



**MONTGOMERY COUNTY**  
**OFFICE OF RACIAL EQUITY**  
**& SOCIAL JUSTICE**

**REIA #26-63**

**Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) Part B Grant**

Requesting Agency/Department(s)	Dollar Amount
Montgomery County Public Schools	\$553,497

Funding Source

Federal Grant

Finding

The Office of Racial Equity and Social Justice (ORESJ) finds that *Supplemental Appropriation (SA) 26-63 Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) Part B Grant* does not appear to substantively alter programming that differs from the Racial Equity Impact Assessment (REIA) of *SA #23-85 FY23 Operating Budget Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) Part B Grant*. Therefore, ORESJ’s findings remain unchanged:

*“The Office of Racial Equity and Social Justice (ORESJ) finds that Supplemental Appropriation #23-85 – FY23 Operating Budget Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) Part B Grant – has the potential to advance equity for students with disabilities in the County, however, the absence of data makes it difficult to determine to what extent this supplemental will also advance racial equity.”*

Background

Purpose

The purpose of SA #26-63 is to fund a one-time supplement of the IDEA Part B Grant from the United States Department of Education (DoE) to support the continued delivery of Federal and State-mandated special education and related services. Montgomery County Public Schools (MCPS) has been awarded \$38,009,408 for the FY26 IDEA Part B Grant from the DoE through the Maryland State Department of Education, representing a \$1,001,184 decrease in funds from the

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FY25 Operating Budget. As a result of the funding reduction and inflationary costs, and to accommodate the negotiated salary and benefit rate increases effective July 1, 2026, MCPS will use this one-time supplement grant to support essential program activities for students with disabilities in the least restrictive environment.

### Additional Background Information

The IDEA Part B Grant aims to support special education services for children with disabilities and their families by funding instructional and program materials for preschool classrooms, contractual costs for nurses and audiological assessments, licenses for screening, diagnosing, and progress monitoring assessments, and substitute part-time salaries and benefits for teachers to participate in professional development activities. The funds will be used for:

- substitute part-time salaries and associated benefits to ensure continuity in classroom instruction for teachers to participate in professional development activities;
- contractual costs to provide one-to-one private duty nursing support and to conduct audiological testing and assessments, ensuring students with health and hearing impairments receive required services;
- consumable instructional and program materials, including supplies for new and relocated preschool classrooms to support instructional delivery and meet student enrollment needs based on cost-per-student ratios; and
- procurement of Woodcock-Johnson licenses to ensure staff have access to standardized assessment tools necessary for intervention planning and progress monitoring.

The IDEA Part B Grant aligns with MCPS's systemwide initiatives aimed at improving outcomes and equitably aligning resources for students with disabilities. The grant also aligns with MCPS' strategic priorities by supporting academic excellence through individualized instruction and services that help students with disabilities access the general curriculum and achieve academic growth. It promotes future-ready graduates through transition planning and skill development, fosters positive, safe, and effective environments by encouraging inclusive practices in the least restrictive setting, and strengthens a high-quality, diverse workforce through professional learning and specialized staffing to meet diverse student needs. Grant activities also advance racial equity and social justice by applying an equity-focused and culturally responsive lens to all practices. This approach informs perspectives, instruction, and interventions that promote equal access to learning and success for all students.

## Relevant REIAs and Other Assessments

ORESJ has conducted REIAs since 2021. The following REIAs are relevant to supplemental appropriation #26-63.

- REIA #22-24 High-Quality Early Childhood Inclusion  
<https://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/ore/Resources/Files/22-24.pdf>
- REIA #22-75 ARPA IDEA Early Intervention Grant  
<https://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/ore/Resources/Files/22-75.pdf>
- REIA #22-77 ARPA IDEA Part B1 Grant and SA #22-78 ARPA IDEA Part B2 Grant  
<https://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/ore/Resources/Files/22-77and22-78.pdf>
- REIA #22-93 MCPS Title I, Part A Grant  
<https://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/ore/Resources/Files/22-93.pdf>
- REIA #23-04 IFSP Infants and Toddlers Grant  
<https://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/ore/Resources/Files/23-04.pdf>
- REIA #23-14 FY23 DHHS, IECMHSS Grant  
<https://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/ore/Resources/Files/23-14.pdf>
- REIA #23-85 FY23 Operating Budget Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) Part B Grant  
<https://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/ore/Resources/Files/23-85.pdf>

## Analysis

### ORESJ Research & Analysis

Supplemental information accompanying this funding request states that the IDEA Part B Grant supports students with disabilities receiving special education and related services, who represent approximately 15 percent of MCPS's total enrollment. The grant activities support the reduction of racial inequities by applying an equity lens and culturally responsive practices to the delivery of services. These approaches help ensure that students with disabilities, particularly those from historically underserved racial and ethnic groups, have equitable access to instruction, interventions, and supports that promote academic success and positive outcomes.

As REIA #23-85 notes, the IDEA Part B Grant primarily serves to support the staff working with MCPS students with disabilities and their families through salaries and employee benefits. The REIA finds:

*“Supporting the salaries and associated employee benefits of the instructors, social workers, and psychological services provided by the grant will ultimately benefit children*

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*and families supported by IDEA Part B, as Montgomery County Public Schools (MCPS) will be able to attract and retain a high-quality, culturally competent workforce equipped to meet the special education needs of diverse students in the County. However, while bolstering instructional capacity is vital to addressing disparities in student opportunities and outcomes, a clear link to structures, policies, and practices must be accompanied by data collection and monitoring that lend themselves to continual staff development and resources that explicitly address students with special learning needs who identify as Black, Indigenous, or People of Color (BIPOC).”*

As such, the REIA proposes the following considerations:

1. In an effort to mitigate poor outcomes in which BIPOC students in special education programs experience worse academic outcomes, staff working with MCPS students served by IDEA Part B should be trained (and receive continuing education keeping up with best practices) to be culturally responsive to the students they serve.
2. Considering the vast diversity of MCPS students (as it relates to race, ethnicity, and primary language spoken in the home), it is imperative that earnest efforts be made in recruiting, training, and retaining qualified and effective special education staff who are both reflective of and culturally responsive to, the children in their care as research shows BIPOC students perform better when there is teacher and staff congruence.
3. Resources should be provided that facilitate family engagement efforts that prioritize parents and caregivers as partners in their child’s educational journey.

## Caveats

This REIA has been conducted with the best available information at the time of writing, including department responses to the Racial Equity and Social Justice template and research conducted by ORESJ Policy Team Analysts. While the assessment examines specific racial equity and social justice impacts of the funding request, it cannot fully address all systemic inequities that affect the communities in question, nor do we seek to examine impacts outside the scope of the funding request. We recommend using this assessment as a starting point for discussions about the program's impact on advancing racial equity and social justice in Montgomery County.