



SPECIAL EDUCATION DEPARTMENT

School Committee Presentation

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Special Education in SPS: The Big Picture

Our responsibility is to identify students who require special education, meet individualized needs in the least restrictive environment and implement IEP and specialized instruction with integrity.

1,032

students with IEPs • 2026–27

17.7%

of SPS enrollment • 2026–27

All schools

provide special education
services

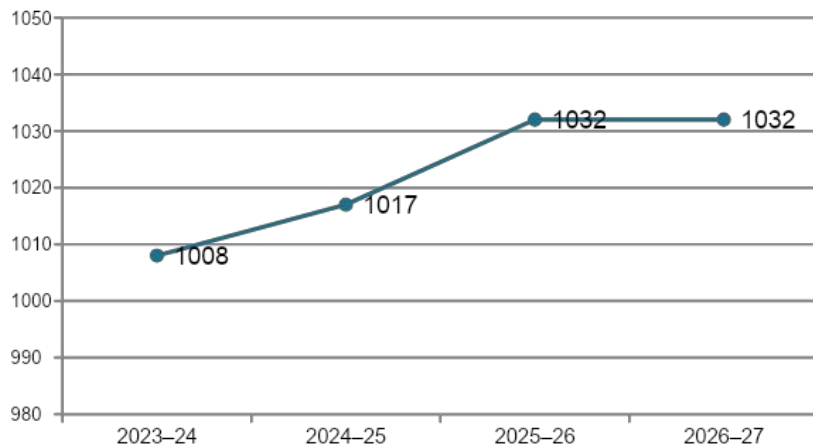
10+

specialized programs/settings

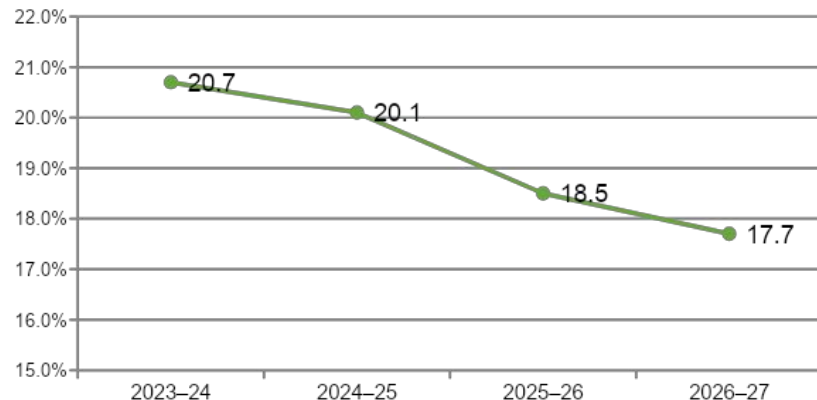
~200+

school-based & central
staff*

Students with IEPs



Students with IEPs as % of SPS Enrollment



*Staffing figures in the outline include shared staff and FTE counts at some schools; this is an approximate departmental footprint.

Services and Programs Across SPS

Every school provides special education services. Specialized programs and settings extend across the continuum based on individual student needs.

Services available across schools

Specialized instruction

Resource room • inclusion/co-teaching • partial inclusion • substantially separate

Speech & Language

Speech/language pathology services and consultation

Occupational Therapy

Direct service, consultation, access and participation supports

Behavioral support

BCBA consultation and behavioral programming

Counseling

School adjustment counseling and therapeutic supports

Additional access services

Physical therapy • orientation & mobility • vision services • nursing

Specialized programs / settings

ECIP

Capuano

SEEK

Kennedy

AIM

Capuano • Winter Hill • Argenziano • SHS

Multi-Graded

Healey

Life Skills

Kennedy • SHS

Language-Based

Argenziano

SKIP

Kennedy

Path

Somerville High School

SHIP

Somerville High School

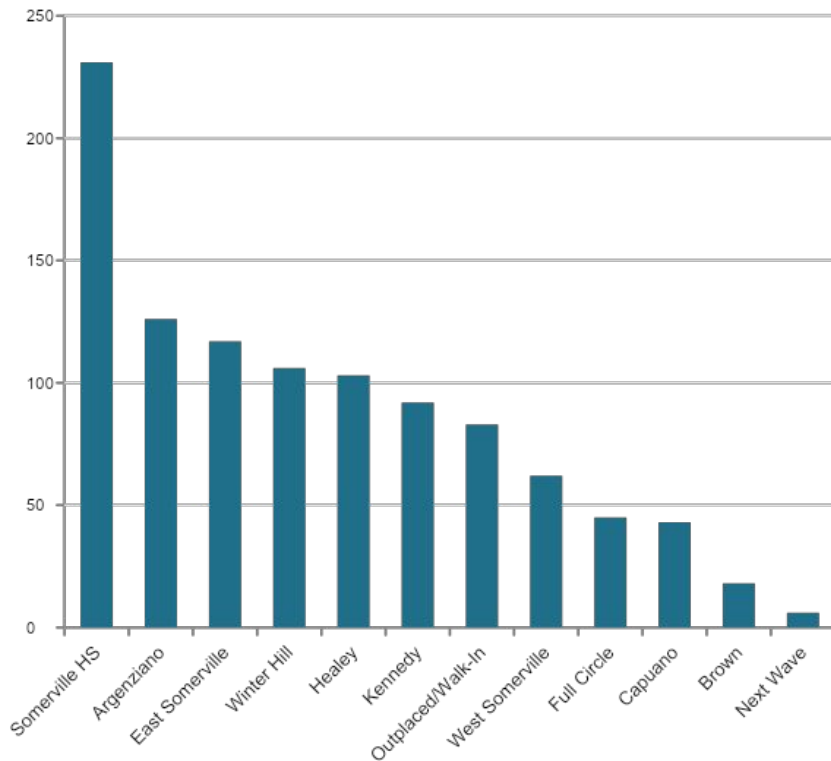
Transition (18-22)

Somerville High School

The continuum allows IEP Teams to match services, intensity, and setting to each student's individualized needs while prioritizing the least restrictive environment.

Who are our Students?

Special education students are served across every school and program within the district.



% of building enrollment receiving special education

Full Circle	68.1%
Next Wave	66.7%
Winter Hill	30.1%
Healey	22.8%
Argenziano	21.7%
Capuano	20.8%
Kennedy	19.1%
Somerville HS	17.1%
East Somerville	16.5%
West Somerville	16.3%
Brown	7.5%

Outplaced and Walk-In Services are not shown in the building-percentage table because they are not building enrollment percentages.

1,032

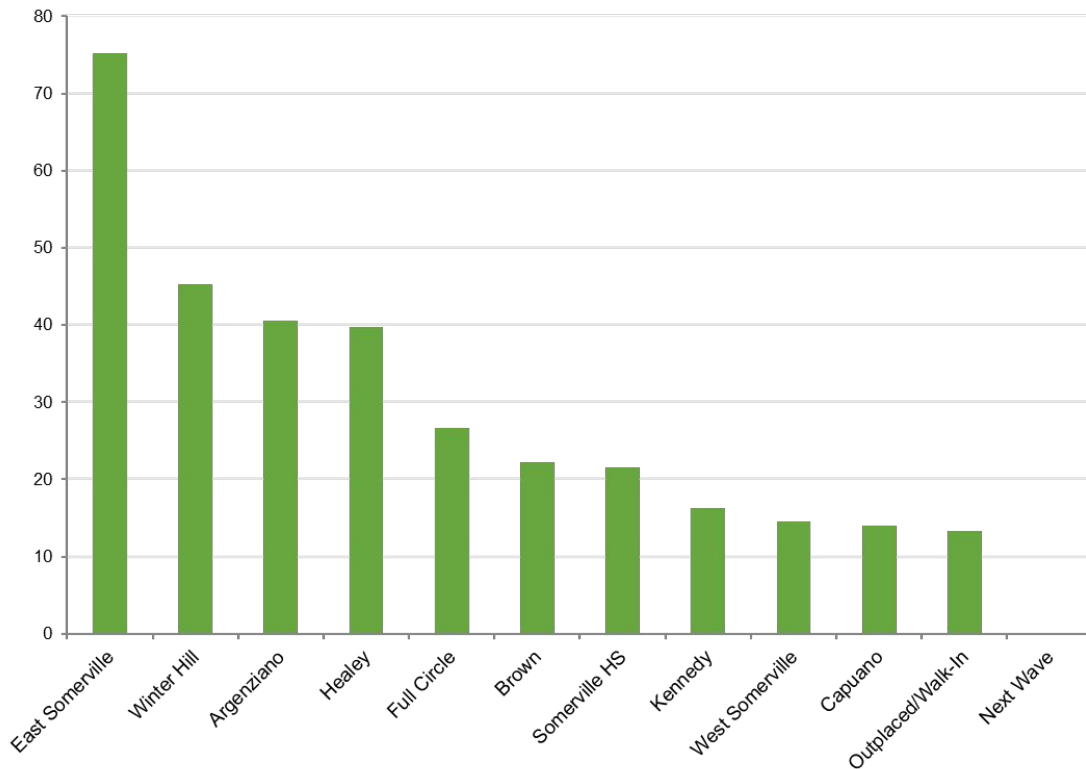
Special Education
Students

17.6%

districtwide

Students Bring Multiple Learning & Language Needs

The overlap between disability and language acquisition is an important part of service planning.



LEP share of special education enrollment

Districtwide, 335 of 1,032 special education students are coded Limited English Proficiency.

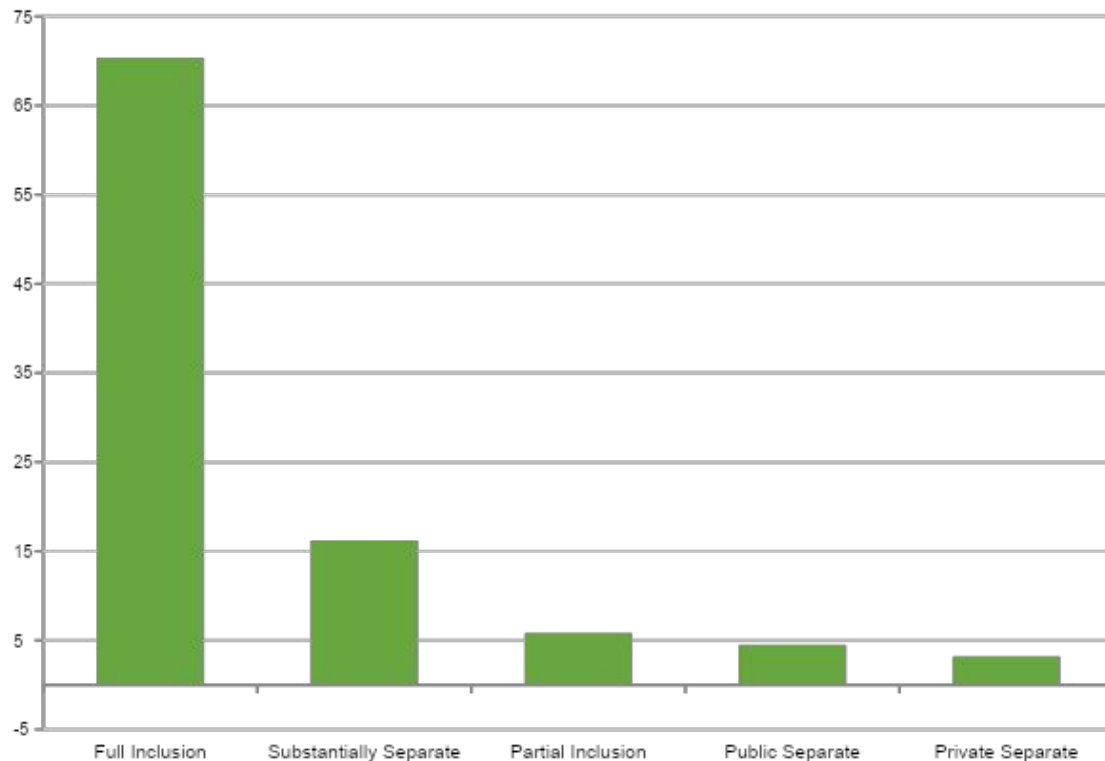
32.5%

districtwide Multilingual Learners with Disabilities

This variation reinforces the need for coordination among special education, multilingual learner supports, classroom teachers, and families.

What do our Students need?

The district provides a continuum of placements and supports based on individual IEP needs.



70.3%

Full Inclusion

16.2%

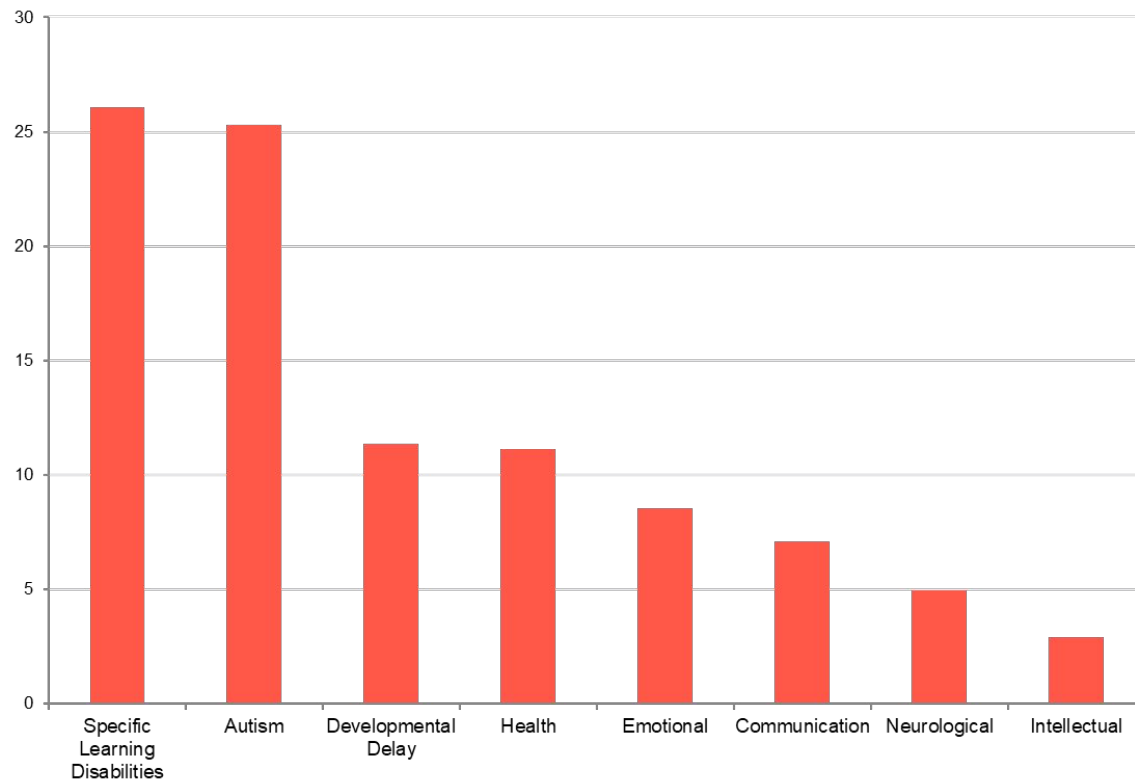
Substantially Separate

5.8%

Partial Inclusion

Primary Disability Category

Student needs span a broad range of disability categories.



26.1%

Specific Learning Disabilities

25.3%

Autism

11.3%

Developmental Delay

Health (11.1%), emotional (8.5%), communication (7.1%), neurological (4.9%), and other categories make up the remainder.

Special Education Department

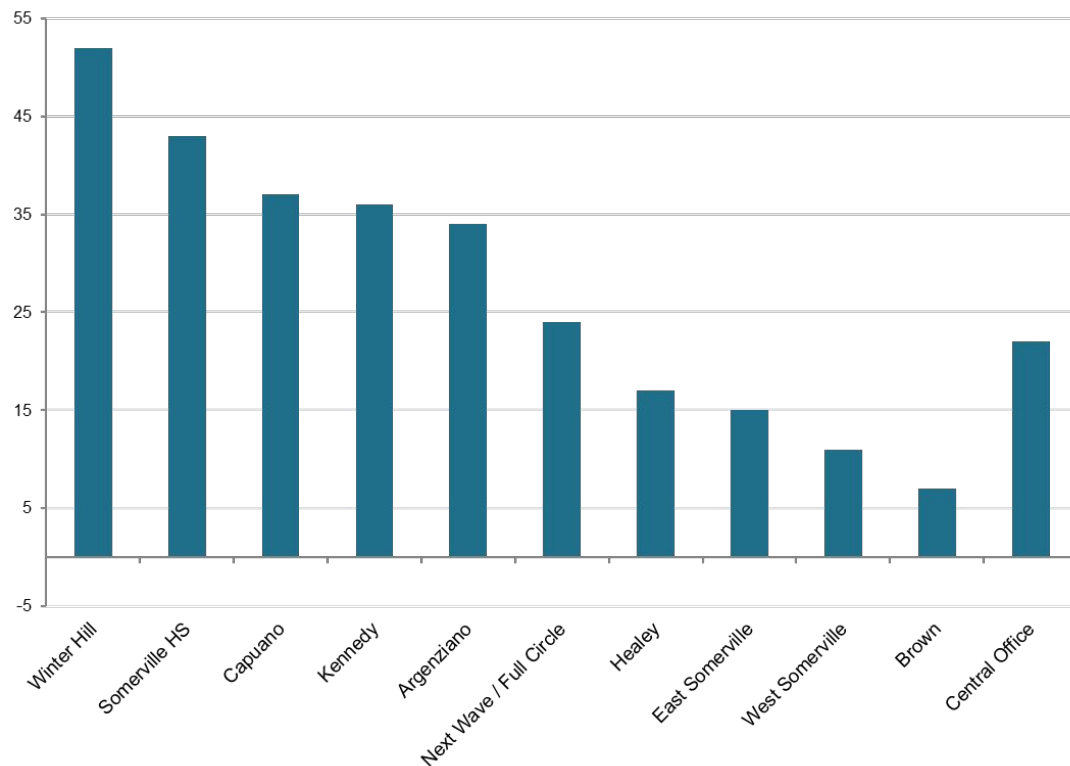
Shared Responsibility



Every Student Learns. Every Class. Every Day.

Special Education Staffing

The SY 2026-27 organization chart reflects a large, multidisciplinary team working across schools, specialized programs, and central services.



≈283

unique districtwide staff / listed positions*

276

school-based positions listed*

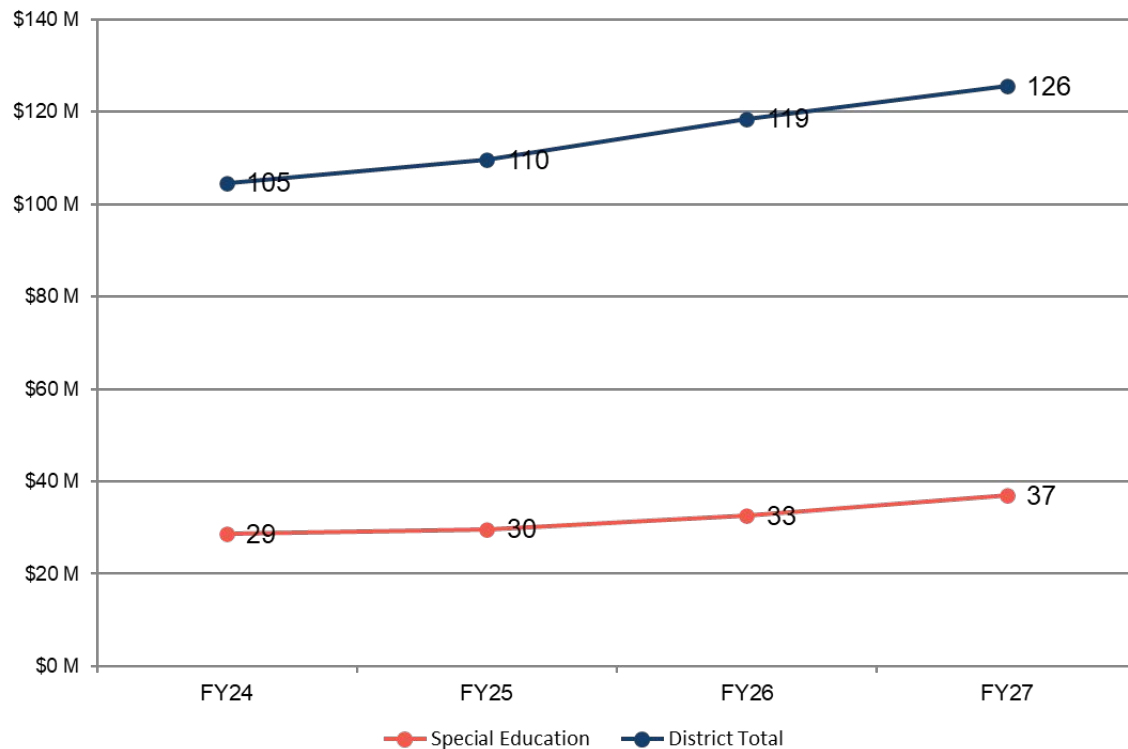
22

central office / district wide positions listed

*School totals reflect positions listed in the organization chart, including shared staff and vacancies/TBDs. Because some staff serve more than one school, school totals should not be added to produce a districtwide headcount.

SPS investment in Special Education

Four-year expenditure trend: special education spending has increased alongside overall district investment.



\$36.9M

FY27 special education spend

\$125.6M

FY27 district total spend

29.4%

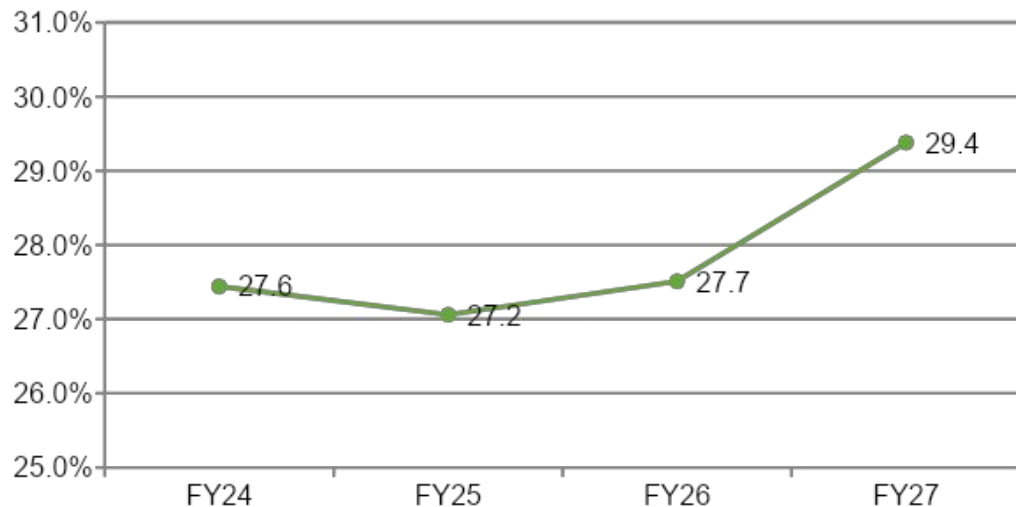
FY27 SPED share of district spend

FY24 → FY27: Special education spending +28.6%;
district spending +20.1%.

Investment Trend

Special education represents a growing share of district spending.

Special Education Spend as % of District Total



Our focus remains: individualized services, least restrictive environments, strong IEP implementation, and families as partners.

Next School Committee Update - 9/28

- Inclusive practices and co-teaching initiatives
- Working group updates
- Specific program implementation and priorities