



**Calvert County
Public Schools**

Daniel D. Curry, Ed.D.
Superintendent of Schools

1305 Dares Beach Road
Prince Frederick, MD 20678
Telephone: (443) 550-8000
FAX: (410) 286-1358
www.calvertcounty.education

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Board of Education
Calvert County Public Schools
1305 Dares Beach Rd.
Prince Frederick, MD, 20678

Members of Board of Education:

The Calvert SECAC is in support of the recommended Special Education Staffing Plan for the 2019-2020 school year. We continue to support the ratio of one special education teacher for every 175 students in elementary, middle and high schools, based on total school enrollment and taking into consideration the number of students with IEPs while also being flexible to staffing and resources needed to support students who have IEPs with varying, complex, and significant needs. We understand the need to close the achievement gap that continues to exist between general and special education students and feel this cannot be done without adequate staff as indicated in the Staffing Plan. Simultaneously, considerations for Staffing Plans must also account for needed staffing flexibilities which only present once the school year is underway and new students join CCPS schools, or, when existing students are identified as students with educational disabilities.

Although it is not in the Special Education Staffing Plan, the Calvert SECAC suggests additional mental health and behavior supports for our schools. There is currently only one BCBA (board certified behavior analyst) and only 2 behavior specialists to support special and general education in the entire county. In comparison to other districts, CCPS also has a lower number of school psychologists supporting our schools and students. SECAC recommends that CCPS strongly consider the intense needs which exist in our schools in supporting our students with social/emotional/behavioral challenges. This significant need warrants increasing the number of psychologists, mental health and behavioral specialists to support all of our students. It is also noted that Student Services now oversees the roles of school psychologists, versus the Department of Special Education. Psychologists are tasked with providing services and/or support to general education and special education student populations, thus impacting their availability for students with disabilities.

As parents and educators, we support the Special Education Staffing Plan and thank you in advance for your consideration of additional mental health support for our schools and increased behavioral supports for the Special Education Department.

Respectfully,

The Calvert SECAC