



## FY 2017 Recommended Budget Budget Question

Board Question #: 48

**BUDGET QUESTION:** What is driving the increases in SPED? Are there categories with more incidents, or new classifications? How does the fact that special education students are increasing as % of general student population play into long-term state/national trends? Is this the beginning, middle, or end of the trend increase?

**RESPONSE:**

**A. What is driving the increases in SPED?**

- An overall increase in the Special Education Population in SCPS, since the 2014 Child Count, we've had a 2.8% increase based on our 2015 Child Count to the Virginia Department of Education.
- As a division, for the 2015-16 school year, we have experienced 325 students transferring in that are already SPED eligible and only 103 leaving the division to date
- We serve students with disabilities from the ages of 2 to 21.

**B. Are there categories with more incidents or new classifications?**

- There have not been any category changes in SPED in Virginia since 2009, which was the removal of the Severe Disabilities category. Students previously identified as SD are currently identified under Intellectual Disabilities or Multiple Disabilities.
- The following are eligibility classifications in the State of Virginia:
  - ID - Intellectual Disabilities (effective July 2009)
  - MR - Mental Retardation (discontinued effective July 2009)
  - SD - Severe Disability (discontinued effective July 2009)
  - HI - Hearing Impairment (can include Deaf and Hard of Hearing)
  - SLI - Speech or Language Impairment
  - VI - Visual Impairment
  - ED - Emotional Disturbance (can include Emotional Disability)
  - OI - Orthopedic Impairment
  - OHI - Other Health Impairment
  - AUT - Autism (can include certain areas under Autism Spectrum Disorder)
  - SLD - Specific Learning Disability
  - DB - Deaf Blindness
  - MD - Multiple Disabilities
  - DD - Developmental Delay
  - TBI - Traumatic Brain Injury

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#### **C. How does the fact that special education students are increasing as % of general student population play into long-term state/national trends?**

The increase in our Special Education population impacts the entire school division, from Transportation and Instruction to Food Services. The majority of our students with disabilities are served in the General Education setting, but for those served in programs, additional specialized resources are required to meet their needs in the educational setting.

#### **D. Please share the national trends...**

- National Average - 12.9% (According to the National Center for Education, in 2013 the national average of students receiving Special Education services ages 6 to 21)
- Virginia Department of Education Average for the 2014-15 school year (PK to 12) - 12.7%
- Spotsylvania County Public Schools (2015-16) - 12%