

FINAL REPORT: FOCUSED MONITORING  
EXCEPTIONAL STUDENT EDUCATION PROGRAMS

# DIXIE COUNTY

APRIL 18 - 20, 2005



FLORIDA DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION  
BUREAU OF EXCEPTIONAL EDUCATION AND STUDENT SERVICES

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January 17, 2006

Mr. Dennis W. Bennett, Superintendent  
Dixie County School District  
P.O. Box 890  
Cross City, Florida 32628-0890

Dear Superintendent Bennett:

We are pleased to provide you with the Final Report of Focused Monitoring of Exceptional Student Education Programs in Dixie County. This report was developed by integrating multiple sources of information, including: student record reviews; interviews with school and district staff; information from focus groups; and parent, teacher, and student survey data from our visit on April 18-20, 2005. The report includes a system improvement plan outlining the findings of the monitoring team. The final report will be placed on the Bureau of Exceptional Education and Student Services' website and may be viewed at [www.firn.edu/doe/commhome/mon-home.htm](http://www.firn.edu/doe/commhome/mon-home.htm).

Bureau staff have worked with James Bray, ESE Director, and his staff to develop a system improvement plan that includes strategies and activities to address the areas of concern and noncompliance identified in the report. We anticipate that some of the action steps that will be implemented will be long term in duration, and will require time to assess the measure of effectiveness. In addition, as appropriate, plans related to the district's continuous improvement monitoring may also relate to action steps proposed in response to this report. The system improvement plan has been approved and is included as a part of this final report.

Semi-annual updates of outcomes achieved and/or a summary of related activities, as identified in your district's plan, must be submitted for the next two years, unless otherwise noted on the plan. The first scheduled update will be due on May 30, 2006. A verification monitoring visit to your district may take place two years after your original monitoring visit.

**BAMBI J. LOCKMAN**  
*Chief*

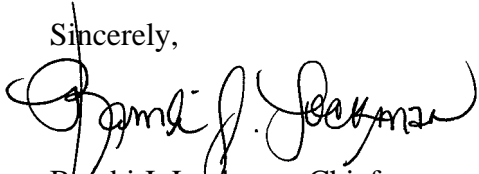
*Bureau of Exceptional Education and Student Services*

Superintendent Bennett  
January 17, 2006  
Page 2

If my staff can be of any assistance as you implement the system improvement plan, please contact Eileen L. Amy, ESE Program Administration and Quality Assurance Administrator. Mrs. Amy may be reached at 850/245-0476, or via electronic mail at [Eileen.Amy@fldoe.org](mailto:Eileen.Amy@fldoe.org).

Thank you for your continuing commitment to improve services for exceptional education students in Dixie County.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Bambi J. Lockman". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name being the most prominent.

Bambi J. Lockman, Chief  
Bureau of Exceptional Education and Student Services

Enclosure

cc: Timothy Alexander, School Board Chairman  
Members of the School Board  
Leenette McMillan, School Board Attorney  
School Principals  
James Bray, ESE Director  
Eileen Amy  
Evy Friend  
Kim Komisar

**Dixie County Final Monitoring Report  
 Focused Monitoring  
 April 18-20, 2005**

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**Dixie County Final Monitoring Report**  
**Focused Monitoring**  
**April 18 - 20, 2005**

**Executive Summary**

The Florida Department of Education, Bureau of Exceptional Education and Student Services, in carrying out its roles of leadership, resource allocation, technical assistance, monitoring, and evaluation is required to oversee the performance of district school boards in the enforcement of all laws and rules (Sections 1001.03(8) and 1008.32, Florida Statutes (F.S.)). In fulfilling this requirement, the Bureau conducts monitoring activities of the exceptional student education (ESE) programs provided by district school boards in accordance with Sections 1001.42 and 1003.57, F.S. Through these monitoring activities, the Bureau examines and evaluates procedures, records, and programs of exceptional student education (ESE); provides information and assistance to school districts; and otherwise assists school districts in operating effectively and efficiently. One purpose of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act (IDEA 2004) is to assess and ensure the effectiveness of efforts to educate children with disabilities (Section 300.1(d) of the Title 34, Code of Federal Regulations (CFR)), and districts are required to make a good faith effort to assist children with disabilities to achieve their stated goals and objectives in the least restrictive environment (34 CFR Sections 300.350(a)(2) and 300.556). In accordance with the IDEA 2004 the Department is responsible for ensuring that the requirements of the IDEA 2004 are carried out and that each educational program for children with disabilities administered in the state meets the educational requirements of the state (34 CFR Section 300.600(a)(1) and (2)).

During the week of April 18-20, 2005 the Florida Department of Education, Bureau of Exceptional Education and Student Services, conducted an on-site review of the exceptional student education (ESE) programs in Dixie County Public Schools. Jim Bray, Exceptional Student Education Director, served as the coordinator and point of contact for the district during the monitoring visit. In its continuing effort to focus the monitoring process on student educational outcomes, the Bureau identified four key data indicators: percentage of students with disabilities participating in regular classes (i.e., spending at least 80% of the school day with their nondisabled peers); dropout rate for students with disabilities; percentage of students with disabilities exiting with a standard diploma; and percentage of students with disabilities participating in statewide assessments. Dixie County was selected for monitoring on the basis of the dropout rate for students with disabilities. The results of the monitoring process are reported under categories or related areas that are considered to impact or contribute to the key data indicator. In addition, information related to the following are addressed: counseling as a related service, including psychological counseling; speech and language services as related services; transition services; services for gifted students; review of student records, and, review of district forms.

## **Summary of Findings**

### **Administration and Policy**

Students who have at least five unexcused absences within a calendar month or 10 unexcused absences within a 90-calendar-day period are not referred to the school's child study team to determine if early patterns of truancy are developing and to develop a plan to address the issue. A concern was noted that the majority of staff interviewed are not aware of requirements related to attendance, and do not initiate formal interventions to address chronic nonattendance on the part of their students. The district is required to provide district-wide technical assistance on the statutory requirements related to nonattendance, to develop a method of tracking school-level compliance, and to provide technical assistance to IEP team members regarding the need to address attendance in the IEPs of students' whose chronic nonattendance negatively impacts their school performance. A promising practice was noted by staff at Anderson Elementary School, who reported extensive student-specific actions designed to foster student attendance and parent involvement at the school.

### **Curriculum and Instruction**

Findings of noncompliance related to curriculum and instruction involved students being placed on home instruction for an extended period of time. The IEP teams of the students on home instruction were required to reconvene to address the students' placement and to incorporate plans for reentry into school. The district is required to review its practices related to the use of home instruction and develop policies and procedures to address this area. Concerns were noted that some students with significant cognitive impairments are served in classes housed in schools that do not allow for interactions with age-appropriate peers. Support for some students with disabilities in general education (GE) classrooms is limited to consultation with staff. The district is encouraged to conduct a review of the service delivery models available by school. Students are not informed of the Florida Comprehensive Assessment Test (FCAT) waiver until their senior year. Technical assistance regarding diploma option decisions, including the information to be provided to families, must be provided to IEP team participants at the middle and high schools. A promising practice noted by staff involved the inclusive service delivery model implemented at Anderson Elementary School, with teachers reporting a positive effect on students' academic achievement.

### **Discipline and Classroom Management**

Manifestation determination meetings for students at Dixie County High School are not conducted, or are not documented appropriately when they are conducted. Discipline data related to in-school and out-of-school suspensions (OSS) are not reported accurately to the DOE. A concern was noted regarding reliance on suspension and punitive behavior management strategies rather than providing positive behavioral supports to students with interfering behaviors results in students being removed from the classroom for an extended period of time over the course of the school year. The district is required to access technical assistance through the Bureau to address: the manifestation determination process; accurate collection, reporting, and analysis of discipline data; and, developing and implementing effective behavior management plans based on the results of individual student, class, and school-wide data analysis.



### **Staff Development**

There were no findings of noncompliance in this area. A concern was noted that staff across all school and grade levels reported a need for additional training in behavior management focusing on prevention. A promising practice noted by staff was the wide range of topics and training opportunities available for professional development.

### **Parental Involvement**

Prior written notice of change of placement for five students did not include all required information. A funding adjustment will be made by the DOE for the five student records in question. A concern was noted at Dixie County High School that, when parents attend the IEP meeting, written documentation of the meeting notice is destroyed. Promising practices noted by staff included a willingness to use multiple means for communicating with parents including, teleconferencing, e-mail, late or early meetings, and daily notes.

### **Stakeholder Opinions Related to the Key Data Indicator**

When asked their opinions regarding the relatively high dropout rate for students with disabilities, district and school staff reported that there is a need for: identification of and intervention with students who are struggling in elementary school; additional technical/vocational opportunities for students who are not college bound; training to better assist the students to deal with stress that may be associated with the FCAT; methods of getting parents more involved in supporting student attendance and academic achievement; additional applied skills courses that are high interest and can be introduced at the middle school level; higher expectations for students on the part of teachers; increasing student attendance; and, provision of transportation for students to attend after school tutoring and other remedial programs. Concerns noted by students included: lack of sufficient text books in In-school suspension (ISS); excessive restrictions in the school's discipline policies; inability to pass the FCAT; conflicts with teachers; and, problems with school social groups.

### **Counseling as a Related Service**

Counseling as a related service is not documented on the IEPs of some students who need it and receive it. A concern was noted that some students who appear to be in need of counseling services do not receive it. The district is required to provide technical assistance to IEP team participants regarding the need for counseling as a related service, including determining if a need exists and documenting it on the IEP as appropriate.

### **Speech and Language Services as Related Services**

There were no findings of noncompliance or concerns noted in this area.

### **Transition Services**

Transition is not identified as a purpose on the IEP team meeting notice as required. A concern was noted that interaction with Division for Vocational Rehabilitation is limited to students in their senior year and that agencies often are not invited to transition IEP meetings due to lack of participation in the past. The district is required to provide technical assistance to IEP team members on requirements related to transition planning, including transition being noted as a purpose of the meeting and the need to continue to invite and foster appropriate agency participation in the transition planning process.

### **Services to Gifted Students**

The only service delivery model available through the gifted program is teacher-to-parent consultation or training provided on Saturdays; this service delivery model does not affect the students' educational experience at school. The district is required to review its gifted services to ensure that the students' needs beyond the general curriculum are addressed. It was noted that district staff report on-going efforts to expand the gifted program in the district.

### **Review of Student Records**

There were systemic findings of noncompliance on 18 components of the individual educational plan (IEP) document or process for students with disabilities, and individual or non-systemic findings on 30 additional components. IEP teams of 21 students were required to reconvene to address identified findings. Six records required an adjustment of federal funds. One matrix of services document was found to be inaccurately reported, and the district must submit an amendment of its data through the Automated Student Information System database for that student. There were systemic findings of noncompliance on four components of the educational plan (EP) document or process for gifted students, and individual or non-systemic findings on five additional components. The district will be required to target the areas noted above in its existing IEP and EP training procedures, and to develop and implement a system of self-assessment to ensure compliance with required elements. It is recommended that the district utilize the student- and item-specific feedback on the record reviews provided to assist in the provision of targeted technical assistance on IEP/EP development.

### **Review of District Forms**

Revisions were required on forms representing ten actions, and recommended revisions were noted on forms representing nine actions. The district was notified of the specific findings via a separate letter June 17, 2005. A detailed explanation of the specific findings is included as appendix D.

### **System Improvement Plan**

In response to these findings, the district is required to develop a system improvement plan (SIP) for submission to the Bureau. This plan must include activities and strategies intended to address specific findings, as well as measurable evidence of change. Compliance and procedural issues regarding the IEP and direct services to students are required to be resolved by a date designated by the monitoring team leader, not to exceed 90 days. In addition, long-term and/or systemic issues may be required to be included in the district's continuous improvement plan. The district may be required to address an issue for an extended period of time, identifying benchmarks to reach acceptable changes. In developing the SIP, every effort should be made to link the system improvement activities resulting from this focused monitoring report to the district's continuous improvement monitoring plan. The format for the SIP, including a listing of the critical issues identified by the Bureau as most significantly in need of improvement, is provided with this executive summary. Also included in this report will be a list of recommendations and technical assistance available to the district.

## Dixie County School District Focused Monitoring System Improvement Strategies

This section includes the issues identified by the Bureau as most significantly in need of improvement. The district is required to provide system improvement strategies to address identified findings, which may include an explanation of specific activities the district has committed to implementing, or it may consist of a broader statement describing planned strategies. For each issue, the plan also must define the measurable evidence of whether or not the desired outcome has been achieved. Target dates that extend for more than one year should include benchmarks in order to track interim progress. Findings identified as “ESE” are those findings that reflect issues specific to ESE students. Findings identified as “All” are those findings that reflect issues related to the student population as a whole, including ESE students.

Category	Findings	ESE	All	System Improvement Strategies	Evidence of Change and Reporting Date
Administration and Policy	<p>Students who have at least five unexcused absences within a calendar month or 10 unexcused absences within a 90-calendar-day period are not referred to the school’s child study team to determine if early patterns of truancy are developing and to develop a plan to address the issue.</p> <p>Recommendations are included in the respective section of this report and/or under <i>General Recommendations and Technical Assistance</i>.</p>		X	<p>The district will provide district-wide technical assistance on the statutory requirements related to nonattendance and to develop a method of tracking school-level compliance.</p> <p>The district will provide technical assistance to IEP team members regarding the need to address attendance in the IEPs of students’ whose chronic nonattendance negatively impacts their school performance.</p>	<p>District report of self-assessment indicates compliance with all targeted elements for 100% of IEPs reviewed.</p> <p>May 2006 May 2007</p>

Category	Findings	ESE	All	System Improvement Strategies	Evidence of Change and Reporting Date
Administration and Policy (continued)				Periodic self-assessments (conducted at least quarterly) of five students with extensive absences will be conducted to determine compliance with attendance requirements. Based on the results, targeted interventions will be applied.	
Curriculum and Instruction	<p>Students are not informed of the FCAT waiver until their senior year.</p> <p>Recommendations are included in the respective section of this report and/or under <i>General Recommendations and Technical Assistance</i>.</p>	X		<p>Technical assistance regarding diploma option decisions, including the information to be provided to families, must be provided to IEP team participants at the middle and high schools.</p> <p>Periodic self-assessments of five students ages 14 and older will be conducted to determine compliance with requirements. Based on the results, targeted interventions will be applied.</p>	<p>District report of self-assessment indicates compliance with all targeted elements for 100% of IEPs reviewed.</p> <p>May 2006 May 2007</p>
Discipline and Classroom Management	<p>Manifestation determination meetings for students at Dixie County High School are not conducted, or are not documented appropriately when they are conducted.</p>	X		<p>No later than March 15, 2006, the district will access technical assistance through the Bureau to address</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• the manifestation determination process</li> <li>• accurate collection, reporting, and analysis of discipline data</li> <li>• developing and implementing</li> </ul>	<p>Documentation of request for and provision of technical assistance submitted to the Bureau.</p>

Category	Findings	ESE	All	System Improvement Strategies	Evidence of Change and Reporting Date
Discipline and Classroom Management (continued)	<p>Two students were placed on home instruction for an extended period of time due to behavioral concerns, with no plan for reentry into school included in the IEPs.</p> <p>Discipline data related to in-school and OSS are not reported accurately to the DOE.</p> <p>Recommendations are included in the respective section of this report and/or under <i>General Recommendations and Technical Assistance</i>.</p>			<p>effective behavior management plans based on the results of individual student, class, and school-wide data analysis</p> <p>The IEP teams of the students on home instruction were required to reconvene to address the students' placement and to incorporate plans for reentry into school.</p> <p>The district will review it's practices related to the use of home instruction; based on the results of that review, policies and procedures regarding the use of this service delivery model must be developed and submitted to the Bureau for review.</p> <p>Periodic self-assessments of 5 students with multiple disciplinary referrals will be conducted to determine compliance with requirements. Based on the results, targeted interventions will be applied.</p>	<p>The district has provided documentation of completion of the reconvene requirement effective October 2005.</p> <p>Policies and procedures submitted to the Bureau for approval.</p> <p>May 2006</p> <p>District report of self-assessment indicates compliance with all targeted elements for 100% of IEPs reviewed.</p> <p>May 2006 May 2007</p>

Category	Findings	ESE	All	System Improvement Strategies	Evidence of Change and Reporting Date
Staff Development	<p>There are no findings of noncompliance.</p> <p>Recommendations are included in the respective section of this report and/or under <i>General Recommendations and Technical Assistance</i>.</p>				
Parental Involvement	<p>Prior written notice of change of placement for five students did not include all required information.</p> <p>Sixty percent of the surveys sent to parents of ESE students were returned as undeliverable.</p> <p>Recommendations are included in the respective section of this report and/or under <i>General Recommendations and Technical Assistance</i>.</p>	X	X	<p>A funding adjustment will be made by the DOE for the five student records noted above.</p> <p>The district will work with its information technology department and develop a means for ensuring that the student information is current and correct.</p>	<p>The district will submit to the Bureau their procedures outlining how, in conjunction with their information technology department, periodic updates will be conducted and their method for ensuring that student data is accurate.</p> <p>May 2006</p>
Counseling as a Related Service	<p>Counseling as a related service is not documented on the IEPs of some students who need it and receive it.</p> <p>Recommendations are included in the respective section of this report</p>	X		<p>The district will provide technical assistance to IEP team participants regarding the need for counseling as a related service, including determining if a need exists and documenting it on the IEP as</p>	<p>Documentation of provision of technical assistance submitted to the Bureau.</p>

Category	Findings	ESE	All	System Improvement Strategies	Evidence of Change and Reporting Date
Counseling as a Related Service (continued)	and/or under <i>General Recommendations and Technical Assistance</i> .			<p>appropriate.</p> <p>Periodic self-assessments of five ESE students known to the schools' guidance counselors as receiving counseling and five EH students will be conducted to determine compliance with requirements. Based on the results, targeted interventions will be applied.</p>	<p>District report of self-assessment indicates compliance with all targeted elements for 100% of IEPs reviewed.</p> <p>May 2006 May 2007</p>
Speech and Language	There are no findings of noncompliance.				
Transition Services	<p>Transition is not identified as a purpose on the IEP team meeting notice as required.</p> <p>Recommendations are included in the respective section of this report and/or under <i>General Recommendations and Technical Assistance</i>.</p>	X		<p>The district is required to provide technical assistance to IEP team members on requirements related to transition planning, including transition being noted as a purpose of the meeting and the need to continue to invite and foster appropriate agency participation in the transition planning process.</p> <p>Periodic self-assessments of five students ages 17 and older will be conducted to determine compliance with requirements. Based on the results, targeted interventions will be applied.</p>	<p>Documentation of provision of technical assistance submitted to the Bureau.</p> <p>District report of self-assessment indicates compliance with all targeted elements for 100% of IEPs reviewed.</p> <p>May 2006 May 2007</p>

Category	Findings	ESE	All	System Improvement Strategies	Evidence of Change and Reporting Date
Gifted	The only service available at the time of our visit was teacher-to-parent consultation or training provided on Saturdays; this service delivery model does not affect the students' educational experience at school.	X		No later than December 15, 2005, the district will review its gifted services to ensure that the students' needs beyond the general curriculum are addressed. Based on the results of the review, a plan will be developed and implemented to expand the services available to gifted students to address educational issues.	Service plan submitted to the Bureau.  May 2006
Review of Student Records	<p>On IEPs, systemic findings of noncompliance were noted on 18 components.</p> <p>Individual or non-systemic findings were noted in 30 additional components of the IEPs.</p> <p>For 17 IEPs more than 50% of the goals were not measurable.</p> <p>Ten IEPs had additional findings of noncompliance that required reconvening of the IEP teams.</p> <p>Five records did not include prior written notice of change of placement as required, and one was not current on the day of the review.</p>	X		<p>The district will provide an amendment to the data provided to the DOE through the Automated Student Information System database for surveys 3 and 4 for the 2004-05 school year for any matrix of services documents found to be in error.</p> <p>The IEP teams for 21 students will reconvene to address identified findings of noncompliance.</p> <p>An adjustment of federal funds will be made by the DOE for six students.</p> <p>The district is required to access technical assistance through the</p>	<p>The district has provided documentation of completion of the reconvene requirement effective October 2005</p> <p>Documentation of on-going provision of technical assistance, including provider, participants, and schedule, submitted to the Bureau.</p> <p>District report of self-assessment indicates compliance with all targeted elements for 100% of IEPs reviewed.</p>



Category	Findings	ESE	All	System Improvement Strategies	Evidence of Change and Reporting Date
Review of Student Records (continued)	<p>One of two matrix of services documents were found to be inaccurately reported.</p> <p>On EPs, systemic findings of noncompliance were noted in four components.</p> <p>Individual or non-systemic findings were noted on five additional components of the EPs.</p>			<p>Bureau to provide comprehensive staff development on IEPs and EPs.</p> <p>The district will develop and implement a system of self-assessment to ensure compliance with required elements of IEPs and EPs. This system will include the requirement that district and/or school staff periodically review at least 15 IEPs and three EPs to determine compliance with these requirements.</p>	<p>May 2006 May 2007</p>
Review of District Forms	Revisions are required on forms representing ten actions, and recommended revisions were noted on forms representing nine actions.	X		Required revisions will be made to the identified forms.	<p>Revisions submitted to the Bureau</p> <p>May 2006</p>



# Monitoring Process

## Authority

The Florida Department of Education, Bureau of Exceptional Education and Student Services, in carrying out its roles of leadership, resource allocation, technical assistance, monitoring, and evaluation is required to oversee the performance of district school boards in the enforcement of all laws and rules (Sections 1001.03(8) and 1008.32, Florida Statutes (F.S.)). In fulfilling this requirement, the Bureau conducts monitoring activities of the exceptional student education (ESE) programs provided by district school boards in accordance with Sections 1001.42 and 1003.57, F.S. Through these monitoring activities, the Bureau examines and evaluates procedures, records, and programs of exceptional student education (ESE); provides information and assistance to school districts; and otherwise assists school districts in operating effectively and efficiently. One purpose of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act (IDEA 2004) is to assess and ensure the effectiveness of efforts to educate children with disabilities (Section 300.1(d) of Title 34, Code of Federal Regulations (CFR)), and districts are required to make a good faith effort to assist children with disabilities to achieve their stated goals and objectives in the least restrictive environment (34 CFR §300.350(a)(2) and §300.556). In accordance with the IDEA 2004 the Department is responsible for ensuring that the requirements of the IDEA 2004 are carried out and that each educational program for children with disabilities administered in the state meets the educational requirements of the state (34 CFR §300.600(a)(1) and (2)).

The monitoring system reflects the Department's commitment to provide assistance, service, and accountability to school districts, and is designed to emphasize improved educational outcomes for students while continuing to conduct those activities necessary to ensure compliance with applicable federal laws and regulations and state statutes and rules. In addition, these activities serve to ensure implementation of corrective actions such as those required subsequent to monitoring by the U.S. Department of Education, Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP), and by the Office for Civil Rights (OCR), as well as other quality assurance activities of the Department.

## Focused Monitoring

The purpose of the focused monitoring process is to implement a methodology that targets the Bureau's monitoring intervention on key data indicators identified as significant for educational outcomes for students. Through this process, the Bureau uses data to inform the monitoring process, thereby implementing a strategic approach to intervention and commitment of resources that will improve student outcomes. A detailed description of the Bureau's monitoring processes is provided in *Focused Monitoring, Continuous Improvement/Self Assessment Plan Verification, Focused Monitoring Verification: Work Papers and Source Book for Exceptional Student Education Programs (2005)*. The protocols used by Bureau staff when conducting procedural compliance reviews are available in *Compliance Manual: Work Papers and Source Book for Exceptional Student Education Programs (2005)*. These documents will be made available on the Bureau's website at [www.firn.edu/doe/commhome/mon-home.htm](http://www.firn.edu/doe/commhome/mon-home.htm).

## **Key Data Indicators**

The four key data indicators utilized during 2005 and their sources of data are as follows:

- percentage of students with disabilities participating in regular classes (i.e., spending at least 80% of the school day with their nondisabled peers) (Survey 9)
- dropout rate for students with disabilities (Survey 5)
- percentage of students with disabilities exiting with a standard diploma (Survey 5)
- participation in statewide assessments by students with disabilities (performance data from the assessment files and Survey 3 enrollment data)

## **District Selection**

In making the decision to include Dixie County in this year's focused monitoring visits, the dropout data from Survey 5 for the 2003-04 school year was reviewed. Districts were rank-ordered on the dropout rate of their students with disabilities. Dixie County's rate of 6.1% approached the highest in the state. The district's out-of-school suspension rate is 14%, which is inline with other districts similar in size and one percent lower than the reported state out-of-school suspension rate. Dixie County's current 2005 LEA profile and the listing of districts rank ordered on data related to the key data indicator, which was used for district selection, are included as appendix A. The most current LEA profiles for all Florida school districts are available on the web at <http://www.firn.edu/doe/commhome/datapage.htm>.

## **Sources of Information**

### **On-Site Monitoring Activities**

The Bureau conducted the on-site focused monitoring visit from April 18-20, 2005. Three Bureau staff members and one peer monitor conducted site-visits to the following three schools:

- Anderson Elementary School
- Dixie County High School
- Ruth Raines Middle School

Peer monitors are exceptional student education personnel from other school districts who are trained to assist with the DOE's monitoring activities. A listing of Bureau staff, peer monitors, and contracted staff who conducted the monitoring activities for this visit is included as appendix B.

### **Interviews**

A total of 22 interviews, including three district-level staff, five school-level administrators or other support staff (e.g., guidance counselors), eight ESE teachers or other service providers, and six general education teachers were conducted.

### **Focus Group Interviews**

In conjunction with the 2005 Dixie County focused monitoring visit, two focus groups for students with disabilities were conducted. Eleven students participated in the focus group for

students pursuing a standard diploma and ten students participated in the focus group for students pursuing a special diploma.

### ***Student Case Studies***

Students may be randomly selected for case studies or the monitoring team may select students who appear more able to participate in the general educational environment to a greater extent than a preliminary record review indicates that they are. As part of this process, the student's records are reviewed, teachers are interviewed regarding the development and implementation of the student's IEP, and the student's classroom may be observed. Seven in-depth case studies were conducted in Dixie County.

### ***Classroom Visits***

Classroom visits are conducted in conjunction with individual student case studies as well as during general observations of classrooms that include exceptional students. In addition to implementation of a student's IEP, curriculum and instruction, classroom management and discipline, and classroom design and resources are observed during general classroom visits. Teachers of the classes visited are interviewed regarding practices related to students with disabilities. A total of ten classrooms (six ESE and four GE) were visited during the focused monitoring visit to Dixie County.

### **Off-Site Monitoring Activities**

Surveys are designed by the University of Miami (UM) research staff in order to provide maximum opportunity for input about the district's ESE services from parents of students with disabilities and students identified as gifted, ESE and GE teachers, and students with disabilities in grades 9-12. The survey that is sent to parents is printed in English, Spanish, and Haitian Creole, where applicable. It includes a cover letter and a postage paid reply envelope. Data from the surveys are incorporated into the body of this report. The results of the surveys are included as appendix C.

### ***Parent Surveys***

The parent survey was sent to parents of the 458 students with disabilities for whom complete addresses were provided by the district. A total of ten parents representing 2% of the sample returned the survey. Surveys were returned as undeliverable from 275 families, representing 60% of the sample.

### ***Teacher Surveys***

Surveys developed for teachers and other service providers were mailed to each school, with a memo explaining the key data indicator and the monitoring process. All teachers and other service providers, both GE and ESE, were provided an opportunity to respond. A total of 64 teachers, representing approximately 53% of ESE and GE teachers in the district returned the survey. Data are from five (83%) of the district's six schools.

### ***Student Surveys***

A sufficient number of surveys were provided to allow all students with disabilities, grades 9-12, to respond. Instructions for administration of the survey by classroom teachers, including a written script, were provided for each class or group of students. Since participation in this

survey is not appropriate for some students whose disabilities might impair their understanding of the survey, professional judgment is used to determine appropriate participants. Surveys from 46 students, representing approximately 37% of students with disabilities in grades 9-12 in the district, were returned. Data are from two (67%) of the district's three schools with students in grades 9-12.

### ***Review of Student Records and District Forms***

Prior to the on-site monitoring visit, Bureau staff conducts a compliance review of student records that are randomly selected from the population of exceptional students. In Dixie County, 19 IEPs for students with disabilities and five educational plans (EPs) for gifted students were reviewed for compliance. Six of the IEPs represented transition IEPs for students 14 years of age or older. An additional 26 records were reviewed on-site in conjunction with student case studies and to collect information related to additional compliance areas designated by the Bureau, and two matrix of services documents for students reported for funding at the 254-255 levels through the Florida Education Finance Program (FEFP) were reviewed.

As part of the monitoring process Bureau staff review selected district forms and notices to determine if the required components are included. The results of the reviews of student records and district forms are described in this report.

## **Reporting Process**

### ***Interim Reports***

Daily debriefing sessions are conducted by the monitoring team members in order to review findings, as well as to determine if there is a need to address additional issues or visit additional sites. Preliminary findings and concerns are shared with the ESE director and/or designee through daily debriefings with the monitoring team leader during the monitoring visit. In addition, the district ESE director is invited to attend the final team debriefing with Bureau staff and peer monitors. During the course of these activities, suggestions for interventions or strategies to be incorporated into the district's SIP may be proposed. Within two weeks of the visit, Bureau administrative staff conduct a telephone conference with the ESE director to review major findings.

### ***Preliminary Report***

Subsequent to the on-site visit, Bureau staff prepare a written report. The report is sent to the district ESE director. Data for the report are compiled from sources that have been previously discussed in this document. The director will have the opportunity to discuss and clarify with Bureau staff any concerns regarding the report before it becomes final.

### ***Final Report***

Upon final review and revision by Bureau staff, the final report is issued. The report is sent to the district, and is posted to the Bureau's website at [www.firn.edu/doe/commhome/mon-home.htm](http://www.firn.edu/doe/commhome/mon-home.htm).

Within 30 days of the district's receipt of the final report, the SIP, including activities targeting specific findings, must be submitted to the Bureau for review. In developing this plan, every effort should be made to link the SIP for focused monitoring to the district's continuous

improvement plan. The plan must provide for findings to be addressed in a timely manner, with compliance and procedural issues regarding IEPs, EPs, and direct services to individual students to be resolved by a date designated by the Bureau, not to exceed 90 days. Other issues may be required to be resolved over a period of time not to exceed one year. All SIPs will be expected to extend for a period of at least two years, in order to provide an assurance of the ongoing effectiveness of the district's strategies for improvement. In collaboration with Bureau staff, the district is encouraged to develop methods that correlate activities in order to utilize resources, staff, and time in an efficient manner in order to improve outcomes for students with disabilities. Upon approval of the SIP, it is forwarded to the district and the plan is posted on the website noted above. Corrective actions are monitored through the submission of semiannual status reports of progress to be submitted to the Bureau on May 30<sup>th</sup> and November 30<sup>th</sup> of each year for the duration of the SIP.





## **Reporting of Information**

The data generated through the surveys, focus group interviews, individual interviews, case studies, and classroom visits are summarized in this report. In addition, the results from the review of student records and district forms are presented in the report. This report provides conclusions with regard to the key data indicator and specifically addresses related areas that may contribute to or impact the indicator. For the participation of students with disabilities in statewide assessment these include the following:

- administration and policy
- curriculum and instruction
- discipline and classroom management
- staff development
- parental involvement
- stakeholder opinion related to the key data indicator

In accordance with the Department's agreement with the U.S. Department of Education, Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP), additional areas addressed during all monitoring visits include the following:

- the provision of counseling as a related service
- the communication needs of students with disabilities not eligible for programs for students who are speech or language impaired
- school to post-school transition
- services for gifted students

To the extent possible, this report focuses on systemic issues rather than on isolated instances of noncompliance or need for improvement. In accordance with established Bureau monitoring procedures, a finding of a systemic violation will be made if evidence of such a violation is found in 25% or more of the pertinent data sources. Findings are presented in a preliminary report, and the district has the opportunity to clarify items of concern. In a collaborative effort between the district and Bureau staff, system improvement areas are identified. Findings are addressed through the development of strategies for improvement, and evidence of change will be identified as a joint effort between the district and the Bureau. Strategies that are identified as long-term approaches toward improving the district's issue related to the key data indicator are also addressed through the district's continuous improvement plan.

## **Results**

### **General Information**

This category provides demographic and background information specific to the district as well as information regarding the educational placement of students with disabilities.

#### ***Data***

Based on the 2005 LEA profile, Dixie County School District has a total school population (PK-12) of 2,143 with 22% of students being identified as students with disabilities (including 2% identified as eligible for the program for speech impaired (SI) only), and <1% identified as

gifted. Dixie County is considered a “small” district and is one of 25 districts in this enrollment group. Dixie County School District is comprised of two elementary schools, one middle school, and one high school.

According to the data provided in the 2005 LEA profile (Survey 5), 6% of Dixie County’s students with disabilities dropped out of school during the 2003-04 school year, 5% dropped out the previous year (2002-03), and 7% the year before that (2001-02).

### **Administration and Policy**

This section provides information related to specific administrative policies that may affect the dropout rate for students with disabilities. These include attendance policies as well as data reporting procedures.

#### ***Requirements***

The IDEA requires that the state establish performance indicators and assess progress related to dropout rates for students with disabilities (34 CFR § 300.137). Dropout prevention and academic intervention are addressed at section 1003.53, F.S., which requires that the educational program for dropout prevention provide curricula, character development and law education, and related services that support the program goals and lead to improved performance in the areas of academic achievement, attendance, and discipline.

In an effort to foster consistent school attendance on the part of students at risk of dropping out, section 1003.26(1)(b), F.S., requires that a student who has had at least five unexcused absences within a calendar month or 10 unexcused absences within a 90-calendar-day period be referred to the school’s child study team (CST) to determine if early patterns of truancy are developing. If the team determines that a pattern of nonattendance is developing, whether the absences are excused or not, a meeting with the student’s parent must be scheduled to identify potential remedies.

In accordance with section 1003.24, F.S., each parent of a child of compulsory attendance age is responsible for the school attendance of that child. The school district must establish an attendance policy that includes, but is not limited to, the required number of school attendance days and the number of absences and tardy arrivals after which a statement explaining such absences and tardy arrivals must be provided. Each school in the district must determine if each absence or tardy arrival is excused or unexcused in accordance with criteria established by the district school board.

#### ***Data***

District staff reported that the students who are most at-risk of dropping out are those who are not reading on grade level and those who score level 1 or 2 on the FCAT, and therefore the district’s dropout prevention program focuses on providing early reading interventions. Both of the district’s elementary schools participate in the Florida Reading Initiative (FRI), with a focus on intensive early intervention. The middle school has implemented Read 180 and students scoring at level 1 and 2 on the reading portion of the FCAT are provided instruction in the Corrective Reading program.

For the 2003-04 school year, the percentage of students who were absent 21 or more days was as follows: 10.8% at Anderson Elementary School; 18.1% at Dixie High School; 19.7% at Raines Middle School; and, 24.5% at Old Town Elementary School. Elementary school staff reported that student absenteeism is impacted by how involved parents are in their child's education. Attendance is encouraged by rewarding students for good attendance. Staff at Anderson Elementary School reported picking up students who missed the bus and working with the Department of Children and Families when that agency is involved with a family. At the middle school it was reported that the school's resource officer contacts parents when students are not in school and that guidance counselors are responsible for reviewing patterns of truancy and referring students to counseling if deemed necessary. At the high school it was reported that students with excessive absences cannot earn class credits, but that students may attend adult education classes to make up their work.

Dixie County's Student Code of Conduct states that students with nine or more unexcused absences in one semester are considered at risk of jeopardizing their academic progress, and parents are to be sent a letter requesting a conference to develop an "Attendance Improvement Plan." Most teachers interviewed had experience with students who are frequently absent; none had participated in or had awareness of child study team meetings to address attendance. Attendance records were reviewed as part of the case process. Although anecdotal reports from staff included interventions targeting increased attendance for some students, for the majority of students with excessive absences there was no evidence of referral to child study teams, and attendance was not addressed in those students' IEPs. This was particularly evident at the middle school. The students who participated in the standard diploma group were aware of the school's attendance policy, reporting that students are allowed to have nine unexcused absences in a semester and that credits are withheld and drivers' licenses are revoked for accumulations of 15 unexcused absences.

### ***Findings***

- Findings of Noncompliance
  - Students who have at least five unexcused absences within a calendar month or 10 unexcused absences within a 90-calendar-day period are not referred to the school's child study team to determine if early patterns of truancy are developing and to develop a plan to address the issue.
- Areas of Concern
  - The majority of staff interviewed are not aware of requirements related to attendance, and do not initiate formal interventions to address chronic nonattendance on the part of their students.
- Corrective Actions
  - The district is required to provide district-wide technical assistance on the statutory requirements related to nonattendance and to develop a method of tracking school-level compliance.

- The district is required to provide technical assistance to IEP team members regarding the need to address attendance in the IEPs of students' whose chronic nonattendance negatively impacts their school performance.
- Promising Practices
  - Staff at Anderson Elementary School report extensive student-specific actions designed to foster student attendance and parent involvement at the school.

## **Curriculum and Instruction**

### ***Requirements***

Section 300.550(b)(1)(2) of Title 34, Code of Federal Regulations, requires each public agency to ensure "... (1) that to the maximum extent appropriate, children with disabilities, including children in public or private institutions or other care facilities, are educated with children who are nondisabled; and (2) That special classes, separate schooling or other removal of children with disabilities from the regular educational environment occurs only if the nature or severity of the disability is such that education in regular classes with the use of supplementary aids and services cannot be achieved satisfactorily."

Section 300.551(a) of Title 34, Code of Federal Regulations requires that a continuum of alternative placements be available to meet the needs of children with disabilities for special education and related services (34 CFR 300.551(a)).

Rule 6A-6.0311(1)(a)-(h), Florida Administrative Code (FAC), *Eligible Special Programs for Exceptional Students*, describes the continuum of placements as follows: "...Special programs shall be organized so that an exceptional student shall receive instruction in one or more of the following ways: (a) Supplementary consultation or related services; (b) Resource room; (c) Special class; (d) Special Day School; (e) Residential school; (f) Special class in a hospital or facility operated by a noneducational agency; (g) Individual instruction in a hospital or home; (h) supplementary instructional personnel to public or nonpublic preschool or day care programs for the instruction of pre-kindergarten exceptional students." Rule 6A6.03411(3)(a)3, FAC, *Policies and Procedures for the Provision of Specially Designed Instruction and Related Services for Exceptional Students*, clarifies that regular class placement is included in the continuum of placements.

Rule 6A-6.03028(7)(h), FAC, *Development of Individual Educational Plans for Student with Disabilities*, requires that "During the student's eighth grade year or during the school year of the student's fourteenth birthday, whichever comes first, a statement of whether the student is pursuing a course of study leading to a standard diploma or a special diploma" be included in the IEP.

*Policies and Procedures for the Provision of Specially Designed Instruction and Related Services for Exceptional Students*, p. 27, assures that the district make information available to parents regarding diploma options, including the requirements for obtaining a waiver of the requirement to obtain a passing score on the FCAT, when IEP teams discuss a students course of study.

### *Data*

Staff reported a continuum of placement options available across the district, including regular class placement with consultation, limited pull-out to a resource ESE class, self-contained ESE classrooms, and home education. At Anderson Elementary School it was reported that the school implemented a more inclusive model during the 2004-05 school year, with students either being pulled-out for services for short periods of time or being provided support facilitation in the classroom.

Both Anderson Elementary School and Ruth Raines Middle School have two self-contained classrooms for students with moderate to severe cognitive impairments who require community based instruction in a modified, functional curriculum. Parental choice allows for students in those classrooms to remain at the schools beyond the designated grade levels. As a result, there are students up to age 17 at the elementary school and up to age 22 at the middle school. During classroom observations the younger students at the elementary school and the students of middle school age at the middle school were engaged in age-appropriate functional academic activities; the students older than the expected age for the school level were not.

At Ruth Raines Middle School it was reported that ESE students are placed in general education classes by the IEP teams, and that some ESE students are allowed to try general education classes upon their request. Consultation is available as a support to staff, but teachers stated that there is no formal system for tracking or monitoring student performance. It was reported that students who receive failing grades in two subjects are placed back into ESE classes, and that many students are moved into ESE classes at the semester break as a result. Records reviewed through the case study process yielded numerous ESE students who were failing general education classes, with no indication that the IEP teams were reconvened to determine additional supports that might be needed.

At Dixie County High School it was reported that virtually all ninth graders begin the school year pursuing a standard diploma through enrollment in general education classes. Support is available through consultation. If, during the course of their first semester, it becomes evident that a student is not being successful, the IEP team will reconvene to consider a change to special diploma. Vocational courses and extra-curricular programs such as Reserve Officers' Training Corp (ROTC) are provided, in part to encourage students to stay in school. Staff at the high school expressed concerns that students will not have the opportunity to participate in vocational or other elective classes if they require FCAT remediation and 90 minutes of uninterrupted instruction in reading, and that more students will possibly drop out as a result of the remediation requirements.

District and high school level staff reported that students are informed of the FCAT wavier during their senior year, and several stated that providing this information earlier would decrease the students' motivation to achieve a passing score on the FCAT. In 2002-03 46% of the students with disabilities graduated with a standard diploma through the FCAT wavier, and in 2003-04 35% did. As the district's total K-12 population is approximately 2100 students, these percentages may reflect a small number of students.

### ***Findings***

- Findings of Noncompliance
  - Students are not informed of the FCAT waiver until their senior year.
  
- Area(s) of Concern
  - Some students with significant cognitive impairments are served in classes housed in schools that do not allow for interactions with age-appropriate peers (e.g, 17 year old in an elementary school; 22 year old in a middle school); parent wishes reportedly drive these placements.
  - Support for some students with disabilities in general education classrooms is limited to consultation with staff; lack of direct monitoring of student progress may be impacting the number of students who return to ESE classes due to lack of success in the general education environment.
  
- Corrective Action(s)
  - Technical assistance regarding diploma option decisions, including the information to be provided to families, must be provided to IEP team participants at the middle and high schools.
  
- Recommended Action(s)
  - The district is encouraged to conduct a review the service delivery models available by school, and to develop and implement a coordinated plan to ensure that
    - sufficient supports are available for students with disabilities to participate in the general education classroom to the extent appropriate (i.e., development of a procedure or system to allow for direct monitoring of individual student progress)
    - specialized programs are housed in settings that allow for interaction with age- and grade-appropriate peers to the extent possible.
  
- Promising Practices
  - Staff report that the inclusive service delivery model implemented at Anderson Elementary School has had a positive effect on students' academic achievement.

### **Discipline and Classroom Management**

This section provides information related to classroom and behavioral management in general as well as disciplinary procedures used with students with disabilities. Behavioral factors often are cited as affecting the IEP team's determination of the least restrictive environment appropriate for a given student.

### ***Requirements***

In accordance with 34 FR 300.346(a)(2)(i), the IEP team must "...In the case of a child with a disability whose behavior impedes his or her learning or that of others, consider, if appropriate, strategies, including positive behavioral interventions, strategies, and supports to address that behavior." In addition, regulatory requirements related to discipline are found at 34 CFR 300.519 through 300.529.

34 CFR 300.523(a)(2) requires that the IEP team immediately, if possible, but in no case later than 10 school days after the date on which the decision is made to suspend or change the placement of the student, conduct a review of the relationship between the child's disability and the behavior subject to the disciplinary action.

### *Data*

Discipline and classroom management were reported to be areas of concern at the elementary school. A large number of ESE students who had previously been served in self-contained ESE classrooms exhibited challenging behaviors when their placements were changed to the general education setting. Staff reported that teachers were not sufficiently trained in classroom management for the diverse groups of students in their classrooms.

At the high school, staff reported having to implement strict disciplinary guidelines in an attempt to address problems the school has experienced related to fighting, the introduction of tobacco and drugs to school grounds, and general disruption to the educational setting. All of the students who participated in the focus groups expressed concerns about the restrictions placed on them at the school. They reported that, while the number of serious physical altercations has decreased as a result of more stringent disciplinary policies, they feel all students are being punished for the behaviors of a few. Concerns were expressed regarding the use of cameras, bathroom restrictions, and the inability to have some activities at the school (e.g., pep rallies) as a result of the behavior of some students.

At all schools visited, there was limited evidence of the use of positive behavioral supports for students with challenging behaviors. Behavioral interventions reported by staff and documented in records included: informal counseling with students, or warnings; parent conferences; lunchroom detention; the opportunity classroom (OC), which is a form of ISS; OSS; placement in the SAVE alternative education (AE) program; and, placement on home instruction. Students who are extreme behavioral problems and students involved with the judicial system are sent to the SAVE center where they use computers and software for competency based credit retrieval.

Through the case study process two students who had been placed on home instruction due to behavioral concerns were identified. The IEPs documenting this placement were developed for a year's time, and did not include plans for reentry into school. It was not clear that all the students' goals could be addressed in the home environment.

For the 2003-04 school year the ISS rates reported to DOE were 2% for students with disabilities and <1% for nondisabled students; during the 2002-03 school year the rate for both groups was 0%. Based on teacher reports and the records reviewed, these data do not reflect the actual numbers of students who served in ISS and OSS during those school years. Staff reported that students are often given the option of trading a certain number of OC days for a lesser number of days of OSS, with parent approval.

Through the case study process the records of high school students who were suspended for more than 10 days in a school year were reviewed. While staff reported that the manifestation determination process for students with disabilities being considered for suspension is conducted, documentation of this IEP team process was not evident in the records reviewed.

## ***Findings***

- Findings of Noncompliance
  - Manifestation determination meetings for students at Dixie County High School are not conducted, or are not documented appropriately when they are conducted.
  - Two students were placed on home instruction for an extended period of time due to behavioral concerns, with no plan for reentry into school included in the IEPs.
  - Discipline data related to in-school and out-of-school suspensions are not reported accurately to the DOE.
  
- Areas of Concern
  - Reliance on suspension and punitive behavior management strategies to a greater extent than considering the need for positive behavioral supports to students with interfering behaviors results in students being removed from the classroom for an extended period of time over the course of the school year.
  
- Corrective Actions
  - The district is required to access technical assistance through the Bureau to address
    - the manifestation determination process
    - accurate collection, reporting, and analysis of discipline data
    - developing and implementing effective behavior management plans based on the results of individual student, class, and school-wide data analysis
  - The IEP teams of the students on home instruction were required to reconvene to address the students' placement and to incorporate plans for reentry into school.
  - The district is required to review its practices related to the use of home instruction; based on the results of that review, policies and procedures regarding the use of this service delivery model must be developed and submitted to the Bureau for review.

## **Staff Development**

This category refers to in-service training or other staff development activities designed to: foster more inclusive environments; ensure that students with disabilities are provided instruction in the least restrictive environment; prepare GE teachers to address the learning and behavioral needs of students with disabilities in their classrooms; and, prepare ESE teachers to act as effective consultants for their general education colleagues and support facilitators for students with disabilities enrolled in general education classes. Actual or perceived levels of staff knowledge and training are factors that may influence IEP teams' placement decisions.

## ***Requirements***

In accordance with 34 CFR 300.347(a)(3), an IEP must include "...a statement of the program modifications or supports for school personnel that will be provided for the child." "Supports for school personnel" is described in the portion of *Attachment I—Analysis of Comments and Changes* that applies to this section as including staff training for a child's teacher.

Section 1003.02, F.S., delineates the responsibilities of district school boards, which include "...staff development, public K-12 school student education including education for exceptional



students and students in juvenile justice facilities, special programs, adult education programs, and career and technical education programs.”

### ***Data***

Staff at all schools visited reported participating in staff development related to effective reading instruction and assessment. The majority of teachers reported receiving training in discipline and classroom management, although staff at all schools indicated that additional staff development in this area is needed. Teachers at Anderson Elementary School and Ruth Raines Middle School reported training in FCAT remediation and inclusive practices such as differentiated instruction and the use of instructional accommodations or modifications. Several staff members also mentioned English for speakers of other languages (ESOL) training and technical assistance related to graduation requirements.

### ***Findings***

- Findings of Noncompliance
  - None noted.
- Areas of Concern
  - Staff across all school and grade levels reported a need for additional training in behavior management focusing on prevention.
- Corrective Actions
  - Addressed in the *Discipline and Classroom Management* section above.
- Promising Practices
  - Staff reported a wide range of topics and training opportunities for professional development.

### **Parental Involvement**

This category refers to parental involvement in the decision-making process regarding placement of students with disabilities in the least restrictive environment.

### ***Requirements***

In accordance with 34 CFR 300.501(c)(1),(3),(5), “... (1) Each public agency shall ensure that the parents of each child with a disability are members of any group that makes decisions on the educational placement of their child. (3) If neither parent can participate in a meeting in which a decision is to be made relating to the educational placement of their child, the public agency shall use other methods to ensure their participation, including individual or conference telephone calls or video conferencing. (5) The public agency shall make reasonable efforts to ensure that the parents understand, and are able to participate in, any group discussions relating to the educational placement of their child, including arranging for an interpreter for parents with deafness, or whose native language is other than English.”

### ***Data***

A range of activities intended to increase parents’ involvement in their children’s education was reported. At Anderson Elementary School staff reported: restarting the Parent Teacher

Association (PTA); having an ESE parent liaison on campus; placing weekly articles in the local newspaper; sending letters home to inform parent of activities at the school; periodic family nights; and, a parent volunteer group. Staff at Ruth Raines Middle School reported: calling parents when students are absent; monitoring attendance with reports from the school resource officer (SRO); holding periodic open houses; parent/teacher conferences; and, contacting parents through e-mail, notes home, newspaper articles, and phone calls. At Dixie County High School staff reported: holding parent night and senior night; an 8<sup>th</sup> grade parent meeting; parent conferences; general assemblies; and, informing parents when students are absent from school.

District and school level staff reported that there is more active parent involvement in the younger grades, with participation decreasing in the higher grades. For the sampling of IEPs reviewed prior to and during the on-site visit, participation at IEP team meetings was lowest at the middle school level. Parents attended seven of ten IEP team meetings (70%) for elementary school students, five of 13 (38%) for middle school students, and eight of 11 (73%) for high school students. At Dixie County High School the IEPs for students whose parents attended the IEP meeting did not include documentation that the parents were invited. When asked about this, staff indicated that the written record of the invitation routinely is destroyed if the parent attends, and only included in the record if the parent was not present. Five of the IEPs reviewed reflected a change in placement. The written notice of change of placement form was included in those records, but the required information was not provided.

Staff reported that parents' wishes often drive the IEP team decision. For example, it was reported that frequently the decision for a student to pursue a special diploma rather than a standard diploma results from parents' desire for their children not to be frustrated by courses they perceive as too difficult. As noted in the *Curriculum and Instruction* section of the report, parents' concern for the safety of their children results in some students with more significant disabilities being served in schools for younger students.

In an effort to obtain input from as many families as possible, one component of the Bureau's monitoring process is the dissemination of a survey to all parents of ESE students in the district. The district provided contact information for all ESE students, and 458 surveys were mailed to those addresses. Surveys from 275 families (60%) were returned as undeliverable; ten families responded (2%). Because of the inaccuracy of the addresses provided and the extremely low response rate, little information was obtained through this source.

### ***Findings***

- Findings of Noncompliance
  - Prior written notice of change of placement for five students did not include all required information.
  
- Areas of Concern
  - Addressed under *Curriculum and Instruction* section.
  - At Dixie County High School, when parents attend the IEP meeting written documentation of the meeting notice is destroyed.
  - Sixty percent of the surveys sent to parents of students with disabilities in grades 9-12 were returned as undeliverable.

- Corrective Actions
  - A funding adjustment will be made by the DOE for the five student records noted above.
  - The district must ensure that documentation of written notice to meetings is maintained in student records.
  - The district is required to work with its Information Technology department and develop a means for ensuring that student information is current and correct.
- Promising Practice(s)
  - School and district staff reported multiple means for promoting parent involvement including, teleconferencing, e-mail, late or early meetings, and daily notes.

### **Stakeholder Opinions Related to the Key Data Indicator**

This section provides information related to the opinions of district staff as to why they believe the number of ESE students participating in statewide assessments is low. When asked their opinion on the likely contributors to the relatively high dropout rate for students with disabilities in Dixie County, the following factors or areas of need were cited by staff:

- identification of and intervention with students who are struggling in elementary school
- additional technical/vocational opportunities for students who are not college bound
- training to better assist the students to deal with stress that may be associated with the FCAT
- methods of getting parents more involved in supporting student attendance and academic achievement
- additional applied skills courses that are high interest and can be introduced at the middle school level
- higher expectations for students on the part of teachers
- increasing student attendance
- provision of transportation for students to attend after school tutoring and other remedial programs.

A majority of the students in both groups reported that they had considered dropping out of school. Students in the standard diploma group reported that the desire to further their education, better equip themselves for the work force, and their parents' support were the primary reasons why they remained in school. Students in the special diploma group indicated that teachers, vocational opportunities, sports, and ROTC motivated them to stay to stay in school. Concerns noted by students included:

- lack of sufficient text books in ISS
- excessive restrictions in the school's discipline policies
- inability to pass the FCAT
- conflicts with teachers
- problems with school social groups.

### **Counseling as a Related Service**

This section provides information related to the provision of counseling as a related service, including psychological counseling, to ESE students who need it in order to receive a Free Appropriate Public Education (FAPE).

### ***Requirements***

Section 1003.01(3)(a), F.S., defines “exceptional student” as any student who has been determined eligible for a special program in accordance with the rules of the State Board of Education. ESE students include gifted students as well as students with disabilities. “Special education services” are defined as specially designed instruction and such related services as are necessary for an exceptional student to benefit from education. (S. 1003.01(3)(b), F.S.)

In accordance with 34 CFR 300.346(2)(i) the IEP team must “In the case of a child whose behavior impedes his or her learning or that of others, consider, if appropriate, strategies, including positive behavioral interventions, strategies, and supports to address that behavior.”

Section 300.24, Title 34, CFR, defines related services as “...developmental, corrective, and other supportive services as are required to assist a child with a disability to benefit from special education, and includes...psychological services,...[and] counseling services...” “Counseling services” are services provided by qualified social workers, psychologists, guidance counselors, or other qualified personnel. (34 CFR 300.24(b)(2) “Psychological services” includes the planning and management of a program of psychological services, including psychological counseling for children and parents. (34 CFR 300.24(b)(9)

Rule 6A-6.03016, Special Programs for Students Who Are Emotionally Handicapped, FAC, requires that students may be eligible as severely emotionally disturbed (SED) they meet the requirements as emotionally handicapped (EH) and, in addition, “...require a program which... (d) provides extensive support services specifically designed for SED students. These services include but are not limited to: 1. individual or group counseling, 2. parent counseling or education, and 3. consultation from mental health, medical, or other professionals...”

### ***Data***

In the past the district contracted with the White Foundation, Meridian, and Children’s Home Society to provide counseling services to students who needed it. Due to difficulties in ensuring that services consistently were provided through a contract with an independent agency, the district has hired a school psychologist to provide counseling services to the ESE students. Schools also have guidance counselors who provide services to students. Students are provided counseling by the school psychologist through a referral process that includes receiving consent from the parent.

Of the seven district and school staff interviewed, six (86%) reported that educationally relevant counseling services would be considered by the IEP team, and all indicated that the school guidance counselor is the contact person who interacts with the service provider. All staff reported that counseling would likely not be documented on the IEP as a related service, but would be provided.

At the time of the monitoring visit there were no students eligible for the program for students who are SED. The IEPs of 29 students in the program for students who are EH were reviewed on-site. In three (10%) of the EH records counseling was provided and documented on the IEP as a related service or in some other manner. Of the 26 EH students not receiving counseling, there

was a perceived need for counseling to be considered by the IEP team in 14 of the records (54%). Behaviors that represented a perceived need to consider counseling included

- self-injurious and/or mutilating behavior
- explosive temper and frequent interruptions
- CBA recommended intense behavioral interventions
- parent concerns that acting out behavior interferes with learning
- difficulty expressing anger and aggression toward others
- numerous disciplinary referrals for insubordination and impulsivity
- significant dependency

Case studies were conducted for some of the student records in question; counseling was provided to some of the students and not reported to have been considered for others.

### ***Findings***

- Findings of Noncompliance
  - Counseling as a related service is not documented on the IEPs of some students who need it and receive it.
- Areas of Concern
  - Students who appear to be in need of counseling services (e.g., self-injurious and/or mutilating behaviors) do not receive it.
- Corrective Actions
  - The district is required to provide technical assistance to IEP team participants regarding the need for counseling as a related service, including determining if a need exists and documenting it on the IEP as appropriate.

### **Speech and Language Services as Related Services**

This section provides information related to the speech and language services provided to students with disabilities who are not eligible as language impaired or speech impaired, but who have communication needs.

### ***Requirements***

Rule 6A-6.03411 (1)(f), FAC, requires that all ESE students be provided a free appropriate public education consistent with state board rules pertaining to special education, specially designed instruction, and related services.

Currently, in Florida speech and language therapy are available for students who meet eligibility criteria for programs for students who are SI or LI. In addition, students eligible for the programs for autism, traumatic brain injury, developmental delay, and deaf or hard of hearing may be eligible under the speech and language programs. However, speech and language services are not included in the list of related services included under Section 1003.01, F.S.

In accordance with 34 CFR 300.24, related services are "...developmental, corrective, and other supportive services as are required to assist a child with a disability to benefit from special education, and include speech-language pathology and audiology services...." In addition, to the

need for speech or language services as related services, the IEP team must “consider the communication needs of the child.” during the development of the IEP (34 CFR 300.346(2)(iv).

### ***Data***

Of the seven school-level staff interviewed, seven (100%) reported that the students’ needs would either be addressed on the IEP as a related service, in goals and objectives, or specially designed instruction in the area of communication. Six of seven (86%) reported that services would be provided directly by either the speech/language pathologist (SLP) or the classroom teacher, or through consultation.

Prior to and during the on-site visit 32 records were reviewed to determine the extent to which communication needs are addressed. Of the 32 IEPs reviewed, there was evidence of a communication need for 16 students (50%). Of the 16 for whom communication was an area of need, two included communication as a related service (13%), and 14 incorporated communications into other areas, such as goals, objectives, and specially designed instruction.

### ***Findings***

- Findings of Noncompliance
  - None noted.
  
- Areas of Concern
  - None noted.
  
- Corrective Actions
  - None required.

### **Transition Services**

This section provides information related to the process of planning for the school to post-school transition of students with disabilities. This includes the participation in the planning process of the student, the parents, and any outside agencies.

### ***Requirements***

In accordance with 34 CFR 300.347 (b)(1), beginning at age 14, and up dated annually, IEP teams are required to provide “...a statement of the transition service needs of the student under the applicable components of the student’s IEP that focuses on the student’s courses of study ...” and, at the age of 16, provide “...a statement of needed transition services for the student, including, if appropriate, a statement of the interagency responsibilities or any needed linkage” (34 CFR 300.347 (b)(2)).

### ***Data***

District and school staff reported that the district has a transition specialist who is responsible for providing students and parents with information regarding services available to support transition to post-school adult living. The agencies available in the area for students with disabilities are reported to be the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (DVR), the Association for Retarded Citizens (ARC), and the One-Stop Career Center. Staff indicated that there is no formal policy or procedure for addressing an outside agency’s nonattendance to an IEP team meeting, and that

they are rarely invited to the meetings, since they so seldom attended in the past. It was reported that, while representatives from DVR do not routinely attend IEP meetings, they do come to the school at least annually to meet with high school seniors as a group.

Eleven IEPs for students 16 years of age or older were reviewed. In cases where the parents were in attendance (six of 11 or 55%), the parent notices were shredded, and it could not be determined if transition was included as the purpose of the meeting. For the five remaining records (45%), the meeting notice did not indicate transition as the purpose of the meeting. None of the 11 (0%) records had documentation of an outside agency being invited to the transition IEP meeting.

### ***Findings***

- Finding(s) of Noncompliance
  - Transition is not identified as a purpose on the IEP team meeting notice as required.
- Area(s) of Concern
  - Interaction with DVR is limited to students in their senior year.
  - Agencies often are not invited to transition IEP meetings due to lack of participation in the past (i.e., staff have stopped inviting them, as they rarely attend).
- Corrective Actions
  - The district is required to provide technical assistance to IEP team members on requirements related to transition planning, including transition being noted as a purpose of the meeting the need to continue to invite and foster appropriate agency participation in the transition planning process.

### **Services to Gifted Students**

This section provides information related to the manner in which gifted students are identified, evaluated, and provided with appropriate services in the district.

### ***Requirements***

In accordance with section 1003.57, F.S., districts are required to "...provide for an appropriate program of special instruction, facilities, and services to exceptional students...." An exceptional student is a student who has been determined eligible for a special program in accordance with State Board of Education rules, and includes students who are gifted as well as students with disabilities (Section 1003.01(3)(a), F.S.).

### ***Data***

Dixie County is addressing the identification of students eligible for the gifted program in its continuous improvement plan for gifted students. During the 2003-2004 school year all first and second graders were screened, and through that process three elementary level gifted students were identified. Additional elementary level gifted students have since enrolled in the district. There are no identified gifted students at the middle or high school levels. The district currently does not have a gifted teacher, although one staff member is pursuing the gifted endorsement.

The educational plans (EPs) for the eligible students indicate that they receive monthly consultation and themed-based instruction. Currently the consultation consists of monthly meetings between the students' parents and the designated district staff. Parents and staff have agreed to meet on Saturdays to provide this service.

Five EPs were reviewed for compliance. Systemic findings of noncompliance were related to lack of documentation of performance on district and statewide assessments, lack of documentation of the students needs beyond the general curriculum, lack of indication of how the student's parents will be informed of the progress, and lack of documentation of the results of recent evaluations, class work and district and state assessments.

### ***Findings***

- Findings of Noncompliance
  - The only service available is teacher-to-parent consultation or training provided on Saturdays; this service delivery model does not affect the students' educational experience at school.
  - Findings of noncompliance related to EPs are addressed in the *Student Record Reviews* section below.
  
- Areas of Concern
  - None noted.
  
- Corrective Actions
  - The district is required to review its gifted services to ensure that the students' needs beyond the general curriculum are addressed.

### **Review of Student Records**

A total of 19 student records for students with disabilities and five records for students identified as gifted, randomly selected from the population of ESE students, were reviewed. The records were from four schools in the district. Six of the records represented transition IEPs for students aged 14 or older. Targeted or partial reviews of an additional 35 IEPs were conducted on-site in conjunction with student case studies and to collect information related to additional compliance areas designated by the Bureau. In addition to IEP reviews, the Bureau conducted reviews of two matrix of services documents for students reported at the 254 or 255 funding level through the Florida Education Finance Program (FEFP). Any services claimed on the matrix must be documented on the IEP and must be in evidence in the classroom.

Student- and item-specific feedback on the record reviews was provided to district staff to assist in the provision of targeted technical assistance on IEP and EP development. Identifying information on individual students for whom corrective actions are required was provided to the district in a letter dated July 29, 2005.

To be determined systemic in nature, an item must be found noncompliant in at least 25% of the records reviewed. In Dixie County, at least five of the IEPs and two of the EPs must have been noncompliant on a given item to be considered a systemic finding.



## ***Findings***

- Finding(s) of Noncompliance
  - On IEPs, systemic findings of noncompliance were in the areas of:
    - lack of a statement on the IEP of how the student's progress towards annual goals will be measured (18)
    - annual goals not measurable (17)
    - report of progress not provided (16)
    - lack of statement describing how the students' disability affects their involvement and progress in the general education curriculum (12)
    - inadequate present levels of educational performance (11)
    - lack of or inadequate explanation of the extent to which the student will not participate with non-disabled students in the regular class on the IEP (11)
    - lack of or inadequate short-term goals or benchmarks (9)
    - special education services/specially designed instruction not clearly described (8)
    - frequency of special education services/specially designed instruction not clearly described (7)
    - lack of or inadequate program accommodations and or modifications (6)
    - location of special education services/specially designed instruction not included (5)
    - purpose of the meeting not included on the notice (5)
    - lack of or inaccurate listing of persons attending the meeting (5)
    - parents not notified of the right to bring someone with special knowledge about their child to the meeting (5)
    - lack of evidence that the parent was provided a copy of the IEP (5)
    - prior written notice of change of placement not provided (5)
    - transition IEP does not include a course of study statement beginning at age 14 (5)
    - lack of or inadequate statement of desired post-school outcomes (5)
  - Ten IEPs had additional findings of noncompliance that required reconvening of the IEP teams.
  - Five records did not include prior written notice of change of placement as required (*fund adjustment*).
  - One IEP was not current on the day of the review (*fund adjustment*).
  - One of the two matrix of services documents reviewed (50%) was found to be inaccurately reported.
  - Individual or non-systemic findings were noted in 30 additional components of the IEPs.
  - On EPs, systemic findings of noncompliance were in the areas of:
    - lack of documentation of performance on district and statewide assessments (5)
    - lack of documentation of how the student's parents will be informed of the progress (5)
    - lack of documentation of the results of recent evaluations, class work, and district and state assessments (4)
    - lack of documentation of the student's needs beyond the general curriculum (3)
  - Individual or non-systemic findings were noted on five additional components of the EPs.
  - Additional record-related findings and/or concerns are addressed under the *Counseling as a Related Service* section of this report.

- Corrective Action(s)
  - The district must provide an amendment to the data provided to the DOE through the Automated Student Information System database for surveys 3 and 4 for the 2004-05 school year for any matrix of services document found to be in error.
  - The IEP teams for 21 students must reconvene to address identified findings of noncompliance.
  - An adjustment of federal funds will be made by the DOE for six students.
  - The district is required to access technical assistance through the Bureau to provide comprehensive staff development on IEPs and EPs.
  - The district must develop and implement a system of self-assessment to ensure compliance with required elements of IEPs and EPs. This system must include the requirement that district and/or school staff will review, at least quarterly, no less than 15 IEPs and 3 EPs to determine compliance with these.
  
- Recommended Action(s)
  - Utilize the student- and item-specific feedback on the record reviews provided by DOE to assist in the provision of targeted technical assistance on IEP development.

### **Review of District Forms**

This section provides information related to the review of district forms for ESE teacher services. Forms representing the thirteen areas identified below were submitted to Bureau staff for a review to determine compliance with federal and state laws. Revisions were required on forms representing ten actions (see \* below), and recommended revisions were noted on forms representing nine actions (see + below). The district was notified of the specific findings via a separate letter June 17, 2005. A detailed explanation of the specific findings is included as appendix D.

- *Parent Notification of Individual Education Plan (IEP) Meeting*
- *IEP forms\**
- *EP forms \*+*
- *Notice and Consent for Initial Placement\*+*
- *Informed Notice and Consent for Evaluation+*
- *Informed Notice and Consent for Reevaluation*
- *Notification of Change of Placement\*+*
- *Notification of Change of FAPE \*+*
- *Informed Notice of Refusal\*+*
- *Documentation of Staffing/Eligibility Determination*
- *Informed Notice of Dismissal\*+*
- *Notice: Not Eligible for Exceptional Student Placement\*+*
- *Summary of Procedural Safeguards*
- *Annual Notice of Confidentiality\*+*
- *Services Plan for Privately Placed Students\**

\*indicates findings that require immediate attention

+ indicates recommended changes

## **System Improvement Plan**

In response to these findings, the district is required to develop a SIP for submission to the Bureau. This plan must include activities and strategies intended to address specific findings, as well as measurable evidence of change. In developing the SIP, every effort should be made to link the system improvement activities resulting from this focused monitoring report to the district's continuous improvement plan. Following is the format for the SIP, including a listing of the critical issues identified by the Bureau as most significantly in need of improvement.

During the course of conducting the focused monitoring activities, including daily debriefings with the monitoring team and district staff, it is often the case that suggestions and/or recommendations related to interventions or strategies are proposed. Listings of these recommendations as well as specific discretionary projects and DOE contacts available to provide technical assistance to the district in the development and implementation of the plan are included following the plan format.



## **Recommendations and Technical Assistance**

As a result of the focused monitoring activities conducted in Dixie County, the Bureau has identified specific findings related to the percentage of students with disabilities who participate in the FCAT. Recommended actions regarding findings and concerns are included in the body of the report. If additional activities or strategies were suggested by Bureau staff or peer monitors, those recommendations are included here. The recommendations included in this report do not represent an all-inclusive list, and are intended only as a starting point for discussion among the parties responsible for the development of the plan. A partial listing of technical assistance resources also is provided. These resources may be of assistance in the development and/or implementation of the SIP.

### **Recommendations**

- Utilize materials developed by the Bureau's for conducting compliance reviews, and include teacher self-assessment in the staff development process.
- Utilize promising practices evident in specific school sites or classrooms for expanding effective strategies.

### **Technical Assistance**

#### **Florida Inclusion Network**

Website: <http://www.FloridaInclusionNetwork.com/>

The project provides learning opportunities, consultation, information, and support to educators, families, and community members, resulting in the inclusion of all students. Technical assistance on literacy strategies, curriculum adaptations, suggestions for resource allocations, and expanding models of service delivery, positive behavioral supports, ideas on differentiating instruction, and suggestions for building and maintaining effective school teams is available.

#### **Project CENTRAL**

Website: <http://reach.ucf.edu/~CENTRAL/>

This comprehensive, statewide project is designed to identify and disseminate information about resources, training, and research related to current and emerging effective instructional practices. The ultimate goals are to provide information leading to appropriate training, products, and other resources that provide benefits and appropriate outcomes for all students, including students with disabilities.

#### **Student Support Services Project**

Website: <http://sss.usf.edu>

The project purpose is to provide technical assistance, training and resources to Florida school districts and state agencies in matters related to student support (school psychology, social work, nursing, counseling, and school-to-work).

**Florida's Positive Behavioral Supports Project**  
<http://flpbs.fmhi.usf.edu/>

This project is designed to support teachers, administrators, related services personnel, family members, and outside agency personnel in building district-wide capacity to address challenging behavior exhibited by students in regular and special education programs. It provides training and technical assistance for districts, schools, and individual teams in all levels of positive behavior support (individual, classroom and school-wide).

**Bureau of Exceptional Education and Student Services**

In addition to the special projects described above, Bureau staff are available for assistance on a variety of topics. Following is a partial list of contacts:

**ESE Program Administration and Quality Assurance—Monitoring**  
(850) 245-0476

Eileen Amy, Administrator  
[Eileen.Amy@fldoe.org](mailto:Eileen.Amy@fldoe.org)

Kim Komisar, Program Director  
[Kim.Komisar@fldoe.org](mailto:Kim.Komisar@fldoe.org)

April Katine, Program Specialist  
[April.Katine@fldoe.org](mailto:April.Katine@fldoe.org)

Barbara McAnelly, Program Specialist  
[Barbara.Mcanelly@fldoe.org](mailto:Barbara.Mcanelly@fldoe.org)

Angela Nathaniel, Program Specialist  
[Angela.Nathaniel@fldoe.org](mailto:Angela.Nathaniel@fldoe.org)

Denise Taylor, Program Specialist  
[Denise.Taylor@fldoe.org](mailto:Denise.Taylor@fldoe.org)

**Special Programs Information, Clearinghouse, and Evaluation**  
(850) 245-0475

Karen Denbroeder, Administrator  
[Karen.Denbroeder@fldoe.org](mailto:Karen.Denbroeder@fldoe.org)

Marie LaCap, Program Specialist  
[Marie.Lacap@fldoe.org](mailto:Marie.Lacap@fldoe.org)

Virginia Sasser, Program Specialist  
[Virginia.Sasser@fldoe.org](mailto:Virginia.Sasser@fldoe.org)

**Clearinghouse Information Center**  
[cicbiscs@FLDOE.org](mailto:cicbiscs@FLDOE.org)  
(850) 245-0477

Arlene Duncan, Program Director  
[Arlene.Duncan@fldoe.org](mailto:Arlene.Duncan@fldoe.org)

**ESE Program Development and Services**  
(850) 245-0478

Evy Friend, Administrator  
[Evy.Friend@fldoe.org](mailto:Evy.Friend@fldoe.org)

**Behavior/Discipline  
EH/SED**

Lee Clark, Program Specialist  
[Lee.Clark@fldoe.org](mailto:Lee.Clark@fldoe.org)

**Mentally Handicapped/Autism**

Sheryl Sandvoss, Program Specialist  
[Sheryl.Sandvoss@fldoe.org](mailto:Sheryl.Sandvoss@fldoe.org)

**Assistive Technology**

Karen Morris, Program Specialist  
[Karen.Morris@fldoe.org](mailto:Karen.Morris@fldoe.org)

**Speech/Language**

Lezlie Cline, Program Director  
[Lezlie.Cline@fldoe.org](mailto:Lezlie.Cline@fldoe.org)

**Gifted**

Donnajo Smith, Program Specialist  
[Donnajo.Smith@fldoe.org](mailto:Donnajo.Smith@fldoe.org)

**Appendix A:**

**District Data**







FLORIDA DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION  
BUREAU OF EXCEPTIONAL EDUCATION AND STUDENT SERVICES

2005 LEA PROFILE

JOHN WINN, COMMISSIONER

DISTRICT:	<b>DIXIE</b>	PK-12 POPULATION:	<b>2,143</b>
ENROLLMENT GROUP:	<b>LESS THAN 7,000</b>	PERCENT DISABLED:	<b>22%</b>
		PERCENT GIFTED:	<b>&lt;1%</b>

**INTRODUCTION**

The LEA profile is intended to provide districts with a tool for use in planning for systemic improvement. The profile contains a series of data indicators that describe measures of educational benefit, educational environment, and prevalence for exceptional students. The data are presented for the district, their enrollment group (districts of comparable size), and the state. Where appropriate and available, comparative data for general education students are included.

Data presented as indicators of educational benefit (*Section One*)

- Standard diploma rates for students with disabilities receiving standard diplomas through meeting all graduation requirements, GED Exit Option, and FCAT waivers
- Dropout rates
- Post-school outcome data
- Third grade promotion and retention, including good cause promotions

*Note: FCAT participation and performance data formerly included in the LEA profile will be published separately in Fall 2005.*

Data presented as indicators of educational environment (*Section Two*)

- Regular class, resource room, and separate class placement, ages 6-21
- Early childhood setting or home, part-time early childhood/part-time early childhood special education setting and early childhood special education setting, ages 3-5
- Discipline rates

Data presented as indicators of prevalence (*Section Three*)

- Student membership by race/ethnicity
- Gifted membership by free/reduced lunch and limited English proficiency (LEP) status
- Student membership in selected disabilities by race/ethnicity
- Selected disabilities as a percentage of all disabilities and as a percentage of total PK-12 population

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**LEA PROFILE 2005**

Three of the indicators included in the profile, graduation rate, dropout rate, and regular class placement, are also used in the selection of districts for focused monitoring. Indicators describing the prevalence and separate class placement of students identified as educable mentally handicapped (EMH) are included to correspond with provisions of the Bureau's partnership agreement with the Office for Civil Rights.

**DATA SOURCES**

The data contained in this profile were obtained from data submitted electronically by districts through the Department of Education Information Database in surveys 2, 9, 3, and 5 and through the Florida Education and Training Placement Information Program (FETPIP).

**DISTRICTS IN DIXIE'S ENROLLMENT GROUP:**

BAKER, BRADFORD, CALHOUN, DESOTO, DIXIE, FRANKLIN, GADSDEN, GILCHRIST, GLADES, GULF, HAMILTON, HARDEE, HOLMES, JEFFERSON, LAFAYETTE, LEVY, LIBERTY, MADISON, SUWANNEE, TAYLOR, UNION, WAKULLA, WALTON, WASHINGTON



## SECTION ONE: EDUCATIONAL BENEFIT

Educational benefit refers to the extent to which children benefit from their educational experience. Progression through and completion of school are dimensions of educational benefits as are post-school outcomes and indicators of consumer satisfaction. This section of the profile provides data on indicators of student progression, school completion, and post-school outcomes.

### STANDARD DIPLOMA STUDENTS MEETING ALL GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS:

The number of students with disabilities graduating with a standard diploma (withdrawal code W06) by earning required credits, maintaining required GPA and passing FCAT divided by the total number of students with disabilities who completed their education (withdrawal codes W06-W10, W27, WGD, WFW, WFT) as reported in end of year (survey 5). The resulting percentages are reported for the three-year period from **2001-02** through **2003-04**.

	2001-02	2002-03	2003-04
Dixie	68%	13%	15%
Enrollment Group	41%	44%	36%
State	48%	45%	42%

### STANDARD DIPLOMA THROUGH GED EXIT OPTION:

The number of students with disabilities in a GED Exit Option Model who passed the GED Tests and the FCAT or HSCT and were awarded a standard high school diploma (withdrawal code W10) divided by the total number of students with disabilities who completed their education (withdrawal codes W06-W10, W27, WGD, WFW, WFT) as reported in end of year (survey 5). The resulting percentages are reported for the three-year period from **2001-02** through **2003-04**.

	2001-02	2002-03	2003-04
Dixie	0%	0%	0%
Enrollment Group	2%	2%	2%
State	1%	1%	1%

### STANDARD DIPLOMA THROUGH FCAT WAIVER:

The number of students with disabilities graduating with a standard diploma through the FCAT waiver (withdrawal code WFW) divided by the total number of students with disabilities who completed their education (withdrawal codes W06-W10, W27, WGD, WFW, WFT) as reported in end of year (survey 5). The resulting percentages are reported for **2002-03** and **2003-04**.

	2002-03	2003-04
Dixie	46%	35%
Enrollment Group	8%	15%
State	9%	14%

**DROPOUT RATE:**

The number of students grades 9-12 for whom a dropout withdrawal reason (DNE, W05, W11, W13-W23) was reported, divided by the total enrollment of grade 9-12 students and students who did not enter school as expected (DNEs) as reported in end of year (survey 5). The resulting percentages are reported for students with disabilities, gifted students, all PK-12 students, students identified as EH/SED, and students identified as SLD for the years **2001-02** through **2003-04**.

	Students with Disabilities			Gifted Students			All Students		
	2001-02	2002-03	2003-04	2001-02	2002-03	2003-04	2001-02	2002-03	2003-04
Dixie	7%	5%	6%	0%	0%	0%	3%	4%	3%
Enrollment Group	5%	5%	5%	<1%	0%	<1%	3%	3%	4%
State	5%	4%	5%	<1%	<1%	<1%	3%	3%	3%

	EH/SED			SLD		
	2001-02	2002-03	2003-04	2001-02	2002-03	2003-04
Dixie	6%	3%	8%	7%	4%	6%
Enrollment Group	5%	5%	6%	5%	5%	6%
State	7%	7%	7%	5%	4%	5%

**POSTSCHOOL OUTCOME DATA:**

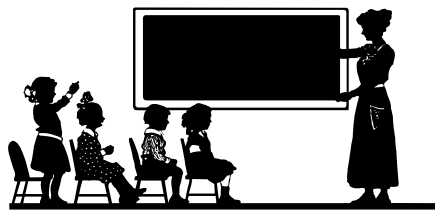
The Florida Education and Training Placement Information Program (FETPIP) is an interagency data collection system that obtains follow-up data on former students. The most recent FETPIP data available reports on students who exited Florida public schools during the **2002-03** school year. The table below displays percent of students with disabilities and students identified as gifted exiting school in 2002-03 who were found employed between October and December 2003 or in continuing education (enrolled for the fall or preliminary winter/spring semester) in 2003.

	Students with Disabilities		Gifted Students	
	Employed	Cont. Ed.	Employed	Cont. Ed.
Dixie	35%	6%	0%	0%
Enrollment Group	38%	15%	42%	84%
State	44%	20%	37%	72%

**THIRD GRADE PROMOTION AND RETENTION RATE:**

The number of third grade students promoted, promoted with cause, and retained divided by the total year enrollment as reported in end of year (survey 5). The percent of students promoted with cause is a subset of total promoted. Total enrollment is the count of all students who attended school at any time during the school year. The results are reported for third grade students with disabilities and all third grade students for **2003-04**.

	2003-04					
	Students with Disabilities			All Students		
	Promoted	Promoted with Cause	Retained	Promoted	Promoted with Cause	Retained
Dixie	88%	44%	12%	92%	18%	8%
Enrollment Group	81%	36%	19%	88%	12%	12%
State	82%	30%	18%	89%	11%	11%



## SECTION TWO: EDUCATIONAL ENVIRONMENT

Educational environment refers to the extent to which students with disabilities receive special education and related services in natural environments, classes or schools with their nondisabled peers. This section of the profile provides data on indicators of educational environments.

### REGULAR CLASS, RESOURCE ROOM AND SEPARATE CLASS PLACEMENT, AGES 6-21:

The number of students with disabilities ages 6-21 in regular class, resource room, and separate class placement divided by the total number of students with disabilities ages 6-21 reported in December (survey 9). Regular class includes students who spend 80 percent or more of their school week with nondisabled peers. Resource room includes students spending between 40 and 80 percent of their school week with nondisabled peers. Separate class includes students spending less than 40 percent of their week with nondisabled peers. The resulting percentages are reported for the three years from **2002-03** through **2004-05**.

	Regular Class			Resource Room			Separate Class		
	2002-03	2003-04	2004-05	2002-03	2003-04	2004-05	2002-03	2003-04	2004-05
Dixie	41%	48%	56%	45%	31%	30%	13%	20%	13%
Enrollment Group	49%	52%	56%	27%	25%	21%	18%	16%	15%
State	48%	50%	55%	26%	24%	21%	22%	22%	20%

### EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION SETTINGS, AGES 3-5:

The number of students with disabilities ages 3-5 who are served in early childhood settings, part-time early childhood and part-time early childhood special education settings, and early childhood special education settings divided by the total number of students with disabilities ages 3-5 reported in December (survey 9). Students in early childhood settings receive all (100%) of their special education and related services in educational programs designed primarily for children without disabilities or in their home. Students in part-time early childhood and part-time early childhood special education settings receive special education and related services in multiple settings. Students in early childhood special education settings receive all (100%) of their special education and related services in educational programs designed primarily for children with disabilities housed in regular school buildings or other community-based settings. The resulting percentages are reported for the three years from **2002-03** through **2004-05**.

	Early Childhood Setting or Home			Part-Time Early Childhood/ Part-Time Early Childhood Special Education Setting			Early Childhood Special Education Setting		
	2002-03	2003-04	2004-05	2002-03	2003-04	2004-05	2002-03	2003-04	2004-05
Dixie	56%	47%	8%	32%	41%	87%	12%	12%	5%
Enrollment Group	10%	16%	16%	68%	62%	64%	19%	21%	17%
State	7%	7%	7%	57%	57%	56%	31%	31%	33%

**SEPARATE CLASS PLACEMENT OF EMH STUDENTS, AGES 6-21:**

The number of students ages 6-21 identified as educable mentally handicapped who spend less than 40 percent of their day with nondisabled peers divided by the total number of EMH students reported in December (survey 9). The resulting percentages are reported for three years from **2002-03** through **2004-05**.

	2002-03	2003-04	2004-05
Dixie	23%	47%	26%
Enrollment Group	49%	47%	46%
State	61%	62%	57%

**DISCIPLINE RATES:**

The number of students who served in-school or out-of-school suspensions, were expelled, or moved to alternative placement at any time during the school year divided by the total year enrollment as reported in end of year (survey 5). The resulting percentages are reported for students with disabilities and nondisabled students for **2003-04**.

		2003-04							
		In-School Suspensions		Out-of-School Suspensions		Expulsions		Alternative Placement*	
		Students with Disabilities	Nondisabled Students	Students with Disabilities	Nondisabled Students	Students with Disabilities	Nondisabled Students	Students with Disabilities	Nondisabled Students
Dixie		2%	<1%	14%	7%	0%	0%	1%	<1%
Enrollment Group		15%	11%	14%	8%	<1%	<1%	<1%	<1%
State		14%	9%	15%	7%	<1%	<1%	<1%	<1%

\* Student went through expulsion process but was offered alternative placement.



### SECTION THREE: PREVALENCE

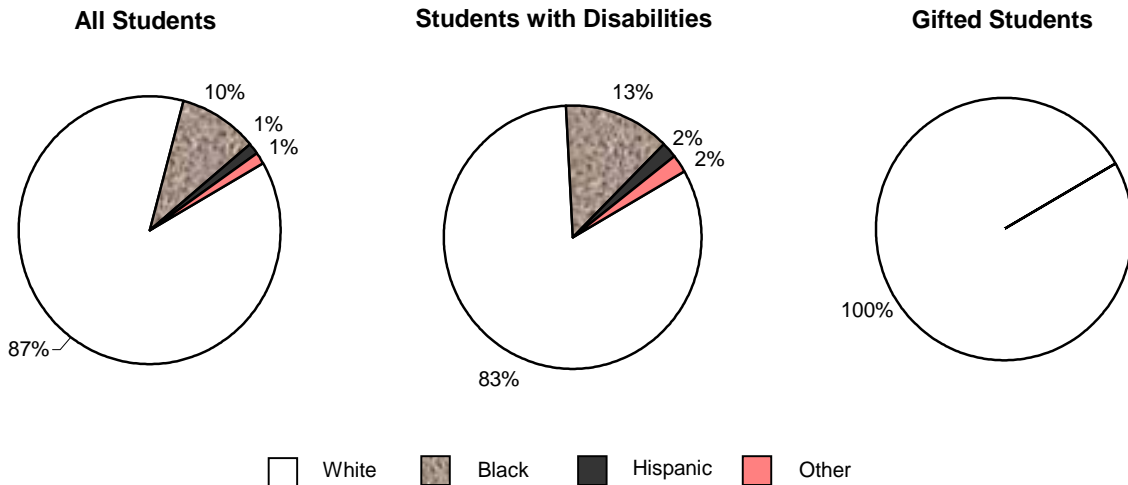
Prevalence refers to the proportion of the PK-12 population identified as exceptional at any given point in time. This section of the profile provides prevalence data by demographic characteristics.

#### STUDENT MEMBERSHIP BY RACIAL/ETHNIC CATEGORY:

The three columns on the left show the statewide racial/ethnic distribution for all PK-12 students, all students with disabilities, and all gifted students as reported in **October 2004** (survey 2). Statewide, there is a larger percentage of black students in the disabled population than in the total PK-12 population (28 percent vs. 24 percent) and a smaller percentage of black students in the gifted population (10 percent vs. 24 percent ). Similar data for the district are reported in the three right-hand columns and displayed in the graphs.

	State			District		
	All Students	Students with Disabilities	Gifted Students	All Students	Students with Disabilities	Gifted Students
White	49%	50%	63%	87%	83%	100%
Black	24%	28%	10%	10%	13%	0%
Hispanic	23%	19%	20%	1%	2%	0%
Asian/Pacific Islander	2%	<1%	4%	<1%	0%	0%
Am Ind/Alaskan Native	<1%	<1%	<1%	<1%	<1%	0%
Multiracial	3%	2%	3%	1%	2%	0%

District Membership by Race/Ethnicity



**FREE/REDUCED LUNCH AND LEP:**

The percent of all students and all gifted students in the district and the state on free/reduced lunch. The percent of all students and all gifted students in the district and in the state who are identified as limited English proficient (LEP). These percentages are based on data reported in **October 2004** (survey 2).

	State		District	
	All Students	Gifted Students	All Students	Gifted Students
Free/Reduced Lunch	46%	22%	65%	100%
LEP	11%	3%	<1%	0%

**SELECTED DISABILITIES BY RACIAL/ETHNIC CATEGORY:**

Racial/ethnic data for all students as well as students with a primary disability of specific learning disabled (SLD), emotionally handicapped or severely emotionally disturbed (EH/SED), and educable mentally handicapped (EMH) are presented below. The data are presented for the state and the district as reported in **October 2004** (survey 2).

	All Students		SLD		EH/SED		EMH	
	State	District	State	District	State	District	State	District
White	49%	87%	51%	89%	47%	62%	32%	67%
Black	24%	10%	24%	10%	39%	36%	51%	29%
Hispanic	23%	1%	22%	0%	12%	2%	14%	2%
Asian/Pacific Islander	2%	<1%	<1%	0%	<1%	0%	<1%	0%
Am Ind/Alaskan Native	<1%	<1%	<1%	0%	<1%	0%	<1%	0%
Multiracial	3%	1%	2%	1%	2%	0%	1%	2%

**SELECTED DISABILITIES AS PERCENT OF DISABLED AND PK-12 POPULATIONS:**

The percentage of the total disabled population and the total population identified as SLD, EH/SED, EMH, and speech impaired (SI) for the district and the state. Statewide, seven percent of the total population is identified as SLD and 46 percent of all students with disabilities are SLD. The data are presented for the district and state as reported in **October 2004** (survey 2).

	All Students		All Disabled	
	State	District	State	District
SLD	7%	8%	46%	55%
EH/SED	1%	2%	9%	10%
EMH	1%	<1%	7%	4%
SI	2%	2%	14%	10%



John Winn, Commissioner



**Florida Department of Education  
Bureau of Exceptional Education and Student Services  
2005 Focused Monitoring  
Dixie County School District**

**Districts Rank-Ordered on Drop out for Students with Disabilities**

Based on data reported to the FDOE for Survey 5 (2003-04), dropout rates for students with disabilities were used to rank-order the districts.

District	Dropout Rate	Rank
Franklin	11.3%	1
Bradford	10.7%	2
Gadsden	9.1%	3
Suwannee	8.4%	4
Baker	8.0%	5
Hardee	7.5%	6
Flagler	7.4%	7
Duval	7.2%	8
Miami Dade	6.9%	9
Hamilton	6.8%	10
Monroe	6.7%	11
Levy	6.7%	12
Lake	6.6%	13
Osceola	6.4%	14
Hernando	6.3%	15
Citrus	6.2%	16
Dixie	6.1%	17
Pasco	6.0%	18
Okeechobee	6.0%	19
Taylor	5.9%	20
Lee	5.6%	21
Jefferson	5.6%	22
Collier	5.5%	23
Putnam	5.4%	24
Polk	5.4%	25
Lafayette	5.4%	26
Manatee	5.4%	27
Marion	5.4%	28
Sumter	5.3%	29
Pinellas	5.3%	30
Highlands	5.3%	31
DeSoto	5.2%	32
Escambia	5.1%	33
Wakulla	5.1%	34

District	Dropout Rate	Rank
Sarasota	4.9%	35
St. Johns	4.9%	36
Calhoun	4.7%	37
Palm Beach	4.6%	38
Leon	4.6%	39
Orange	4.6%	40
Jackson	4.5%	41
Hendry	4.4%	42
Charlotte	4.4%	43
Gilchrist	4.3%	44
Madison	4.3%	45
Holmes	4.0%	46
Clay	3.9%	47
Bay	3.9%	48
Gulf	3.8%	49
Walton	3.7%	50
St. Lucie	3.7%	51
Hillsborough	3.5%	52
Okaloosa	3.2%	53
Santa Rosa	3.1%	54
Washington	3.0%	55
Columbia	3.0%	56
Volusia	2.7%	57
Alachua	2.5%	58
Seminole	2.4%	59
Indian River	2.4%	60
Broward	1.8%	61
Glades	1.8%	62
Brevard	1.3%	63
Nassau	1.3%	64
Union	0.9%	65
Martin	0.8%	66
Liberty	0.5%	67
District Total	4.7%	

Note: Shaded districts have been monitored during the past four years or are currently being monitored



**Appendix B:**  
**ESE Monitoring Team Members**



**Florida Department of Education  
Bureau of Exceptional Education and Student Services  
2005 Focused Monitoring  
Dixie County School District**

**ESE Monitoring Team Members**

**Department of Education Staff**

Bambi J. Lockman, Chief, Bureau of Exceptional Education and Student Services  
Eileen L. Amy, Administrator, ESE Program Administration and Quality Assurance  
Kim C. Komisar, Program Director, ESE Program Administration and Quality Assurance

Anitra Moreland, Program Specialist, Team Leader  
April Katine, Program Specialist  
Angela Nathaniel, Program Specialist

**Peer Reviewers**

Jan Benet, Alachua County School District



**Appendix C:**  
**Survey Results**





**Florida Department of Education  
Bureau of Exceptional Education and Student Services  
2005 Focused Monitoring  
Dixie County School District**

**Parent Survey Report: Students with Disabilities**

Responding to the need to increase the involvement of parents and families of exceptional education students in evaluating the educational services provided to their children, the Florida Department of Education, Bureau Exceptional Education and Student Services, contracted with UM to develop and administer a parent survey as part of the Bureau's district monitoring activities.

The parent survey was sent to parents of the 458 students with disabilities for whom complete addresses were provided by the district. A total of 10 parents representing 2% of the sample, returned the survey. Surveys from 275 families were returned as undeliverable, representing 60% of the sample. Results from the parent survey will not be provided due to the low response rate.

**Florida Department of Education  
Bureau of Exceptional Education and Student Services  
2005 Focused Monitoring  
Dixie County School District**

**Teacher Survey Report: Students with Disabilities**

In order to obtain the perspective of teachers who provide services to students with disabilities, the Florida Department of Education, Bureau of Exceptional Education and Student Services, contracted with the UM to develop and administer a teacher survey in conjunction with the Bureau's focused monitoring activities.

A sufficient number of surveys were sent to each school in the district for all teachers and other service providers to participate. A total of 64 teacher surveys representing approximately 53% of ESE and general education teachers in the district were returned. Data are from five (83%) of the district's six schools.

**% Always, Almost Always,  
Frequently combined**

**To provide students with disabilities access to the general curriculum, my school:**

- |   |    |
|---|----|
| • modifies and adapts curriculum for students as needed.  | 95 |
| • gives ESE teachers access to adequate instructional materials, including technology.                                    | 93 |
| • places students with disabilities into general education classes whenever possible.                                     | 89 |
| • ensures that students with disabilities feel comfortable when taking classes with general education students.           | 88 |
| • addresses each students' individual needs.  | 87 |
| • ensures that the general education curriculum is taught in ESE classes to the maximum extent possible.                  | 85 |
| • implements support facilitation and/or consultation by ESE teachers for students in general education classes.          | 81 |
| • encourages collaboration among ESE teachers, GE teachers and service providers.   | 78 |
| • provides adequate support for GE teachers who teach students with disabilities.   | 74 |
| • offers teachers professional development opportunities regarding curriculum and support for students with disabilities. | 73 |
| • implements co-teaching for some or all classes.   | 60 |

**% Always, Almost Always,  
Frequently combined**

**To help students with disabilities who take the FCAT, my school:**

- provides ESE teachers with FCAT test preparation materials. 97
- aligns curriculum for students with the standards that are tested on the FCAT. 95
- provides students with appropriate testing accommodations. 95
- gives students in ESE classes updated textbooks. 94
- provides extra help or remediation before or after school. 89

**To keep students with disabilities from dropping out, my school:**

- conducts ongoing assessments of individual students' performance. n/a
- provides positive behavioral supports. n/a
- allows students to make up credits lost due to disability-related 97
- makes an effort to involve parents in their child's education. 97
- ensures that classroom material is culturally appropriate. 95
- develops IEPs according to student needs. 94
- ensures that classroom material is grade- and age- appropriate. 92
- encourages participation of students with disabilities in extracurricular 89
- provides adequate counseling services for students who need it. 78
- provides social skills training to students as needed. 77
- ensures that students are taught strategies to manage their behavior as needed. 76
- tracks student attendance to identify students with attendance problems. 73
- uses a child study team to develop strategies for students identified as having an attendance problem. 73
- implements dropout prevention activities. 69

*The items in the following section relate primarily to middle and high schools. If any items did not apply, respondents marked N/A.*

**My school:**

- implements an IEP transition plan for each student. 97
- informs students through the IEP process of the different diploma options and their requirements. 92
- encourages students to aim for a standard diploma when appropriate. 91
- provides extra help to students who need to retake the FCAT. 88
- provides students with information about options after graduation. 83
- teaches transition skills for future employment and independent living. 73
- provides students with job training. 70
- coordinates on-the-job training with outside agencies. 67

**Florida Department of Education  
Bureau of Exceptional Education and Student Services  
2005 Focused Monitoring  
Dixie County School District**

**Student Survey Report: Students with Disabilities**

In order to obtain the perspective of students with disabilities who receive services from public school districts, the Florida Department of Education, Bureau of Exceptional Education and Student Services, contracts with the UM to develop and administer a student survey as a component of the Bureau's focused monitoring activities.

In conjunction with the 2005 Dixie County School District monitoring activities, a sufficient number of surveys were provided to allow all students with disabilities, grades 9-12, to respond. Instructions for administration of the survey by classroom teachers, including a written script, were provided for each class or group of students. Since participation in this survey is not appropriate for some students whose disabilities might impair their understanding of the survey, professional judgment is to be used to determine appropriate participation.

Surveys were received from 46 students, representing approximately 37% of the students with disabilities in grades 9-12 in the district. Data are from 2 (67%) of the district's 3 schools with students in grades 9-12.

	<b>% YES</b>
<b>I am taking the following ESE classes:</b>	
• Math	78
• English	73
• Science	8
• Social Studies	8
• Vocational (woodshop, computers)	6
• Electives (physical education, art, music)	6
• Learning Strategies or Unique Skills	5
 <b>At my school:</b>	
• ESE teachers give students extra help, if needed.	94
• ESE teachers encourage students to ask for help if they need it.	92
• ESE teachers teach students in ways that help them learn.	91
• ESE teachers believe that ESE students can learn.	91
• ESE teachers understand ESE students' needs.	86
• ESE teachers give students extra time or different assignments, if needed.	83
• ESE teachers teach students things that will be useful later on in life.	80
• ESE teachers provide students with updated books and materials.	80

	<b>% YES</b>
<b>I am taking the following general education/mainstream classes:</b>	
• Social Studies	92
• Science	89
• Vocational (woodshop, computers)	86
• Electives (physical education, art, music)	83
• English	32
• Math	19
<b>At my school:</b>	
• general education teachers believe that ESE students can learn.	89
• general education teachers provide students with updated books and materials.	81
• general education teachers encourage students to ask for help if they need it.	78
• general education teachers teach students things that will be useful later on in life.	77
• general education teachers teach ESE students in ways that help them learn.	73
• general education teachers understand ESE students' needs.	70
• general education teachers give students extra help, if needed.	66
• general education teachers give students extra time or different assignments, if needed.	58
<b>At my school, ESE students:</b>	
• are encouraged to stay in school.	92
• can take vocational classes such as computers and business technology.	86
• participate in clubs, sports, and other activities.	86
• get the help they need to do well in school.	81
• fit in at school.	81
• are treated fairly by teachers and staff.	75
• spend enough time with general education students.	73
• get information about education after high school.	70
• get work experience (on-the-job training) if they are interested.	62
<b>Diploma Option</b>	
• I agree with the type of diploma I am going to receive.	89
• I know what courses I have to take to get my diploma.	84
• I will probably graduate with a standard diploma.	83
• I know the difference between a standard and a special diploma.	81
• I had a say in the decision about which diploma I would get.	64
<b>IEP</b>	
• I had a say in the decision about which classes I would take.	68
• I was invited to attend my IEP meeting this year.	38
• I had a say in the decision about special testing conditions I might get for the FCAT or other tests.	31
• I attended my IEP meeting this year.	22
• I had a say in the decision about whether I need to take the FCAT or a different test.	19

<b>FCAT</b>	<b>% YES</b>
• I took the FCAT this year.	100
• Teachers help ESE students prepare for the FCAT.	86
• In my math classes, we work on the kinds of problems that are tested on the math part of the FCAT.	86
• In my English/reading classes, we work on the kinds of skills that are tested on the reading part of the FCAT.	81
• I received accommodations (special testing conditions) for the FCAT.	46

**Florida Department of Education  
Bureau of Exceptional Education and Student Services  
2005 Focused Monitoring  
Dixie County School District**

**Parent Survey Report: Gifted Students**

Responding to the need to increase the involvement of parents and families of exceptional education students in evaluating the educational services provided to their children, the Florida Department of Education, Bureau of Exceptional Education and Student Services contracted with the UM to develop and administer a parent survey as part of the Bureau's monitoring activities.

Dixie County is in the early stages of developing a gifted program and identifying students who are gifted. Currently they have identified five elementary age students who will begin receiving services in 2005-06 school year.





**Appendix D:**  
**Review of District Forms**



**Dixie County School District  
Focused Monitoring Report  
Review of District Forms**

The following district forms were compared to the requirements of applicable State Board of Education rules, the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), and applicable sections of Title 34, Section 300, Code of Federal Regulations. The review includes recommended revisions based on programmatic or procedural issues and concerns. The results of the review conducted on the most recent forms were detailed below and list the applicable sources used for the review.

<b>Individual Educational Plan (IEP) Meeting</b> <i>Form Individual Educational Plan Revised Jan 02</i> <b>34 CFR 300.347</b>
---

**The following must be addressed:**

- While not required to be part of the IEP, there should be documentation of a statement providing understanding and consent of the parent for the student receiving instructional accommodations not permitted on statewide assessments and the implications of such accommodations. (*Note:* this may be a separate form).
- While not required to be a part of the IEP, there should be documentation of consideration of state and district-wide assessments.
- The present level of performance statement must include a statement of skills needing remediation to pass FCAT.

<b>Educational Plan (EP) Meeting</b> <i>Form Gifted Educational Plan (EP)</i> <b>34 CFR 300.347</b>
---

**The following must be addressed:**

- The present levels of educational performance must include strengths and interests, needs beyond the general curriculum, results of performance on state and district assessments, and evaluation results.
- While not required to be on the EP, the following areas must have documentation of consideration by the EP team:
  - strengths and needs resulting from giftedness;
  - recent evaluations including state and district assessments;
  - the language needs of a limited English proficient student; and
  - results of most recent state and district-wide assessments.

**Recommendation:**

- It is recommended that the “models of support” be changed to “specially designed instruction.”

**Parent Notification of IEP or EP Meeting**  
**Form** *Notification of Meeting Form Revised Jan 02*  
**34 CFR 300.345**

This form contains the components for compliance.

**Notice and Consent for Initial Placement**  
**Form** *Informed Notice and Consent for Initial Placement Revised Jan 02*  
**34 CFR 300.503 and 300.505**

**The following must be addressed:**

- A statement of where a copy of the procedural safeguards may be obtained must be included.

**Recommendations:**

- In the statement regarding rights, it is recommended that you change the statement to read “As parent(s)/guardian(s) of a child with a disability you have protections under the procedural safeguards of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA). A copy of the Summary of Procedural Safeguards has been attached for you.”
- It is recommended that the statement regarding further explanation of your rights included the location of the ESE Director (district office) and the guidance counselor (school).

**Informed Notice and Consent for Evaluation**  
**Form** *Informed Notice and Consent for Evaluation revised Jan 02*  
**34 CFR 300.503 and 300.505**

This form contains the components for compliance.

**Recommendation:**

- In the statement regarding rights, it is recommended that you change the statement to read “As parent(s)/guardian(s) of a child with a disability you have protections under the procedural safeguards of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA). A copy of the Summary of Procedural Safeguards has been attached for you.”

**Informed Notice and Consent for Reevaluation**  
**Form** *Informed Notice and Consent for Reevaluation Revised Jan 02*  
**34 CFR 300.503 and 300.505**

This form contains the components for compliance.

**Notice of Change in Placement Form and Change of FAPE**  
**Form** *Notice of Change in Identification, Placement, or Provision of a Free Appropriate Public Education (FAPE) Revised Jan 02*  
**34 CFR 300.503 and 300.505**

**The following must be addressed:**

- At least two sources for parents to contact for assistance in understanding the provisions of IDEA, including telephone numbers, must be included.
- A description of each evaluation procedure, test, record, or report used as a basis for the proposal must be included.

**Recommendations:**

- In the statement regarding rights, it is recommended that you change the statement to read “As parent(s)/guardian(s) of a child with a disability you have protections under the procedural safeguards of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA). A copy of the Summary of Procedural Safeguards has been attached for you.”
- It is recommended that the statement regarding further explanation of your rights included the location of the ESE Director (district office) and the guidance counselor (school).

**Informed Notice of Refusal**

*Form Informed Notice of Refusal to Take a Specific Action*

**34 CFR 300.503**

**The following must be addressed:**

- At least two sources for parents to contact for assistance in understanding the provisions of IDEA, including telephone numbers, must be included.
- Form must be able to refuse any action. Current form only allows for refusal of formal evaluation and change of educational placement. Must be revised to permit refusal of any action.
- Form must be able to provide an explanation of any refusal action. Current form only allows for explanation of refusal of formal evaluation and change of educational placement. Must be revised to permit explanation of refusal of any action.

**Recommendations:**

- In the statement regarding rights, it is recommended that you change the statement to read “As parent(s)/guardian(s) of a child with a disability you have protections under the procedural safeguards of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA). A copy of the Summary of Procedural Safeguards has been attached for you.”
- It is recommended that the statement regarding further explanation of your rights included the location of the ESE Director (district office) and the guidance counselor (school).

**Documentation of Staffing Form**

*Form Staffing Documentation revised Jan 02*

**34 of CFR 300.534, 300.503**

This form contains all required items to meet compliance.

**Notice of Dismissal**

**Form** *Informed Notice of Ineligibility or Dismissal Revised Jan 02*

**Form 34 CFR 300.503 and 300.505**

**The following must be addressed:**

- Evidence of a reevaluation prior to dismissal should be included.
- At least two sources for parents to contact for assistance in understanding the provisions of IDEA, including telephone numbers, must be included.

**Recommendations:**

- In the statement regarding rights, it is recommended that you change the statement to read “As parent(s)/guardian(s) of a child with a disability you have protections under the procedural safeguards of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA). A copy of the Summary of Procedural Safeguards has been attached for you.”
- It is recommended that the statement regarding further explanation of your rights included the location of the ESE Director (district office) and the guidance counselor (school).

**Notice of Ineligibility**

**Form** *Informed Notice of Ineligibility or Dismissal Revised Jan 02*

**34 CFR 300.503 and 300.505**

**The following must be addressed:**

- At least two sources for parents to contact for assistance in understanding the provisions of IDEA, including telephone numbers, must be included.

**Recommendations:**

- In the statement regarding rights, it is recommended that you change the statement to read “As parent(s)/guardian(s) of a child with a disability you have protections under the procedural safeguards of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA). A copy of the Summary of Procedural Safeguards has been attached for you.”
- It is recommended that the statement regarding further explanation of your rights included the location of the ESE Director (district office) and the guidance counselor (school).

**Confidentiality of Information**

**Form** *School Policy Resolve Conflicts Dixie County High School*

**Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act, Part 99 34 CFR Title 34 CFR Section 300.503**

**The following must be addressed:**

- Manual indicates “Dixie County High School,” annual written notice must be available to all students.
- A statement regarding the right to file a complaint with the US Department of Education concerning alleged failures by the agency to comply with the requirements of FERPA should be added.

- If the district has a policy of disclosing education records to school officials determined to have a legitimate educational interest, the specification for determining who constitutes a school official and what constitutes a legitimate educational interest should be specified.

**Recommendations:**

- It is recommended that Section 1002.23(3), Florida Statutes; Rule 6A-5.0955(b), Florida Administrative Code; and Sections 300.561 to 300.572, Title 34, Code of Federal Regulations be indicated in the Annual Notice of Confidentiality.
- It is recommended that “to the extent that FERPA and state statute permits disclosure,” be added to the fifth paragraph.

**Service Plan for Privately Placed Students**

**Form** *Service Plan ESE #13s*

**20 U.S.C. Section 1414(d)**

**The following must be addressed:**

- There currently is no Services Plan for privately placed students. Due to Dixie County having one private school, a Services Plan must be developed to include all the required components.

It was noted that the district utilizes the procedural safeguards wording provided by the Bureau of Exceptional Education and Student Services. The district should ensure that when available that the “new-updated” procedural safeguards are provided.





**Appendix E:**  
**Glossary of Acronyms**



**Florida Department of Education  
Bureau of Exceptional Education and Student Services  
2005 Focused Monitoring  
Dixie County School District**

**Glossary of Acronyms**

AE	Alternative Education
Bureau	Bureau of Exceptional Education and Student Service
CFR	Code of Federal Regulations
CST	Child Study Team
DNE	Did Not Enter
DOE	Department of Education
DVR	Division of Vocational Rehabilitation
EH	Emotionally Handicapped
EMH	Educable Mentally Handicapped
EP	Educational Plan (for gifted students)
ESE	Exceptional Student Education
ESOL	English for Speakers of Other Languages
F.S.	Florida Statutes
FAC	Florida Administrative Code
FAPE	Free Appropriate Public Education
FCAT	Florida Comprehensive Assessment Test
FEFP	Florida Education Finance Program
FRI	Florida Reading Initiative
GE	General Education
GED	General Educational Development diploma
IDEA	Individuals with Disabilities Education Act
IEP	Individual Educational Plan (for students with disabilities)
ISS	In-School Suspension
LEA	Local Educational Agency
LEP	Limited English Proficient
LI	Language Impaired
LRE	Least Restrictive Environment
OC	Opportunity Classroom
OSEP	Office of Special Education Programs (USDOE)
OSS	Out-of-School Suspension
PBS	Florida's Positive Behavioral Support
PreK (PK)	Pre-kindergarten
PT	Physical Therapy
PTA	Parent Teacher Association
ROTC	Reserve Officers' Training Corps
SAVE	School for Alternative Vocational Education
SED	Severely Emotionally Disturbed
SI	Speech Impaired

## **Glossary of Acronyms Continued**

SIP	SIP
S/L	Speech and Language
SLP	Speech/Language Pathologist
SLD	Specific Learning Disability
SRO	School Resource Officer
TMH	Trainable Mentally Handicapped
UM	University of Miami