

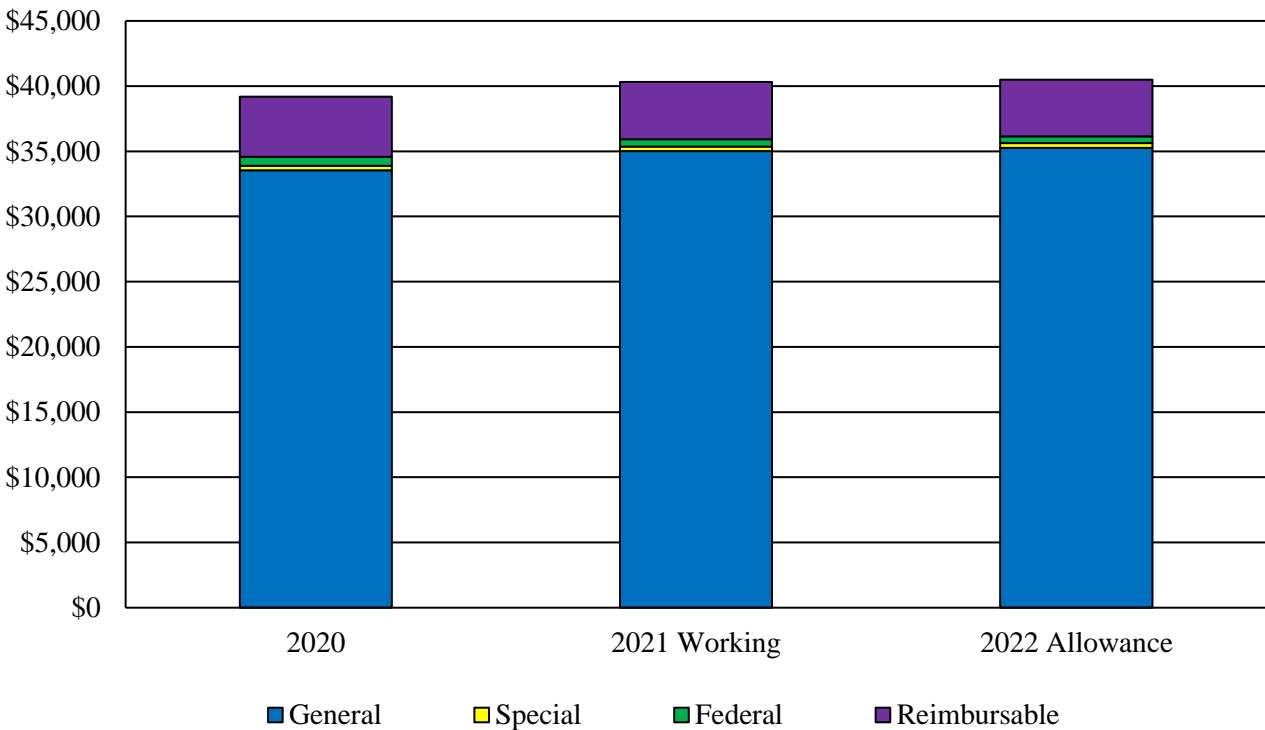
R99E Maryland School for the Deaf

Program Description

The Maryland School for the Deaf (MSD) is a public school that educates deaf and hard of hearing students from across the State at its two campuses in Frederick and Columbia. Students range in age from prekindergarten through grade 12. MSD also serves the families of its students through family education and early childhood education programs, including American Sign Language classes.

Operating Budget Summary

Fiscal 2022 Budget Increases by \$182,000, or 0.5%, to \$40.5 Million
(\$ in Thousands)



Note: The fiscal 2021 appropriation includes general salary increases. The fiscal 2022 allowance includes annual salary review increases, State Law Enforcement Officers Labor Alliance increases, and annualization of general salary increases.

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- The fiscal 2022 allowance consists primarily of mandated general funds and reimbursable funding from the Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE) Aid to Education program.
- The Supplemental Budget includes \$479,094 in additional federal Consolidated Appropriations Act (CAA) stimulus funding for MSDE, which will be distributed to MSD to support additional costs related to the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Fiscal 2020

MSD received an additional \$113,398 in special fund revenue payments from counties based on higher than anticipated enrollment in the school's Enhanced Services Program. MSD also received an additional \$583,457 in reimbursable funding from MSDE due to increases in the Enhanced Services Program grant and funding for the Division of Rehabilitation Services Work to Learn program, reflecting increased student enrollment in both programs.

Fiscal 2021

MSD received \$430,422 in reimbursable funding from MSDE for its share of the Governor's Emergency Education Relief funds. These funds were used to purchase computer equipment and to support students and staff for virtual learning. Additionally, the Supplemental Budget includes a proposed fiscal 2021 deficiency appropriation of \$479,094 for additional costs related to the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic. These funds are federal CAA stimulus funds that will be distributed to the school by MSDE.

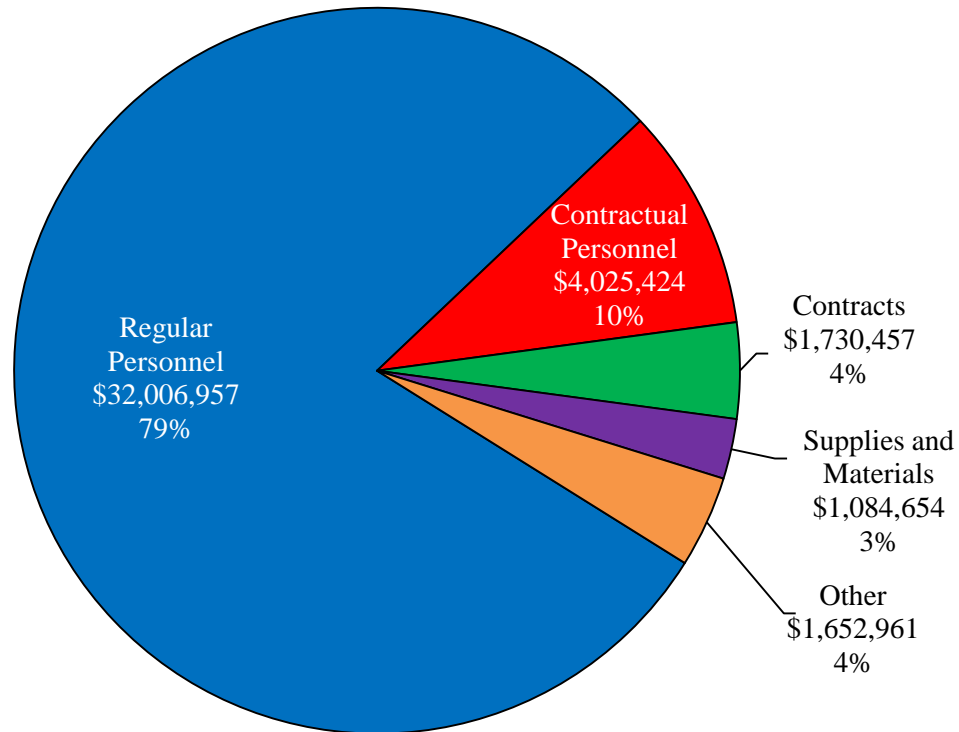
Cost Containment

At its July 1, 2020 meeting, the Board of Public Works approved reductions totaling \$56,104 in general funds, \$515 in special funds, and \$1,132 in federal funds. These reductions are statewide reductions to unemployment insurance.

Fiscal 2022 Overview of Agency Spending

As shown in **Exhibit 1**, the adjusted fiscal 2022 allowance is \$40,500,000 and consists mostly of personnel costs. Regular personnel expenses total \$32,006,957, or 79% of the budget, and contractual personnel expenses total an additional \$4,025,424, or 10%. There are 334.5 regular positions and 90.3 contractual full-time equivalent positions, primarily teachers or teachers' aides. The remaining 11% of the budget includes the operating expenses for the school. The largest categories are contracts for various facilities and equipment maintenance and repairs and other services, which total \$1,730,457, and supplies and materials, including instructional supplies and food, totaling \$1,084,654.

Exhibit 1
Overview of Agency Spending
Fiscal 2022 Allowance



Note: The fiscal 2022 allowance includes annual salary reviews, annualization of general salary increases, and State Law Enforcement Officers Labor Alliance increases.

Source: Governor’s proposed fiscal 2022 budget

Proposed Budget Change

As shown in **Exhibit 2**, the adjusted fiscal 2022 allowance increases by \$182,000, or 0.5%, from the adjusted fiscal 2021 working appropriation. The largest changes in the budget are related to personnel expenses. Regular personnel expenses decrease by \$488,148 primarily due to the budgeting of several vacant positions at base salary. These positions include the vacant superintendent position, as well as several other positions that the school has been unable to fill due to the pandemic. Contractual personnel expenses increase by \$439,336, reflecting the addition of 5.9 contractual positions, all teachers’ aides, as well as aligning expenses to the most recent actual. Other operating expenses increase by \$231,000, including increases in contracts for a variety of services, supplies and materials, and other equipment purchases.

**Exhibit 2
Proposed Budget
Maryland School for the Deaf
(\$ in Thousands)**

How Much It Grows:	<u>General Fund</u>	<u>Special Fund</u>	<u>Federal Fund</u>	<u>Reimb. Fund</u>	<u>Total</u>
Fiscal 2020 Actual	\$33,537	\$361	\$667	\$4,633	\$39,197
Fiscal 2021 Working Appropriation	35,008	351	569	4,390	40,318
Fiscal 2022 Allowance	<u>35,252</u>	<u>378</u>	<u>522</u>	<u>4,349</u>	<u>40,500</u>
Fiscal 2021-2022 Amount Change	\$244	\$27	-\$47	-\$41	\$182
Fiscal 2021-2022 Percent Change	0.7%	7.6%	-8.3%	-0.9%	0.5%
Where It Goes:					<u>Change</u>
Personnel Expenses					
Annualization of fiscal 2021 general salary increase					\$257
Employee and retiree health insurance.....					158
Unemployment compensation					56
Other fringe benefit adjustments					-25
Reclassification					-125
Workers' compensation premium assessment.....					-137
Retirement contributions					-143
Regular salaries, due to budgeting of currently vacant positions at base salary.....					-529
Other Changes					
Contractual personnel expenses, including additional 5.9 FTE positions and aligning to most recent actual.....					439
Contracts for maintenance and repairs of grounds, facilities, and equipment.....					72
Computer and other equipment					68
Subscriptions					64
Office supplies.....					50
Other.....					36
Food.....					-59
Total					\$182

FTE: full-time equivalent

Note: Numbers may not sum to total due to rounding.

Personnel Data

	<u>FY 20</u> <u>Actual</u>	<u>FY 21</u> <u>Working</u>	<u>FY 22</u> <u>Allowance</u>	<u>FY 21-22</u> <u>Change</u>
Regular Positions	334.50	334.50	334.50	0.00
Contractual FTEs	<u>88.69</u>	<u>84.40</u>	<u>90.30</u>	<u>5.90</u>
Total Personnel	423.19	418.90	424.80	5.90

Vacancy Data: Regular Positions

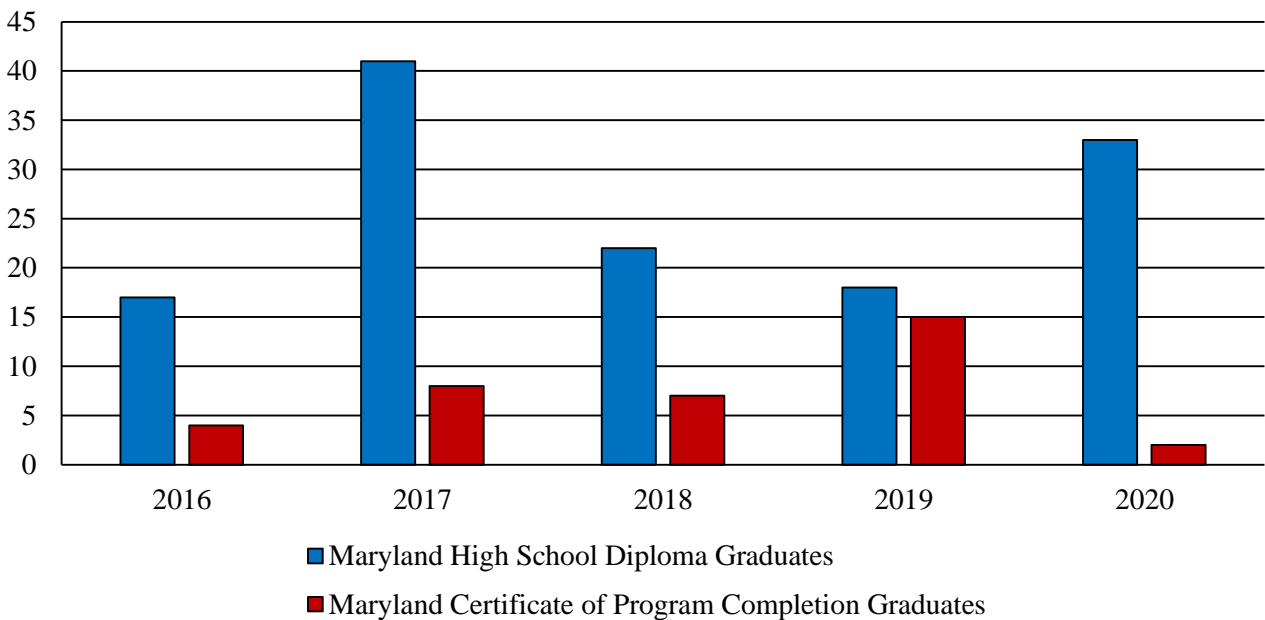
Turnover and Necessary Vacancies, Excluding New Positions	1.54	0.46%
Positions and Percentage Vacant as of 12/31/20	10.00	2.99%
Vacancies Above Turnover	8.46	

Key Observations

1. High School Diploma and Certificate of Completion Graduates

As shown in **Exhibit 3**, MSD had a total of 35 high school seniors graduating in 2020, of which 33 graduates earned a Maryland high school diploma and 2 graduates earned a Maryland certificate of program completion. These numbers can vary from year to year, depending on total enrollment. The total student enrollment in 2020 was 299 at the Frederick campus and 125 at the Columbia campus. Additionally, there were 22 children at the Frederick campus and 45 children at the Columbia campus enrolled in the Family Education and Early Childhood Department.

Exhibit 3
Graduates Receiving a High School Diploma or Certificate of Completion
Fiscal 2016-2020



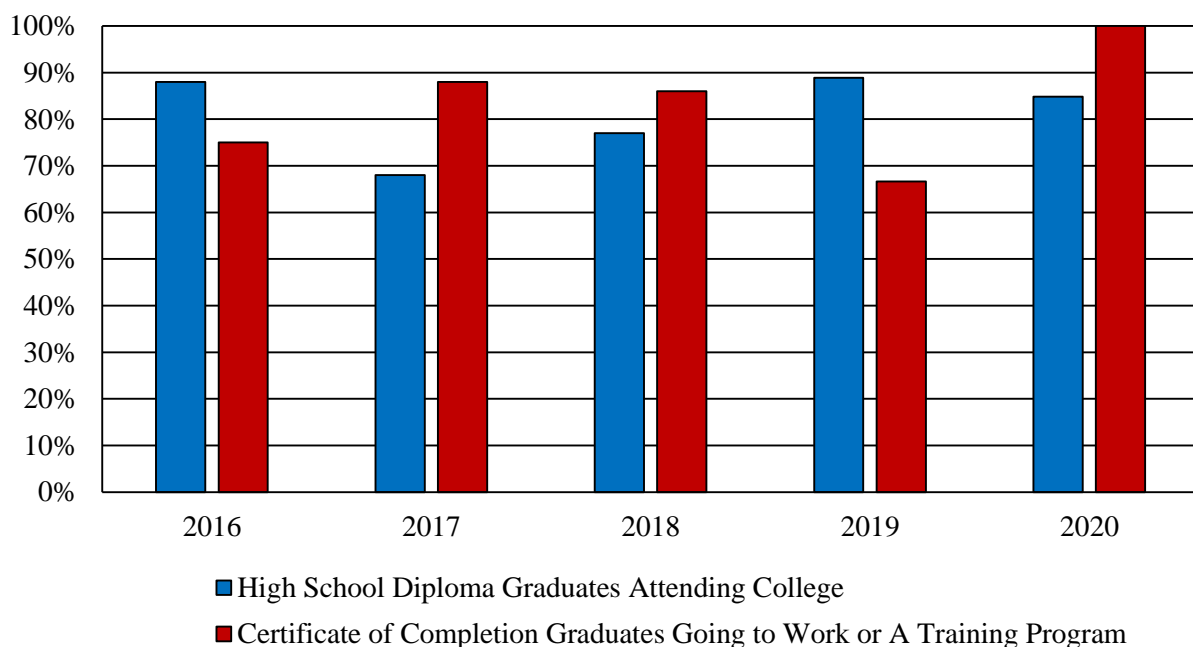
Source: Maryland School for the Deaf

2. Graduates Attending College, Working, or Attending a Training Program

Exhibit 4 shows the percentages of MSD graduates that either attended college after receiving their Maryland high school diploma or went to work or a training program after receiving their certificate of program completion. MSD's goal is to surpass 80% in both categories. In fiscal 2020,

85% of high school diploma graduates attended college, and 100% of certificate of program completion graduates went to work or attended a training program. These percentages can fluctuate from year to year, due to the small size of the school’s graduating class.

Exhibit 4
Graduates Attending College, Work, or Training
Fiscal 2016-2020

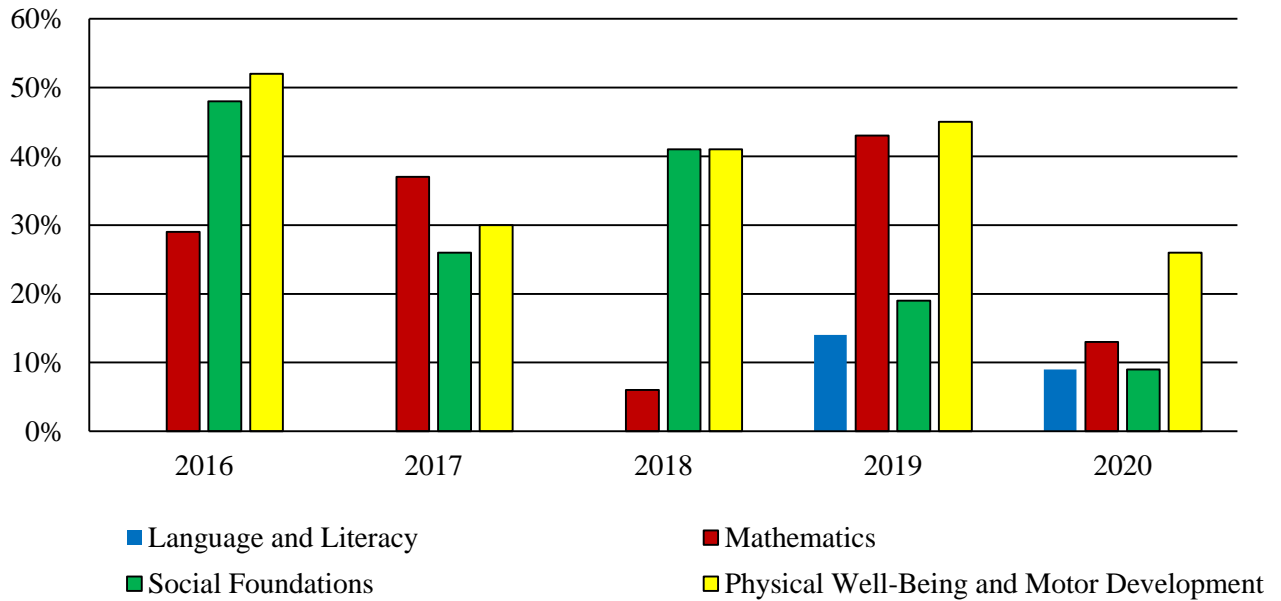


Source: Maryland School for the Deaf

3. Kindergarten Readiness Assessment Results

MSD has used the Kindergarten Readiness Assessment (KRA) since fiscal 2016 to assess incoming kindergarten students in the areas of mathematics, social foundations, and physical well-being and motor development. Additionally, since fiscal 2019, students have had the ability to receive a score on the language and literacy component of the assessment. KRA is a key component of Maryland’s Early Childhood Comprehensive Assessment System, which aligns with MSDE’s Early Learning Standards. MSD’s goal is that 47% of students demonstrate readiness in each category, which is the statewide average reported by MSDE. As shown in **Exhibit 5**, kindergarten readiness has been below this target in all categories for the past four years and declined in each category during fiscal 2020. However, again due to the small size of kindergarten enrollment at MSD compared to local school systems, readiness percentages can fluctuate significantly from year to year.

Exhibit 5
Kindergarten Readiness Assessment Results
Fiscal 2016-2020



Source: Maryland School for the Deaf

Operating Budget Recommended Actions

1. Concur with Governor's allowance.

Updates

- **New Superintendent Search:** MSD is currently in the process of searching for a new school superintendent. The school’s previous superintendent retired in September 2020. A 15-member search committee was formed to facilitate the search process and is comprised of a diverse group of stakeholders from across the MSD community. Members of the committee were officially announced in November 2020. The committee will facilitate the search process through assisting in the vetting of potential candidates and by soliciting input from members of the MSD community through focus groups and online surveys.

Additionally, MSD has contracted with an independent executive search firm to aid in the recruitment of qualified candidates and to provide guidance to the search committee throughout the process. The firm selected is a deaf-owned national consulting firm with experience in consulting on executive searches for other schools and programs for the deaf.

A series of focus groups and meetings were held and a survey was conducted in early 2021 to gain input from members of the MSD community and assist in the development of a leadership profile for the superintendent position. A vacancy announcement, prospectus, and leadership profile were released in February 2021, and screening of applicants and interviewing of candidates will take place throughout the spring. The finalists will participate in forums and meetings with various MSD stakeholders, as well as with representatives from MSDE and the Governor’s Office for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing. The new superintendent will be formally hired during summer 2021 and will be on board prior to the start of the 2021-2022 school year.

- **Remote Learning:** In March 2020, MSD closed to in-person instruction for students due to the COVID-19 pandemic and began operating virtually. Additionally, all residential students on the Frederick campus returned home at that time. MSD distributed laptop computers and tablets to students and staff in order to facilitate the transition to remote learning. Some families that did not have access to the Internet were also given Wi-Fi hotspots.

Language access has been the primary challenge MSD students have faced during the remote learning period. Any disruptions to video during online lessons negatively impact students because they can no longer see the class instruction being communicated through sign language on screen. Ideally, MSD would like to return to in-person instruction for as many students as possible as soon as it is safely possible to do so based on statewide health metrics.

A reopening plan was previously submitted to MSDE focusing on a hybrid model for the school’s students with the most educational needs once the statewide positivity rate had fallen below 5%. On February 16, 2021, MSD brought back its first group of students, including a small group of residential students, for hybrid learning. These students will be in the classroom three days a week and in virtual learning for the remaining two days of the week. Over the next two months, MSD plans to offer additional students the option to join the hybrid learning model, until all students eventually will have the opportunity to return to campus at least three days per week. However,

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families will continue to have the option of keeping their students in virtual instruction until the end of the current school year and until a vaccine is widely available, if they desire.

- ***December 2020 MSD Report on Addressing Concerns Surrounding School Climate and Oversight:*** MSD submitted a report as requested by the Senate Budget and Taxation Committee and the Education Subcommittee of the Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs Committee providing follow-up to questions raised during a joint hearing that was held on October 8, 2020. In response to several issues of concern raised by individuals during the hearing regarding the school’s climate and oversight, MSD has indicated that it has taken or plans to take the following actions to address these concerns:
 - MSDE is currently working with MSD to review the school’s practices and procedures in several areas.
 - MSD has hired a Chief Diversity Officer, who began work at the school in January 2021 and whose duties will include promoting a culture of inclusivity, developing plans with leadership to address diversity issues that are not currently being addressed, and to facilitate the development of a strategic plan for prioritizing diversity and inclusion.
 - Several community workgroups were formed and forums were held to solicit feedback on several areas of the school’s operations, climate, and the superintendent search process.
 - MSD has contracted with an outside consulting firm to facilitate an independent evaluation and analysis of the environment of the school and to conduct a climate survey of students, faculty, and other members of the MSD community.
 - MSD’s Board of Trustees will propose the creation of a subcommittee to address any and all incidents of bullying, intimidation, harassment, or discrimination.
 - MSD will also study ways to better align the school’s two campuses and how to improve the transition of students from the Columbia Campus to the Frederick Campus.

The report also included a timeline for the implementation or completion of these tasks, further details on the school’s policies and applicable State laws pertaining to bullying, discrimination, and harassment, and an update on the school’s search for a new superintendent.

**Appendix 1
Object/Fund Difference Report
Maryland School for the Deaf**

<u>Object/Fund</u>	<u>FY 20 Actual</u>	<u>FY 21 Working Appropriation</u>	<u>FY 22 Allowance</u>	<u>FY 21 - FY 22 Amount Change</u>	<u>Percent Change</u>
Positions					
01 Regular	334.50	334.50	334.50	0.00	0%
02 Contractual	170.09	84.40	90.30	5.90	7.0%
Total Positions	504.59	418.90	424.80	5.90	1.4%
Objects					
01 Salaries and Wages	\$ 30,432,102	\$ 32,275,025	\$ 31,494,895	-\$ 780,130	-2.4%
02 Technical and Spec. Fees	4,414,902	3,586,088	4,025,424	439,336	12.3%
03 Communication	120,309	111,880	126,748	14,868	13.3%
04 Travel	25,844	19,076	26,645	7,569	39.7%
06 Fuel and Utilities	754,767	796,205	808,096	11,891	1.5%
07 Motor Vehicles	110,881	77,904	85,621	7,717	9.9%
08 Contractual Services	1,981,912	1,717,083	1,730,457	13,374	0.8%
09 Supplies and Materials	896,688	1,037,384	1,084,654	47,270	4.6%
10 Equipment – Replacement	275,122	327,551	395,420	67,869	20.7%
13 Fixed Charges	184,762	150,178	210,431	60,253	40.1%
Total Objects	\$ 39,197,289	\$ 40,098,374	\$ 39,988,391	-\$ 109,983	-0.3%
Funds					
01 General Fund	\$ 33,537,080	\$ 34,791,432	\$ 34,792,016	\$ 584	0%
03 Special Fund	360,687	351,206	377,827	26,621	7.6%
05 Federal Fund	666,640	565,492	515,948	-49,544	-8.8%
09 Reimbursable Fund	4,632,882	4,390,244	4,302,600	-87,644	-2.0%
Total Funds	\$ 39,197,289	\$ 40,098,374	\$ 39,988,391	-\$ 109,983	-0.3%

Note: The fiscal 2021 appropriation does not include general salary increases. The fiscal 2022 allowance does not include annual salary review increases, State Law Enforcement Officers Labor Alliance increases, or annualization of general salary increases.