



Special Education Update

Board Meeting
Date: April 10, 2025

Presented by:

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SCUSD CORE VALUE

We recognize that our system is inequitable by design and we vigilantly work to confront and interrupt inequities that exist to level the playing field and provide opportunities for everyone to learn, grow and reach their greatness.

SCUSD GUIDING PRINCIPLE

All students are given an equal opportunity to graduate with the greatest number of postsecondary choices from the widest array of options

Acronyms

IDEA	Individuals with Disabilities Education Act
FAPE	Free Appropriate Public Education
SDC	Special Day Class
LRE	Least Restrictive Environment
FTE	Full Time Equivalent
LEA	Local Education Agency
SELPA	Special Education Local Plan Area
CDE	California Department of Education
CCEIS	Comprehensive Coordinated Early Intervening Services
CAC	Community Advisory Committee
ADR	Alternative Dispute Resolution
NPS	Non-Public School
NPA	Non Public Agency

Tonight's Presentation:

1. IDEA, FAPE, and LRE Comparison
2. Who We Serve
3. Special Education Revenues
4. How is the Funding Used?
5. Cost Increase Factors
6. 3 Drivers of Change
7. Questions

Vision 2.5

We support Students with Disabilities (with a focus on Black and African American Students with disabilities) in an environment where they are seen, understood, celebrated and experience joy within every SCUSD school. We will ensure that every student, regardless of their background, is given an equal opportunity for success, grows academically and social emotionally, and foster an inclusive community that values diversity and promotes equity for all.

What is IDEA?

(Individuals with Disabilities Education Act)

- Federal law that ensures students with disabilities receive a Free Appropriate Public Education
- Requires schools to identify, evaluate, and serve eligible students
- Covers children from birth through age 21
- Provides funding and sets legal standards for special education services
- Includes categories such as autism, speech/language impairment, emotional disturbance, etc.

What is FAPE?

Free and Appropriate Public Education

- Guaranteed under IDEA
- Students with disabilities are entitled to special education and related services
- Services must be:
 - a. Free (at no cost to the family)
 - b. Appropriate (based on individual needs)
 - c. Designed to provide educational benefit
- Delivered through an Individualized Education Program (IEP)

What is LRE?

Least Restrictive Environment

- A principle within IDEA
- Students with disabilities should learn alongside their non-disabled peers as much as possible
- Removal from general education settings occurs only when necessary
- Continuum of placements from full inclusion to specialized settings
- Decision is individualized based on student needs

IDEA, FAPE, LRE

Why This Matters

- These terms shape how we serve students with disabilities
- They guide our legal obligations and instructional practices
- Understanding the differences helps in making informed budget and policy decisions

Who We Serve: Students with Disabilities:

Demographic Group	% of District Enrollment	% of Students with Disabilities
American Indian Alaskan Native	005%	01%
Asian	16.8%	10.7%
Black/African American	11%	16.8%
Filipino	01%	01%
Hispanic	41.7%	44%
Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander	02%	01%
Two or More Races	08%	09%
White	17%	17%
English Learners	19.6%	19%
Socio-economically Disadvantaged	67%	60%

Who We Serve: Office of Special Education

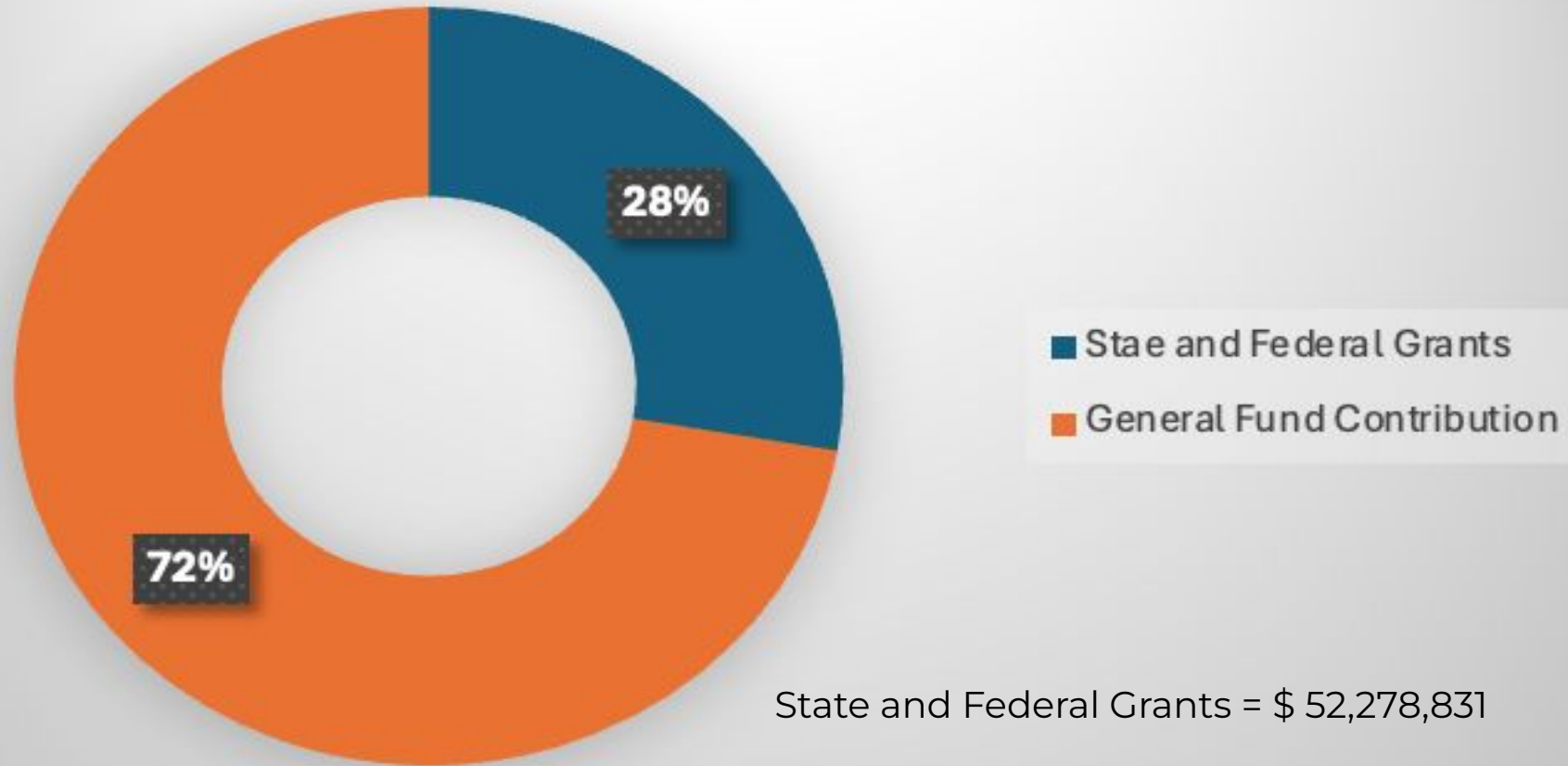
Disability Categories

	December (7,287)	April (7,587) +300
• Autism	1583	1654
• Deafness	10	11
• Emotional disturbance	135	134
• Established Medical Disability	22	17
• Hard of Hearing	46	43
• Intellectual disabilities	234	244
• Multiple disabilities	59	65
• Orthopedic impairment	30	29
• Other health impairment	982	1070
• Specific learning disability	2235	2290
• Speech or language impairment	1930	1955
• Traumatic brain injury	7	8
• Visual impairment	14	18

Continuum of Service (Preschool through Age 21)

- General Education with Related Services (i.e. Speech/Language)
- Resource Specialist Program
- Special Day Classes
- Non Public Schools
- Residential Treatment

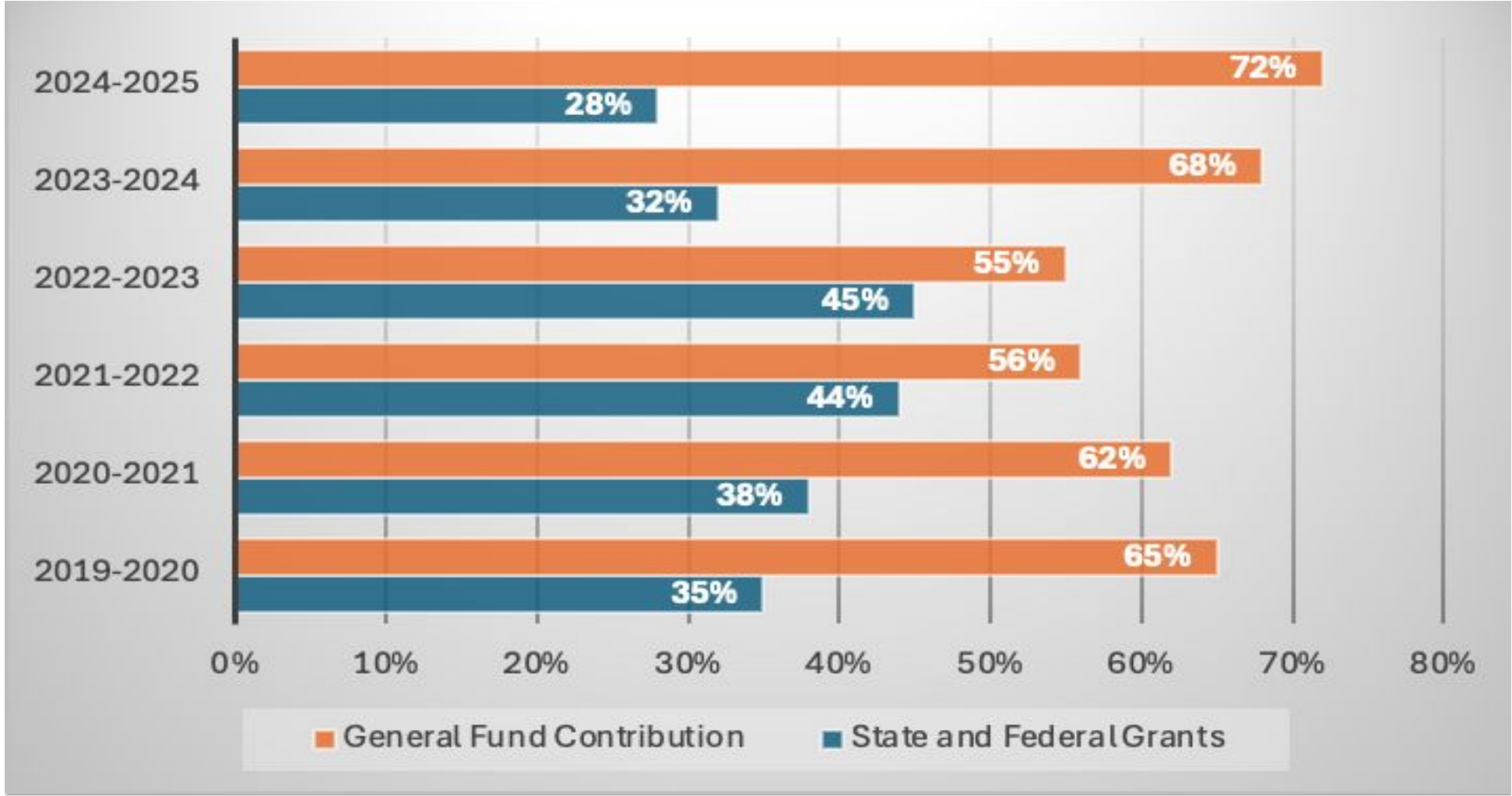
Special Education Revenue 2024-2025



State and Federal Grants = \$ 52,278,831

General Fund Contribution = \$136,334,558

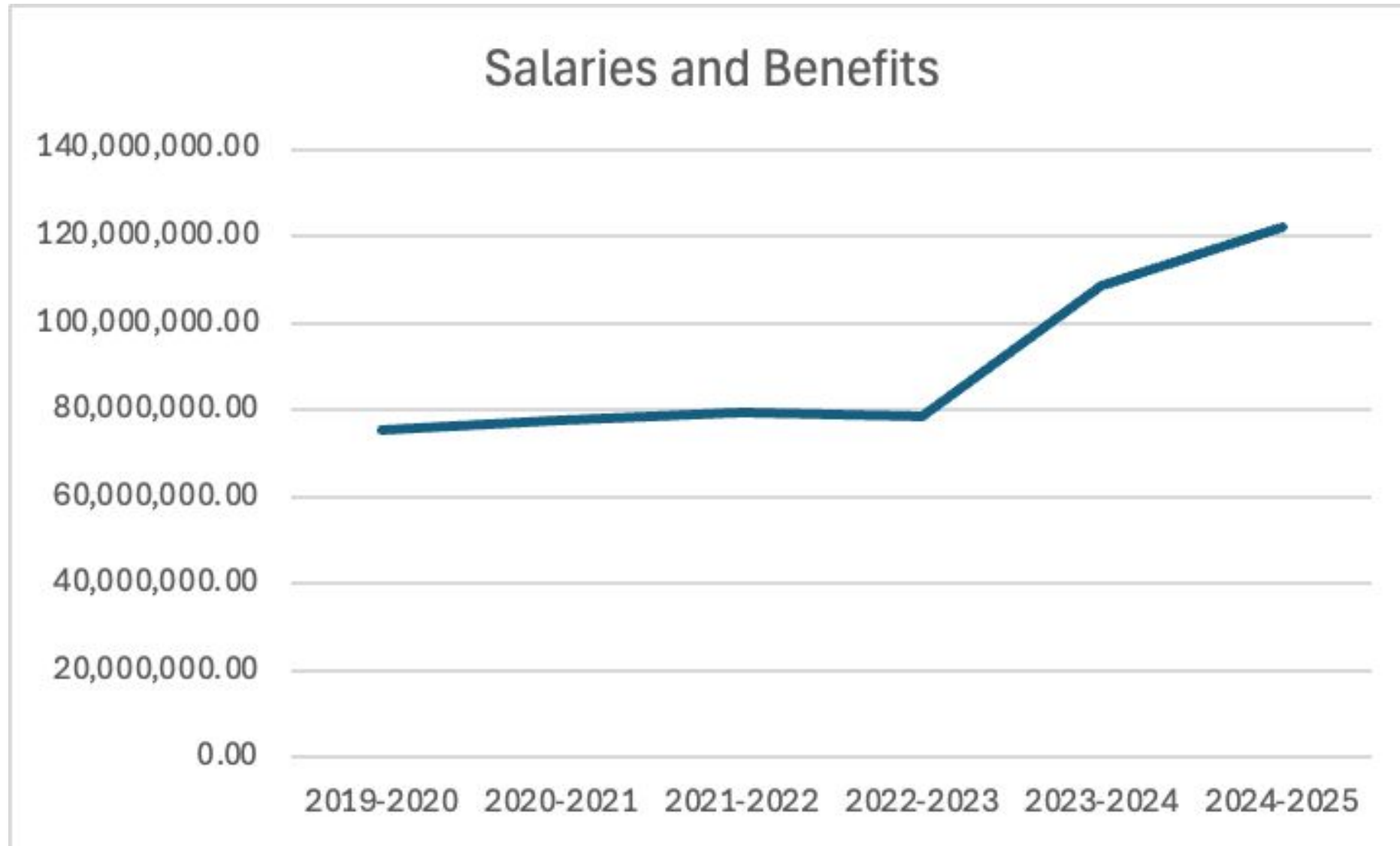
Special Education Revenue Over Time



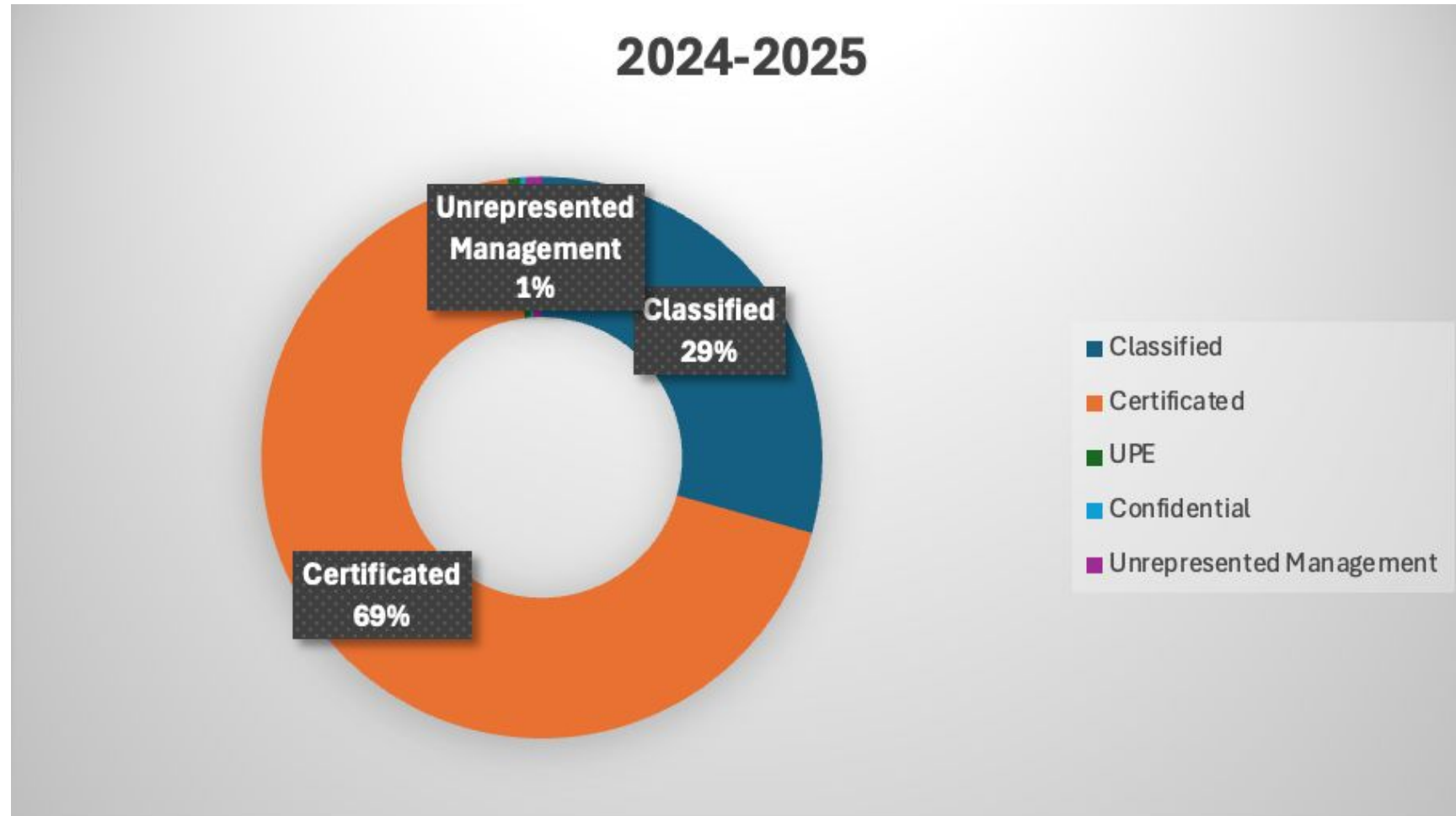
How is the Funding Used? Staff*: It Takes a Village

Teachers, Resource Specialists	156.	Speech and Pathologists Assistant (SLPA)	9
Teachers, Special Education	197	Assistive Technology Specialists	2
Classroom Aides	386.3	Augmentative and Alternative Communication Specialists	4
IEP Designated Aides (1-1)	340.5	Occupational Therapists	34
Program Specialist - Special Education	16	Certified Occupational Therapists Assistant	6
School Psychologists	58.4	Educational Audiologist	1
School Social Worker	7	Training Specialists (Assistive Technology, Speech)	3
Clinician Psychologists/Social Worker	7	Vocational Specialists	1
School Nurse	11	Interpreter for the Deaf	18.75
Health Aides	36.9	Educational Assistant	6.75
Behavior Intervention Specialists (BIS)	15	Job Developer, Employment Services	1.6
Registered Behavior Technician	8	Employment Coach	3
Board Certified Behavior Analyst	2	Transition Assistant	2.25
Language Speech and Hearing Specialists	104.9	Applications Specialists, Office Technicians, Administrative Assistants, Budget Analyst, Fund Specialists, Record Technicians, Computer Technician	

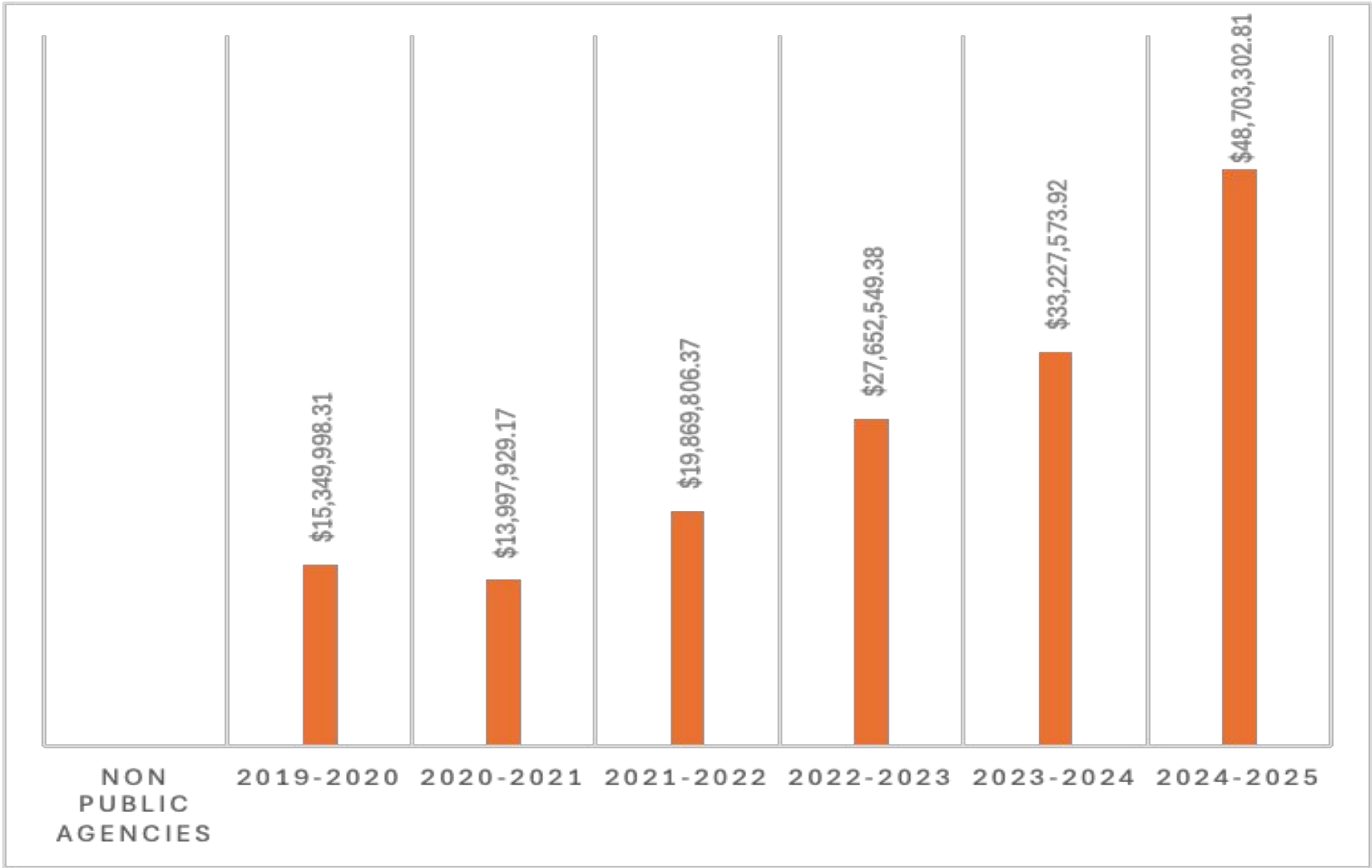
How is the Funding Used?: Salaries and Benefits



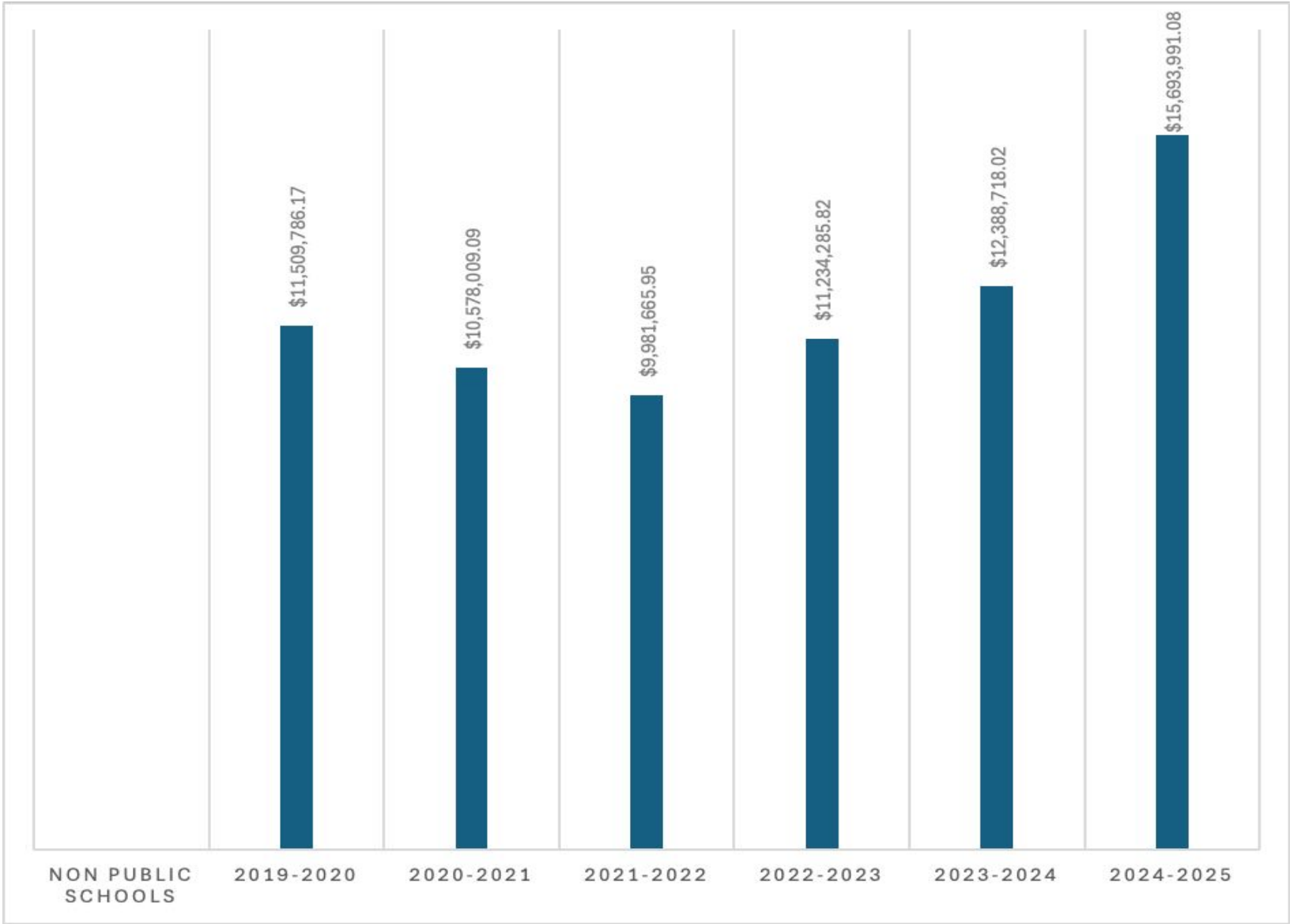
How is the Funding Used?: Salaries and Benefits by Unit



How is the Funding Used?: Non Public Agencies



How is the Funding Used?: Non Public Schools



305 Students

2024-2025SY

Grade	Number of Students
PreK	5
KN	15
1	22
2	19
3	19
4	20
5	18
6	10
7	16
8	30
9	13
10	20
11	14
12	21
Transition	44

**Average Cost
Per Student
\$69,285/yr.**

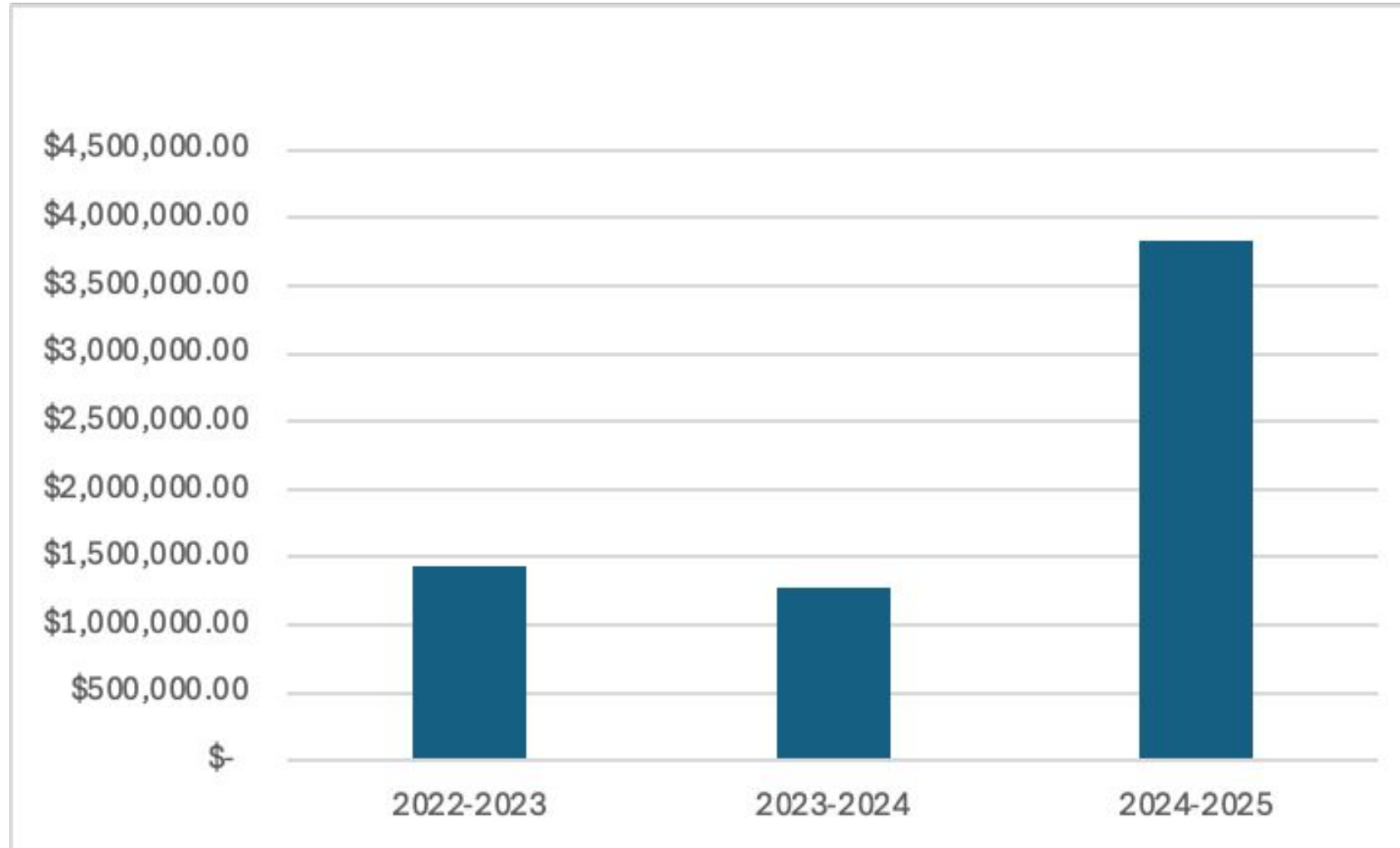
Snapshot: Residential Treatment Facility

2 Current, 2 Pending

**Average Cost
=
\$250,000/yr.**

Counseling • Psychiatry • Art Therapy • Speech Therapy • Music Therapy • Occupational Therapy Behavior Modification Therapy • Psychological Assessment • Adaptive Physical Education Health Services • Dietician Services • 24 hour Therapeutic Treatment/365 days per year Special Education in On-Site Fully Accredited K-12 School • Vocational Training Snoezelen (multi-sensory) room • Safe Crisis Management • Swimming (seasonal) Social Service Support • Basic Life/Social Skills Training • Behavioral Levels System IEP Based Classroom Instruction • Community Based Instruction

Legal Fees*



What's Driving the Increases

- Increases in Identification of students
- NPA and NPS Costs over time (Increases in rates, increases in the number of students served)
- Increase in demands for 1-1 Aides
- Collective Bargaining Agreements and Salary Increases
- Staffing Shortages
- Independent Monitor and BPSB Action Plan
- Legal Costs and Settlements (More cases and higher settlements)

Driver of Change #1:

Fiscal Responsibility and Resource Alignment

- Strategic use of IDEA, general fund, and supplemental funds
- SPED Budget literacy and responsibility among department and system leaders
- Budget decisions driven by student need and program impact
- Greater planning, oversight, and monitoring of expenditures including:
 - Nonpublic Agency (NPA) contracts and Nonpublic School (NPS) placements
 - Transportation,
 - Related services, and specialized supports
- Cost-control strategies while maintaining FAPE and appropriate services
- Internal controls and regular fiscal audits and forecasting to ensure long-term sustainability

Drivers of Change #2: Quality Program Implementation and Shared Responsibility

- Strong systems for IEP development, service delivery, and evaluation timelines
- Internal monitoring tools and regular audits
- Accurate and timely data tracking (SEIS, CALPADS, service logs)
- A culture of collaboration and shared responsibility

Drivers of Change #3: Instructional Equity and Staff Capacity

- Clear roles, caseload balance, and staff oversight systems
- Targeted professional learning and capacity building for general and SPED staff
- Invest in recruitment and retention strategies for hard-to-fill positions (e.g., SLPs and paraeducators)
- Promote a culture of shared ownership for all students, regardless of setting or disability



Questions?