough understanding in order to teach it to multiple grades at the same time. One person cannot master Reading, Writing, Math, Phonics curriculum in order to teach for every grade in an elementary school. General education teachers DO NOT have to do that, why should special education teachers be required to do it?
- Paras need explicit training by the county so I'm not spending time fixing issues. To ensure quality paras, they should be paid more- we've had 3 subpar paras in the past 2 years and have had a very hard time hiring quality paras. More planning time to work on compliance paperwork Subs for special education teachers when they are pulled for meetings or testing accommodations A dedicated pool of subs specifically trained for special education More bilingual evaluators in the county to provide triennial testing for bilingual special education students so that cases are not going out of compliance because there's not enough people to test a non-English dominant student.
- More training/criteria for para educators, more planning time with general education teachers, less data collection from county wide expectations to allow us to focus on the data we are collecting (MIRL is an extra burden to track)
- Have Behavior Specialists complete FBA and BIPs. Have a position dedicated to writing IEPs and PWNs so that special ed teachers do not have to work on weekends or during the instruction day to complete paperwork. Cut the amount of paperwork required when requesting a specialist to observe a student. Have administration handle some of the parental concerns so that an IEP meeting is not held for every concern a parent-cutting paperwork put on a teacher. Have SLOs for CSEP teachers coincide with student IEP goals so that additional testing and paperwork is not required. Have a dedicated person do Medicaid billing for Sped teachers. Have summer school teacher create the lesson for the extended school year so that special education teachers do not have to spend hours creating packets for extended school year. Have a dedicated position to administer testing for student who are being evaluated and re-evaluated so that the paraprofessional is not left teaching class.
- I feel administrators should consider the legal obligations special educators face and not expect us to be on page with general education teachers. This is a constant battle being faced at our school now. Expecting us to be on page with general education. We are without a special education coordinator and this has made us feel like we are on an island by ourselves.
- We need some time when you can pull students for special needs e.g., A student may be behind the class or absent a day or two. You need to catch them up.
- Do not pull special educators to sub for general ed teachers when subs don't show up. Recognize the need for special ed to be part of leadership team (we are excluded from leadership in our school and always have been). Provide computers/chrome books to spec ed students and teachers (all teachers get them except special educators). Provide chrome training, particularly

so spec ed teachers can access work of their students --this is a very nice feature of the chrome classroom but special educators are left out, as we are not classroom teachers.

- Instruction on different strategies to support behavioral problems. More time outside the Duty Day to prepare paperwork.
- More qualified people are needed to substitute for special educators, specifically teachers of self-contained classrooms. More time given for case management during the duty day- professional leave days.
- Montgomery County has a system of the special education students reporting to their home school when they transfer to a school in the county. When a student is severely impacted it does not benefit anyone in the process. This means that the student has to come from his/her previous school, to his home school, and then to the correct placement (3 transitions for the students). The special educator has to accommodate that one student which means she/he becomes out of compliance with her other caseload students IEP's. She/he is also not able to provide the proper support to the inclusion teachers. This is just a beginning of a list that demonstrates how everyone is influenced by this system. The only benefit that I can think of is the fact of the special educator being able to work with a variety of disabilities after a situation like this happens.
- \*no additional assignments, unless directly related to special education process or students  
\*since EMT is not a special education process, use special educators as consultants, they should not have to be in charge of the EMT meeting (schedule, note-taking, follow-up) \*do not remove para educators from working directly with special education students for duties such as recess duty or class coverage \*meetings with other staff members (and administrators) to ensure that they don't use special education terms inappropriately.
- More staff - plain and simple
- I feel that there is no consistency with how special education services are delivered throughout the county. There is not enough time allotted to special education teachers for co-planning with multiple co-teachers, planning with paraeducators, personal planning time/caseload management time, and delivery of services to special education students across classrooms. I feel as though I spend much of my personal time after school, before school and weekends trying to make up for a lack of time during the school day.
- We are assigned duties that take away from our planning time. There are so many students needing intervention that you don't get enough planning time.
- Additional staff so special Ed teachers are only covering 1-2 grade levels instead of 3-4 grade
- Substitute teachers should be provided for special Ed teachers so they could work on students.' IEP instead of taking writing IEP home or staying back after school to see if they can be in compliance.
- Smaller caseloads, more teachers, having one sped teacher one classroom (not 3) to be able to provide services and extra help, having same level students in math and language arts to be able to focus on specific skills of need and direct instruction, time to meet with special Ed supervisors to discuss what needs to be completed each year.
- I think special Education teachers need time to plan with general educators. Also, like General educators, Special educators should get extra time to plan when there is a change to the schedule.
- Accommodations on testing needs to be done by others. Removing extra morning, lunch, and afternoon duties from my everyday schedule. I only have a lunch break, not even a planning break technically. When there are students who need to be tested for IEPs allowing for a

substitute to be able to work with the students. According to my current administrator, the substitute cannot give individualized instruction outside of the general education classroom, or modify assignments unless asked to by the general education teacher.

- Have a day when we can just do case management work
- The demands placed on general educators (F & P levels, observations, guided reading groups, ensuring the "room" is appropriately decorated with objectives, PD's, performance matters data, etc.) make tracking my IEP data most difficult. There should be a way for a special educator who is also the general educator, such as a self-contained situation, to have more time to address the needs for both roles.
- Add case management time to master agreement
- Lighter caseloads. Less paperwork A specialized instruction curriculum so that we aren't spending all of our time creating our instruction. Allow research based interventions to "count as service hours" as long as all students in the group have IEPs and that the intervention targets their needs.
- Smaller class sizes for self-contained classes, increase number of provided IEP work days, provide more time for planning with general education teachers and para-educators, provide more support for modified grade level work/indicators/curriculum support
- No splitting grades-it is nearly impossible unless in resource room. Moreover, I plan outside of the school day with two grades of teachers, I attend two sets of team meetings and basically use up all my non duty time juggling the demands of two teams. Cap on caseload-no more than x number of hours or x number of students, or both. Limitation on age span on a single caseload to avoid splitting grades or huge variations in grade levels and skill levels on the same case load. Extra planning periods allotted or reduction in school responsibilities (exemption from school committees) for caseload management and paperwork OR compensation for proven work outside of school hours for legal paperwork. This would actually compensate special educators for all of the extra work we do drafting legal documents. Alternatively, special educators should be given a bonus or extra compensation in a separate salary scale. Basically, I can work wherever I want in the country. I am in demand. Supply and demand dictates that, since my services are scarce and hard to replace, I should be paid accordingly. Increased salaries would create competition for special ed jobs and reduce turnover. Training for general educators so that they use school base problem solving teams and do not take it upon themselves to refer students or to tell parents to refer their child rather than go through the school based intervention program. Training for general educators regarding the amount of work and time it takes to maintain a caseload. Having my child be permitted to attend my school for free so that I could work extended hours at my school with my child present so that I could avoid paying before and after care at my neighborhood school. Currently it would cost me at least \$5500 to bring my child with me. My child comes first, so I do most of my paperwork and planning at home. My county is pretty much unaffordable, but I contribute to our county's amazing schools. It is ridiculous that I work so hard for other people's children, helping to create amazing schools, but my own child cannot benefit.
- Compensation for case management done on top of special education teaching job. Appropriate programming for children with special needs ie. Behavior vs. Life skills\autism. Appropriate staffing. Supervisor support, guidance, and hands on initiatives to remedy issues. Work load set at an attainable level.
- Time needs to be allowed for IEP compliance paperwork as well as instructional planning. More Teaching assistants need to be hired in order to provide to accommodations. Another issue is that special educate teaching assistants are being pulled when substitutes are needed.
- More training on co-teaching environments/communication & collaboration

- TIME!!! Special education students spread throughout a grade level is outrageous! Even in 2 classrooms it is difficult to adjust service hours. Placing all special education students in one classroom and hiring an additional instructional assistant to assist the general educators will improve student learning. Paperwork is ridiculous. Special education teachers in elementary schools should receive additional compensation for planning, Medicaid billing, etc. We do not have the planning time middle and high school teachers have nor do we have department chairs to complete all of our paperwork. We use a lot of our personal time so we are not out of compliance!!!
- Less testing of all students would allow more time to instruct all students; more teacher planning time so that I am not doing paperwork to meet compliance when I could be instructing
- Increasing compliance issues require increased time to complete. While I understand and agree completely that documentation is essential, it seems like we are duplicating efforts on many fronts, which takes a great deal of time and takes away from time needed to plan for valuable instruction. It might be helpful for data to be collected on how much personal time is taken each month in order to complete the paperwork needed for this job. I think it would surprise many. Efforts must be made to address the workload that is NOT categorized as planning for instruction. I don't think anyone truly knows what comes down to us in terms of requirements each year. One department sends one requirement, another sends 2 more, etc., and all are of utmost priority. If viewed individually, it doesn't seem like a lot, but when viewed in its entirety, it's nothing less than overwhelming. In addition, with the adoption of Common Core, my students and many others in their class are not fully prepared for the rigor that is being expected of them. Our class sizes are large and our human resources are stretched to the limit. We are struggling to be able to meet the needs of our learners. We are having more and more students "falling behind" and in need of extra attention because they can't perform at the highest level. Additionally, all of our assessments test each standard at a higher level (application) than most instruction. Analyzing the data only tells me that my students can't perform at that level. I knew that already. This data does not help me plan for additional instruction to meet the needs of the students. An assessment that would test at various levels of mastery would be much more beneficial and provide more helpful data for instructional purposes. Maybe my students can't solve a difficult word problem involving  $2+2$  and explain their thinking but they can tell that  $2+2=4$ . That gives me a starting point for additional instruction.
- Extra time to complete paperwork.
- Having Special Education professional development being included as part of teacher in-service days prior to students starting school.
- More planning time than the allotted contract time. I spend hours beyond hours after my school hours to complete paperwork, write reports, bill for Medicaid, contact parents etc. There is no time during my school day to complete paperwork. I also co-teach with 4 other educators. There is no common planning time. All of our planning happens before or after contract hours.
- Training para educators to properly administer standardized testing such as PARCC and MAP. More support from qualified paraeducators to support students in the classroom. More well informed administrators who have at least a basic knowledge of special education protocol.
- Special Educators need time to prepare IEP's, complete Medicaid billing, test students, write up test results, meet compliance issues, as well as plan for instruction.
- Hire IEP facilitators for every school to handle filing Medicaid billing, papers, send home notices, etc. Give special educators approximately 2 straight hours to prepare an IEP OUTSIDE of planning time and 3 hours to write an academic assessments report. Or hire a team of people that come out and assess students to see if they qualify for services.

- The amount of services each special educator is required to provide matches the amount of time a teacher has for providing instruction. \* Special education teachers need time for co-planning, planning for differentiating, training aides, scheduling, testing, data analysis, and paperwork (IEPs, FBA/BIP, meeting process, Medicaid, communication logs, etc.).
- Restore a full-time schedule, 8 hours/day. It would be beneficial for us to attend afterschool staff meetings, department meetings, have planning time and time to meet with our co-teachers to be informed of details for instruction BEFORE we arrive in the classroom. Allow us to participate or direct a "special education" homework club since our students require different levels of assistance to be successful.
- More training needs to be provided to those teachers that work with students on a weekly basis (Art, Music, Media, etc.) most of the training goes to the Special Educators and general education teachers. More time needs to be made available so that we have time to plan with the special educators and other support personnel so that we know we are meeting our students' needs.
- Subs for testing accommodations Extra duty personnel for lunch, car duty, etc. so we can work with students
- Hire more special educators! No morning, lunch/recess, dismissal duties! No covering for teachers or EA's! Reduce the amount of IEP paperwork that needs to be done. Hire a person that ONLY DOES IEP's, like some counties already do. My paperwork takes away from instruction.
- More time or less students
- In addition to instructional planning, extra time needs to be given to Special educators to plan for TA's, TSA's, and IEP related paperwork/documentation. This should be an extra 160-180 minutes a week during the student school day. If a special educator is co-teaching with more than 2 teachers, then additional planning time needs to be given/funded to co-plan. You cannot effectively co-plan and attend collaborative and team level meetings for multiple grades in 1 week. There is just not enough time in a day. More special educators need to be hired. I work in a school with 740+ students and currently we only have 3 special educators. We are supposed to have 3.5 but the part time was not hired (just a long time uncertified substitute, which we have to pick up the paperwork for but are not compensated for the addition paperwork) There are other schools in the county that have 350 or less students and have 3 special educators. This is not equivalent workloads.
- Time for writing IEP's, testing, and all the other paperwork that is required.
- We need more para's for one on one instruction and in the classroom
- Additional support so that there is time in the work day to meet with special ed teacher, paraprofessional; paraprofessionals who get paid enough to stay in the position and not change all of the time
- More staffing
- Allow one day per week, the IEP meeting day, for IEP paperwork rather than teaching. Hire a TA to cover classes.
- More time dedicated for testing related to reevaluations/alt assessment, IEP's, etc. Smaller class sizes. Learning centers are being overwhelmed with kids of varying disabilities.
- Smaller class sizes, more appropriate placement of students into special education services, trained paraprofessionals.
- I do not think as a resource teacher I should be responsible for teaching, scheduling all IEP meetings, participating in all those meetings, testing, school wide duties (lunch, bus in the am and pm). In addition, I am required to attend the weekly grade level meetings for the various

grades I service and they occasional SSIT meeting. To be completely honest there is not enough time in the day to be responsible for all of those areas.

- Clear, concise and DEFINITIVE standards for students in each special education setting (LFI, SCB, LC, ED, Autism, Home school model). There is often a lot of confusion and misplaced students due to lack of standards and guidelines defining what students are in each program. Because of this, some cases can become a legal issue.
- We need at minimum one more Special Education teacher, and one more special education para-educator at our school.
- More special educator teachers given to schools when there are emergency or critical situations (in example children without IEPs that have extreme behaviors, children with IEPs that are placed in the wrong learning environment).
- Not sure..... I think every school should have a special educator who tests and writes assessments. I know the high schools here in Anne Arundel have that- but elementary doesn't. Both middle school and high school special ed. teachers have much more planning time than we do- It is not right!
- Time needs to be allotted in the schedule
- Increase number of special educators per school building based upon student service hours and other unique needs.
- Special Educators should NOT test students to determine if a disability exists. This process takes HOURS to test, score, analyze results, and write assessment reports. In other states, a Learning Disability Teacher Consultant completes the testing process, allowing the special educator to continue with instructional duties and remain compliant with IEPs. I am often asked by my former out-of-state colleagues: "How much are you paid for each evaluation completed?" The question is: How does one remain in compliance when in-school hours are spent testing students? Maryland (and states south of here) are using and abusing the position of a special educator. Anne Arundel County, in particular, needs to examine the necessity of the roles and responsibilities of their VERY TOP HEAVY presence in central office in the special education and reading departments. Perhaps the idea of shared Assessment Teams between/among a few elementary schools is something to take a look at. Research how other states (mid/northern Atlantic) manage the incredible amount of paperwork which typically inundates Special Education.
- Inform school admin on the time requirements for quality paperwork!! Special education teachers are also not just general education teachers and should not only be assigned a classroom. They provide individualized instruction and specialized services to students in need!
- Daily time during the school day to meet with co-teachers and plan Eliminate the mandatory collaborative planning session with "coaches" that is not beneficial to the grade level team and only serves to increase the workload of demands for teachers while the "coaches" do not work directly with students
- Compensation for outside time spent working on paperwork (financial-time card or extra personal leave days).
- Separate roles of special educator into 2 positions: teacher and case manager.
- I really wish the Special Educator (Teacher) would do their job!! They are never in the room to teach! The Para is put in the room to "provide the students their Hours!! And now the Admin is saying that the Gen. Ed . Teacher can implement IEP HOURS for the students that the SpEd teacher doesn't have to be in the room to do so!!! One certain teacher pulls Six different Paras to work with one Child cause she has other things to do. All she does is sit in her room and does

nothing or attend a bunch of meetings so the Principle doesn't have to!! Totally redic!! I've been a Para for ten years this situation has the whole school in an up roar. And the admin keeps defending ONE SPED TEACHER. IM SORRY BUT 100 staff members can see this going on and the Principle cannot or WILL NOT. IF PARENTS KNEW THEIR KIDS WERENT GETTING THER HOURS MET THE COUNTY WOULD HAVE A SERIOUS PROBLEM ON THEIR HANDS.

- Smaller caseloads, designated time for case management, clerical support for paperwork, designated planning time with general educators
- Someone else to do testing, especially private school students. Give us drop down banks within all paperwork that can be customized per student. Give each school a full time special education secretary. Each special ed. teacher should have 1/2 day a month to work on compliance paperwork.
- Provide substitutes to cover when sped teachers are pulled for testing.
- Special Education students should receive all their accommodations for PARCC testing. If their IEP states that they receive "human reader for selected sections" and they receive this during instruction and during all other assessments, how is it legal for the students not to receive them during PARCC? This directly impacts their score. The PARCC test is several grade levels above the level of my students who perform below grade level. I would like to see a modified version for students with learning disabilities.
- Central office should hire/provide personnel to take care of testing duties so I can provide instruction for my IEP students-last year the students lost 17 days during PARCC. Streamline/shorten procedures such as PARCC eligibility, and ESY and STAR
- Providing smaller caseloads and more opportunity to be in fewer classrooms for longer periods of time.
- Take away lunch duty
- Periodic early dismissal for students so teachers can complete paperwork/collaborate
- Shared planning time, consistent attendance if co-teachers, who are often pulled from class to attend IEP or 504 meetings.
- Schools with more than 10 special education students should have a coordinator to manage paperwork. 2. The Special Education Department must cease and desist from continually adding to the already exorbitant amount of paperwork they require of us without taking something away. Much of what we do is redundant and, work that is being passed down. 3. Untouchable time allotted for paperwork.
- More MEANINGFUL planning time which is also coordinated to be at same time as SpEd teacher/para so that we can have MEANINGFUL time to work together.
- -chairpersons in elementary schools should not be held accountable for both instruction of assigned caseload of 12 students and compliance -additional sped teachers for each school to help with paperwork and implement interventions
- One would be to get rid of SLOs for Sped Teachers. We do not give grades, plus Sped students are tested 6 extra times by informal assessments (2-reading teacher, 2 math teacher, & 2 by special educator.
- I need time to plan with paras or special educators so that we can co-teach better.
- Planning time for general educators and paraeducator a Paraeducator training because that takes a lot of my time away Paperwork planning time A special education lead teacher who is in charge of meetings and paperwork and parent contact Less paperwork demands Smaller class sizes so inclusion can actually work Substitutes for when we have meetings or paperwork

- Hire more teachers. Hire more therapists, especially occupational therapists to provide services to students with clear educational impacts due to their poor fine motor skills. Change regulations such as for a student with Muscular Dystrophy who does not require academic individual instruction - allow her to still receive school system physical therapy. Do not require local schools to coordinate and give assessment on students who will never attend that school. Have a central office do such assessment.
- The special education population is rising; we need more special educators to provide service.
- More time to teach and complete paperwork, equitable distribution of caseload, streamlined IEP process.
- Hire more teachers so that caseloads can be lowered
- Teachers should have time in their schedules to do IEP process (paperwork, parent communication, data review, collaboration/kid talk, and IEP meetings). Planning time is for planning instruction and this is often done on my own time in order to insure IEP compliance.
- A special education coordinator for each school would be beneficial. They could complete the majority of Special Education paperwork and allow Special Education teachers time to co-teach without the worries of when to assess students, meeting compliance requirements, etc. Smaller caseloads at my school would work well, and grouping students into inclusive classrooms rather than spreading them throughout the grade level would help. We also seem to do a lot of paperwork over again. For example, I have completed 6 PNPs, but now we have a new format and I have to do them again. It's the same with PARCC documents.
- Demands of completion of those federally mandated documents need to be factored into the formula for allocation of work time. Develop a set of jobs for "Test Examiners" to assist with meeting the demands of timelines. Seriously consider the time it takes for SLPs to complete assessments. The time allocation is not sufficient in comparison to the components required to complete the task.
- More special educators - at least one per grade level and lower caseloads. Or a split between case management and teaching.
- Lower teacher to student ratio; this would provide more time to collaboratively plan and work with teachers and paras.
- There needs to be more staffing to allow for special educators to focus on teaching their students, rather than focus on paperwork.
- Caseloads are too high. We need more professionals and more clerical help. I spend way too much time scheduling meetings, copying, filing, making phone calls home. etc. I am a .5 special educator with a case load of 15. It's insane!!!!!!!!!!!!!! I am able to do nothing well.
- There should be mandatory substitute funds available for special educators to complete required paperwork, testing, documentation, etc during the work day. Providing a substitute should be required for AT LEAST once per month.
- For every 8-10 students with special needs, it should be mandatory that a new special education teacher be hired. A paraprofessional should be assigned per grade level to assist special educators with service delivery and implementing accommodations (especially if a special educator is assigned to multiple grade levels). Not every school is the same, but it should be uniform where every school has 1 day within the school week that is allocated for the completion of any SPED Paperwork.
- Decrease paperwork

- Be given more time during the day to look at students' needs and have the ability to meet with them regularly. Be given a "planning" period so that Para educators have the time to make sure they have updated class lists, the correct accommodation forms, etc.
- At the Elementary Level, lunch duty coverage and morning and afternoon duties would free up over an hour per day to reallocate to SPED needs. When developing the IEP, realistic "service" hours and DAYS must be taken into consideration. DO NOT automatically assign FIVE (5) days of service at the Elementary level especially when duties are part of Special Educators' schedules. Administrators MUST become educated on the mandates that are required of the Special Educator and/or Case Manager. Option: At the Elementary Level where there are more than one Special Educator, have the "chair" responsible for ALL paperwork so that the other SPED teachers can focus on instruction. When the Sped teachers are absent, the chair then becomes the substitute to provide continued service to the student by a certified Special Educator.
- Provide more special educators per school to lower caseloads, allow dedicated planning time for sped and gen. ed teachers to plan together (currently we are doing this outside of contract hours)
- Certain amount of time should be allotted per week, per student for paperwork; more if they are MA, more if they are due for reevaluation
- More planning time!
- We need more planning time. It's insane the amount of paperwork we are responsible for completing in addition to teaching.
- During PARCC testing, the county should hire test administrators to free up special educators and allow them to provide services to their students during the weeks of testing.
- Change County allocations for the amount of Special Educators schools receive. Do not use Special Educators as paras for testing, they are teachers who have services hours to provide for students.
- Not putting a large amount of special education students into an encore classroom that the teacher only sees every 3rd day (ABC Schedule.) If Special education students are in the encore room, the correct amount of teacher assistants need to be present.
- More time during the school day for content and special education teachers to plan lessons, modify lessons, plan differentiated instruction, grade papers, and discuss the needs of individual students. Also, having classes of 36 students with 15 special education students isn't reasonable or practical. Administrators reply, "Well, you have two teachers" is insulting and inappropriate. We don't have two teachers so you can put more students in the classroom, and with 36 students, two teachers aren't enough to provide services to all of the students who need them.
- More special educators at each school! One per grade level would be perfect.
- More time.
- Smaller class sizes, ability grouping across the grade level
- Too many kids needs getting worse and worse...smaller caseloads
- Streamlined system for students to receive placements that need it. We need to understand that while inclusion is great for most, it is not for all!
- At the very least, one day per month sped teachers can be provided a substitute so that we can devote time to IEP paperwork, Medicaid billing, testing/report writing, progress report writing etc. At this time, I am forced to complete all of the paperwork tasks at home.

- Hire more staff. Have all counties in Maryland use the same IEP program. Have less duties to allow more time for case management, more planning with co-teachers, less paperwork- less repetition of the same data in the program and on IEP's.
- Time to complete compliance case management in addition to instructional planning time.
- Additional staffing. Servicing students 4 days a week instead of 5 with 1 day devoted to testing, paperwork, meetings, etc. Additional planning time
- Our school needs more resource people. We need at least one reading specialist. Special educators should have lighter caseloads. There need to be special placements for students that struggle within the inclusion setting. IEPs should be developed from a bank of objectives that are scaffolded and ready to be chosen based on student needs. When a special educator goes out on leave the other one in the building should not have to carry their duties as well.
- We need more special educators! Ideally, there should be one per grade level or per every 2 grade levels, depending on the need. Every school should have an IEP clerk. We should not have to be pulled to help with testing accommodations on tests, especially when it is not testing in our grade level with our students. Their needs to be more planning time allotted to special Ed teachers. We should have equality with gen Ed teachers.
- More co-teachers in the classroom
- Designated planning time in appropriate proportion to the workload and amount of written paperwork involved for special education students. Mandatory and designated planning time with special education team members in each school. Release special educators from doing SLOs. This is just additional work that requires yet more of our time and it is by design not an individualized process. Educate Principals about the duties of a special education teacher and the unique needs of special education students. Some principals really don't get it and this lack of information often leads to unfair judgements of teacher performance. Have a different system for evaluating teacher effectiveness for special education teacher. Include case management responsibilities and progress toward IEP goals as part of teacher evaluation. Develop a consistent county wide special education teacher evaluation and provide mandatory training for principals and supervisors on what to look for and how to appropriately evaluate special education teachers. Realistic planning time is a major issue. Specialized written documentation requires chunks of time. Fifteen to thirty minute increments throughout the day are not effective. Also planning time that is counted at the beginning or the end of the day often does not happen because time is spent setting up before students arrive and cleaning the classroom after the students leave and waiting for busses. This time should not be considered planning time. This time is also often lost to school meetings either planned or spontaneous staff meetings that are called. Additional training for para professional staff who work in the classroom. Many classroom assistants ask for training and would gladly participate in additional training. The responsibility for training classroom staff currently lies with the teacher. Most often the teacher trains assistant and TSA staff on the job. Additional TSA support is frequently needed. Due to the high level of supervision required for many special education students, special education teachers and teacher's assistants are frequently over-worked. More and better trained staff are needed in the classrooms. County-wide policies are often put into place without considering the impact on special education teachers and students. Special education is often an afterthought- SLOs and the new teacher evaluation system are the most recent examples of this. Teachers are often left to figure the system out for themselves, and those in leadership don't seem to have definite answers to procedural questions. The open to interpretation system can have very bad consequences for teachers when applied subjectively because many leaders are not fully informed about the needs of special education students and the full duties of special education teachers. Special education is often a subject that gets ignored or tabled as an after-thought because it is time consuming and complicated. Designated leadership is needed to help teachers

who are trying to work within the county systems and adhere to new county incentives as they are developed (SLOs, teacher effectiveness, common core literacy, writing and math). Help is needed to apply and implement county incentives within the special education process.

- A quieter room, increased counselor access, a substitute when the co-teacher is absent or re-assigned to testing...
- One special educator per grade level would be extremely helpful and make for a consistent program. Then the classes would be truly a Co-Taught class, not a part time co-taught class because I have to go to another grade level, or give a test, or complete paperwork I haven't been able to get done. (and by the way, no one uses the term inclusion anymore...in this county it is co-taught) A real assistant per grade level would be more than wonderful to pre teach or to follow up after teaching.
- Overall, the caseload size of a special educator is too large to effectively case manage as well as prepare and plan for differentiated instruction. In schools with a high percentage of FARMS students, there should be enough special educators to ensure that students with special education services are receiving specialized instruction. Inclusion and pull-out interventions need to be utilized appropriately to best meet the needs of each child. Also, special educators should be given time (on a weekly basis) to fulfill case management duties.
- Not sure how things can be changed due to legal issues surrounding IDEA and special ed. documentation. In recent years the role of a special educator has more to do with documentation and the countless hours of paper work required for each student for each step of the IEP process than it does with planning meaningful lessons to support our students. I am continually frustrated because there aren't enough hours in the school day and beyond to do all that is expected and required (and that's just for paper work, not planning lessons or consulting with teachers). I have twenty-four years of experience as a special educator in the public school system and I have never felt as stressed, ineffective, or overwhelmed as I do now. Documentation is necessary to measure goals and to drive instruction, but I am feeling so bogged down in the process that ironically, I have less time to engage with students and really get to know them. I am concerned about the future of the special education profession and school systems' ability to retain qualified teachers. It is not possible to do two full time jobs- paper work and teaching.
- Make Medicaid and Special Ed paperwork a duty. No one else in the school has the level of paperwork we have to do. We should not have any duties with all the paperwork we have to keep up with. We do not have an IEP clerk either.
- More special education teachers per school--large schools require a special educator per grade. Time allocated for general education and special educators to plan Additional planning time in contracts to complete compliance paperwork Students get extended time for test taking but not to learn the content Students are performing extremely below grade level, but being assessed on grade level. Data collected does not show any progress
- I routinely work until at least 5:00 every day and also put in 2-5 hours (or more) on the weekend. Because I teach a special education preschool class I have a morning and afternoon class. Beyond holding meetings for annual IEP's my students need meetings for assessments, extended school year determinations, and transition IEP's. With a current caseload of 15 (with potential to grow as students age into the program) I average at least one meeting a week. I need more time for case management paperwork!!! I can be a great teacher or a great case manager - but there isn't enough time to do both. Case management wins because of compliance.
- Increase budget so that I can buy appropriate tools/materials in order for my students to have what they need within the classroom. I don't know how it is possible, but I'd love to have more planning time with my para and my two general education teachers I co-teach with. Chrome

Book dedicated to just me so that I can create documents and modify assignments on the fly within the classroom. General Education teachers have them to take home and use in the classroom, why can't special ed?

- There needs to be less paperwork. The amount of paperwork in Carroll County is ridiculous with all the extras. There are so few teachers and so many children and with a caseload of almost 20 and other students I provide service to who I am not the case manager it is too much. I also have about 10 students with MA to complete each month. I don't get any planning time with general educators and very little of my planning time is to actually plan what I teach, I have to use it for paperwork. Things need to be simplified.
- Smaller caseload Time during the duty day to case manage and maintain compliance
- I need an aide to copy and make materials to send home for my students to practice. I have too many meetings, other student responsibilities (25 students) and other things during the day to accomplish this task within my work day.
- Need more special education staffing!!! We are expected to do it all. We are only one person, yet expected to carry out an exorbitant amount of responsibilities. It is unrealistic.
- We need to have TIME in the week to complete the legally mandated paperwork. EVERY special education program should have RITSE to help organize and plan for the program.
- Every elementary school needs an IEP coordinator. The amount of time special educators spend on paperwork, including Medicaid, is ridiculous. We spend so much more time on paperwork than we do with the students. Also, when multiple students have additional adult support on their IEPs, please get them they additional adult support. Stop having a TSA be shared between 5 or more students.
- I believe that there should not be part time special education teachers, because the case load is the same as a full-time SpEd teacher. Furthermore, the students and the teachers loose a connection because of the lack of time spent with the students.
- Hiring additional staff to work with either the paperwork or with the students. It's impossible to complete all of the necessary paperwork while supporting students. Many nights, I am completing hours worth of paperwork that I was unable to complete during the work day.
- The people at the state level who are putting these laws in place and paper work for teachers and staff to do need to be in the classroom and see what the needs are of the students. The IEP is a ridiculous procedure where you have people evaluating and making goals for students they have never even met. There are way toooooo many service providers at the school level that the teacher has no input but is expected to take their input and use for the student. Also therefore the parents who demand and want these services there needs to be limits set. A parent should not be able to interrupt instruction time for their student to get additional service hours. Example: Because a parent is too lazy or does not have the equipment to have their student stand or do PT, that should not fall on the public school system to do 3 time a day!!!! Which it does!!! THE STATE AND COUNTIES NEED TO DO A COMPLETE OVERHAUL!!!!
- Half day for students every other Wednesday
- I would like to have one special education teacher assigned to each grade level, instead of being spread over multiple grade levels.
- We are given 1 day a month for paperwork - 2 days a month would be more beneficial. Having time to collaborate and plan with general education teachers is a chore when assigned to multiple grade levels as there is no common planning time so planning time happens before and after school - therefor collaborative planning time would be beneficial

- There needs to be a limit as to how many students one person can case manage and there needs to be a limit to how many intensive students one person has on their caseload. In addition, there needs to be time compartmentalized for a special educator's duties-time to teach, time to plan for instruction, and time for case management duties.
- I need half my day to be allotted to complete paperwork and test students and the other half for instruction. Being a special educator truly requires completing two jobs in the same time frame as one job. Paperwork becomes the requirement and then planning time is diminished. More special educators need to be hired to allow for the half and half schedule.
- Something has to give - the paperwork for every facet of the SPED process increases every few months. In addition, we face all the paperwork from administrators- planning notes, SLOs, documentation for everything! It would be wonderful to teach and not be burdened by so much paperwork.
- Adequate staffing to meet the needs of the students; Reduction of staff at our school- but not reduction in student needs or hours of service Removing funding for Dedicated Assistants (now additional staff support) so that members of special education team have to cover the position because the student need the support to be successful in the general education setting
- Smaller caseloads, fewer classrooms to be in (I have 4) fewer meetings and paperwork. I also have to assess students for initial and reveals, which in other states is completed by the psychologist. Hire more psychs so I can teach. Supports for RTI, as we have none.
- Hire more special educators! If there was a main resource teacher that was only responsible for paperwork and meetings, that would free up the other special educators to only deliver services (similar to the middle and high school models with a RTSE). As a resource model program, we often keep many of our students that should be in a different placement due to their needs and required service hours. Changes of placement are so difficult on families that sometimes that process is not worth it. We must have more staffing in the area of special education in order to meet our students' needs.
- I have so many people above me, but none "help" unless it gets to the point where I am constantly complaining.
- More special education teachers so we have smaller caseloads so we can manage all of the paperwork without a ton of it being on our own time. Lessen standardized testing.
- More supports within the school, so special educators and paras can devote the appropriate amount of time for the special education students.
- It would be helpful if more support was provided for students - in the form of competent paraeducators or additional special educators.
- Smaller caseloads. Less inclusion settings- doesn't work for all students; students don't get services and support they need in many inclusion settings Limit standardized testing
- The paperwork piece of special education has gotten out of control and no longer allows teachers to teach. High caseloads and excessive paperwork leave no time for good instruction.
- Time should be provided on a daily basis for case management work load.
- Speech pathologist substitutes for missed days. Given own room to work in. Open time of the day where educators can meet with me.
- In our particular school we only have 45 minutes of planning for Special Educators. That includes lesson prep, planning, and all IEP case management. I feel that we need more time to complete all of the paper work that is required of us. Many of us complete our paper work outside of the

school day. It should be the same at every school. Some schools are given the required time, others like ours are not. It needs to be equitable.

- I need time outside of the classroom to write IEPs. This is especially true now that expectations have changed (i.e. COS). In addition, I need time outside of the classroom to observe students in order to write Functional Behavior Assessments and Behavior Intervention Plans that accurately reflect the needs of students. Lastly, O/SS needs to be updated in order to reflect the diverse language needs of our families. I should not be expected to work from a shell in order to write an invite letter in Spanish. Similarly, IEPs should be able to be printed in other languages so that parents are able to understand what is being outlined for their child without a case manager having to call prior to an IEP meeting.
- Caseloads are too large. Special education teachers are always scrambling to make everything work. Paperwork is taking away from teaching the students.
- There has to be some more substitutes for related service providers -while we can make up many sessions by grouping students it becomes nearly impossible to make up all sessions due to meetings, paperwork, special activities. Even more frustrating is if you happen to be sick or have professional activities and then have to make up even more sessions. The time deadlines are a constant source of stress i.e. in getting out IEPs, drafting new IEPs, writing reports and completing testing. Add to that the # of medical assistance students and we spend endless hours above and beyond our work day.
- \*Separate planning time and case management time. Currently, I have 60-minutes of planning (contract requires 50 minute; building principal gave all 3 special ed. teachers 60 minutes) during the school day. My "case management time" is during dismissal; I wasn't assigned a dismissal duty and I think that was just luck (some encore teachers and other specialized teachers have no duty or one duty instead of two). \*Provide time for the special ed. team to meet during the day. Grade level teams have common planning, but we do not because there is always a student somewhere that needs coverage. The principal does pay us to meet outside of the school day (it's an option for all staff), but not everyone can make it, so we still have gaps in information.
- Resource teachers for special education at the elementary level like in middle schools and high schools. These could be shared across multiple schools. More equity between the inclusive service provide within the LAD, HSM, and resource models at the elementary level. Less duplicate paperwork between online system and paper file.
- More staffing would help reduce caseload, which would in turn allow me to service my students, provide quality interventions because I'd have more time for planning, and I'd spend less time testing, observing, writing reports, drafting IEPs, etc.
- Resource model schools are extremely difficult. Case managing 20 students on top of all the paperwork and other school duties is very hard.
- I am the only special education teacher for my entire elementary school. It is impossible to provide services properly. It creates burnout and has brought me to the point of reconsidering working in education entirely. I don't have a laptop of my own to use for IEP meetings. I count on my principal to bring hers. When she is not in the building, I have to walk around the school looking for one to borrow that is compatible with our computer system.
- The student caseloads in the resource model programs are split between classrooms, making it very difficult to support so many grade levels and teachers per grade level. Compliance and paperwork is not valued by principals or leadership teams because they lack understanding of its necessity. We are charged with services between 15-25 students per Special Educator and all the paperwork for identified students and students being referred! DSES procedures and Administrative/School-based practices need to be aligned so we're not being pulled in every direction! No consistency between the two competing entities! Please revisit the amount of

caseload paperwork required for elementary school special educators because we handle 95% of the early intervention process and the Identification Process for all special education students in the county! There needs to be a streamlined model for ALL elementary schools instead of individual principals making decisions at their schools! Absurd and irresponsible model for special education teachers to have to support and isn't in the best interest of the students.

- Have principals and special education department on same page. My experience is sped department tells us to do one thing and principal tells us another. Either way it affects our performance evaluation. This made me leave public education this year. I am now a resource teacher in a private school.
- We need special education staffing to be based on the number of special education service hours in each school.
- County providing a special educator from central office to do special education assessments and reports (ex. WJ-IV for initial evaluations and re-evaluations) This takes up a LOT of time that could be spent doing other things.
- Flexibility for hours worked outside of the regular school day, ie: evening meetings, parent support meetings, job coaching, travel training, etc.
- More time; freedom to use planning time (less mandatory meetings and training during planning)
- I believe that staffing needs to be allocated based on the needs of students as opposed to the number of students. It is not appropriate to ignore the fact that some students need very intensive support throughout the day, across all settings.
- Credit bearing remedial classes for students to make them college ready. Evidence based diagnosis and remediation training for all special educators. Increase staffing by reducing the ratio of number of students to case manager. Hire paras with some content knowledge base, this is not a babysitting job. Provide Paras with mandatory content knowledge and behavior management courses. Train gen. ed. teachers on behavior management too; sp. ed. teachers are not police in class, they are there to support students to be academically successful.
- End documentation for quarterly reports
- First of all, hiring more special education teachers will reduce the number of students receiving services on your caseload. This will allow the special educators more time to work individually with the students in need. Secondly, providing the necessary materials to ensure students' academic needs are being met. Next, placing students in the best possible setting, in which they will be successful, both academically and behaviorally. Some student cannot be educated in the public school setting, and for the sake of saving money, all students end up suffering. Lastly, providing on going staff development to special and general educators on better ways of collaborating in hopes of closing the achievement gap. Often times, I believe that the people that make laws governing education, don't have a clue what it is like to be on the "front line" teaching students with disabilities, in addition to issues they may have in their households on a daily basis.
- Paperwork is overwhelming. I am pulled in 9 different directions during the day. We are required to attend to each student and their unique needs on a daily basis
- More time for caseload management. Improve staff to students with IEP ratios.
- More inclusion and segregated schools only for the very few. High school vocational campus' to stop discriminating against the handicapped. Washington County has a 'policy' that after 4 years in high school student should go to a segregated school - the Job Development Program. At my high school, the same services are provided in the home school the students would go to if not disabled and they integrate with typical students and remain part of their home community. LRE

-parents rarely send them to the JDP.... that troubles my supervisors who proactively recruit students to go to the JDP.

- Stop forcing students with cognitive levels comparable to a toddler to be assessed on 10th and 11th grade content. Tests like Alt-MSA and NCSC are farcical, self-serving instruments which do NOTHING to benefit students. The teacher planning time that they waste means fewer quality lessons and materials for instruction that will help students with their greatest needs. The student instructional time that they waste means fewer skills acquired.
- Teachers need more planning time to work on IEPs, planning and making instructional materials and so on. Due to the type of classroom I am in I barely get planning time or lunch. I am here late everyday trying to get work completed related to IEPs. Every year the caseload increases but we do not get extra support. Most of my students need extra support (paraeducators), but we don't get the staffing we need. Teachers need more time to train and plan with general education teachers, therapists, and paraeducators who work with the students. Teachers need more time to write IEPs. It takes me hours to write one IEP and the past two months I had 5 IEP meetings and I am struggling trying to get them done and then to create the materials for the new IEPs. There is not enough time to do everything that needs to be done and be an effective teacher. With state testing, curriculum changes, trying to manage IEP caseload, create materials, update and manage data, create and manage behaviors plans and so on, it is easy for special education teachers to burn out.
- I only work part-time so I therefore have a reduced caseload. However, there is not enough time to do the paperwork required in this job. It is unfair to special educators. We cannot do our jobs properly without TIME. Parent communication takes a great deal of time. There is never any time to review a student's records the way they need to be. Many of our students have case workers, doctors, mentors.... whom we need to communicate with. This takes time too! I believe that we either need secretarial staff or we need an extra period off from teaching.
- More planning time, support from administration on discipline issues.
- Don't make us go to school-based trainings that do not pertain to us (i.e. how to use google drive, google classroom). More time to collaborate with teachers from other schools. Many of us have such small departments and very few people who understand what we do in each building.
- Time/additional opportunities to complete IEPs and other case management duties
- Eliminate some paper work and meetings. It is bad enough teaching, attending planning meetings with the general educators, PLC's, department meetings, SLO's!!!!, calling parents, doing IEP, trying to meet with students on my caseload is impossible with schedules
- Lobby for change to Maryland law that allows for the board of education or MSDE to have direct taxing power, so that resources are allocated without political influence from partisan candidates
- We started off with an extra planning time only for it to be dissolved when a position was not filled. I would hope that the time will be found and address for the next school year. Better scheduling for our students at the end of the school year in order to meet their needs.
- More time in planning, less time co-teaching if you want us to be effective
- Less redundancy in the forms, IEP's, progress reports 2. Get rid of Wicomico county requirements on the IEP's, follow state mandated only. 3. Case manager for paperwork and meetings, sped instructor for delivery of services. (2 separate staffing positions) 4. Hire more physical therapists, occupational therapists, speech therapists in Wicomico County.
- Have time during my working hours to complete paperwork (MA billing, IEPs, reports)
- As case management duties and compliance paperwork have increased instructional planning time has become minimal at best. This is having a direct impact on instruction.

- I would like better curriculum resources, so that I don't spend so much time reinventing the wheel for each lesson. The curriculum resources my county provides are not sufficient for my students with severe disabilities (cognitive functioning between 3 and 18 months). I would like to meet with other teachers in the region, so that we can all share our resources.
- Co teach with special educator or at least more IAs. Se students need help reading on grade level, 1/4 of my students read on 3rd grade level and are seniors. 1/2 read under 5th grade
- Special educators should be given additional time/planning period to work on their caseload and meet all their professional and instructional responsibilities.
- The needs, roles and responsibilities of the special education teachers who teach self-contained classrooms are not recognized. A very small percentage of information discussed in staff meetings apply to the program but it is not considered when we are expected to use our planning periods or time after school to attend meetings. It is necessary for our programs to be recognized and for administration to plan accordingly for our staff development time. In addition, the school bell schedule changes frequently leaving students in self-contained classes without electives, access to community busses, access to appropriate lunch times, etc. Although we are only a small portion of the school population, the impact these changes make on our student's day needs to be considered.
- Time to plan with special educators
- I think during Pre-Service Week Special Educators should be allowed a day just preparing accommodations and going through Case Management Rosters.
- Need PD on how to work as a co-teaching team that shows how the general educator is not the only one providing differentiated activities
- In an era of academic curriculum alignment in special education it's important to maintain the functional life skills curriculum and maintain the integrity of transition programs: community instruction, travel training and vocational training.
- Better working environment not just for teachers but aide too. Aides should be a part of IEP meeting they are the ones that are with the students 80 percent of the time. When there is a change the aide should be notified just like the teacher.
- Classes need to be smaller. Kids that cannot handle moving from class to class should not do so, until they take responsibility for their actions. Kids need to take responsibility for their behavior. They should not be in a situation where they see parents arguing and yelling at teachers.
- We are tasked with teaching/co-teaching 3-4 different subjects. An additional planning period to dedicate to case management tasks/duties would be helpful.
- It would be nice to actually use my planning time to plan for instruction rather than working on case management paperwork/compliance paperwork. Although we get 2-3 "IEP" sub days, those are not nearly enough to cover the number of meetings that we have to attend in addition to the number of hours we spend preparing for those meetings by writing IEPs, Ed reports, teacher reports, quarterly reports, FBA's, BIP's, etc. Just about every special educator I know constantly feels like they are drowning on a daily basis. We are tired of worrying so much about compliance and paperwork and would like to TEACH and work with kids. Our creativity is being stifled under the mountains of paperwork that is expected from us on a daily basis. And it is the students who suffer when our lessons and instruction is mediocre because the paperwork has become the top priority over quality of instruction.
- Time allotted for collaboration with general ed teachers. Release periods for case management responsibilities.

- We need more time to collaborate with regular ed teachers. Sometimes we support 4-5 different content areas subjects and we don't have the time to meet with teacher/supporting staff. Also, we have duties (clubs, fundraising events, coaching,...) lunch time and after school to provide our students with opportunities to interact with other peers and practice their social and sportsmanship skills.
- The school could give us treat our LFI and SCB departments as if they mattered, we are required to attend in-service that has no relevance to our students yet no time is given to discuss items that are relevant to us and not to the rest of the school. 2. When our students have behavior issues, security does not support us, again we are outside of the regular school definition and our support needs are ignored. 3. Within the school, we are asked to support regular ed students as a mentor. But none of our students are in this group, so again we are ignored....
- Too many new time consuming things thrown at us, and nothing taken away.
- More time to plan for the varied needs of students and to collaborate. Smaller class sizes to seriously address student behaviors or stumbling blocks to learning instead of just bandaid them.
- Reading intervention programs; Excel spreadsheets for caseload management
- Not to have an advisory other than my case load. Don't need to attend all staff required academy meetings, etc.
- It would be encouraging to see the PARCC testing duties shared equally among all teachers, and not simply the "responsible" special education teachers. Everyone's time is valuable, but in speaking with my colleagues, I have come to find that those of us who are responsible and Attuned to the rules and expectations of PARCC and/or HSA are more likely to spend more time testing.
- More planning time allotted for Case Management duties. Either less paperwork requirements on the Special Education teacher or less time in the classroom to give ample time for compliance issues.
- Pull department chairs and/or administrators that do not have instructional periods to cover testing windows.
- Extra prep time just dedicated to case management.
- I collaborate with my fellow general educators twice a week but have no time in my schedule to collaborate with my special educator.
- More planning time (paid) for para. Planning as a group. Time.
- Truly effective co-teaching requires a commitment on the part of both teachers to fully share responsibility for all aspects of the classes they teach in common. This includes planning lessons, creating materials, differentiating materials, modifying materials, printing and making copies, delivering instruction, grading, providing extra help to students outside of the classroom, and communicating regularly with parents and guardians. Truly effective case management at the high school level requires adequate time for case management tasks outside of the time teachers are expected to be in the classroom. This includes regularly communicating with parents and guardians, observing the student in the classroom setting, providing additional support to the student during their tutorial classes, collecting and compiling data about student performance, communicating and collaborating with up to 7 different teacher for each student on the caseload ( approximately 50-75 different teachers (or more) at the high school level), asking those teachers to complete teacher feedback forms prior to meetings and at the end of every quarter, e-mailing all of those teachers to remind them to fill out the forms (sometimes several times), collaborating with related service providers, conducting educational assessments and writing assessment reports, writing IEP's, writing quarterly progress reports, amending all of the

caseload IEP's to account for the testing changes that take place at the state level and to address compliance issues (3 times in the last year), attending IEP meetings approximately 25-30 times during the course of the school year, preparing for and completing follow-up paperwork for each IEP meeting, and conducting file maintenance at the beginning and end of each school year to ensure that the files are compliant with all laws and regulations. I think that the following changes need to be made in order for the special education teacher to adequately perform all of the duties expected of him or her: 1. Special Educators should be assigned to co-teach with only one or two co-teachers within the same subject area, with common planning time for collaborative tasks. Additionally, co-teaching teams should be stable and consistent through multiple years. These conditions will allow for true collaboration and effective co-teaching. 2. Special Educators should be assigned to co-teach 3-4 class periods each day, instead of 5 class periods. 3. Special Educators should be provided with planning time that is specifically designated for case management tasks. 4. IEP meetings should be scheduled so that the case manager that is responsible for attending the meeting will not be pulled out of his or her co-taught classes. 5. If all else fails, Case Management and Co-Teaching should be exclusive positions. They are both, in essence, full time jobs. In order to be a "highly effective" teacher or a "highly effective" case manager, one must put in 100% of effort to the job. It is not possible to excel at both at the same time. It is unfair to the students, the General Educators, the paraprofessionals, the Instructional Team Leaders, and the Special Educators to expect that both jobs will be done fully, and done well, by one person. Although I love being in the classroom, and I love managing my caseload, I am increasingly finding that I have to sacrifice excellence in one to achieve excellence in the other. Or I have to achieve mediocrity in both.

- Make sure behavior students are not placed in special Ed unless they really have a disability!!!
- It's ridiculous that it takes 5 or more hours to write one typical special education student's IEP (online). This does not include data collection in order to determine their current levels of performance, interviewing the student and giving a transition assessment to determine their transition needs (high school only), and preparing 5 days before and after letters to send to parents prior to the IEP meeting and then again after the IEP meeting. There must be a reduction in paperwork-The time I spend on paperwork would be a lot more productive working with students! I need to have dedicated and mutual planning time to plan with general education teachers to work on more individualization of students needs and provide services within the classroom without sacrificing curriculum content. At the high school level, many (most in our school) parents are more concerned about their child's grade/earning credits for graduation. Special Educators are often blamed that they are not providing services if a child is earning D's or F's even when in actuality they often are receiving more services than identified on the IEP. I have students whose disabilities do not demonstrate an educational impact (straight A's, A's and B's on report cards in grade level courses) but because the parents make more "noise" or have an advocate and/or attorney they are getting services above and beyond those of students who are more impacted by their disability. There needs to be a clearer understanding of what constitutes a disability and what it means by impacting their placement in the general education classroom and what constitutes services (working on IEP goals and objectives/individualizing their education-NOT providing accommodations and being in the general education classroom). For example, if a student has written language goals, and their services are in the general education classroom, how does the special educator work on these goals if the general education teacher does not include writing every day or even every week? I can't pull them out because their services are in general education. If I work with them in the classroom on a writing assignment and the rest of the class is doing another assignment, the student gets behind in their required coursework (remember, I don't have mutual planning time with the general educator). If they have math goals but are only in a one semester math course and do not have any courses second semester that would include enough math I have to hold a special IEP meeting to amend the IEP and change the services to out of general education so I can work with the student on their math goals. This doesn't always work because a resource class is only an elective credit and some

students don't have room in their schedules for electives because they need original credit in required courses. These are topics that are extremely frustrating for special educators.

- Often we, special education teachers do not have an assigned classroom. Our classes are all over the building. This creates a problem for our students when they need additional assistance.
- Community Referenced Instruction (CRI) students need to have opportunities to participate in general education electives (class size under 25) in order for CRI teachers to have a planning period. CRI students need a functional job training curriculum incorporated in the day to help with transition needs to prepare them for post-secondary opportunities. CRI students need less standardize testing when students are diagnosed with severe cognitive disabilities.
- Instead of having 5 preps (classes that we need to be in), SPED teachers should have 4; therefore, they have 2 planning periods. I almost always work at home doing SPED paperwork or grading. I feel that I cannot meet student needs because I am busy often trying to meet IEP deadlines or in meetings.
- People who work in central office, including the superintendent's office, should spend one day a week working as subs in buildings throughout the county.
- Presently, I spend from 7:30 to 5PM juggling special ed duties -recording data on all kids sheets about accommodations provided, writing IEP's, holding IEP meetings, tutoring students after school and planning for classes in PLC meetings. Improvement 1- special ed teachers should not be 50% responsible for teaching and planning lessons, they should be resp. for modifying, small groups and re-teaching students. Improv 2- I need sub time during the year
- Unclear what "% during duty day" means... most of the time a typical work week involves 10 + hour days. A 1.0 position is turning into a 1.6 position but it's not all due to Special Education duties. We need to be able to speak in a free and anonymous ... or off campus method of reporting... would like to be able to report as a teacher and not segregated into SE teacher title only. Make sure classes are smaller and not a place to put students with behavioral issues in with students with attention and learning concerns. Students with behavior issues are being placed in self-contained and co-taught classes. This makes the learning conditions difficult for students with attention and academic needs. Some self-contained and co-taught classes are very large in addition to having students with behavioral issues.
- Majority of non-teaching time, if not all, is spent on paperwork (IEP, behavior plans, teacher reports, documentation, state testing prep/paperwork) and meetings. Nearly zero time for planning for classes during the work day. Classroom planning takes place at home on weekends and evenings.
- I am not sold on the idea that every special needs child needs to be included in every classroom setting. I think we do some special needs students a disservice when we do not meet their true lifetime skill sets to mainstream them into classes that will totally irrelevant to their lifetime needs as an adult. Would like more self-contained classrooms and a better process, which includes every teacher, to determine a student's needs and therefore their schedule.
- Don't use most of my planning time in meetings Don't overwhelm us with (nearly) useless data gathering from everything to cooking, bus training, every school and community job, class responses Allow my para at least one planning period with me to get on the same page and allow to take over easier when I am called away from class for case management "fires" to put out and this happens almost daily that i miss a class or portions of classes for students who have been violent or non-compliant or are displaying their Emotionally Disturbed status Don't have LFI or SCB conform to every training or class or project that general educators do that have Nothing to do with our classes or students just so the principal can feel we are part of their team or whatever other "reasons" The only way my students are allowed in the cafeteria is if several staff are present from their classes...so, as a teacher, and to allow them the inclusion, I sit with them

in the lunch room every day, giving up my lunch period (and working time) so that my students are not forced to stay in their homerooms for lunch...so that admin :(including my department) are not caused "trouble" by anything or any behaviors that result from my students learning to integrate with gen. ed. students in an inclusion based model

- I am a para educator. The teachers and students are being given tablets but the para educators who are responsible for coordinating and augmenting the lessons between teachers and students are not. Many para educators don't even have access to a computer during the work day. Teachers who do not have time in the class day to meet with para educators are unable to send instructions to us prior to our entering the classroom. We don't have enough training on the device to assure that the students remain on task or are even using the tablet correctly. Para educators are responsible for helping students meet their IEP goals. To do so we need to know what the goals and objectives are for each student. The tablets would allow us to access necessary information and better track the progress of each student.
- If administration exempts the special educator from duties and advisory classes such as CATS at Arundel. If they get us a substitute for IEP meetings so the special education students will be in compliance.
- Develop awareness among admin staff of the realities of our workday; insure our planning time is not usurped by tending to student needs and replacing absent staff as we are expected to do daily as functional program case managers; pay or allow comp time for Medical Assistance paperwork (this takes huge amounts of time for those of us with all Level 5 caseloads); give us materials and curricula up-to-date with current Functional Level expectations instead of a roomful of "retired" materials that now can only be used as supplements to instruction and expecting us to solve the issue by "just adapt(ing) the regular ed curriculum in each subject" (at least 5 total for me); develop a meaningful, realistic Functional Curriculum in each required subject area with materials that do not need to be replaced and determined unsuitable the next year.
- Planning time scheduled for spec Ed inclusion teams weekly. In addition to planning scheduled for General Ed.
- We need to have a better understanding of what our students are capable of and what we are asking them to do. Mandating all students take the PSAT and then SAT is not, in my opinion, in the best interests of all the students we teach.
- State Mandatory planning time for case management 90 mins per day, separate case management from instructional positions, use work load analysis models
- Special Education teachers need extra planning time. There have been weeks when I have had to devote almost all of my planning time to Case Management and Principal's PD sessions that are held twice monthly during planning time. Collaborative Planning is also required and occupies planning time.
- Additional planning period every other day. Equal standing in my building versus general educators. Special educators are second class employees. Our preferences/needs/seniority are ALWAYS put after general educators.
- Keep case students the same students I teach - that way there is continuity and consistency in following the IEP. 2. Less intensive classes and more co-taught; students get too familiar with each other and tag team each other for disruptive or bad behaviors. They perform and behave better with mainstream peers; they usually want to "keep up" with other students instead of being sequestered or separated from the mechanics of other classroom experiences.
- More staff is needed to complete all duties. Teacher's cannot: teach, plan, provide services (outside of the classroom IEP goals), test, write IEP's, contact parents, PAECC testing, be experts

of the new curriculum, and KEEP UP WITH ALL OF THE NEW "STATE" DEMANDS SUCH AS PROVIDING GRADE LEVELS ON ALL STUDENTS IN ALL SUBJECTS ON THE ALL IEP'S - IMPOSSIBLE! IDEAS: more teachers or "others" to do necessary paperwork; trade in some Instructional Assistants for "teacher" positions - we need them to work with kids and they are invaluable, but they cannot perform necessary tasks that we need them to perform to help us.

- Have classrooms for special education rather than having the teachers float. Allow the teachers with caseloads an extra class period to do work on the caseload. Excuse special ed teachers the opportunity to interview students and work on IEP's
- Revamp the system as to where all counties have Education Evaluators and Psychologists who handles all needed testing. So that teachers won't have to do testing, develop IEP's, and implement them on top of other instructional and grade level duties. Create a job description or team of IEP writers/developers. Designate teachers who are very familiar with curriculum and can determine and select specific goals and objectives for students. Create SPED offices with secretaries to take care of clerical needs such as invites, scheduling, phone calls, filing etc.
- Reduce the amount of meetings for special education teachers. Special education teachers go to double the meetings. Limit a classroom to 10 IEP's. Anything over that is very difficult to manage.
- STOP Segregation in the classrooms of Wicomico County. The mandate to include special education students in the general education classroom with "age peers" is not effectively or equitably implemented when the "general education" students with whom they are included are the lowest performing, most ill-behaved, least motivated learners in the school. This is not fair to the students or to special educators who then shoulder the burden for managing behavior and discipline in the most problematic classrooms throughout the day.
- Special education students should not be mainstreamed.
- Make sure that you actually teach students on your caseload
- Give special educators one extra planning period per day to complete necessary paperwork, make accommodations, test students for re-evaluations etc.... Make IEPs more efficient to create.
- Consistency and feedback from other teachers
- Eliminate the amount of paperwork.
- An additional period off each day for case management
- Additional time for special education paperwork
- Schedule IEP meetings etc. during planning periods and not teaching periods. Have consequences that are followed up by administration for behavioral issues that impact the teaching & learning of the rest of the class.
- Caseloads should be made up of the students you teach. Assignments should be done to maximize the time you spend with your caseload. For example, 9th graders should be teamed with English and Social Studies married together and Math and Science. It would allow case managers to communicate more effectively with less time.
- Provide a stipend to case manager work with 10 or more students on their caseload. 2. More funding for professional days to complete case manager work. 3. Educate general education teachers on the duties of special educators. 4. Provide one location to find resources like sample letters to send home to parents or graphic organizers.
- A set amount of time during the day must be set aside for case management. The school should provide substitutes to cover gen. ed. classes so that the gen. ed teachers can attend meetings. It

is very stressful to try to gather an appropriate IEP team when the members of the team need class coverage and don't feel it's their legal obligation to attend. The SPED teachers seem to be the only ones in the building concerned about compliance.

- My lower special ed. students need to have their own curriculum. They are not mentally capable of doing multiple step problems (which almost all of 7th grade math involves) because of their processing abilities. We cannot modify 7th grade work enough to enable them to be successfully. They need to master 1st - 5th grade prerequisite skills first.
- How can we cut down on the immense number of professional development sessions and meetings so that we can devote more of our increasingly rare time outside of the classroom to work on IEPs and materials related to actual teaching?
- To be better prepared for a class with a 50% population of Special Education students especially students who are classified as non-diploma a teacher should be give more than just an IEP the first week of class.
- Too many new and improved ideas trying to be implemented at once too many meetings and PD that take away from planning time larger caseload and % of SPED students in co-taught classes
- -Dedicated Case Management & Planning periods for Special Educators, so they can not only plan for their own classes if they, like me, also have self-contained classes. But so they can also meet with the GenEd teachers they co-teach with. AS WELL AS, time to do their Case Management duties.
- Make special educators have to help general ed teachers. They show up when they want too and do not help.
- The IEP paperwork compliance have exceeded what they need to be. IEP's have grown from 10 pages to 54+ . Case managing time is not enough even with a period for it. Students are struggling with the PARCC mandates; the expectations with accommodations provide frustrations to the students that have reading and writing issues. Teachers have to give time to help the students... Go back to some self-contained classes.
- More paraeducator staff. As a teacher I can design material, differentiate for different learners, and consult with general educators. But I can't be in multiple places at once or work with multiple learners at the same time. More paraeducator staff would help to improve individual student learning and allow me as the teacher to reach more students and further differentiate material.
- Mixing teaching and case management is difficult and often requires me to spend time outside of school, and after school to get all the paper work done, at the expense of my teaching.
- One period for IEP and case management would help. We are supposed to have 1 full 45 minute period per day for planning and one for instructionally related activities- working with students, completing other required paperwork and activities that are not special ed related and new this year is required trainings and meetings during non-teaching periods called rolling trainings and staff meetings
- Special educators should have one additional period per day to do special education duties (write IEPs; meet with students on our caseload; provide accommodations to students, such as extended time; call or email parents); hold meetings, to name a few. Our department should have their own cart of Chrome books for providing accommodations to our students beyond the capabilities of the desktops, such as the ease of text to voice, the voice to text capabilities and more. Our department should have more headphones with mics.
- We need more classrooms to provide accommodations. We need more para educators.
- Less paperwork

- More staffing to reduce paperwork load on case managers, so we can spend our time giving out students the support they deserve.
- I think it would be beneficial to lighten the extra duties that special educators are asked to do. I think it would also benefit to have confidence in our educators that they do not need to be micromanaged the entire day or with all paper work that is submitted.
- If we could spend more time with the students and their families to know how we can address other problems with their education to get them motivated.
- Reduce some of the paperwork.
- Less testing and more time for instruction.
- Some possibilities could be: lower caseloads; hiring a clerical MOIEP specialist to handle basic paperwork responsibilities (scheduling meetings, creating and delivering notifications for meetings, inviting participants, printing, filing, distributing, and uploading required MOIEP documents, creating, printing, distributing and filing Medical Assistance forms, etc.); assigning one day per week to special educators for case management; hiring/designating one special educator per building to solely handle the case management with no teaching responsibilities, ????. Coincidentally, a colleague and I sat down last night to estimate how many hours that it would take outside of our contract day to complete our required duties, and we conservatively estimated that (if we take our contracted 30-minute duty-free lunch, which we never do because there is no time!) we have an average of 79 hours a month required extra work, which translates into about 20 extra hours a week, or roughly an additional 3 days of work per week! (Sounds like a Beatles' song, right? "Eight Days and Week. . .") That also includes a conservative estimate of 30 minutes per school day to deal with emails, and a required collaborative planning at my particular school, but does not include before-school duty or after-school staff or department meetings, SLO development, data collection or conferences, or hall duty in between classes.
- SP Ed Assistants need to be trained in how to develop accommodations
- Time given to work on IEPs, especially when they are coming into review. When you have 2 or more IEPs due in 1 month and have to have them out 10 days prior, it can be difficult to complete. If we were given X number of IEP days to be taken in order to complete them, that would be helpful. IEP days would be paid and taken during the school day, at the school, so that you have time to work on any IEPs, progress reports, or testing to be done.
- No advisory for special education teachers. We need pullout classes for our special education students so that we are meeting the needs addressed in the IEP and helping to close the gap. This means that we will not be in general education classes.
- Hire more instructional assistants (paraprofessionals) for each building to cover testing and other situations where students are pulled. Hire qualified special educators.
- Special Educators should be released of duties. Planning time should be allotted for case management in addition to 2 periods
- Inclusion class sizes are large at the high school level (33 - 34 kids in a class) and often have a large number of SPED, ESOL, and/or 504 students. Students requiring some form or level of support can reach numbers as high as 12 or 15 in a class, which makes it very difficult to adequately address all needs. More attention and commitment should be given to capping the TOTAL NUMBER of impacted students in a class, which, obviously, has staffing implications.
- Working conditions are horrendous. To meet the needs of students, I am assigned to 5 periods, with 5 different teachers, who are all doing different things. I have a total of 45 students in those periods that I need to provide accommodation for. In addition, I have a case load of 18 students, so that is total of 63 students. In addition, I am assigned to a homeroom advisory that meets

weekly. In that advisory, I have 1 special education student and 22 general education students. It is not co-taught. So that adds an additional 22 students to the already 63 students. I am not generally pulled for testing, IEP meetings, or to provide accommodations. All that takes place during my planning time, so essentially, I have no planning time. I have no lunch. We are expected to meet students during lunch to work with them individually. I provide accommodations in the classroom and take IEP students out to a separate location during classroom time for testing. If they need extended time, then the either do so at lunch or the next day. Case management, emails to parents, and writing IEPs, completing teacher reports, medical assistant reports, quarterly reports take up any available planning time I may have and I cannot get it all done. One improvement would be to be grant an additional planning period to help with the case management load. I am also expected to perform at the same level as the general education teacher, so essentially I have 2 jobs. the larger the classes get, the harder it is because to teach the IEP students because they all distract each other and it's hard to separate them from one another, they all have the accommodation for preferential seating, reduced distractions, and many have behavioral problems. I also have no time to see my caseload of students on a regular basis. Another improvement would not to be placed in a homeroom/advisory position. I could use that time to paperwork, which is mandated by law. Or assign me my case management students so I can follow up with them on a weekly basis. Another improvement, provide me a secretary to help with the paperwork.

- Increase staffing. Have special educators who are primarily teachers and those that are primarily paperwork/case managers.
- Place students appropriately when they enter the county so years are not spent trying to get the student into the most beneficial program. Stop buying every new program without testing it first to see if it actually works. Stop adding sections to the IEP each year that are repetitive and cause the IEP to become basically useless.
- Caseloads need to be even. It is not fair to have 8 special education teachers at SDMS with only two grades and then 7 at SDHS with four grades. In order to better serve our students, caseloads should not exceed 10.
- Special educators need additional time to work on IEP's, that does not interfere with planning periods. A law should be implemented that we are compensated for the additional workload, because case management and teaching are two different jobs all clumped into one job that is under paid. Special Educators who have Masters degrees in Special Education should not be classified as resource teachers. Also, the number of classes being taught per day should be decreased in order for case management and IEP meetings to be held, opposed to having to manage a IEP meeting or case management issues during instructional time.
- Teach less classes or separate jobs. Either be a case manager or be in the classroom like in NJ.
- We need more time, less of a caseload, more staffing. I share the responsibilities of planning, grading, teaching, caseload supervisions, writing IEPs, progress reports, meetings, documentation, etc... and we cannot get more time. I teach in 5 classes of English with 2 planning periods. More than 70% of my caseload I do not see during the day and have difficulty getting to them to check in. My weekends are taken up with doing my IEP case management, sending emails, grading written assignments, etc.
- Special education case managers need additional time during the duty day to work on case management. At our school, the main focus is on documentation, and I am spending the majority of my day documenting in our online communication log. I teach four different preps in five different classrooms, so I also have multiple PLC meetings to attend. As case managers, we are also using our planning time to deal with crises that arise daily with our students. This leaves us, on average, 3 planning periods a week (roughly 2 hours) to grade, work on IEPs, document, hold meetings, compile and complete reports, communicate with stakeholders, and attend to all

of the other aspects of our job. We often are pulled for testing, covering classes, and attending meetings, so our students end up losing service and we all suffer. I also think that there needs to be communication from the state/local level that tells school administration and parents exactly what the role of a case manager is. At my school, we are viewed as the only stakeholder for the child - we are responsible for every single aspect of their lives, both in and out of school. If they are not doing well, we are often to blame, and it is not recognized that there is a team supporting each child. The administration is giving us no time and expecting us to be miracle workers for 20 different, unique kids.

- Actual time for case management
- Include case management hours in our duty day/week. Hire dedicated staff to do educational assessments.
- I believe that we are trying to do 2 jobs at once. The first being a case manager and the second being a teacher trying to implement IEPs. I think that we should have rotating cycles every few years. For one cycle we will be case managers. Our caseloads would double but we would have no instructional responsibilities. We would be able to properly manage our caseloads and ensure compliance and delivery of services. The second cycle would be teaching. In this cycle you would support many classes at once or have parallel team taught classes. You would have no case management responsibilities so all time could be spent improving and perfecting the delivery of services and ensuring that all services were being offered in a correct manner. I believe that this would be the best way to make our jobs more manageable and successful.
- Improvement on scheduling would be helpful so all the children's needs could be met on a daily basis.
- Special education teachers need to have at least one period of case management time in addition to the planning time allotted to other teachers. All teachers need to be trained on how to provide accommodations.
- Streamline paperwork, allow time during work day to complete paperwork, treat special educators as professionals with knowledge and expertise in our certified content and in special education services
- At my school we teach 5 periods, like all general education teachers. We used to teach 4 periods and had a designated period for case management. Several years ago the principal said that other teachers complained that it was not fair and we were not using our time productively, and we had to provide data to show what we did during our case management period. Very disrespectful and demoralizing, and we have never gotten that period back.
- My time in the classroom is wasted. I am delivering too much service; more than the IEP lists. My own caseload students are not being seen. I need at least another period to work on paperwork daily. The IEP process is more important than sitting in a class. Regular ed teachers don't want or need us in the classroom. The workload duties are OPPRESSIVE and I can't wait to retire!
- Special education teachers should teach fewer periods per day, so that they have more time for case management, including paperwork and visiting with students. ----- I am concerned about the lack of programs for students who are not succeeding in a college-prep curriculum. There are students who are deemed too high level for LFI, but are not high enough to benefit from being in on-level (or even slightly below level) academic classes, regardless of the level of support. These students need programs where they can learn both academic skills at their level/pace, and vocational skills so that they can be prepared for a job or a community college program after high school. ----- Limit the number of students in inclusion classes. Many special education students have difficulty focusing, and it becomes increasingly difficult for students to focus, and for teachers to help them focus, when classes are very big. Furthermore,

there is no space to separate disruptive students in the classroom when there are too many students in a classroom designed for fewer students. For example, some classes have 34 students in a room designed for 28.

- Reduce the amount of paperwork
- Allow us more planning time
- Contracts need to be negotiated to include time for case management and planning for instruction. We shouldn't be doing SLOs unless we are truly in a co-teaching situation with sufficient numbers of students in the classroom.
- Extra planning time for paperwork, data collection, time to speak to other teachers regarding work assignments, tests, and other miscellaneous details regarding our students.
- Local systems should realistically evaluate the addition of paperwork and forms which are not required at the state level.
- Something needs to be done about special educators not providing the required services to their assigned students. Administration should be overseeing them more. I realize that they are overworked, but we all are. Yet it is always up to the classroom teacher to pick-up all of the slack on top of everything else we must do. The level of neglect the special educators have for their students is ridiculous... at least this is the case in my building.
- Implement a good working model of special education services to high school students. Out of general education services are very difficult to deliver at the high school level because students are removed from instruction in general education classes in which they need to earn credits for graduation. Many students are resistant to services provided in or out of the general education setting once they get to high school. Small group class instruction by a special educator (optimally 10 or less students per class) ends up being way over the maximum student count. It is virtually impossible for the instructors of these pull-out special education classes to plan and teach as well as providing additional services to students on a caseload of 18-20+ students. Have differentiated diplomas that reflect a student's true abilities upon graduation because many students are earning a diploma without acquiring the skills and meeting state standards because teachers are pressured into passing them even though they fall severely below the standards of a high school diploma. Separate the occupation/role of case manager and special education teacher so that special educators either case manage or teach. It is impossible to do both and keep compliant with the services demanded in the IEPs of caseload students. High school special education services be consultation services for the majority of students and be a resource to the general educator, only being service providers for students with out of general education services, not in inclusion classes.
- Provide separate additional time for case management.
- Hire more special education teachers
- More time for case management, and parent intervention, Subs given for paperwork
- I co-teach with three general educators. There is not enough time to plan effectively with all 3. Not enough time to modify classroom assignments and teacher made tests. I have no easily accessible/acceptable place to pull students for re-teaching or for testing.
- More staff is needed = professional and para support stream line paperwork RTSEs need to have a secretary to assist with the paperwork
- One more period off for case management. Three periods off instead of two.
- This is my 16th year teaching in special education. 14 years were in NJ and these past two years in Maryland. In NJ I was only the special education teacher. We had a Child Study Team with

LDTc's assigned to special education students in the district. I easily made the transition into becoming a case manager and a teacher in Montgomery County. However, this year there has been an enormous amount of pressure placed upon the special education teachers and general education teachers. There is more required documentation, no zeros only Z's and thorough documentation of why the student still earned a 0, non-stop annual meetings/reevaluations, parent conferences, answering e-mails etc. I have three English 9 inclusion classes and two resource classes. The students in my resource classes need much attention. I also find myself modifying work from other academic inclusion classes that my colleagues should have done and now I am pressed for time summarizing and modifying these assignments. My inclusion classes are very big and the special education students who are enrolled in them this semester need much attention as well. I bring home a great deal of work to try and complete and I am usually working until 11pm to 12AM. Or I am getting up one to two hours before my alarm to get more work done. I honestly feel special education teachers need to be on a separate pay scale or receive a stipend at the end of the school year. I feel like all I do is paperwork. I don't feel like an educator :(

- More time for case management
- 3 periods outside of the classroom with one devoted solely to case management/special educator demands. No class coverage during this time, no meetings during this time.
- We used to teach 4 periods but years ago that was changed to 5 periods. That extra period of teaching took us away from case management time.
- I need another period off so that I am able to meet with my students and/or complete their paperwork. Or Students with an IEP have one period with their case manager. This way we will be able to address their goals, look at grades and make sure that their accommodations are being met on the classroom.
- Allow special educators to work additional PAID hours for compliance, Case management, etc so the "work day" can be dedicated to student care. Reduce caseloads to manageable size. Reduce non-instructional/non-caseload paperwork
- Two kinds of special educators: those for paperwork and those for teaching classes. We don't have enough time to do a good job with either when we have to do both.
- I believe that having a caseload of 16-20 is detrimental to students with special needs. It is very hard to deliver services, keep data, individualize instruction for students within the classroom who are not on my caseload, and perform all other duties a teacher has to, while trying to write at minimal 16-20. I work in a Title 1 school where many parents do not show, which requires the IEP team to hold 3 meetings for EACH student on the caseload. I believe that staffing more Special Educators in Title 1 schools will allow for case managers loads to be lightened, as well as helping those students who are falling between the gap, and below the mastery line. Special Educators should have, at most, 10 students on their caseloads.
- More time for planning time and co-teaching opportunities for special Ed-teachers.
- Sadly, I am not certain. Special educators are expected to co-teach which means they have a full time teaching job which includes planning, prepping, teaching and grading, as well as a full time special education job which demands additional planning, and teaching, and finally, the job of case management. It is not realistic that a single employee fulfills all of these duties at any level of proficiency. Regretfully, the students who need our time, suffer.
- More opportunity should be created for Woodcock-Johnson training.
- More time needs to be allocated to special educators so they can manage their caseloads in a compliant manner. Caseloads need to be reduced. Special educators should not be assigned so many "extra" duties.

- Have a database where teachers can fill out 272s. The data would be stored in a database so there's no need for the case manager to do the following: -send out 272s -collect 272s -input data from 272s -print 272s -file 272s in confidential folder The case manager could focus on making sure teachers fill out the 272 correctly (assist where necessary) and have time to focus on instruction. For quarterlies case managers can input the data like always to send to guardians. Have ONE database where case managers can access the following information/data in order to write Present Levels on a student's IEP: • Individual assessments o WJ-III and WJ-IV o Key Math o Brigance • Classroom based assessments o Unit tests Quizzes o Informal assessments o Exit cards o Lexile scores • County assessments o Formatives o Final exams o Unit tests o MAP-R o HAS o MSA o PARCC o PSAT • Teacher input o Quarterly reports o Emails o Communication log o Observations/anecdotal records (including use of accommodations)
- Principals should understand the importance of what we do. We work with general educators and para educators to make sure the job is done well.
- Time! Less of a caseload
- I have 18 to 20 students on my case load and teach the same number of classes as a general educator. Either lower the number of students on my case load or cut the number of classes I am teaching.
- Smaller caseloads, no duties for Special educators. Paid time for additional time spent doing case management and other mandated duties that run over the contractual duty day.
- IDEA and COMAR need to re-evaluate special education, the children who are serviced along with their disabilities and the services provided. THE SYSTEM IS BROKEN, BROKEN, BROKEN!!! First, special education teachers should not be doing the job of case management and teaching. These are two distinctly different jobs with different duties that are both high priority. Special educators in Maryland should be hired as either a teacher, resource specialist, service provider or case manager. Coupling many of these jobs is more than one person can handle and many of the issues Maryland is having with compliance with IEPs begins with this issue. How would it be for a heart surgeon to also have the job of the surgical coordinator. I don't think the surgeon can give his best in the operating room when he or she is also outside of the operating room coordinating the surgery. Two distinctly separate jobs, yet when one person is doing both it becomes frustrating, stressful and even depressing for some. Second, general educators do not see the importance of giving detailed information on required documentation so that the special educator can write a high quality IEP. We are often scrabbling for, begging for, or struggling to write an IEP with limited documentation because general educators are so burned out from the redundancy of the mounds of paperwork they are always being asked to complete. There has to be a way to streamline the paperwork. A young attorney left his job in DC giving up his long commute so that he could spend more time with his wife and new infant. He thought he would go for a teaching degree, specializing in special education. Within the first 2 weeks of the new school year this new teacher said, "I didn't have this much paper work when I practiced law." Now this statement may have been a stretch, but this teacher felt overwhelmed and is not getting the quality time with his family. He thought working closer to home and moving into a new career would give him more time with his family but instead he is seeing them less. He is thinking that this was a bad idea and he may call it quits at the end of this year. PEOPLE WANT TO WORK SMARTER NOT HARDER.
- Not having to do duties due to extra caseload and paperwork compliance - 1-2 days per month where I would be provided coverage to complete paperwork -
- The amount of work that has been placed on Special Education Teachers is overwhelming. We are expected to co-teach in the general education classroom, plan with our co-teachers, support our IEP students (which can be 7-10 per class), keep tabs on our special education caseload (I have 19, and more than half I do not see in any of my co-taught classes), administer PARCC/HSA

testing while leaving our students to fend for themselves for weeks at a time, and complete all of our caseload paperwork. I am way behind in my paperwork right now because I am not one of those teachers who does not go to class to get caught up in my paper work. The majority of my paperwork gets completed after the school day has ended.

- Special Educators are in many meetings, which is understandable, but they often times do not get a substitute and then the students who need services are left with one Teacher. If a sub is given to the school for the special educator, they are often pulled to cover something other than where they should be.
- Less department meetings during planning periods. My IEP meetings are typically during planning periods and now I barely have anytime at all to case manage and meet with caseload since I have meetings and online IEP paperwork
- When pulled for state/county testing and special education students are remaining in the general education classroom, a substitute should be provided for all special education teachers, not just a selected few. Common planning between the general educators and special educators is a great idea and seems to help make the classroom run smoother. However, taking away time from the normal special education planning has caused a lot of take home work in order to stay in compliance. Also, there has not been time this year to assist all the students.
- Ongoing Professional Development to General Educators on assistance in delivering and implementing Accommodations, Modifications, supplementary aids and services, and Behavior Intervention Plans. Ongoing Professional development for General education staff on classroom management techniques with special education students. More uninterrupted time to complete IEP's, FBA's, BIP, summary of data collection tools, calling parents, completing assessment reports. I know there is a day allotted for special education paperwork in our negotiated agreement but it is useless to use because there are no certified special education subs we can use that are qualified to work with our challenging students.
- 1. Additional period for use of case management time 2. Increased support of administration 3. Increased support of central office resources 4. Improved classroom conditions 5. Improved resources for school use 6. Increase of training provided to general education staff 7. Schedules created with special education needs first
- Give additional period for case management by reducing teaching load
- We need more teachers so that we can each teach fewer classes, so that we can have a 4 period day. If we had a 4 period day, we could case manage more, and work with our parents and teachers so they are able to accommodate correctly.
- Increase staffing. We have one teacher in the office on some occasions, so even if it is a planning period, we need to provide accommodations for students that are not in co-taught classes. My lunches are often lost due to re-teaching and reassessing students, both general ed and IEP students. Annual review meetings are the only type of meeting providing professional leave coverage. Re-eval planning paperwork, meetings, and follow-up, as well as WJ IV testing for identified students, and subsequent evaluation meetings, are held during my planning/lunch periods or I am pulled from class. Observations of identified students require an entire planning period. Completing teacher reports for students in College Prep, both IEP and 504, are time consuming if completed accurately
- One day a week should be for Case-management, Assessments, Observations, co-planning etc.
- Less paperwork!!!! I feel like our district has us filling out too many testing documents that could be utilized in one form.
- More educators given to a school based on enrollment.

- Maryland On Line IEP is cumbersome and hard to navigate- allow for planning time as well as IEP paperwork time- we only get the same planning time as general education teachers - even when we teach our own classes. Plus we are pulled constantly to provide testing accommodations
- Have special educators in every classroom with special education students. Have those who help know what they are doing.
- Increased pay for para educators. If we had more professional reliable support our students would receive better education. Lower caseload sizes and scheduling decisions for students and staffing that start first with special education classrooms so we can meet the needs of the students with a stronger curriculum.
- Smaller caseloads
- We used to be given 1 day a week to pull out of co-taught classes when a test or quiz was typically given to work on IEP's, testing, IEP progress reports, med claim reports, checking on students on our caseload that we don't service. We need a planning period and a period to fulfill our special educator duties. We are all overburden, we just try to survive and make it through.
- Less paperwork, admin puts their expectations on us that is not realistic, we are solely responsible for a student on our caseload, additional periods off, some sort of effective documentation that we are doing our job
- Reduce the amount of paperwork or allow time for an additional off period for special educators
- Hire more special education teachers, so the number of students would be less. Cut our teaching responsible to 4 days, so that we can have a day for case management.
- -Additional time during the duty day to focus on sped students, their IEPs, building relationships with parents - maybe given one day per week for case management? - have prep periods at times when we can call parents - 1st p prep in high school is too early for us to call and have meaningful conversations with parents and other colleagues - release from duties such as hall monitoring during lunch (I meet with my students during lunch), chaperone - have a Special Ed PLC be the number 1 PLC and be released from attending PLC meetings for department/content(I am in 3 PLCs - 1 for each of the content/classes that I teach - Biology, Alg 1, and Alg2)
- Teaching less classes and periods to be designated for IEP Caseload, State Standards for IEP caseload,
- LESS PAPERWORK WHICH TOTALLY CONFLICTS WITH AND TAKES AWAY FROM TIME WHICH COULD BE DEDICATED TO PLANNING AND/OR STUDENT SUPPORT.
- I need two planning periods to address all of my students' needs. Two planning periods allow be the time to accommodate student instructional needs and write substantive, relative IEPs.
- Common mandatory planning time for co-taught classes.
- Extra periods throughout the day to do case management. 4 teaching, 3 planning, daily.
- The special educator needs to know the content of the classroom they are also teaching in.
- Special ed children need one-on-one time for at least 1 hr a day to address their individual need. They respond much better.
- A planning period for paperwork only plus an additional block that would allow for meeting with general education teachers or to plan for remediation. We are often reactive rather than proactive in working with students.

- 1. The paperwork is overwhelming and should be downsized. To complete a high quality IEP for each student on my caseload, I spend approximately 10 or more hours. This results in completing documents outside of my school day as I am unable to complete them during planning. My planning time often is used to work with students first and foremost, hopefully squeeze in a time to meet and plan with my co-teacher, call parents, input parent contact in MD online, upload documents to MD online, etc. 2. Determination to re-eval meetings should be able to be completed over the phone. (While I know it is an option, it is looked down on). Many of my parents are unable to take off work for this meeting as well as a assessment result meeting/annual review. 3. Truthfully, I don't see working conditions improving, only getting worse. 3. Progress reports should be addressed through the report card.
- We have too much work. We are expected to be co-teaching and planning with our general education teachers, as well as keeping up with all of the students on our caseload. If they are not doing well, we are blamed. I have 27 students on my caseload, and co-teach 4 different classes, on top of Resource. The paperwork is out of control, and takes away from time I could be spending helping students.
- I would like NEA to lobby congress to reduce the requirements for least restrictive environment. Students who are reading on a pre-kindergarten level in the 3rd grade are not able to access the curriculum and become frustrated and disruptive in the general ed classroom. These students would be so much better off if they could spend part of their day learning to take care of themselves and being taught at their level.
- We should have another planning time added into our contract as a special education teacher.
- Change the laws that keep teachers and admin so that unruly students can be accountable for their actions.
- Lower class size
- I am a transition support teacher. I have 160 sets of transition pages to do plus attend IEP meetings as part of the team. Additionally, I have a caseload of 25. Now I am also co teaching an English class. I am also SSL coordinator. It is ridiculous that this county could not hire another teacher for our school. We are all so exhausted. And we are all overworked and some of us now have blood pressure problems and other health issues. My hips hurt from sitting at my desk so long and typing all of these IEPs, plus my transition pages. The amount of paper work is absurd!! And we are held to the same standards on attending meetings, professional development meetings period by period and everything else- it's way too much!!! Every other week we have a staff meeting. Every other Thursday we all have "advisory" ... We have testing - PSAT, AP PARCC and HSA's with NO time for our job! Something needs to change. Morale in the county is low.
- More time for case management by reducing teaching assignments by one class period, ie. - assign one class period as Special Ed Case Management time.
- Smaller caseload would be ideal. Not enough hours in the day to catch up with a student (and not pull them from an academic content) to properly review things. Many students give me their email/cell phone number to enable me to communicate with them outside the school day. Contacting parents is very time consuming --- class responsibilities include keeping up with and contacting general education students and parents regarding academic and behavioral performance.
- Co-teachers need to have a common planning time to address student needs.
- There is so much paper work for the case manager - For example, planning for Re-evaluation and determination, Annual reviews, IEP preparation, processing College board accommodations, Quarterly progress reports. Extra time allocated for case management would definitely improve the working conditions.

- Special educators cannot teach a full schedule of five classes and manage 23 - 25 special education students. There are students who need assistance in the five classes, and these obligations to take care of these students take up time. The 23 - 25 students on our caseload also need our attention. There is not enough time to meet the needs of the students in the inclusion classes and the students on our caseloads.
- Limit the IEP paperwork. Populate some of the IEP data fields - the technology exists.
- Limit caseloads; share caseloads equally between special Ed staff; hire the number of qualified people we need to meet compliance demands and classroom responsibilities; change required number of co-taught classes so we can have more time to address needs of kids on our caseloads; provide additional days of sub time not only for IEP prep, but for attending meetings, administering educational testing (WJ IV) and writing reports; opportunities to collaborate with in-school and out-of-school peers; more training opportunities; time for true team planning. This is not all of my ideas- just a few to get started.
- I think we need more information about the students like how to help them reach their goals so they can climb to higher heights in life.
- Hiring of another Special Educator to lower caseloads.
- Designated time per week for case management only Restructure the coordinator's position (have a co-chair who just does IEPs) Lessen the case management load per case managers Pair a new case manager with a mentor
- Curriculum/materials provided to use when dealing with them in a large group as well as a small group.
- Provide funding to staff appropriately so that caseloads are manageable. Provide staffing to allow for 1 extra release period for case managers for IEP work Provide staff such that para-educators could have an administrative period to assist with IEP paperwork
- I am a Special Education Resource Teacher and my job is to oversee the entire department, chair all IEP meetings, make sure everything is in compliance, observe teachers/paras, conduct screenings, assess students for eligibility, etc. So, my actual situation is a bit different than if I was a special education teacher teaching and case managing students.
- RTSE positions are currently unmanageable. Additional clerical hours are needed to support the tasks of a RTSE. Schools to accept financial responsibility to replace old and unusable 'Encore' laptops for completing IEP meetings.
- more planning time beyond regular planning time to complete required IEP paperwork \* larger variety of services and classes \* less focus on testing, more on individualized instruction \* smaller classes \* mentors to provide support and ideas, not just evaluate
- It would be nice to have a special education educator in the classroom for all subject areas throughout the day. Now a days, with PARCC testing, various content disciplines are instructionally integrated with each other, which then causes a pitfall to the student(s) who may need a second person to re-explain the concept.
- I believe that paraprofessionals need to be in every classroom.
- There needs to be more special education teachers (and many need better training). These are two separate issues. Example - we have the cluster program for the deaf and hard of hearing. Currently we have two teachers who are each teaching multiple grade levels all day long. How does this work? The teacher teaches for part of the time and then one grade level is passed to a para to 'reinforce' the lesson. You can't possibly teach a special needs student an entire ELA lesson in 30 minutes. The teacher almost never gets to start and complete a single lesson. Our neediest students are not being serviced properly.

- I am in an ACC classroom. I am required to attend PD during my planning that does not pertain to my class or what I do. Because of frequent behaviors, I am often shorted on my planning, so I can address the behaviors.
- Better administration state support, one staff member to write IEPs while special educator gives required IEP information to the staff so they can focus more on teaching and planning, and better access to consultants.
- Decrease compliance paperwork by adhering to federal guidelines rather than extra state / county additions. More self-contained classes to provide a continuum of services not just inclusion for the sake of inclusion
- Planning is EVERYTHING! WITHOUT PLANNING THERE IS NO QUALITY TEACHING
- I think most of the time I spend on developing materials for my students so maybe finding a program that corresponds with Common Core grade level material in special ed style - don't just purchase the on grade level stuff; Find competent people to help with special ed students
- More planning time and/or not being scheduled to teach or co-teach so many different subjects and grade levels. I currently am teaching/co-teaching ELA7, ELA8, SS7, Sci7, Sci8, and Reading Intervention (6th grade). I have ONE planning period per day. None of my 3 co-teachers & I have common planning. It's ridiculous.
- More certified special educators are needed to reduce case management numbers per teacher. Just because we are "given" the title of case managers, shouldn't mean anything and everything that ever arises, falls on our shoulders to complete.
- More planning time but then the time would be pulled from service time to students.
- Spend less time in meetings and more time with completing my special education duties.
- We build school routines schedules and meetings around the requirements of special education and therefore we have no concerns or issues.
- Paperwork takes up such a big part of our planning period and at times, beyond that. It is frustrating when administrators FORCE us to also commit to at least one other committee when we are already so swamped. We are underpaid and overworked. There is no reason to FORCE a teacher to stay after when we are already here 50+ hours a week.
- I have 3 reading lab groups and support 9 students in the inclusive setting. My assistant is only with my students for 1 90 minute block; there are gaps in the day where my students are not supported by me or my assistant but the other sped teacher. There is not enough co-planning time for us, and the 3 reading lab groups take up much of my instructional planning time, therefore I am working for 6-8 hours every weekend.
- Time to collaborate with our special education teachers.
- Our paperwork is a lot - it always will be/ what we need are more special Ed teachers that are trained and certified. Trained inclusion teachers more training for paras. By training others, it will lighten our load of having to do their work because they don't know how. Less training during the work day. The more we are pulled out the less the kids learn.
- Less scheduled teaching time, more time on providing paperwork services that are required.
- I need more planning time during the day for paperwork so that I do not have to do it afterschool.
- I work at the tech school it would be nice to be able to speak with teacher from the home school to see what works there and any suggests that the parents might be able to offer if needed

- We are in desperate need of space to pull students into small group settings. Many of our students have that accommodation and there is nowhere to provide it. There have been many times that I have to pull my students into our media center and it is bustling with classes everywhere. In order to provide specialized instruction, we need our own space.
- Secretaries could assist with paper work. Time allotted for paperwork. Support needed from administration and central office. General ed teachers encouraged to provide accommodations.
- As a special educator covering both language arts classes with students with reading and writing goals and objectives- I have to write all the progress reports- quarterly- up to 20. An exhausting task. The workload to keep up with IEPs, prior meeting reports, and preparing for multiple curriculums for classes is overwhelming. Is there a solution? Its especially tough when your co-teacher is out & students don't see you equally as their teacher. I'm overwhelmed!
- Cut back on the ever increasing paperwork. Paperwork is becoming so detailed that you need a law degree to complete it.
- Classroom disruption by gen Ed students in inclusion settings must be addressed by administration. Gen Ed and related arts teachers need to be able to manage classroom behavior more effectively. Administrators need to monitor and deal with teachers who are ineffective. Administrators need to stop pulling instructional assistants from their duties in inclusion settings to cover for shortages of substitutes in the building. Sometimes they even pull special educators from their planning time. Administrators and central office need to be on the same page where TAASC guidelines are an issue. I feel very welcomed in the building by the new principal. Requests for additional IAs and new students are considered "a problem."
- I think special educators should not be required to attend subject content area planning as regularly as general education teachers. I also think it should not be the role of the special educator to grade papers, when general education teachers are not expected to assist with Medicaid, IEP writing, data collecting, or progress reports. I also believe that special educators should not be required to write SLO's, when the entire job of a special educator is to provide services to the students who need it. As a special educator, I am responsible for hundreds of objectives that are reported on each quarter.
- Smaller class size, less than 20% of students with IEP's. Students with IEP's more spread out within the classes.
- Classes are too large for students who need intensive services. Why are we moving away from this?
- Stop putting special education teachers in so many positions to cover, alt-MSA testing, NCSC testing, Medicaid case manager, behavioral specialist, SLO's, record keeping for cumulative files, principals with a special education background, grade level assessments without a common assessment etc... Stop bullying of my co-workers. One is so fed up, that she is leaving the teaching profession. This is so unfortunate as she is one of the most superior educators I have seen in years. Sufficient and correct supplies. A sensory room Adapted Physical Education in the gym. Extend the school day or year with adequate compensation for educators. Give teachers a month before students return to set up classrooms and attend PD training. When do I get the opportunity to really instruct? If these conditions don't change, I am leaving special education ASAP.
- Special Educators need time to complete their paperwork during the school day. My school offers Compliance Day once a month, however, this year, they included a half day of professional development, leaving us with little to no time to do work. Planning periods at my school have been scheduled by administration. Mondays and Fridays are parent-teacher conferences. Tuesdays and Thursdays are either collaborative department planning or a grade level meeting (both of which are longer than 30 minutes). Wednesdays are designated for IEP meetings. This

leaves little time to get regular paperwork done, let alone special education/compliance paperwork. Planning periods should be designated only for planning and paperwork.

- Planning period without students and another paraprofessional to be with a student who screams when not attended to so I can teach. Time to write IEP's
- REDUCTION OF PAPERWORK!!!!!!
- Caseloads need to be smaller A county wide special education group needs to be established to support best practices sharing Better training on expectations of the special educator
- I proposed using substitutes to provide Special Educators one professional work day a month to complete some of their IEP workload.
- Howard County is a 100% inclusion county. In order for a student to be pulled out, the student must have significant needs. Due to this I am expected to address all IEP goals in the inclusion setting while working seamlessly with the general educator so that an observer would not know which teacher was which. Additionally, I am expected to deliver my services in a way that draws no attention to the student (i.e. so other kids don't know they have an IEP). I do this across three different curricula with three different GEs. This is COMPLETELY unrealistic.
- Instead of doing SLO's do smart goals. Making more time for meeting with gen Ed. Having general educators shadow a special educator for a day.
- Special educators should be required to stop attending so many meetings throughout the course of the week
- There needs to be a balance between caseload management and planning/grading with the general educator. It should not be the responsibility of the special educator to grade work, in addition to special education paperwork. This is especially true at the end of the marking period when quarterly progress reports are due.
- Special Educators need more time and fewer duties and meetings. Reduce the massive amounts of paperwork that take hours and hours to complete. Stop requiring that everything be documented so that we can actually TEACH rather than have to be data collectors.
- Stop giving IEP's to students who are failing because they chose to.
- Give time to do paperwork. Exempt from duty or committees.
- The improvements that are needed to address the needs of special education students is time to work with them during the day. Students cannot be pulled when the instruction is being given. Even when students are put into smaller groups within the class they will still need more time to process the assignments. They are expected to do the same work and academically they are not reading or writing on the grade level they are placed in. If there are seven students in the classroom you can only work with one at a time. They poor penmanship, difficulty with spelling, difficulty writing complete sentences, poor paragraph formation, difficulty with writing mechanics, organizational skills, etc.
- Special educators are required to attend Grade Level Professional Development as well as IDT and 2 collaborating plannings (which are usually discussions about what the gen ed teachers in the dept are doing) IN ADDITION TO IEP meetings and having to find time to plan with co-teachers for our specific classes. We need to have more time to complete paperwork and plan with our co-teachers.
- Special education students are working several grades below grade level, but not alternative curriculum candidates should be able to have pull-out instruction in reading and math.
- -Have 1 person run special education meetings. -Identify 1 day for IEP meetings and 1 day for paperwork/testing in each building. I spend 3 hours most weekday nights and at least 8-10 hours

on the weekends/holidays typing IEP's, compiling data for progress reports, scoring reports, typing reports and writing educational evaluations for special education students. I often sacrifice time with my own children and husband because of the compliance deadlines for the IEP's. My administration is very understanding but this is bigger than that.

- More Time to plan, meet with general educators and provide small group re-teaching without missing new instruction.
- Either let the special education teacher be a part of the co-teaching environment and actively participate in modified/accommodated teaching strategies or go back to self-contained. Too many times the special educator is not given opportunities to present the material in a UDL format and then spend after school or lunch time supporting kids by fixing up what should have been addressed previously.
- One extra Special Education teacher needs to be hired in each middle school to do 1) Woodcock Johnson Testing; 2) Provide relief in the classroom for Special Education teachers who have to attend IEP meetings/etc.; 3) Do paperwork/filing to ensure all LAF files are up to date and all paperwork is correct for each student.
- The Special Education Administrators at the county and state level need to stop creating more paperwork and require excessive levels of documentation. These newly created documents go way beyond what is required and necessary.
- More support from the Special Education department, Director and Supervisors on supporting us and respecting us as knowledgeable professionals.
- If MCPS wants to collect data on the number of times case managers meet with their students on their caseloads, there needs to be standardized tool we all can use. Otherwise, what kind of data are you collecting and how is it meaningful? For example, some schools are requiring teachers to document meeting times with students every week on myMCPS. Other schools are allowing teachers to document meetings times in any format (post-its, word doc, journal log, etc.) Why even make us do this if there is no standardized way to collect and assess data? I understand the need for accountability, but there needs to be a way that actually ensures this data collection is meaningful. Also, documenting each time we meet with students is another addition to the amount of paperwork we fill out. For example, I currently have 15 students on my caseload. Documenting each time I meet with my students (at least once per week) means that I would have 135 pieces of document in one marking period. For schools that are requiring myMCPS documentation on communication logs, do you really want each student to have at minimum, 36 entries? That kind of documentation might be confusing for staff trying to find specific information about students. This also requires more case management time, and also brings me back to the previous issue of what kind of data you are collecting, how you are collecting it, and what you plan on doing with this information. It would make more sense to have a standardized tool that is separate for case managers or special educators -perhaps on OSS.
- The school I am at is very short staffed. Due to scheduling concerns, my student who needs support, is not getting his allocated hours. Additional assistance is needed.
- SLO's should not be "required" for practice due to the fact that they are not reflected in our evaluations, nor technically required.
- Give us a rotating day off once a week to simple do special education paper work. There are two special educators per grade level so we could each take one day opposite the other teacher's day.
- Right now I am thrilled to have a teaching position and am doing everything humanly possible to make it all work. I co-teach 2 different content areas and 2 different grade levels with 14 students on my caseload. I have a full planning period with one teacher and only a few minutes

with the other. My schedule does not allow me to attend in school Professional Development. I make sure Goal work/SDIs are met, and the co teaching happens when it can. Pulling students to test for present levels and IEP testing is challenging. Most of my evenings and weekends are spent searching for materials and planning, filling out tracking sheets and working on IEPs.

- Sped. Supervisors should have more than 1 student on case load. Should be responsible for some case managing activities: a portion of quarterly updates, help either logging information for esy.etc. Make it so that teachers get back their planning taken away by community trips, long IEP meetings, Pay teachers working beyond the school day. Have a do not disturb time (not by related services, impromptu meeting etc. ). So that Iep compliance and the like can be done. SO MUCH TIME IS TAKEN AWAY FROM SPED. TEACHERS AND NO ONE WANTS TO COMPENSATE THE TIME BACK.
- -I wish I had more time to complete this very important survey. My students never fall out of compliance due to the extra hours clocked to ensure compliance. -Assign a full-time benefited TSA per building to assist with many clerical duties of the Special Educator, i.e. data collection, organization of student belongings, copy and deliver revised IEP's to General Educators, many items listed on a supplemental page of the IEP can be delivered by a trained TSA thus allowing pre-teaching and re-teaching for the Special Educator within the Co-Taught classes. This TSA could be assigned to one Special Educator one day per week at a minimum. And at the going hourly rate of pay (\$10), the investment of funding would ensure compliance as well as improved teacher moral/health and of course student achievement. -Most important: allow one full day per week for all paperwork generated by the IEP process; teach the remaining four days. -Mandate a thirty minute per day period (Advisory, Study Skills, etc.) to allow students to begin homework, make up classwork due to illness, re-teach concepts, etc. This has been proven to lower anxiety for students and families and likely decrease the overgrowing suicide rate for teens who feel so pushed by the culture of success. Many schools will not implement a program such as this due to many perceived constraints, thus a mandate from the state would be a welcome solution. -Mandate Special Education Department Chairpersons to teach. Period. They are teachers, not administrators. They should continue teaching for many reasons, one of which is to reduce the case load for the remaining dpt. members. Also, they are Unit I members, not supervisors as they often pretend to be, creating a toxic climate within the school environment. This has been a terrible decision on the part of LEA's. Putting teachers in the role of administrators, observing their peers to the importance of influencing a teachers' rating is wrong.
- More Paraprofessionals to administer accommodations in the inclusion classrooms so that if we are pulled, kids still get accommodations or even better, the paraprofessionals could do whatever we are being pulled for so that we can stay and teach with our kids. This would also allow us to be up front teaching with the general education teacher more, instead of always having to circulate to make sure the kids have what they need and trying to control behaviors. Neither of which involve much teaching. More space for pullout groups is absolutely necessary because we never have anywhere to take our kids for small group instruction or re-teaching or for different methods of teaching. There is no point in learning how to differentiate and collecting all of this data to use for differentiation if we don't have the resources necessary to implement EFFECTIVE differentiation. They just can't learn everything in the big group setting for 55 minutes straight, in the same exact way as everyone else. Our talents and teaching abilities are being wasted. But none of the previously suggested improvements would mean anything if we don't have enough time to plan and prep with our general ed teachers. Planning and prepping are two different things. We all go to many, many meetings to plan but that is very broad and we don't talk about how we will specifically address the needs of special ed kids. Instead we talk about things that only affect all of the teachers and that doesn't include special ed students so we have to use personal planning to talk to our gen ed teachers about planning for our co-taught classes and that takes all of the personal planning time that we would otherwise be using for prepping materials and doing paperwork and contacting parents. Co-

teaching is like putting on a play or a performance and it needs to be coordinated and discussed BEFORE the actual "show", otherwise there is no "co" in "co-teaching." For these reasons we need MORE TIME TO PLAN AND PREP, FEWER MEETINGS, MORE PARAPROFESSIONALS SO WE CAN ACTUALLY TEACH, AND SPACE TO USE FOR DIFFERENTIATION.

- Not sure, but special educators are getting burned out quickly. Each year it's more and more paperwork and documentation, but no more time is given.
- Not attend data meetings for math and science, resulting in loss of planning time to modify and DI instruction. Plan only with Co teacher instead of entire grade level team. Get rid of SLOs, waste of time. Special educators have enough paperwork to complete, we already use data to modify instruction and DI to get our students to progress academically. Why do we need to pick another group of students? Use SLOS for teachers who should be on a plan of action.
- Less paperwork and more time to actually work with the students on academics. The paperwork for Special Education teachers is both ridiculous and a waste of time (parents rarely even understand it!) When people spoke about the amount of paperwork before I got my job, I thought "They are just being dramatic, there can't be that much paperwork." Those people were exactly right! My time would be better utilized actually helping students academically instead of sitting in front of a computer filling out 25-35 page IEP's.
- Special Educators should contribute to the IEP's academic areas that they teach. This makes writing the PLAF, Goals, and Objectives, and writing progress reports much more logical and meaningful. There are many duties that can be handled by an IEP coordinator not the special educator with a full class schedule.
- Provide a full time special education resource person to provide support with compliance. Reduce the number of teaching responsibilities of a case manager.
- Thinking outside the box for the middle school special education and maybe for other special education teachers. It would be nice to have one day a week to work closely with students we case-manage such as being the person to administer the weekly probes to students. Allowing special educators to go into the classroom to solely work on student goals will provide us with accurate data and increase student performance. This will also in the long term goal will allow us to exit more students out of the Special Education program because we are able to work closely with them to meet and address students' needs. I truly believe that Co-teaching is only 40% effective and most of the time we can't be effective in class because of relationship with co-teachers are not working out well.
- Stop requiring paperwork and logs of ALL special educators just because the county needs to cover for the ones not doing their jobs right.
- An additional planning or additional pay for Special Educators. Limiting the time of IEP meetings to one period in a day so that Special Educators can have their negotiated planning time as other general educators.
- I am not sure how to decrease the paper work, but I feel that it is the most time consuming and stressful part of the job. Honestly with the requirement that goals have to be grade level goals, I am not sure why we continue writing goals as part of the IEP. All students must access and learn all of the Common Core objectives. I think the IEP should be more about what support we are going to provide to them in order to successfully demonstrate knowledge of the curriculum and less about picking out one or two things in certain areas. General Ed. teachers can rarely accurately report progress made on specific indicators which means I have to track them down and get more information so that I can fill out the progress notes. When I am in school with students, I focus on students. That means I spend a lot of time after school working on paperwork. It would be helpful if MCPS would come up the way they want us to determine grade levels for PLOPs for Reading, Writing, and Math. Once a student has been in the system for

many, many years there is no formal testing that yields a single grade level. Yet MCPS insists on one grade level. Our students have a range of skills and deficits of skills that straddle many grade levels. Currently at my school we use MAP-R scores to find a grade level. However, we have been told that we are not supposed to equate the MAP-M to a grade level and we do not have an informal math test like the Basic Reading Inventory which helps with Reading. I have asked for 8 years to have some sort of assessment that would give a grade level for writing. It is required, but we are never given anything to use that would stand up in court. Right now we use writing samples and compare them to a variety of rubrics to try and figure out a written language grade level. This takes tons of time. I also get frustrated when I fill out Quarterlies for my Resource class (which is my caseload students). I end up filling out paperwork for myself. The same is true for the 272-8. One helpful thing would be for schools to have all staff members assist with providing accommodations. At my school it is just the Special Education staff that does it. I am lucky that I do have a case management period, but I may be pulled several times a week during that time to provide accommodations. Then I may go a week and not be pulled. I also have to do emergency coverage so there have been times when I lost every period in a day. We are also required to make contact with the parents of our students every week and then to log that contact into My MCPS. This takes up a great deal of time. I spend many Friday nights at work trying to call and speak with parents of my 15 students. Sometimes I email but this also takes time. The part that is really frustrating is then to have to go back and document everything in MY MCPS. I keep a written log because the phone is not at a computer. So, I end up writing the same info twice. I work late most evenings and come in on many Sundays to keep up with Sp. Ed. paperwork on top of planning, creating lessons, and grading for my Resource class and trying to help with grading and planning for my co-teaching classes. Then there is all of the data collection and time spent writing FBAs/BIPs as well as numerous contracts for students. Lets not forget those medical assistance forms that must be completed each month. It feels like the forms required never ends! Oh, and the state thought it would be a great idea to have a separate set of Accommodations just for PARCC to make the IEP longer. I am sure you can feel my frustration. Sadly, I don't expect anything to change in this litigious society. However, I do appreciate the opportunity to express my opinion.

- Providing more teachers
- Extra planning time needs to be built into the schedule for special educators.
- At the beginning of the school year, create a paper with the name of student (parent(s) or guardians e-mail and phone number, Case Manager (e-mail and phone number) and the disabilities. The regular teacher does not need a thick packet that we cannot use. 2. Do not leave a student in the class who is a constant disruption to the learning proves. They do no work at all. Some never come to the class. The instructor should not have to create folders and work for these students and get no work back. 3. Student who feels because I have an IEP I can do what I want. Come to class and walk out, several times. Tardy bell rings. The students come in Tardy and wants you to stop teaching and tell them what to do. Continually disrupting the class.
- Special Education teachers need to have time allotted to them during the week for case management/educational testing. There is not enough time during planning to facilitate an IEP meeting, work on paperwork, and plan with general education teachers.
- More immediate for casework; administration needs to be made aware that sped teachers should be compensated for heavy caseload. For example, 8th grade sped teacher at our school has 9 on her caseload. I have 18. Nothing different other than I have more work to do, with no recognition for it, not even all of the hours I have to do at home to keep up.
- Special Education Teachers need time allocated for case management (educational assessments, writing IEPs, writing assessment reports, completing FBA's and BIPs, etc.) in ADDITION to their

instructional planning time. Making up time to students when I'm pulled for assessments is almost impossible.

- At least one planning period a day should be added to the current planning periods to provide the necessary time to complete paperwork.
- Caseload maximums: 12 students Daily case management time (equivalent to a planning period) Co-planning for paraeducators and the teachers they support All of these ideas require much more money and are especially important for students with mild to moderate learning disabilities/attention disabilities, who people feel do not need that much service. MCPS has a wide variety of services for students who have autism but no unique service models for kids with other disabilities. Funding needs to come from there.
- Possibly having two planning periods a day that allow for case management and instructional planning. Hiring more special education teachers would also allow for multiple sections of self-contained classes as well as lowering the case management loads
- The paperwork is insurmountable and has become even more tiresome as new laws are made. We spend crucial time chasing after general educators and administrators to attend IEP meetings. Chasing after general educators to complete teacher input forms is wasted crucial time. Pulling students to update functional levels is time consuming due to general educators not allowing students to be pulled from their class to update. Administrators not allowing special educators enough time for IEP meetings especially manifestation meetings that can be time consuming however, these meetings are crucial. Service providers being assigned 3 or more schools and not servicing students appropriately due to enormous caseloads. Special education students need specific services that are not being addressed in the curriculum because Administrators do not see the service as a necessity. For example, special ed student reading 3 to five grade levels below and not receiving the intervention services to address deficits. Coding of special needs students inappropriately. Testing materials used to test students for services are biased and out dated. Training for special educators has been placed on hold for approximately 6yrs.
- Go back to more pull out hours and self-contained classrooms.
- I need an extra uninterrupted planning period to complete paperwork, reach out to parents, observe students, etc. I cannot, but am expected to, do the job of two full time teachers. There is not a single responsibility of a general education teacher that I don't also have, yet I have a caseload to manage and legal requirements to fulfill. I use my planning periods to plan curriculum with and for my content-specific cohort. Case management and paperwork by default becomes my afterschool/evening/weekend job.
- Hire more special education teachers in order to reduce the number of preps each special education teachers has as well as reduce the size of the caseload each teacher has. Another idea would be to make case management a separate job from teaching, but this idea is less desirable.
- More time needed to analyze student behaviors, test results, plan, etc.
- \*Allow time for paperwork during at least 1 planning period per day. \*Do not pull Spec Ed teachers to cover other classes when we are needed in the class we are assigned \*Have appropriate coverage for the Spec Ed teacher when absent (meeting, testing, illness, etc.) \*Keep caseload numbers low by having enough staff
- Because each and every special educator is overworked, because of our larger caseloads and the ever increasing amount of special education paperwork coming from central office; we are unable to stay in compliance unless we put in 60 plus hours during the week and 10-15 hours during the weekend. To be honest, the improvements I am going to suggest will never be implemented, because our union has been silent on the matter. Anyway, here goes: 1) Reduce

cases loads which now hover around 20. 2) Provide more planning time for each special educator. Being an inclusion teacher, self-contained teacher, and case manager is at a minimum 2 jobs. The only way to provide more planning time would be to lessen our coverage schedule. This is impossible due to the fact that the county says we are "overstaffed." 3) Lessen class sizes overall. With class sizes over 30 per class, behaviors are declining rapidly. I understand, the county is getting devices for every student, but students should not have to learn in a cramped classroom. 4) Have the special ed office discontinue adding more compliance paperwork that most likely occurred because of a parent lawsuit. By adding "baselines" and "narratives" for students' IEPs we would have to have time to see them on a more frequent basis. I am assuming the people in the special ed office haven't taught recently, or they would understand they are beginning to drive people out of education. All they need to do is look at the numbers of special ed vacancies to understand this is a reality. 4) Make tietnet more user friendly. 5) Give each teacher access to staff BCPSOne read only in order to make turning in 5 teacher reports in at once, not as tiring.

- I am an IEP facilitator whose main job is to make sure that the case managers of the special education students in my school meet compliance deadlines. I handle meetings and paperwork for 113 middle school students at a Title One school. I see the case managers struggling to meet compliance deadlines and attend all the collaborative planning meetings, professional developments, and at some point differentiation to teach their students. My role is helpful to them as I relieve them of some of the more mundane tasks such as paperwork and scheduling. I feel that case managers would benefit in a reduction of time in mandatory meetings and professional development so that they could attend to overseeing and providing special education services. Also a reduction in the mandatory paperwork and data collection would improve working conditions significantly. Having a facilitator available at the elementary level would relieve a lot of stress and improve working conditions as well as the elementary teacher has even less planning time in the day and often is delivering interventions to non-special education students even though technically this is not their job. I worked as an elementary special education teacher for close to ten years and I would not do it again due to the long hours (12-14 hour days) and lack of support from building administrators.
- I resigned my position because the job required too many hours of work outside of the regular school day. Planning periods were for CAPS meetings, IDT meetings and other useless meetings. We had no time to plan and create lessons with gen. ed teacher.
- More secretarial hours could alleviate some of the paperwork.
- Special ed teachers should not have duty periods nor be pulled for coverage. That time should be given to complete special ed paperwork, assessments, data collection, etc.
- Don't pull special educators from their classes to cover general Ed classes without notice or lesson plans by so the general Ed teachers can participate in walk throughs with the superintendent.
- More and more, my job is becoming a desk job. I spend way less time in the classroom than I did just 5 years ago. We need to get back to teaching to the needs of the kids.
- Curriculum planning
- Assigned to fewer classes Lower Caseload No Duties Work with fewer co-teachers Work in area of content certification
- Less paperwork- it is out of control and not manageable at this point. I have taking sick days just to stay home and catch up on paperwork. More teachers to manage and make caseloads smaller.

- Smaller caseload and more time to work with students on my caseload. I need time allotted for one-on-one sessions, small group sessions, and time within the inclusion classes to work with students and co-plan with teachers so I can become a better co-teacher.
- The format of this survey was difficult for me because I am a non-teaching Department chair for special ed. I am responsible for 9 teachers including Alt curriculum, self-contained and co-teaching. My overall responsibility is for the 90 students with IEPs in my building. As far as improvement. An extra planning period for special educators would be beneficial. They are responsible for collaborative teaching and a case-load. There just are not enough hours in the day to get all the compliance/paperwork things done for the IEP and then be a strong/effective co-teacher. Teachers are only given 1 personal planning during the day, the other is for collaboration/PD. When they have IEP meetings they lose their collaboration time, but are still expected to do their classroom load. Additionally, the volume of meetings has increased due to parent requests, so it no longer only 1 meeting per student each year (or may be 2 if we do some assessments). 1 student may require 3 or 4 meetings per year. If all 15 on your case load request that, there would be 45 hours of meetings (missing classroom instructional time and planning) and more time lost in preparation for the meeting. Currently, we have 1 student that has already taken 9 meeting hours, at least double that in data collection, team meetings, and discussion with the legal office. Equity is definitely not there with all students. We would not be able to support our students if all families made such requests. The families normally do not make such requests, but if they began to, there would be no way to truly service the students. We would benefit from an assessment team set up in a regional or cluster location that would do all of the assessments (as part of initial IEP's or triennial). While it is best practice for our case managers to do the assessments because we have the relationships with the students, it comes back again, to time out of the classroom or time away from collaboration. We are very fortunate to have part-time IEP facilitators at the secondary level. We need full time due to the volume of meetings. Additionally, we need full-time psych, full-time speech and language. Students needs re increasing, yet our services are not. Same for other related service providers. We need them to be involved with less schools so they can best support our students.
- Co-Teaching is an unsustainable model for the delivery of services in our County. Special Educators should be planning for remediation opportunities in the classroom only. At our school, we have under 5 special educators spread out over 16 classes, across grades and contents. With meetings, IEP writing, Medicaid, Progress Reports, Educational Testing, and the various paperwork and data demands, effective planning time for co-teaching is almost non-existent.
- Need more teachers (special education) in order to have fewer on case load....more effective teaching when there are less number of IEP's in a class. For example a class should not have 31 students and 15 students with IEP's or 24 students in a language arts class with 12 IEP's . This makes it so challenging to get to everyone effectively.
- Smaller caseloads smaller class sizes in all settings less paper work less requirement for mandated state testing
- Most ideal would be smaller caseloads
- Allow time to do the necessary paperwork to determine that another staff member is needed to teach the children on our total caseload. Hire another teacher for the visually impaired.
- Special time needs to be in place so that special educators can complete paperwork (IEPs, progress reports, etc). The state needs to be aware that ever since special education students have had to follow the same testing standards as general education students the IEPs have become a waste of time. Goals aren't being written addressing the needs of students, but rather what the curriculum says that they should be doing. When students are 4,5,6 or more years below grade level, it becomes increasingly difficult to write an IEP.

- Reduce the amount of paperwork required.
- Adequate planning Teaching to the students' needs rather than teaching to a test Collaborative planning Adequate materials Preparation
- Consideration of required testing, paperwork and IEP meeting time when considering whether student services are in compliance. Perhaps a day each month (or every other month) could be set aside for paperwork and meetings. Staff could focus on the meetings or paperwork instead of trying to juggle preparing for a substitute and holding a meeting while worrying about getting back to class. Perhaps additional compensation could be provided in consideration for the (substantial) time special educators spend on paperwork outside of the duty day (on a regular basis).
- Longer work day
- Planning that is free from any distractions and should be continuous for 1 hour during the day and not after school
- Do away with state testing for students with profound or degenerative disabilities.
- Would like less case management duties/less number of preps or untouched planning periods during the day, less professional development (use time for preps or case management). I would like more time in evenings and weekends to see family, run errands and do housework.
- Curriculum needs to be life skills based for students 18-21 years of age
- Special educators use most of their planning time completing IEP related paperwork so that they can be compliant. This then in turn leads to the teachers spending an extraordinary amount of time outside their duty day planning for instruction and often continuing to work on IEP related activities. An average IEP for a student in a self-contained class takes at least 15 hours to complete from draft to final in order to be done well to meet compliance standards. I believe that special educators should be given additional time within their duty day to work on the IEP compliance requirements. This would allow more time to dedicate to better instructional planning to meet student needs more effectively.
- More focus on life skills for non-diploma track students.
- Reduce the amount of paperwork that is mandated. One good way would be to exempt Special Educators from SLO's- IEP goals and objectives are very similar; to add more arbitrary data collection from SLO's is a waste of our time and takes more time away from actually being with the students. Special Educators should also be exempt from the FFT and given a different evaluation method; in order to be considered as "Distinguished", the criteria in the FFT is asking for students to be able to perform certain skills related to the teacher-if our Special Education students could perform those skills they wouldn't be in special education!!! That makes the scoring unfair to Special Educators. Also, the amount of paperwork required while "on cycle" on the FFT is too much for us to complete while trying to complete all the other IEP related paperwork, and other state/county/school wide data paperwork we have to complete as well; it feels like a punishment to complete that amount of paperwork (and it's probably all because of those individuals who were not doing their jobs correctly-discipline them, not ALL of the teachers!). If the amount of paperwork stays the same, something needs to be done to give Special Educators more time to complete the paperwork, because otherwise the students' education and IEP goals suffer as a result.
- I am a Program specialist and I think that there should be a sped facilitator in each school to act as a liaison for assisting teachers with compliance and meetings, if you look at the data and compliance lists from schools that have a specialist or facilitator you can see there are fewer compliance concerns.

- Some teachers are good with IEPs development, have a position so that they can do just that, and other teacher implement the goals in the classroom. I understand infant and todd teachers have this system.
- Far less time needs to be dedicated to testing preparations and testing.
- 460 Polling House Rd
- Smaller caseloads
- Some of the paperwork and filing can be done by other people instead of the special educator. The overwhelming load and changes that continue to occur throughout the year are excessive and many times unnecessary. I have seen items put on IEP for compliance because some parent sued. The cost and amount of work that adds to the IEP is tremendous. We have now been told we have to do another item regarding transportation to regulate children needed a carseat when it is a state requirement that 3, 4 and 5 year olds need a carseat. They are integrated into the special ed buses, just make the bus aides use them instead of making another piece of work for special educators.
- I think some of the work needs to be removed. We either need to reduce the number of classes we are co-teaching/teaching or some of the paperwork needs to be assigned to other people. It also seems that every year we are expected to do more work and take more students on our caseload. It is impossible to serve every student.
- Co-teaching model in the inclusive classroom to meet all students' needs. Smaller class sizes. Smaller case load. Less administrative duties outside the case load.
- Caseloads should be limited and more itinerant teachers should be hired to keep caseloads down. Every school should have an allotted amount of supplies and space for itinerants to work. Time should be allotted for sped teachers to close out and IEP and PWN after each IEP meeting.
- A Special Education chair person who is well trained and professional in their decision making process. Often I find that teachers in this building are confused as to the decisions being made, and when we question, we get shut down. There are many aspects of the SpEd programs that are not being done properly, and though attempts have been made in the building, administration continues to side with the SpEd chair, who is making blind decisions that are not in the best interest of all students.
- Make sure that the special educators meet the service hours described on IEPs. Provide time for the paraeducators to meet with teachers. Currently, the teachers have the time, but the paras are pulled in too many different directions.
- Hire more sped teachers in schools that have high caseloads. Have a resource room for kids that need more intense services. Restructure planning time.
- More correlated planning needs to be created so that myself and special educators can meet to help create lessons that are better accommodating to my inclusion students. I also believe special educators are being pulled out of the class to frequently to be of help to the IEP students that are in my classroom. These meetings usually consist of IEP meetings or case management work. I also have instances where 1/3 of my class is IEP and I have an IA who is supposed to be in the classroom but is more often than not being pulled to sub because there are not enough subs for coverage.
- In my situation, one of my biggest concerns is the concept of least restrictive environment. I teach pre-k special ed. When we are considering kindergarten placement for the next year, I feel inclusion does not meet the needs of some students, but the next alternative is too restrictive. There needs to be a class which offers small class size, with opportunities for mainstreaming. This use to be an option, but now with the least restrictive initiatives, children are being placed in

environments which is not always in their best interest. I feel such policies have lost the concept of what is best for the child.

- Definitely more time to complete paperwork. Smaller caseloads would be welcomed. Have assigned person do paperwork or help with it
- Allow more specialists and para's to be trained to help with testing. Have designated numbers that are allowed for caseloads. There are caseload analysis's out there for different specialists ie vision, hearing etc.. Each looks at kids differently and that must be taken into account.
- Touch base or meet with the Special Educators on a bi-weekly or monthly bases to determine the needs of our students (i.e. are meds involved in behavior changes?, is behavior contract needed for goals to remain consistent?)
- Hire more staff. Each school could have an IEP chair (larger schools may need more than 1) to manage the meetings/testing and case managers would be responsible for providing service, progress monitoring, writing PLAAFPs and goals. Develop a consistent way for services to be provided county wide (all service delivery or all co-teaching). Remove additional duties from Special Educators (bus duty, hall duty, advisory etc.). Provide a way for common planning time to occur so that special educators and general educators can meet to discuss student needs, services and concerns.
- More ancillary staff assigned to our school (PTs, OTs, SLPs) More set aside time to do IEPs ON THE CLOCK, instead of doing them on OUR own time (there is no way in hell we can do IEPs AND teach class during the school time. Everyone who is a special educator in public schools KNOW that the dirty secret in SPED is the numerous hours we work on paperwork ON OUR OWN TIME. We are 'case managers' with certain federally mandated deadlines, but given hardly no time, if any, to meet these deadlines unless we take the work home.
- I am a speech/language pathologist. There are no constraints on how many students that can be assigned to my caseload. There are times that it grows so high, I can only see students in large groups. IEP meetings spill over into the time allotted for me to service students and I struggle to service the students. More and more students transfer into my school daily and my caseload continues to grow. There needs to be a law or rule that after a certain number of students is reached on one caseload, the system should hire another speech pathologist. In the meantime, teachers want their students screened for AIS plans when there is barely time to service my IEP students.
- Streamline MOIEP for faster paperwork completion, there are too many menus to open to move through the paperwork. Provide better resources for instructional planning.
- Administrators and General Educators need more professional development about addressing special needs, especially in our middle schools and high schools. Co-teachers should not be wandering the room and assisting. I am a resource teacher going in and out of many schools a day. Some schools are working together and some are not. When a special education teacher is absent and has a sub assigned, that sub should not be pulled to cover general education leaving special ed students with no services that day.
- Staff need to be hired in a more timely manner. Our department (Vision) had qualified applicants (which are difficult to find in our very small field of teaching the visually impaired) that had been interviewed and our supervisor was hoping to offer the position to them, however, the applicants moved on to accept positions elsewhere because it took the bureaucracy too long to release the position so a formal offer of employment could be made. We are now extremely short staffed and unable to serve our students needs fully in a timely manner. As more accountability paperwork is added each year and we are expected to learn new ways to keep data and have more frustrating and time-consuming software programs to deal with like TeachScape, teachers are more and more stressed. I notice that educators are no longer willing

to collaborate or help others the way they used to. Everyone seems too frustrated, stressed and irritable now. This is not good for educators or students! This makes everyone's job more difficult and the students do not receive the same level of attention or support that they used to. Our working conditions could be improved by making some commonsense changes to reduce redundant paperwork, streamline the teacher observation process and give teachers some more time in their work day so they could once again help other colleagues and share information. The overly complicated lesson plans we have to write and the ridiculously lengthy and complex TeachScape evaluation process takes countless hours of time outside the workday. This is not fair and it is unrealistic to require so many separate things to be checked off on one lesson plan. No one can really teach this way day to day. No one can get more than a couple distinguished scores anymore because the bar has been raised ridiculously and unrealistically high. Please help us!

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**(2) What topics or issues would you like to receive professional development on to address the needs of your special education students and/or improve your working conditions?**

- How to work with students with autism. How to address oral scripting in students with autism. Classroom management.
- How to integrate and grade/adapt the curriculum for our students so that were not just teaching things that go over their heads/aren't appropriate
- Our district is using ESOL teachers as guided reading teachers. This is not exactly our role.
- CPI for all Special Educators who want it.
- Specific assessment / therapy techniques.
- Information to help the regular students deal with these types of students. And how to help them with all the extra time I. Have to spend meeting the needs of the special Ed student
- Enough time to complete all case management duties.
- I think that teachers need additional training and easier access to specialists outside the building who can visit the classroom and meet students with special needs, to help create intervention materials/supports, and PARTICULAR to model effective implementation of these strategies for 2-3 days (rather than 30min-1hour) or for specific times/subjects chosen by teachers (not the specialist). Teachers can sometimes be off-put by special educators in their building. Special educators are sometimes put in an awkward situation of providing educational support for teachers, where teachers may feel that they are being treated as inferiors rather than equals. Then similarly, special educators feel that supports are being brushed off or ignored, and feel discouraged about continuing to provide support.
- Special ed team work
- Improve working conditions by putting a sink in my classroom so that if one of these children sneezes all over me or spits on me that I am able to wash my hands and face immediately instead of dousing myself with hand sanitizer. The class sizes of general education students also must be reduced when adding special needs students to the classes. A general educator cannot meet the needs of special education students- especially ones with severe autism if those children are brought into a class of 25 other students. Elementary level Related Arts teachers (Art, Music & Physical Education) are being burned out because we are expected to be magicians that can handle anything without adequate support. We are also pulled repeatedly for IEP meetings by law and then have to leave our general education students in the hands of substitutes or

instructional assistants who are not even close to being qualified to teach our specialized subject areas.

- Special Education/technology-what programs can assist with social stories, etc. on a daily basis?
- How to adapt a specific content whose objectives cannot be modified to students who require modifications. In science you have to know the vocabulary and concepts and do multi-step labs - there is only so much that can be reduced.
- Writing measurable goals which support the common core.
- Foundations, data collection, behavior problems.
- Inclusion services for students with autism and other disabilities. Helping teachers Promote carry-over of social/pragmatic language goals for students with autism into the classroom and other parts of the school day.
- How to create a schedule that allows us to see all of our kids for their therapy times dictated by the IEP, but also allows us time for collaboration, RTI, evaluation, and make up therapy. Planning alone is not sufficient. We need planning time at the same time as special educators so we can collaborate.
- I just recommended, and the system just started, an American Sign Language class. I took a poll last year from my fellow paraprofessionals and 65 were immediately interested! I contacted staff in professional development...long story short they took one look at the large amount of interest and our first class is Nov.23rd :) I strongly believe that any of my coworkers could do the same thing I did to get worthwhile PD classes. Get the interest first then show the data. Worked for me!
- I know what needs to be done, I just need time to do it. I don't need PD
- IEP development behavior students collaboration how to multi task to finish an impossible job
- Inclusion
- Discrimination against general Ed and special Ed discipline issues
- Multi-disciplinary collaboration - there simply isn't enough time for staff to explore this with large caseloads and demanding students
- I don't have a suggestion at this time because I don't have the time to be out of my building to attend another meeting.
- 1 special educator per grade level so we can participate in planning
- What should be the maximum class size for inclusion classes. 33 kids is way too much! Should that number change for state assessed courses?
- Co teaching with teachers in the classroom and how to provide speech/language services in the classroom effectively.
- I am not sure that we need professional development meetings- they take even more time away from our students. I think the county, and really the state, as a whole needs to work towards a more equitable distribution of caseloads.
- Professional development on getting kids interested in what they're learning, particularly in social studies.
- Providing specialized instruction to special education students.
- RTI or other pre-referral support systems and how to implement them successfully while still managing caseloads.

- More ongoing crisis prevention training. We are only required to renew our card once a year or so.
- Classroom supports, RTI, etc.
- I don't need any more professional development. We need MORE special education teachers. There are students in Baltimore County with significant needs languishing in general education classroom. The general education teacher is expected to implement the IEP. That is ridiculous when there are 25-28 students in the class and more than one with an IEP.
- More time to service every student every day not once a week or covering other classes.
- SLPs are the only discipline responsible for direct service, testing, attending screening & IEP meetings, and our service hours are accountable to the Feds (unlike resource)....We are also expected to complete detailed monthly Medical assistance forms; unlike resource each therapy encounter must be documented.
- How is the data we are so diligently entering into the state websites and medical assistance websites being used? Is data available for long term trends in special education? Research based programs often have an intense level of focus that cannot be replicated in a school setting. What percentage of students are improving to enter regular school and how does that compare to the private programs with more intensive service for similar types of students?
- Something better needs to be done to help struggling readers that does not have them being passed along and/or having personal readers and scribes. By middle school many students either don't care or only work if someone else reads and/or scribes for them.
- How to use new computer programs. They just keep changing,
- More behavioral professional development
- Differentiation of academics Behavior management in the general education classroom setting
- I would like more PD in the areas of behavior management.
- None - make more time available for SPED-Regular coordination
- More professional development with working with the ASD population in public schools, case load management strategies (time savers), working on the /r/ in school age population-strategies and techniques.
- What should you do when a student comes to class every day without the proper tools, like a pencil? What should you do when a student is trying to avoid work and is constantly arguing with you when asked to complete a task? What should you do when none of your strategies are working and no one is available to assist you?
- Planning when there is no school time provided.
- How can special education teachers most effectively service the children on their case load? Special education teachers in my building are spread across multiple grade levels and have up to 20 students in multiple grades on their caseloads. They cannot devote enough quality time to any one grade or student. Special service providers are part time and none of them seem to work on Tuesdays. This is also the day we have IEP meetings scheduled. This means there is no classroom support for any of our classes on Tuesdays.
- As I mentioned above, I think staffing numbers is a serious issue with our special education teachers given the workload.
- I want more information on incorporating more movement into my lessons to give my students the frequent breaks they need.

- Collaboration and evaluation areas of my classified employee evaluation form so that I can know EXACTLY what my duties are and are not because I feel that I am doing way beyond what is required of my position for significantly less pay than certified teachers.
- About 3 to 4 years ago, a motion was made during our state RA to address the credentials of educators identified as related service providers (classified as credential or ESP). What happened? While federal law recognizes the service of sign language interpreters as related service providers, some districts around the state classify interpreters with paraprofessionals, nurses, and even teachers. Interpreters are not even grouped with other communication-related professionals or specialists. Where are the standards for language models hired to work with students of other languages including ESOL? How is fluency in more than one language measured in a state without credentials, license, or standards for language interpreters/translators working in public education? There are standards for interpreters working in Maryland Courts. Highly qualified interpreters are provided for the judicial system, but not for public education. How is a profoundly Deaf or hard of hearing student's achievement determined when access to curriculum is not measured by their ability to access an accurate or an equivalent interpretation? Where is the research on how a standardized test is really standardized when the level of the interpretation varies from one student to the next, and/or one interpreter to the next? Maryland is only one of a handful of states without state standards to support the fundamental right to the language for people who are Deaf and hard of hearing. Surprisingly, it was a student and her family from Montgomery County that helped to get American Sign Language recognized as a language. Today, students may earn a foreign language credit for taking a sign language course. Yet, students who are Deaf and hard of hearing who depend on sign language do not have the right to access their education through a recognized language, American Sign Language. The Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) does not supersede the American's with Disability Act (ADA).
- Teachers already know how to teach, it is the non-teaching duties that prevent them from teaching and providing the best instructional support to students. Anything that interrupts time with students and/or planning for them impacts student performance. If additional clerical support can't be provided, then caseloads must be reduced. In addition, it appears to me that the number of students with mental health issues at all levels has increased. Training to support these students in the classroom seems vital.
- I start out with certain kids in each class and have a good relationship with them. Starting Nov 30th, I am being pulled out of all but one class and put with another student in a contained room with a Special Educator. He will teach, I will be the assistant. Apparently it is to comply with his BIP. BUT what about my other kids that I have been with all year so far?? Don't they deserve consistency? The other IAs are being shifted as well. Don't their kids and the IAs as well deserve consistency? This is not the first time this has happened to me. It's actually the third. The
- Interventions that can be implemented that support all kids, which may help actually divert students from spec ed in the first place. I would rather be supporting kids outside of the spec ed process and therefore avoiding the substantial paperwork demands.
- More efficient data collection; creating more measurable goals; roles of SLP vs. Special Educator on similar goal areas (e.g. developing narratives, reading comprehension)
- Understanding how to modify work to meet the needs of the individual student.
- Autism trainings
- Ways of modifying written assignments for students who have poor and/or illegible handwriting when their focus is on \*what\* they're writing, not on how they're writing it down. Would like to see students learn how to self-modify in elementary grades rather than enter secondary schools dependent on others to modify or scribe for them.

- How to decrease and increase the complexity of written text to address the needs of students receiving speech and language services.
- More on using technology in therapy, How anxiety affects students in their ability to access curriculum, Using curriculum in therapy I would like to have more time built into the duty day to collaborate with teachers,
- How to address reading difficulties in the early grades
- -Understanding IEP goals - Strategies for address emotional disabilities
- Professional development generally creates additional paperwork and responsibilities that we have to collect data on or learn to implement.
- We don't need to the PD. Administrators and general educators need to PD to be able to understand and work with our special ed students.
- Proper supplies. I.e. software, excel word on a iPad not mini where we can't print. Proper testing accommodations for IEP students when taking Park, Map... More of a touch screen for students who can't use mouse. Desk for every Para Higher Pay grade
- Strategies that help specifically in Reading
- I would like CPI training or any training on how to deal with aggressive behaviors when they arise.
- Interdisciplinary teaming.
- No pd ever covers classroom management and behavior issues. It is AVID, testing, college readiness etc.
- I don't need professional development. What I need is assistance in the classroom.
- How to deal with the increase of violent and aggressive students in classroom settings, not more of the CPI garbage that we are trained in. It's useless and irrelevant. The need for ESP's to have some kind of training in psychology since we are dealing with an ever growing population of students with mental illness. Why the MCIE model is failing and why we as educators are not listening to students when they tell us and we can see that it is inappropriate for them.
- Modifications for less work yet same grading scale if using points (as required by my school).
- Students with Autism and more strategies to use in the classroom for differentiation for students with special needs.
- Systems/Shortcuts to completing paper.
- How to address their needs and the rest of the students at the same time.
- How to keep my sanity in this out of control situation.
- Special Ed for ELL
- Professional development time away from students does not alleviate the responsibilities to our students with special needs as their hours ultimately need to be made up due to the lack of special education certified substitute teachers. Unless a professional development can be organized on a two-hour early dismissal day or a full professional development day, this is not a viable option.
- Collaboration/consultation with classroom staff and other related service providers, augmentative/alternative communication with practical strategies for implementation
- Info on young babies

- We do not need increased professional development. We know what to do. We need time and a school structure which will allow us to work collaboratively with school staff and to support the varied needs of all of our students. Teachers are trained and want to do what children need, but right now there are so many demands on their time that they cannot complete all duties well.
- If someone comes up with a way to streamline paperwork in an efficient way, I would love to know about that.
- Do not need professional development. Need smaller classes, students grouped by ability (not GT and mildly needy in same room), and more special education help.
- The referral process for early childhood, and the role of the general educator in the referral, testing, and IEP process.
- I would like professional development on strategies to support my English Learners with an IEP.
- How to improve recruitment and retention service delivery for students in public, separate day schools
- I think it is great that our staff meetings are doing more things geared to PLC (Professional Learning Communities) than general information. I hope that this continues. It is a nice time to consult and network ideas/practices with other OTs and PTs.
- Special educators and Related Services Providers (Speech, OT, PT, Psych) should not have to have duties such as lunch, bus, etc. - during the day when they are to be providing legally mandated services - as these trump general ed time - in my opinion - and IEP documentation, progress reporting, therapy log notes, Medicaid documentation, data collection, etc. are all very tedious and time consuming, yet mandatory parts of the special ed process.
- Make schools more accountable for ensuring that children with special needs receive their special education services. Related service providers are responsible through documentation.
- Clear Directions on SLO Process - Workshops have been provided but more online support would be helpful.
- Methods for improved collaboration; time during the school day set aside monthly for service providers to meet with teachers.
- Behavior Plans alignment of IEP goals to MCCRS - how to (reality based, not the fiction sent by MSDE)
- Autism, behaviors
- All aspects of special ed. reading IEP's, autism, other learning disabilities - almost everything is on the job training in the classroom without SE Teacher support. Accommodations and what they really mean. Should all be broken down by level or grade you teach.
- Reading an IEP, understanding it and using it correctly. How to restrain a student when he/she is putting another in a dangerous situation. How to use motor, ot, sensory materials etc in the correct way.
- Whatever is needed that year it changes from year to year. This year dealing with autism would be nice.
- A sit-down early in the year to go through each student's IEP in detail
- A professional development on community resources available to parents. More information on government grant programs and resources so I can help parents with the process/point them in the direction of services.

- How to utilize the Paraeducator in the room as well as establishing the right kind of relationship with the students.
- Behavior Social Emotional needs Inclusion tips for students who are severely behind...see below  
If we are going to do full inclusion, how do we meet the demands of the general education pacing while still finding time to fulfill IEP goals? So many of our kids are so below grade level that the material the gen ed does on a daily is not appropriate. Even with modifications it's next to impossible to modify everything a gen ed class does in one single way. Can we find a middle ground between pulling students out to give them what they truly need and self-contained and gen ed?
- The workload has become unmanageable, Perhaps an in-service on managing time for paperwork.
- Any topics related to working with children with significant needs. Most professional development seems to be geared for children with disabilities on the milder end. Very little applies to those students in a self-contained classroom.
- PD for para educators to help with data collection. How we can prioritize our workloads to have a better balance in life.
- Technology
- Behavior management
- Balancing workloads - caseload management, actual instruction, conducting assessments  
Compliance
- Work conditions I would like to see in COMAR, specific guidelines as minimal requirements of case management time allotment formula. Planning for multiple grades Case management duties: writing IEP's , monitoring data, creating data sheets, preparing for a annual meeting, formally assessing students, grading formal assessment entering into the computer system, preparing documents prior and after the meeting and submitting to Medicaid . Student: Preparing for student data tracking system or sheets, behavior sheets, communication systems or communication boards, daily planning for IEP goals, home /school communication system. Currently the choices to complete these task : (A) After the work day ( i.e. ) After the contacted teachers work hours ( nights & weekends) (B) During planning time and beyond planning time which creates a compliance issue (C) Doesn't get done ( D) Combination of all of the above If special educators are required to comply with federal regulations that other educators are not required to perform, then we should be given additional school time to complete some of these mandates with "manpower" to cover the children.
- I would love to have more support from resource staff that is actual help, not judging or finger pointing. Resource staff often has their own agenda to keep students in general ed setting to save the county money, even though that is not the proper placement. More behavior specialists are needed. TA's do not have enough experience or expertise to deal with these high need kids. SPED Teachers should be paid a higher salary to help keep them in their positions. The burn out rate is five years.
- Ways for general education teachers to include them more in the classroom
- Being in an inclusion classroom, my students often have to build up to the grade level standard. Often, administration views this as not being rigorous and not up to standard. I would love PD on how to balance the grade level standards and expectations with the actual ability of my students.
- Not more professional development workshops but actual people in the school demonstrating and assisting with what is being asked of us to do at our schools at the PD's.

- Effectively making schedules
- I would like to see more techniques on de-escalation in stressful situations. Also, understanding the IEP of a student would be very valuable to know before a employee is put into the workplace with no intensive formal training.
- A realistic discussion among the educators and administration to have a full understanding that we are doing 3-4 different jobs and something suffers as a result: our compliance with mandated IEP hours!
- Professional development specifically for ED Regional Program
- More training with the general educator on how to work together to help students.
- Implementing Kurzweil (reading and writing) in general ed. classes for grades 3-5 -WIAT-III scoring (specifically for the essay composition subtest) -determining eligibility and termination
- Writing good goals and accommodations
- Have all TAs and TSAs trained prior to working in an ACC room & have them receive on-going training throughout the year. We need quality staff to work in ACC rooms!
- Inclusion within the general ed classroom
- How to do short cuts for paperwork.
- Inclusions practices
- Developing math interventions 2. Working with assistive tech software like classroom suite; time to develop/modify student tasks 3. An understanding my working conditions prof. dev. would add insult to injury especially here in Carroll where monetary compensation is also insulting.
- Cross county in-services. Does Howard County have a genius idea that makes paperwork easier? I'd love to hear it!
- Use of the newest technologies for communication in the academic setting with students who have the most severe and profound multiple disabilities.
- Professional Development on: Differentiation of instruction Autism trainings Core Language Boards in the classroom
- How to plan for multiple grade levels
- Being new it would be great to have more training on writing and taking data on IEP goals.
- Struggling with fitting in everything and determining what to leave out when there is not enough time to cover all content area when students need more time learning due to their special needs. When you add reading interventions into the schedule something else gets less attention.
- Working relationships- paras/teachers, principals/teachers (principals don't always understand what we do), gen ed teachers/sp. ed. teachers...
- Effective Planning Properly utilizing support staff Time management Behavior Management Data collecting
- Methods used for anecdotal recording. Helping the highly functional Autistic child.
- Professional development for the inclusion of all students would be helpful. We are expected to include all students in my county no matter what at the PreK level. It can be challenging and we need more strategies and things to try besides the "make it work" and "be nice" philosophy we are supposed to follow.
- More information on working with students using alternative communication

- Time management
- SLOs Interventions
- Data collection
- More training/reference resources available online (not everyone is able to attend in-person trainings, and the info isn't always shared the same way it was delivered; also, info is always changing, and it's hard to know where to find the latest updates and/or which online info is up-to-date -- or whether it's even there). \* Better organized, updated resources that are already there.
- Writing Text dependent questions. Choosing appropriate texts for close reading
- Co-teaching
- Ways to differentiate while still keeping lesson rigorous. How to provide for students in a self-contained setting with varying abilities.
- See above
- Extra compensation. Working 11 months
- Consistent communication about changes to laws/IEP/paperwork etc.
- Understanding the essential curriculum in Common Core and then the standards related to the essential curriculum. Common Core does not spiral back and how to know which standards special education students need additional time to learn and master.
- Teaching students with intellectual disabilities in the general education setting Teaching math to special education students Incorporating IEP goals while working on the General Education curriculum when the standards don't match the student goals.
- Time- I have 9 kids on my class load in 2 different grade levels, I teach reading, writing, math, social skills, and occasionally support Science/Social studies when students don't mainstream, PLUS I have to write 9 IEPs, FBAs, BIPs, and make meaning of the data. There is not enough time in the day to do it all.
- How to incorporate the curriculum while teaching students their IEP goals.
- How we can do it all and be compliant.
- Technology, technology, technology. We have had some at MCPS, more needs to come via webinar. Also would like more funding for interventions -- we cannot afford some of the great materials on our spec ed budget and if gen ed does not buy them, we cannot have them.
- Behavior for children on the spectrum. Adapting regular curriculum for students in Sp. Ed
- More learning/ training sessions for special education instructional assistants. Updated information and teaching strategies for teaching students with significant intellectual disabilities required to learn curriculum 2.0 separate from general educators as these students require alternate learning strategies. Collaborative sessions (time to share ideas, strategies, and lessons) with teachers teaching the same populations of students.
- I would like PD in a variety of interventions (reading and math). With me being a fairly new teacher, I can only use the interventions that I know from college (if the school has it) or from what my colleagues know. I've had a few students who can comprehend higher than they can decode. These students also have great ideas for writing but have a very difficult time spelling words. I think this is in large part due to the fact that phonics is not being systematically taught (at least at my school). This shows a lot in the upper grades because students (not just students with special ed needs) are having trouble decoding or understanding spelling patterns. It is good

for students to have decoding strategies to determine unknown words, but if they don't understand that you do not pronounce the 'k' in unknown, then they will just guess a word until a teacher tells them the answer. In math, students are expected to show multiple ways of getting to the answer. For some special education students, that is an unrealistic expectation for them. However, teachers feel pressured to expect the caseload students to show multiple ways even after i have explained that it may be best to show one (maybe two) ways. \*Please contact me if you need to! Thanks

- Pre-referral process \*co-teaching \*strategies that address attention concerns in the general education process that will help, before students are referred for special education services.
- Choosing and training on interventions, including students with autism in general education settings who do not come with extra support.
- Across the county I feel as though special educators are familiar with the special education programs within their own school programs but not with other programs and how those programs delivery special education services. It is difficult to determine the best placement for a student when there is so much unknown. I also feel that out principals and assistant principals should allow special educators to reach out to special education instructional specialists and supervisors to consult and ask questions.
- Applied behavior analysis, using different strategies with student with severe disabilities
- How do I make modifications to student work that will not affect them not being prepared for regular curriculum?
- Different math interventions (i.e. Touch Math), acquiring knowledge of writing interventions. There is probably more, but I am drawing a blank at the moment.
- Autism
- The topics that I would like to have a PD about are best practices in terms of developing IEP's -- how the process differs from school to school seems unnatural to me. Who determines services and modifications and who has the "power" to say this is too much or that is wrong. It used to be a team decision (in theory, mostly) but it appears to me it is whatever the "item of the month" is that leads many decisions on the goals, services and aids that a student receives.
- How to manage one to ones when there is no time in the day to meet with them? How to make sure the student is covered when there isn't a one to one there that day? What happens when your substitute is pulled and services aren't provided?
- We have had so much professional development this year that it's becoming absurd. There is no time to even process the PD and make plans to use what we're learning. If addressing working conditions.....it's time to clean up moldy, old buildings and stop having students serviced in portable buildings where you lose time just walking to the classroom.
- Time management, addressing instructional goals and modified indicators and curriculum
- Special education law classes to keep abreast of changes in the law, or full tuition remission for attending this type of training at law symposium and seminars. Advanced IEP writing courses. Data collection techniques/courses. High and low tech AT and the use of technology for students with special needs. There are plenty of courses, but we typically have to pay out of pocket or try to get part of the ed budget from the school to go and the funds are limited.
- Behavior techniques. Play therapy. De-stressing opportunities.
- Scheduling challenges.
- How to co-teach. My co-teacher wants nothing to do with me and creates such a negative environment for me

- Autism in the general education environment!
- Legal changes to the IEP process
- More for math, but how to address the fact that there is little spiraling of skills in Common Core. Mastery is expected at each grade level and the skill is taken directly to the next level of complexity each year. Many students have not actually "mastered" the concept the year before or have forgotten what they learned because it's been so long since they saw it or because they weren't developmentally ready to master at that time. Teachers in my school think of creative ways to spiral skills and to reinforce mastery later but it's difficult sometimes to juggle that with all the new skills that must also be taught.
- A P.D. on differentiating instruction specifically for Special Education students would be helpful. Also a class that outlines the different paths that are available to special education students who cannot follow the general curriculum.
- I would love for someone to come out and shadow a special education teacher in the elementary schools. We don't have an IEP coach, a clerk, or other instructional resource help including interventionists. This year I am the lead teacher with a team of 3 brand new teachers. The county does not provide enough assistance to help brand new teachers. I have spent over 80 hours this school year helping and assisting the new teachers. I have to sit in on every IEP meeting due a lack of knowledge when presenting to teachers. Accelerated programs in Special Education do not work. Special Education Teachers should be dual certified in Elementary and Special Education in order to fully realize what the job looks like. Teachers that come from accelerated masters programs require a significant amount of more job based training than those that come from a 4 year university program.
- Lawful assessment accommodations PD revolving around proper testing and coding of student needs
- Scheduling
- I would not like to receive a PD. I would like to be able to get some of the paper, plan, and/or create materials my individual students can use.
- I don't feel as though I need additional professional development - just time to do my job.
- More technology instruction and programs that "read & speak" for students.
- I have no idea. The situation is so bleak many of us are so overwhelmed we just want to give up.
- I don't need PD, but admin does, starting at the TOP all the way down to bldg. admin. Tons of \$ is being spent on people at the Board of Ed, but VERY LITTLE is being directed at the student level. It's upside down.
- Strategies for working with young (I work in a pilot all day Pre-K program) defiant children
- Changes in guidelines/rules.
- PD time to co-plan with teachers (currently co-teaching with 4 different teachers across 2 grade levels, this is not uncommon) -PD on how to manage TSA and TA roles and planning for them when they are working with students in the classroom
- changing guidelines, concerns for elementary age students
- Managing scheduling of meetings, sped instruction and completing paper work on appropriate time-lines; current research based interventions in reading and math
- Case management
- Administration an gen Ed teacher understanding of our duties.

- We need smaller class sizes in the learning center and possibly not having combo classes with this new curriculum. It is challenging to plan and coordinate, and find time to address all these issues in small group, along with interventions. Our class sizes are large and the kids aren't always getting the individualized attention needed. There should also be clearer boundaries regarding types of disabilities/severity of disability in different learning centers or programs. With so many different types and severe disabilities in some children, it is also challenging to provide proper services.
- Training for paraeducators. It is very difficult to train paraeducators with the limited time during their duty day (before and after school). With my caseload so large, there is not time or ability to train with the children here.
- I do not need additional professional development. I need more resources such as additional paras, teachers or even for there to be a way where I do not carry a case load.
- More time to work on curriculum planning to develop a better understanding of the curriculum and more opportunities to adapt, modify teaching materials and student tasks.
- I just need more time, or less of a caseload.
- How to educate parents more, more professional development on writing and implementing IEPs and reading/math interventions, more information about county-wide special education programs
- Would like our opinions to matter. We work with these kids 8hours a day very closely we take data we teach these kids they ask us questions and take our data and write their IEPs AND DON'T HAVE A CLUE WHAT THE STUDENT HAS LEARNED OR WHAT THEY NEED HELP WITH OR THEIR DISLIKES OR LIKES!!! They have to ask us because they never work with the kids!!! I truly loved working at my school - it was one of the most wanted schools that parents wanted their kids to be at 5 years ago; and now no one wants their kids there and the staff's moral is at an All-time LOW!! Never seen so many staff members so upset and wanting to leave. We need help at our school badly please!!!
- Specific ways for each disability to modify work to address the needs of students with special needs.
- How to teach math word problems to students with disabilities. Best practices on data collection Best practices on working with several general education teachers across grade levels
- I do not need development; I need someone to take care of tasks that take me away from teaching my students so they can progress on their IEP goals/objectives.
- Learning to co-plan and co-teach. I've often felt as the content teacher that grading, planning and general classroom management fall on me. The Special Ed teacher tends to be a help, but not a true partner.
- Teaching reading comprehension strategies to children with Autism. 2. Managing IEP data collection for multiple students while working with multiple students.
- -time management -scheduling
- Classes on what strategies work well for students with emotional disorders. Best ways/strategies to work with Para educators.
- Training paraeducators. Updates on mandatory paperwork requirements and meeting requirements. We get in trouble later but were never trained
- Accessible technology
- Data management

- Organization and paperwork management
- Writing measureable goals so that when you get a new IEP you understand what the previous case manager was measuring and it is easier to collect data. - how to manage planning time and caseload paperwork time
- More training and application of COS I don't participate in PAARC, so a Not Applicable category would have been more appropriate for answering those questions.
- dyslexia, low achieving Special Education students in the general education setting, dysgraphia, dyscalculia, writing interventions, executive functioning
- How could we design consultative models to meet the classroom demands of our students? How to have honest discussions on LRE, (face-to-face pullouts are now disruptive)
- Time management
- Delivering interventions. We have very little or no interventions in the building.
- I don't need any more professional dev. I need time to plan for and implement what I am being taught. I leave most professional development opportunities thinking, yay right when will I have time to do that.
- Proper progress monitoring (data tools, checklists, etc); How to plan for curriculum, but also incorporate IEP goals/objectives.
- Behavior Mgt
- Being able to electronically access IEP's in case a case manager hasn't done their part in sending out snapshots, and also having access to grade book and training would be helpful in figuring out where a particular student stands in a class.
- \*anything on case management \*managing UP
- The problem with PD is that administration takes time out of our school day, so we have even less time to work with our special educators.
- Strategies and instructional assistance.
- Strategies for problem behaviors, increasing engagement of Special Ed students, students with emotional issues, etc.
- Just more time to do work
- UDL for all teachers
- Strategies for servicing students who do not fall 2 years below grade level, but are students of high needs SEIA Management New forms and compliance
- I would like more prof development in the areas of dealing with behaviors in the classroom, data collection and planning.
- We have plenty of PD here in Anne Arundel, it's just not very helpful. How to manage discipline problems would be helpful
- Using technology in the classroom and during individual instruction Teaching strategies for special needs, autism, children with language and cognitive delays, ADHD Behavior strategies that help children learn and promote independence Helping children develop social skills for group learning experiences, especially when learning in groups with typical peers.
- I would appreciate current laws, rules and resources to be used.

- I do not want any more PDs. I am PDed out. We don't need additional training...We need time. I want time to teach, and time to do paperwork. I also really feel for the general education teachers. They have all these special education students 'included' now...one class has an autistic child, an ID child, 2 LD kids and 2 more LD kids with behavioral issues. I am only co teaching with her part of the time. The rest of the time they are on their own. General education teachers traditionally have had 1 class in college in Special education. I am teaching them about the disabilities of the children. For the record I have been teaching since 1984. I love teaching. I love the kids. I love helping parents to help their kids. But all this paperwork and compliance issues and being scared I will be out of compliance and have to go to mediation and collecting data and writing IEPs that will hold up in court is EXHAUSTING. I went to the retirement meeting. How sad is that. 55 and I am practically out the door.
- -The definition of "specialized instruction" -Building an inclusion "toolbox" of supplementary aids  
-Co-teaching models and planning with a general educator -The definition of a general educator's role as the primary service provider for students with special education services -Effective reading and math interventions
- Fewer meetings, more autonomy to make planning time decisions (whether to use time to plan individually or w/a co-teacher, etc.)
- Grading students who are severely below grade level but are expected to perform common core. How to provide services to address IEP goals as well as touch on common core standards
- My program is a regional one housed in five elementary schools in my county. So I have to participate in whatever PD is done in my school - which usually isn't appropriate. I also participate with the PD provided for Pre-K several times a year which is better, but also not always appropriate. I would love to have PD on Autism given that I have students on the spectrum but not yet diagnosed. Our current contract allows for 2 paid sub days a month for sp. ed. teachers to use for paperwork. We have 12 case managers in my building - so those days are pretty useless. Other buildings with 2 or 3 case managers are getting a day a month - I usually get a half day a year. More time is needed for case management!
- What is actually mandatory for the state versus the County and how to address all the goals with students who should be in different groups but I do not have enough time in the day to separate them so I am teaching reading and math at the same time in a very small room.
- Crisis prevention training More detailed special education training- not so fast paced More special education training- more than once a quarter so that there is not so much information overload Every special education teacher to attend the trainings- not only one representative so that everyone is disbursed the new information and can ask questions.
- We still have Corrective Reading as our reading intervention. Outdated! Where are the funds to purchase updated materials? Also, I would like prof. development on how to conduct small reading group instruction for a group of students that have vastly different reading levels, and have significantly different needs per their IEP (fluency, vs decoding, vs comprehension).
- We are required to create an IEP and provided services based on what the student needs and not what the program has to offer. But then the school does not have the support to offer what the IEP says! It is covered up by the fact that the general educator can "provided services" to the student. But if they really could do that, they why did we say they needed an IEP! It is not fair to the students or staff.
- More training on Autism, Seizures, Restraint Procedure, Behavior Modification
- I have gotten good professional development. I wish our general education staff could have some professional development on their role in accommodating/differentiating instruction for

students with and without disabilities. (There has been some training, but some teachers still teach to all students in the same way.)

- There are inconsistencies between standardized assessments and the common core. Many students that we assess are considered "average" when compared to standardized norms but are struggling in the classroom. This presents a struggle when determining if the student is actually a special needs student. There is also a growing number of students with executive functioning difficulties. PD on effective strategies that can be implemented easily and effectively in the classroom by general ed teachers might be helpful
- Autism, professional development on how to deal with behavioral issues.
- No time for PD
- How to balance/manage/complete all the paperwork. The job is becoming impossible to do.
- Guided reading
- General Ed teachers need training on RTI, we end up doing it.
- Writing quality IEPs, writing support for students with writing needs
- Behavior management, para training on behaviors
- Integration of technology with all of the improvements and changes it is hard to keep up. We get trained to use certain programs on our computers, but now we don't have those computers, the kids have chromebooks. Then we learn certain apps to meet our kids' needs, but then the county doesn't buy those apps for the following year because they are too expensive and we are back to square one.
- Resources for special education curriculum.
- I don't think I necessarily need PD, because I know what my students need and understand how to do paperwork, etc - but there is overall too much for individual special educators to do.
- Splitting the special education teacher case manager position into two full time jobs.
- How to discuss issues with administrators without being considered insubordinate. How to have administrators understand that children with special needs are important and IEP meetings should not be rushed as if they are an inconvenience to the IEP chair's time.
- Phonics instruction for intermediate students Kurzweil
- I would like professional development in order to better understand how the county expects IEPs to align with the COS. The paperwork has already seemed to change in the past two months.
- Relevant PD would be greatly appreciated! Lately, special ed. teachers are being grouped with classroom teachers to ensure we all have the same information, which is great in theory, but I need time and strategies to differentiate the curriculum -Ways to support students struggling in reading, math, and writing. I stopped by to ask the intervention teacher something last week and she was playing an awesome phonics game. It was totally connected to the phonics intervention she is teaching, the students were engaged, and it was motivating for them! It would be great to be able to meet with the intervention staff and talk about how students are doing, monitor their progress, make changes to schedules, etc. But that is usually done on our time, which becomes a juggling act with families and personal obligations. -Opportunities to meet and plan with self-contained teachers in my building since we are all working on Alt-MSA and never see each other
- Co-teaching, training paras, collaborating with ESOL teachers for students who are both ELL's and have special needs.

- Interventions that are working. How are teachers managing caseload and servicing students. ESY eligibility - and those questions.
- Writing an IEP refresher course, case management overview/time management
- I would like there to be more training on completing IEP pages, working with different types of disabilities, resources to utilize, and new technology and training on it. I'd also like the mandatory hours of training over the summer to be more applicable to the job I actually do.
- Educate the principals and general educators about special education process, support and purpose! Authentic assessment of caseload tasks, including writing Initial and Annual IEP's properly, scheduling meetings, testing, reports, screening paperwork, monthly Medical Assistance, language dominance paperwork, interpreters, Dual paperwork for non-English speaking families, planning for several grade-levels with 7-10 different general education teachers who are all doing something different, providing accommodations, etc., etc.
- UDC and engaging admin support for classroom management
- Special education is a stepchild in every school. Educate administrators and general education teachers on the potential of special education students instead of focusing on their disabilities only. There is discrimination against student with needs in classes and how they are graded. Not all gen ed teachers do that, but majority do. Till the buy in is not there by gen ed all remedies are like blowing in the wind. I am saying no to the question below simply because I know I will be targeted by my county.
- I am interested in receiving professional development on data collection, effective strategies for teaching students with emotional impairments, and collaborating with general education teachers.
- Modified teacher evaluation which addresses the unique responsibilities of special educators.
- I requested to go to the TASH conference Dec1-4, 2015, in Portland .I applied Sept 3,2015,offered to pay all expenses, but the sped department pay for the substitute. I was declined the professional absence,'it was not initiated by a department request'.... apply sooner. (TASH is the leader in advocating for severely handicapped, since 1975 with Lou Brown as one of the founders).
- I know how to educate my students. However, I rarely have time to prepare adequate lessons and materials during my duty day. This leaves me the choice of sacrificing time with my family so that I can work unpaid overtime or providing instruction that does not meet my standards for quality.
- More training on technology (communication, iPad apps, programs on computer, promethean board etc.), effective instructional procedures, and behavior management techniques for challenging behaviors. Teachers then time to practice using them or create materials to use in classroom. We have a lot of trainings, but no time to make the changes discussed in the trainings.
- Working conditions need to be better understood by administration. In addition, we are expected to deliver wonderful lessons for each of our classes and also be available for students during lunch to support them in their classes.
- Universal Design lessons and classroom management.
- None, we just need more time but that's too difficult. There isn't enough time in the day. It isn't realistic to expect more than 2 planning periods in an 8 period day (not including lunch). There's just a lot that needs to be done. It's the nature of the beast that is Special Ed.

- I teach in a self-contained environment, focusing mainly on life skills and functional academics. I would like for more professional development opportunities about teaching students in these type of settings, trainings that are designed with teachers in these settings in mind.
- Find another way to conduct IEP meetings without having to have all the necessary people/staff to come to the meeting.
- Technology use
- New instructional techniques to prepare for PARCC Assessment, appropriate materials for high school students, vocational education for special education students, pay for special education teachers
- Educational testing, state laws, behavior
- 1. Consistent responses 2. How to instruct choice making with students who are significantly physically and intellectually limited. 3. The importance of a communication system from a very young age, teaching staff and parents to use it!
- Research based instructional practices and techniques for self-contained classrooms, any PD related to special education
- My working conditions would greatly improve with dedicated time for case management and paperwork in addition to time for instructional planning.
- Better training for practices for students with severe-profound disabilities, collaborative sessions with other teachers who serve this population
- I know what I need to do, I don't have time
- Autism (Post-Secondary Options) Available worksites in the community
- See above
- We receive a good bit of professional development. I can't think of anything additional.
- Teachers being transparent, and communication
- How to deal with bullying. How to adapt lessons to meet the needs of different learning disabilities. Using video to allow kids to "see" themselves in the class setting. Using video records to record negative and positive behaviors in the classroom.
- Time management. IEP are too long (60 pages<). Reg Ed teachers they don't know how to read/interpret the data from an IEP all reg ed teacher should be trained how to access and interpret the IEP. We need to write IEPs for the meeting, summarize IEP for teachers and supporting staff; write, analyze and summarize quarter report; write, analyze and summarize teacher reports; respond to parent emails (sometimes 4-5 emails from the same parent the same day) in a timely manner. Develop, implement analyze and write SLO (sometimes we don't have the same students second semester and we need to re-do the SLO, data should be place on a data base so teacher can share their results and they do not re-invent the wheel). We have to implement SLO, meet IEP goals provide accommodations (parents get upset because they think Resource is a study hall) during resource time at the same time. Special education teachers, are doing more paper work (administrative work), mentoring, providing psychological support (for student parent and staff), data entry, analyzing data, training (training reg ed teacher/supporting staff how to support special ed students in the classroom), collecting data, modifying lessons/homework/projects/test, providing accommodations meeting with parents and staff during school hours..... rather than teaching and supporting the students. Sometimes paraeducators do a better job than me supporting the students because they don't have to do the amount of paperwork that I have to do.

- The training we do receive is not worth much, -for example, at the last training we are asked to share what we know about a topic, I can understand this as an introduction to a training for us, but when what we know becomes the training and nothing new is offered, I can only wonder why I'm at the training if I'm not given something I don't know. It seems like the training is a nice idea and a grant allows all of us to attend with subs, but no really useful information is conveyed, so why bother?
- New Techniques
- Co-teaching models Close reading strategies How to get students to practice critical thinking when reading or problem solving
- More guidance on instruction using the curriculum. More resources & time to share with other teachers.
- Not more PDs, but time to work with my spec. Ed.
- How to accommodate without violating confidentiality
- How to be in two places at once. How to balance the demands of case management and co-teaching. How to avoid working at home on weekends and evenings. How to get reluctant teachers to fill out the forms that I am required to collect and send home to parents prior to IEP meetings. How to get reluctant teachers to provide accommodations to students in the absence of a Special Educator.
- How the system really works with special Ed placement
- How to address student's instructional needs in the IEP when we are required to write grade level curriculum based IEP goals/objectives. How to determine actual grade levels at the high school level (we can no longer write "below age/grade level expectations" on the reading, writing, and math IEP present levels of performance) when there are no resources to determine this at the high school level and general education teachers can't even agree on this.
- I would like to receive professional development in the area of the new Maryland Online IEP. I would also like to know how to get my Certificate to show my content areas of certification. This concerns me because during a recent 2014-2015 stipend pay to Title I schools, I did not receive the stipend because my Advanced Professional Certificate listed me as a Resource Teacher. I have been an Instructor since I've been employed in the County, as well as being certified in Biology, Chemistry, Special Education and Administrator I and II. Thank You
- 1. Having technology in the classroom. 2. The ability to evaluate support staff. 3. A supply budget specifically for CRI 4. Behavior management for students with severe cognitive disabilities 5. Planning time
- Latest research on best practices with working with students in LAD program.
- Paras need more help recognizing how disabilities can lead to students acting uncooperative and ways to work effectively with those kids.
- TECHNOLOGY TO ASSIST KIDS ON CHROME BOOKS- KIDS NEED TO BE AS INDEPENDENT AS POSSIBLE, AND THERE IS TECHONOLGY TO DO THIS.
- Increasing my responsibilities by asking me to go to trainings adds to the problem. PDO is important and I support the need to ensure I am up to date on research and best practices, but the time commitment is part of the issue
- Good idea... make us miss more time with our kids for more "professional development"
- Weekly staff rolling meetings during planning, although some topics are important, the majority is not specific to my classes/job. Takes away valuable prep time/IEP time/parent-student which is

much critical. The amount of time spent outside the work day has increased significantly over the past few years. Conferences with parents (phone) in the evening hours due to lack of time during the work day to call homes, classroom prep, IEP work, etc.

- Dealing with students with social and emotionally disturbed issues.
- I would like my staff (and myself) to learn more about working with students with Emotional Disabilities....i work in LFI
- Technology the students are using, so that we can help them use it correctly.
- Better training for paras in current best teaching practices, esp. those who have been around for decades and are using dated or inappropriate strategies because "we've always done it that way" and refuse to change. Training for all staff on the functions of student behaviors - coming from a MANSEF non-public school, I was appalled at how little public school educators (even those in Special Ed) and admin knew about FBA.
- Model approaches for teaching students who need: Human reader Scribe Reduced distractions
- We receive numerous ads for strategies to improve working memory. Are these legit? My students can do well on short, timely assessments but struggle with comprehensive exams. I tend to think of this as a storage and retrieval issue with working memory being the operative capacity to do well on comprehensive exams.
- Special educator rights in whistleblowing when students are not receiving services & the schools in which we work are out of compliance, IDEA legal refresher, IEP process refresher, Advocacy tools to collect workload data & communicate with administration @ duties
- My special education students need vocational training opportunities and scheduled classes for reading instruction. I primarily teach Social Studies to 10th grade students. In some instances, I am receiving students who have been promoted to 10th grade who have cognitive deficiencies but who also have significantly low reading and writing skills (1st-2nd grade level). For students who have academic abilities that are within grade levels of Grade 4 and up, they are more apt to be able to access the Common Core with modified instruction. However, most are not going to be successful on a college or even community college level. Students, therefore, are being awarded a high school diploma but have no skill to offer the community or work world. Often, they also do not have support from home to help them locate post-secondary opportunities. My working conditions would improve if students could receive vocational training opportunities and also literacy skill instruction because I would be in a better position to realistically help them prepare for their future.
- Less meetings.
- Nothing at this time. I have been a general education teacher and now a certified special education teacher - I am using the tools from each toolkit to teach and prepare my students for the required testing and accountability areas needed to graduate.
- Curriculum Sources for Specific issues: below grade level math and language arts materials and programs; finding "grade levels" when formal testing is not being completed. Dealing with difficult parents. Content training in new curriculum. It is helpful when we are in a class (eg. English 9) but that doesn't always happen. Writing IEP's the way the state expects but NEVER tells us how!!!! They don't even know how to assign grade levels to student skills without formal testing.
- Special education teachers need more time to plan and fulfill IEP requirements, etc., but I do understand that monitoring abuse of the extra time/pay would be an issue. I would like PD on addressing the demands of special education, without spending personal time on weekends and in the evenings.

- Revamp the system as to where all counties have Education Evaluators and Psychologists who handles all needed testing. So that teachers won't have to do testing, develop IEP's, and implement them on top of other instructional and grade level duties. Create a job description or team of IEP writers/developers. Designate teachers who are very familiar with curriculum and can determine and select specific goals and objectives for students. Create SPED offices with secretaries to take care of clerical needs such as invites, scheduling, phone calls, filing etc.
- Dyslexia
- Stop giving me training and let me do my job! I'll ask for training when I need it!
- It's not information that I need - it's the freedom to teach what students need NOT what their grade requires!
- Autism - how to deal with students with this.
- instead of professional development, just MORE TIME to get done what we Special Educators need to get done so that we are not spending so much after school time trying to catch up.
- time
- nscs
- Common Core/Curriculum 2.0 and self-contained, non-diploma bound students Special Education students
- How to work better with the paras
- Collecting actual data for requirements on special ed teachers time. Class size out of compliance, options for students who are unable to remain in the classroom because of disruptive behavior. Trainings for administrators about co-taught classes. Why do we have the most difficult general ed students paired with our students who need special education.?
- How to use all of the available apps to assist our student in receiving their accommodations. There are a lot of tools on the tool bar in Google Chrome that would be great to use if we were trained.
- UDL across the board for all classrooms to help everyone - all teachers and all students esp. those with IEPs.
- The proper way to administer the NCSC test. Planning time with staff.
- Creating IEP's where PLOP and goals are aligned
- As important as professional development is, being pulled out of a planning period when you are already teaching 4 different content areas and providing special education services is too much. Losing those planning periods for the professional development adds more stress and work to make-up.
- How to work with difficult parents.
- I don't think it is so much a need for professional development; I think that most of my colleagues know WHAT to do, but there is simply not enough time to do it. It could be helpful to have a regular professional development for special education updates, as there are changes in the field happening constantly. However, the double-edged sword is that time for professional development is that much more time that is taken away from compliance duties.
- I have had so much PD I could Puke!
- How to write measureable goals based on the curriculum

- Special education training: writing/implementing quality IEPs, co-teaching, grading in the self-contained setting.
- Some of the professional developments should include the general educators who lack understanding of working with special education students. A professional development of what does accommodations look like when providing instruction would be perfect, co-teaching lesson planning, and modeling instructional outcomes for teaching Special Education Students.
- Writing better goals & objectives for common core
- I can address my students' needs. I just have been swamped with unsurmountable jobs that should be delegated to several people. Every year, more and more is being piled on. More responsibility for the students and less for their own advocacy. Now I understand why Special Ed has the highest number of teachers who leave the profession.
- I think that our administration and general education teachers need professional development to understand the legality of IEPs, the role of special educators, and even what it means to have a disability!
- Wish I had the time
- Medical Assistance Compliance Issues Developing IEP goals consistent with Common Core Standards Comprehensive strategies and tools for assisting students in making progress on goals
- To improve my working conditions and further my education, I would like to learn have to create IEP's.
- General education teachers need to be educated on special education law. General education teachers think that filling out paperwork is not necessary and tell special educators how to do their jobs.
- Special education services/paperwork professional development for administration.
- I am not sure what type of professional development would be helpful, unless it could address information about MA forms, why the county I teach in does not use the state IEP documents, or a way to streamline the quarterly report process. Also, having a workload that increases every year and is already unmanageable.
- Determining the instructional levels of my students--we are told not to use the grade levels on the standardized tests. So what are we to use? Better service delivery outside of the class to address specialized needs. Told to not teach curriculum, only IEP goals Training on how to write correct IEP goals and how to implement them in the classroom. I need to shadow someone who is doing this job correctly. Need anchor documents to show a correctly written IEP. A sample document with correct examples that I can follow.
- I would like there to be mandatory co-teaching training at for co-teaching teams at the beginning of the school year. ----- I would like more training on how to help students who have anxiety or otherwise need calming down.
- A more personal way to address all the new paperwork they keep giving us during the school year
- None I can think of right now.
- More efficient data collection ideas. Co teaching efficiently for all teachers IEP Process, documentation, so on refreshers yearly
- P/D that is given for content area teachers should be made available for special education teachers too. This is not consistently in place for local P/D as well as webinars and MSDE sanctioned P/D.

- How to hold the special educators accountable to their job and what action to take when they do not.
- General educators and instructional assistants take on a bigger role in providing accommodations and services to special education students in the inclusive classroom setting under the direction and supervision of the special educator rather than relying on case managers or special education teachers to do it. Special educators would be a resource for consult to students in the inclusion setting taking general education classes for high school credit.
- Pedagogy related to using devices by students
- Changes in MD IEP, what constitutes scaffolding, behavior plans
- Goals and objectives training for students with disabilities ie. autism
- Understanding Ed and psych testing Understanding what the disability code means Gen eds learning how to do paperwork and compliance
- Changes in paperwork – Medicaid, IEPs policies & procedures, etc. We need to be current when and how the laws change, not get it second or third-hand.
- It isn't PD that I need, it's time to get everything done.
- Functional Behavior Assessments, as well as creating Behavior Intervention Plans.
- That depends from year to year on the students in my room.
- I don't want more trainings. I want time to work with students in small group or one-on-one environments where they will best learn and develop skills and confidence.
- Professional development in how to manage such large caseloads.
- I don't have time to attend/complete professional development. I'm already pulled from my lunch, planning, and/or case management period to attend staff meetings, PLC meetings, department meetings, IEP meetings, parent-teacher conferences, admin-student conferences, counselor-student conferences, teacher-teacher conferences, teacher-student conferences, case-manager-student conferences, etc...
- Address SLOs and how executive functions should be included to improve academic success.
- Time management specifically addressing the needs of my students, case load, teaching responsibilities, special education responsibilities and so forth. In other words, come into my specific situations with my specific demands and show me how it can be handled within the duty day without overtime commitment on my part.
- The rules and procedures change so often that Special educators need at least semi-annual update training on all of the new changes.
- As I see it more and more children are being identified as having a disability and are being referred for special education services. If this is going to be the norm we need to bring our general educators on board in way that they are more active in the IEP. This means they must be involved beyond sitting in an IEP meeting as the "Gen Ed teacher" and/or completing a classroom progress sheet for a given special education student in their classroom. This is more than just receiving professional development; this has to be solid ongoing training at the post-secondary level for our core course teachers in general education. Case management needs to be a certificated degree with a salary equivalent to a first year teacher or social worker with the opportunity to move up the salary scale just as a teacher does.

- None- no professional development is going to give me extra time in the day to complete the amount of paperwork I am required to do. I end up losing more time to professional development that I could be working on compliance paperwork.
- 1) MORE SPED TEACHERS (19 IEP students per caseload is absolutely ridiculous!) 2) Doing what is best for students with an IEP and not what is best for numbers. It is so disheartening to have all these decisions being made and not one person thinking about how it affects students with an IEP. It upsets me that my kids are struggling in fast pace courses that is way beyond what they can handle. Why not slow the material down and allow them to take material over 2 semesters instead of cramming into 1.
- Need more time to plan IEP and meet w caseload
- How to manage a special education caseload while having less planning time due to common planning.
- Classroom Management Completing Manifestation Paperwork
- How to gather data in the classroom more effectively to guide instruction for IEP needs 2. Support for special education teachers to truly understand the role of being a case manager 3. For increased mental health services and for them to be held accountable to ensure that services are being provided for
- 226 apple lane
- I don't want training- I want time to work w students instead of simply pushing papers around
- Curriculum development and decisions for students who don't quite reach diploma requirements but whom certainly have higher adaptive skills than students with more severe disabilities.
- Efficient informal assessments
- There must be other counties who run more efficiently, I would love to hear from other counties who have organized more efficiently. I have been in three schools in PG County over my career span. We are all overburdened with special education duties.
- Time management, how to case manage effectively, expectations of the school district (not a principal), Case management must be reduced so we can be effective.
- sample IEPs
- One major issue I would like to see done is, professional development for general education teacher on how to modify their lessons to reach all students.
- Training for other staff about the demands of case management - people give me a "hard time" for not attending PLCs, watching webinars after school, and so on. I don't think they understand that if I'm in the building until 5 pm, it's because I'm doing case management work - training for working with students who have ED and their parents - training working with students who have ODD/Conduct Disorder
- Yearly workshop on IEP Writing, Classes on Time Management and How to Case Manage, Communicating effectively with parents. Letting people really know what we have to do (what is it like to be a special educator).
- WE DEFINITELY NEED FORMAL INSTRUCTION ON THE NEW GOOGLE CLASSROOM SITUATION.
- Co-teaching models that are most effective.
- The special educator needs to the content of the classroom they are also teaching in.
- More effectively handle outburst and fits of rage

- It has nothing to do with how to do my job it is finding the time to get it all done. So far this year I have not completed one IEP at the school. All have been done at home. I have also done all MA billing and progress notes at home. During school I am often making up work with students, handling behaviors, or calling parents. I wish to remain anonymous due to the fact that we are expected to do more and more but not complain. I come home with more work than I ever have and am stressed out more days than not. It is hard to help and enjoy being with students when you know there is so much more to do when you get home. A never ending cycle.
- How to stay "above water" with paperwork.
- I'm not interested in receiving any more PD. I would much rather have time to plan with the special educator to meet the needs of all students in my classroom. However, we have so many meetings that there is no "extra" time to plan together unless we "donate" our time outside of our contracted hours.
- None. There is too much time wasted on PD
- More and more often we are dealing with very difficult children with emotional outbursts and issues ..... This is why as case managers we have no time! We can all use more training with children with emotional difficulties.
- Technology training, especially for students who have individualized needs (augmentative communication devices, for example)
- Social/Emotional training especially for "at risk" students; circumstances are always changing and keeping up with current strategies and the like would be helpful. I am attending a lecture this evening delivered by Erin D. Berman, Ph.D. from NIMH @JHU, Shady Grove Campus -- Coping Strategies for Anxious Kids Ages 8-17, What Parents Need to Know. I find these lectures great additions to my "tool box" when working with anxious students (and their parents)
- Best practices of collaborative teaching; strategies and tools for differentiation.
- Effective organizational strategies for Case Managers.
- The present levels are more difficult to write than ever before because of the data points that are required. I would like to see professional development on writing the present levels to learn how they should be written. I would like to know why special educators teach five classes rather than four classes. If special educators taught four classes, then they would have three planning periods for caseload duties. There should be professional development offered to help us manage our time.
- Google Chrome and classroom new tech and APPS
- UDL; ideas to help special educators work with difficult teachers, etc.
- I would like to be able to take some classes online and learn more about different types of disability and how I can help our students reach their goals.
- Since the new technology privacy policy came into place, other progress monitoring trainings that use online resources.
- Training on teaching strategies for students with significant cognitive delays Training on adapting the general education curriculum for students with significant cognitive delays Writing a compliant IEP for a student with significant cognitive delays
- General educator and new employees have the appropriate training.
- Just to make my answers clear, I am the head of special education, so I do not have a caseload assigned to me as I oversee all cases to varying degrees depending on need and I do not have

classes assigned to me. This might skew your data, but I can easily discuss the schedule and time constraints on all of the special education teachers and paraeducators that I supervise.

- We have students with significant mental health issues, and nowhere to get them help. The same statement can be said for students with drug/alcohol problems. How can we deal with these issues in our schools?
- Better developing the potential of paraeducators in the classroom.
- \*Students with Autism \* students with behavioral concerns \* activities to keep students engaged while learning
- Using the program Kurzweil. Creating a simple UDL lesson for common literacy or math problem solving topics.
- I would like professional development in helping students with ADD/ADHD and Autism.
- I would like to see adequate staffing for Special Education.
- I would like more practice with writing IEPs and developing BIPs. I would like to be more aware of resources that are available to me in the building.
- How to provide all the accommodations and still manage the class
- Consistency from special education administration on rules and regulation, more in person support (not just phone conferences), more time for planning/collaborating with coworkers, more refresher classes to take appropriate time to learn new changes and ideas instead of framing them into an hour or two session.
- DI
- SLO that are suitable for educators and students
- Restraint training
- I would like to not teach every subject. When I taught in another county I taught the subjects I was strong in, and this gave me more confidence. It is stressful when the content is difficult to grasp quickly and plans are not provided in advance and/or due to other duties, I am unable to learn the concepts prior to the instruction.
- Safety How to guide the student in a tech school
- Curriculum in general ed classes needs to slow down so mastery by students can be achieved.
- See above. Too many students on caseload, too many meetings to attend, not enough support from administration, too much to plan for, being pulled to cover classes as a sub, and on and on. And then, of course is the SLO to prepare and having it count so much in your rating! Enough already! Beyond all that is the amount of money and steps we're not getting to compensate for all this workload!
- How to manage the paperwork overload. Time management.
- I don't need it but most special educators are gen Ed teachers don't have a clue about differentiating and modifying class work.
- More time for planning with co-teachers. No SLO's.
- More training for myself and co-teacher on best practices for co-teaching. I was handed a huge notebook and observed one class that was co-taught.
- How can student's needs meet with a large amount of IEPs in a general co-teaching setting?

- More in-depth training on students' disabilities. Better training for support staff. Administrators with special education training. Students properly placed in the Least Restrictive Environment. Mentoring/ support when and as needed. Educational, time allotment support for educators pursuing higher degrees. No caving in to lawyers or advocates and then throwing the agreed solutions on the teacher without the teacher being in agreement. No excessive restraining of students. No excusing/ignoring students harming/attacking teachers. No favoritism to parents or families because of who they know. No decisions by educators/non-educators who are out of the classroom. Cameras in the classroom.
- Class sizes for co-taught classes (should be no more than 20) Scheduling of co-taught classes: many times students with "behavior" issues are placed in the co-taught setting, even if they do not have an IEP. This makes the teacher's job more challenging as s/he is often spending more time managing behaviors than instructing the students. It also impedes the students with IEPs from being able to get their work done with minimal distractions.
- Goal writing for non-certified students; ongoing IEP process training for new teachers, ongoing MOL training for new teachers
- Practical PD that would teach me to manage the above expectations.
- More training on interventions
- Just make agreements in contract whereas special educators be given time to do paperwork instead of attending meetings
- New technology that can address the needs of students in the co-taught classroom
- Training for General Educators and Administrators on exactly what we do and how we have to do it because most of them have absolutely no idea. They think we're glorified teaching assistants with little responsibilities beyond what they see in a classroom.
- Do not remove me from class ever. Schedule other meetings outside my personal planning time.
- Smart board lessons, Plaff writing,
- I have professional development every week with no time to implement the strategies with my students. We only work 37 1/2 hrs. work week. There is not enough time for remedial instruction to take place.
- Programs that align to common core and focus on enhanced remediation for special education students that are 2-3 or even more grade levels below.
- It's not professional development that is required it is time that is needed.
- More DI and strategies for working with many students of various needs at the same time.
- No PD will work if the Admin and General Educators don't support the Special Educators. I've heard more times this year - 'Well, that's taking one for the team, everyone does it'. or 'Its part of the job to lose planning and lunch in SpEd' more than ever.
- NONE!!! I am sick of educators/principals thinking more professional development will help the situation!!!!
- More outside trainings on teaching strategies for students with autism and specific learning disabilities. NO MORE differentiated instruction trainings.
- Progress monitoring ideas
- Crisis intervention.

- Writing good IEPs DI planning with my co-teacher. Latest brain studies on learning issues Advance technology that helps student w special needs Teaching strategies across the country Meeting the needs of our most impoverished; Meeting the needs of our students advanced in one area, challenged in another
- I am struggling with creating meaningful lessons for an ALT student. He needs to be more a part of the action in the classroom, but his ability levels are so different from the other students, I feel frustrated. I am very fortunate to work with a woman in the district who is a terrific resource and has wonderful ideas to share with me.
- RTSE taken on more responsibilities.
- -DATA COLLECTION: every teacher knows where to look for samples of templates as well as the many methods of collecting data (interval, frequency, duration, etc). There remains a significant gap in the effective and most efficient method to collect data per student need. This can be complicated resulting in a severe lack of demonstrated and proven effective examples of useful data collection that would hold up at the IEP mtgs. attended by lawyers and advocates. This becomes an effective hook from which teachers are often hung due to the ease of disagreement regarding the methods used.
- Effectively utilizing space and resources managing paraprofessionals rights and responsibilities of special ed. teachers regarding paraprofessionals rights and responsibilities of paraprofessionals Effective professional communication and balancing kindness and respect with firmness and assertiveness when communicating Professional Development should include significant opportunities to celebrate ourselves and each other's accomplishments. not just going around the room and telling 1 good thing you did today. We never have the time or opportunity to support each other, especially the new teachers. Not like we used to. Administrators need to be educated more about what exactly we do and how we do it. My principal tried to discipline me for something regarding an IEP timeline and the necessary reports, but he had no idea what he was talking about so I could not effectively defend myself.
- How to manage IEP goals for middle school students that the case manager does not teach. How to manage a caseload.
- More info on how the special needs brain works Opportunity to use PD time to create needed materials for instruction with students with IEPs Arts integration Access to elementary educational resources that could be used with middle school students to reteach prerequisite skills i.e. Fastmath List of standards that are prerequisites for grade level math so we can create activities to meet students at their actual grade level. Our students have anywhere from a 5 to 6 year gap in math and reading.
- How to make co-teaching in one class work? For example, I am supposed to be co-teaching in math, however, if a student in Social Studies has a breakdown then I am needed there, thus leaving my co-teaching duties in math and upsetting the math teacher.
- Using a variety of assessments to track progress Instructional planning using data
- Reducing the time required to write iep's.
- Roles and responsibilities between co-teachers should be written out addressed early in the school year. Often times there are misunderstanding on what responsibilities we have when teaching in a classroom when there is a second teacher in the classroom. A set model of a co-teaching practice should be determined a good practice to use in the classroom.
- People at all levels need to understand IDEA. The requirements handed down to teachers show a horrible ignorance of IDEA. It's like a dog chasing its own tail.
- How to compute data in a quick and efficient manner.

- I am not sure of any topics. Time is the key issue or less pieces of paper. It also seems that sometimes everyone is not hearing the same information. I am told what is required at my school but then I get IEPs from transfer students that have none of those elements in place. It would be good if everyone heard the same thing.
- As a General Educator I would like a half day to meet with the Special Education Department and have time to create the document(s) talked about in the question above.
- Resources and or training should cover ways to access the grade level curriculum for students whose ability is far below grade level.
- Database management
- I do not feel that I need any more professional developments to improve my working conditions.
- I need clarification regarding the roles of a special educator vs. general educator in the roles of planning, delivering instruction, grading, reporting, monitoring progress, etc.
- Behavior management for extreme behaviors and emotional disorders. This would be the only worthwhile topic. Everything else is just a waste of my planning time, personal time, or time with my students.
- abuse of power of principals and some vice principals retaliation for being concerned about compliance and work load issues
- \*Data collection strategies to show progress on goals and objectives \*Technology ideas to use in the classroom
- I do not need any professional developments
- Time management and stress relief professional development, information on streamlining data collection for IEPs.
- Behavior management in the classroom. The purpose of documenting behavior and consequences.
- My students are great. I love teaching. Put Admin back in classrooms for a year and remind them what it's really like.
- The job has too many duties and it's increasingly less possible to do a credible job.
- Compliance issues
- Time to review new WCJIV test Time to review Goalbook website Training on BCPSOne We receive too much PD and no time to absorb new info and incorporate into curriculum.
- I am continually finding my own PD to best support my teachers. I would like to see more back mapping from high school to middle, and middle to elementary. Specifically, things like math practices. When students learn multiple ways to solve problems at the elementary level, it would be beneficial for us to know this on the secondary level to better support our students. Same with the move in to secondary.
- More PD would just take up more time that no one has to give.
- General education teacher and encore teachers should have training on how to support students with special needs in their classes.
- collaborative planning with gen ed to help students be more successful, developing IEPs that are standards driven but still meet the needs of students with an IEP
- Technology for the visually impaired

- Curriculum Disabilities Strategies for teaching students with severe disabilities
- I would like to learn more about alternative caseload calculation models. I would like to learn more about special education service delivery models across Maryland. It seems that "Inclusion" does not look the same even within our county. Is there a way to work smarter not harder?
- Unique learning system; UDL
- Communication and literacy strategies for students who are blind/visually impaired with physical/multiple disabilities. (Training through Perkins school for the Blind)
- I take classes in the summer, it is really hard for me to give up hours in the morning weekly for professional development before the students come. Sometimes we have three during the week.
- Transition for students out of the testing window
- How to write standards based IEPs to grade level and prepare lessons to address grade level standards that will still address the more basic academic and functional skills meet their needs. For example, how do we address algebra standards and plan an lesson to meet the standards when we work with students who are unable to tell the difference between a number and a letter.
- NCSC training ASAP
- To improve our working conditions and to address the needs of the special education students we need less paperwork OR more time in our work day to complete the paperwork. Professional Development is not necessary for this fix--perhaps the administrators making the decisions who haven't been in the classroom in several years (or ever) need their own Professional Development by not only visiting but also spending time teaching lessons in both special education classes and general education inclusion classes often so that they can see how their (seemingly uninformed) decisions are affecting all teachers, special education students and general education students.
- Behavior - FBA and BIPS
- Using assessments, handling stress from the profession, more smaller PD on Language Development
- Management of aggressive behaviors due to testing preparation and testing.
- I seem to be in-serviced every time there might be a free day to do catch up on some paper work. We no longer have the collaboration time that was set aside because it is filled up with inservices.
- We receive a lot of professional development opportunities but we don't always have time to implement the knowledge in a meaningful way because of how thin we are stretched with our duties.
- Project based learning, UDL
- A training on making the iep more functional rather than clerical. A training that helps general educators and their school buy-in to have students with special needs included.
- Training of SpEd policy, procedures, and by-laws, so that all teachers can make sure the needs are being met appropriately and according to policy
- Runners, disrespectful students, families difficult to reach
- I believe there should be more special educators per each building to accommodate the increasing amount of IEP students in my county. If the government is failing to allocate funds to

these counties with high rates of IEP students then they are setting up these disadvantaged schools for failures. Proper funding needs to be given to these counties in order for the special and general education to improve.

- Time set aside during school day to do paperwork (managing paperwork)
- \*PDO on ways to deal with non-engaged students or students who constantly disrupt the lessons by calling out, walking around the room etc. \*More Chrome Book trainings for Paraprofessionals
- Interventions How to determine the grade level on which the student is performing How to write a compliant IEP in less time Progress Monitoring
- What topics? How about mandating all teachers have some experience in SPED AND that behavior modification classes be mandated for all incoming teachers, and annual training for current teachers? Issues: Since the school system is made up of more than 50% non-white children, but the teachers of these children are more than 80% white, I would like to see more cultural diversity and EMPATHY classes taught to teachers. It seems like a no-brainer that non-white children are two-three times most likely to be disciplined (suspension, expulsion) than their white student counterparts. Reason? Preconceived notions and ideas about non-white students perpetrated by the majority white teaching staff. It is extremely easy to see that Institutional Racism is thriving in the US school system, at the expense of our country's future (non-whites will outnumber whites in just a few decades in the US).
- One of the things that needs to occur is for all speech/language pathologist to strictly follow the same guidelines for qualifying students for services and some guidelines for the service corresponding to the needs. A student should not be serviced 6 times a month to produce and /r/ sound!!
- Using technology for progress monitoring.
- Stress management solutions. Ways to keep SLO data and paperwork straight. This is very difficult as an itinerant teacher who has to pack everything up and move to the next classroom or school several times throughout the day.