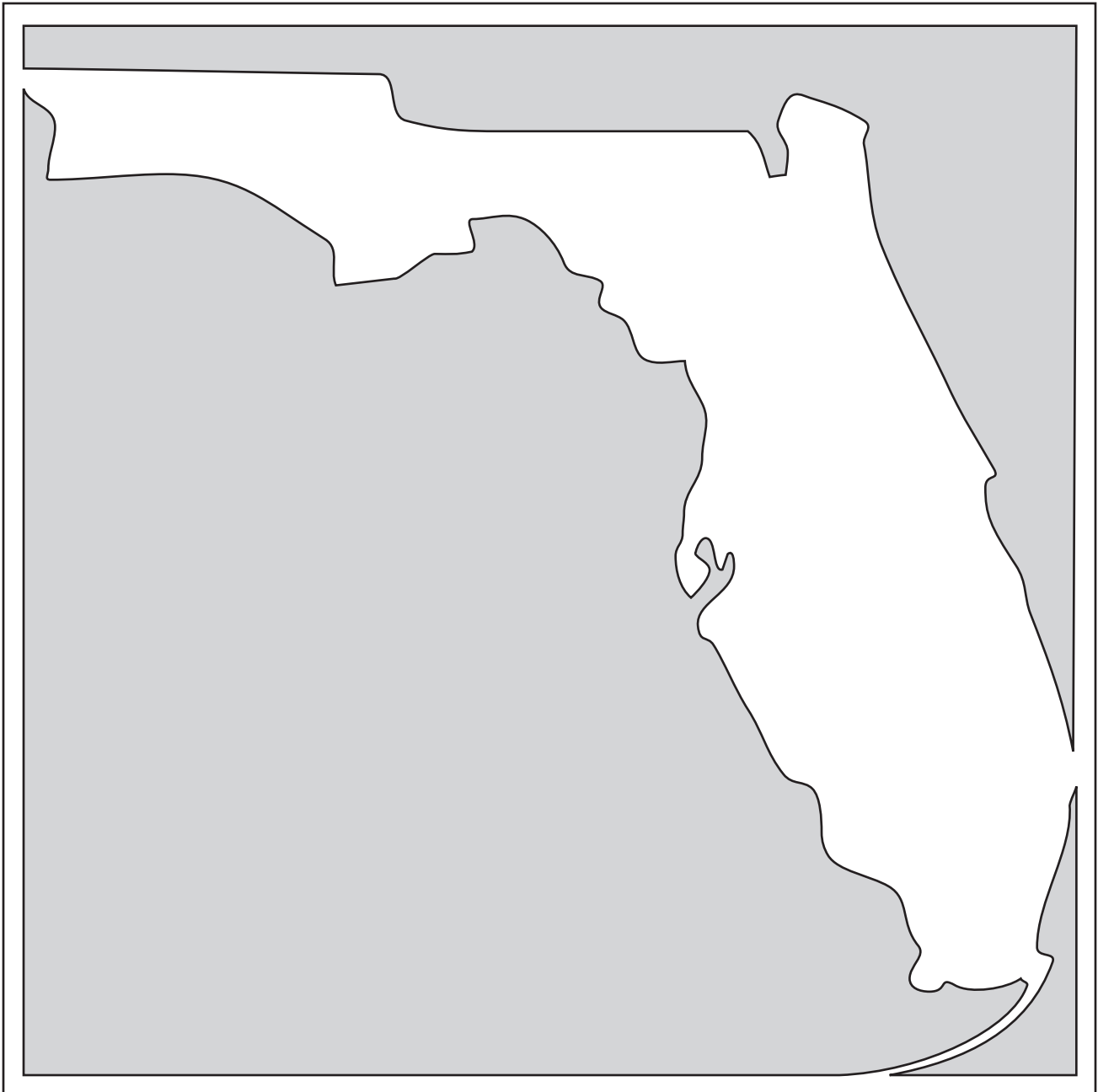


FINAL REPORT: FOCUSED MONITORING
EXCEPTIONAL STUDENT EDUCATION PROGRAMS

HERNANDO COUNTY

SEPTEMBER 26 - 30, 2005



FLORIDA DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
BUREAU OF EXCEPTIONAL EDUCATION AND STUDENT SERVICES

This is one of many publications available through the Bureau of Exceptional Education and Student Services, Florida Department of Education, designed to assist school districts, state agencies which support educational programs, and parents in the provision of special programs. For additional information on this publication, or for a list of available publications, contact the Clearinghouse Information Center, Bureau of Exceptional Education and Student Services, Florida Department of Education, Room 628, Turlington Bldg., Tallahassee, Florida 32399-0400.

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December 15, 2005

Dr. Wendy L. Tellone, Superintendent
Hernando County School District
919 North Broad Street
Brooksville, Florida 34601-2397

Dear Superintendent Tellone:

We are pleased to provide you with the Final Report of Focused Monitoring of Exceptional Student Education Programs in Hernando 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 September 26-30, 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.

Bureau staff have worked with Liz Weber, ESE Director, and her 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

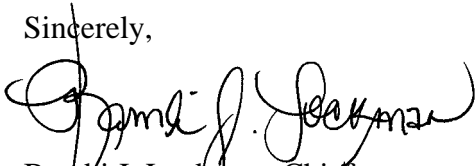
Bureau of Exceptional Education and Student Services

Superintendent Tellone
December 15, 2005
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.

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

Sincerely,



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

Enclosure

cc: Robert Wiggins, School Board Chairman
Members of the School Board
J. Paul Carland II, School Board Attorney
School Principals
Cathy Dofka, ESE Director
Eileen Amy
Evy Friend
Kim Komisar

Hernando County Final Monitoring Report

Focused Monitoring

September 26 – 30, 2005

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Hernando County Final Monitoring Report

Focused Monitoring

September 26 - 30, 2005

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 of 2004 (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 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.

Background Information

During the week of September 26, 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 Hernando County Public Schools. Liz Weber, 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. Hernando County was selected for monitoring on the basis of the percentage of students with disabilities exiting with a standard diploma.

Demographics

This section provides information related to demographic and background information specific to the district. Based on the 2005 LEA profile, Hernando County School District has a total school population (PK-12) of 20,586 with 17% of students being identified as students with disabilities, 10% identified as only speech impaired, and 2% identified as gifted. Hernando County is considered a "medium size" district and is comprised of 10 elementary schools, (Pre-K-5, K-2, and 3-5), 4 middle schools 6-8, 4 high schools 9-12, and 1 alternative school. The district also has 1 DJJ center and 1 charter school.

Hernando County is a diverse community, with 42% of students on free or reduced lunch and 2% of students identified as limited English proficient. Of the students with disabilities who exited from the district during the 2003-04 school year, 38% met all requirements for a standard diploma, 3% met the requirements through a waiver of a passing score on the Florida Comprehensive Assessment Test (FCAT), and 1% graduated through the GED exit option (i.e., under-credited students who have passed the FCAT and who pass the GED examination).

District Selection

In making the decision to include Hernando County in this year's focused monitoring visits, the data reviewed was related to students exiting with a standard diploma. Districts were selected to be monitored based on a review of data from the 2003-04 school year that was submitted electronically to the Department of Education (DOE) Information Database for Surveys 2, 3, 5, 9, and from the assessment files. This data is compiled into an annual data profile for each district (LEA Profile). The 2005 LEA profiles for all Florida school districts are available on the web at <http://www.firn.edu/doe/commhome/datapage.htm>. Specifically, Bureau staff reviewed

data related to the percentage of students with disabilities exiting with a standard diploma from survey 5. This review indicated that Hernando County’s rate of 38% approached the lowest rate of graduation with a standard diploma for students with disabilities for all districts in the state. Hernando County School District’s current 2005 LEA profile and the 2005 listing of districts rank-ordered on standard diploma rate for students with disabilities, which was used for district selection, are included in this report as appendix A.

Monitoring Activities

The Bureau conducted the on-site focused monitoring visit from September 26-30, 2005. Six Bureau staff members, two peer monitors, and a Bureau consultant conducted site-visits to the following eight schools, including one charter school, and one Department of Juvenile Justice (DJJ) facility:

- Hernando High School
- Nature Coast Technical High School
- Gulf Coast Academy (Charter)
- Deltona Elementary School
- West Hernando Middle School
- Central High School
- F.W. Springstead High School
- Withlacoochee Stop Camp (DJJ)

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 and peer monitors who conducted the monitoring activities for this visit is included as appendix B.

The monitoring process includes interviews with administrators, teachers, and other service delivery providers, focus group interviews with students, case studies, classroom observations, record reviews, and surveys of students, parents, and teachers. A summary of the monitoring activities conducted in Hernando County is included in the table below.

Activity	Source	Number
Interviews	District staff	6
	School staff	
	▪ School administrators/non-instructional support	10
	▪ ESE teachers—disabilities	25
	▪ ESE teachers—gifted	5
	▪ General education teachers	<u>18</u>
	Total	64
Focus Groups	F.W. Springstead HS—grades 9-12	
	▪ Students pursuing special diploma	17
	▪ Students pursuing standard diploma	<u>14</u>
	Total	31
Case studies	Individual student case studies	34
Classroom Visits	ESE and general education classrooms	15

Activity	Source	Number
Record Reviews	IEPs	
	▪ Full desk-review	31
	▪ Targeted on-site review	84
	▪ Matrix of services documents	9
	EPs	
	▪ Full desk-review	10
	▪ Targeted on-site review	10
	Total	144
Surveys	Parents—students with disabilities	
	▪ Number sent	3651
	▪ Number returned (%)	423 (12%)
	Parents—gifted	
	▪ Number sent	546
	▪ Number returned	171 (31%)
	Teachers	
	▪ Number sent	sufficient for all staff
	▪ Number returned	616
	Students	
	▪ Number sent	sufficient for all students 9-12
▪ Number returned	323	

The results of the surveys are included as appendix C.

Reporting of Information

Findings based on data generated through record reviews; focus group interviews; individual interviews; case studies; classroom visits; parent, teacher, and student surveys; and, the review of district forms are summarized in the reporting table that follows. This report provides conclusions with regard to the key data indicator and specifically addresses related areas that may contribute to or impact the 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

In addition, information related to services provided to ESE students in Department of Juvenile Justice (DJJ) facilities and charter schools, and services for gifted students are reported.

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. The text of the pertinent legal citations noted in the reporting table is provided as appendix D.

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, and promising practices are noted. Listings of these recommendations and promising practices, as well as specific discretionary projects and DOE contacts available to provide technical assistance in the development and implementation of a system improvement plan, are included following the reporting table.

In response to the findings included in the reporting table, the district is required to develop a system improvement plan. This plan is developed in consultation with the Bureau, and must include activities and strategies intended to address specific findings, as well as measurable evidence of change. In developing the system improvement plan, every effort should be made to link the system improvement activities resulting from this focused monitoring report to the district's continuous improvement plan. A draft system improvement plan also is included.

**Hernando County School District
 Focused Monitoring
 Standard Diploma Rate for Students with Disabilities**

Reporting Table

Standard/Citation	Findings	Supporting Evidence	Concerns
Access to General Curriculum			
34 CFR §300.26(a)(3) Special education 34 CFR §300.347(a)(4) Content of IEP 34 CFR §300.550(b) General LRE requirements 34 CFR §300.552 Placements 34 CFR §300.553 Nonacademic settings Rule 6A-0311(1), FAC, Eligible Special Programs for Exceptional Students	<p>Removal of students with disabilities from the regular educational environment does not occur only when 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.</p> <p>The placement decision for students at Deltona Elementary School is not always based on the child's IEP.</p> <p>The IEP for each child with a disability does not include an explanation of the extent, if any, to which the child will not participate with nondisabled children in the regular class.</p>	<p><i>Records:</i></p> <p>For 13 of 15 IEPs the explanation of the extent to which the student will not participate with nondisabled peers was inadequate or the same/similar to the majority of students.</p> <p><i>Observations:</i></p> <p>At Deltona Elementary School (E.S.) at least one self-contained classroom attends special area/ elective classes in general education classrooms, but not when nondisabled peers are in attendance (removed from general education 100% of the day).</p> <p><i>Interviews:</i></p> <p>3 of 5 teachers at Deltona E.S. reported students are in trial mainstream settings without IEP team involvement. Staff at other schools reported IEP team meetings to determine trial placements.</p>	<p>None noted.</p>

Standard/Citation	Findings	Supporting Evidence	Concerns
		<p>3 of 4 staff at Deltona E.S. reported placements for some students were more restrictive than required based on their needs.</p> <p><i>Case Studies:</i></p> <p>A West Hernando Middle School (M.S.) student functioning on grade level was moved to an ESE math class due to refusal to complete assignments; no supports were provided in the general education classroom; at the time of the site-visit an IEP team meeting had been scheduled to return this student to the general education math class with a behavior intervention plan in place.</p>	
Accommodations, Modifications, Supplementary Aids and Services and Supports to School Personnel			
<p>34 CFR §300.342 When IEPs must be in effect.</p> <p>34 CFR §300.347(a) Content of IEP.</p> <p>34 CFR §300.342.350(a) IEP—accountability.</p> <p>Rule 6A-6.03028(7), FAC, Development of Individual Educational Plans for Exceptional Students</p>	<p>Students at Springstead H.S. are not provided accommodations in accordance with their IEPs.</p>	<p><i>Focus Groups:</i></p> <p>All students from both focus groups at Springstead High School (H.S.) reported teachers require students to ask for instructional or testing accommodations; they are not simply provided.</p> <p>7 of 28 students reported embarrassment and/or discomfort at having to request accommodations.</p>	<p>Administrative and teaching staff at several schools visited reported a need for additional training for general education teachers on implementation of instructional accommodations.</p> <p>While there was evidence of students receiving accommodations based on their unique needs these were not always determined by the IEP</p>

Standard/Citation	Findings	Supporting Evidence	Concerns
		<p><i>Interviews</i></p> <p>4 of 4 teachers at Springstead H.S. who were asked about accommodations reported that students are required to request the accommodations that are on their IEPs.</p> <p>1 of 4 teachers at Springstead H.S. reported that students are expected to ask but that the teacher attends to body language, facial expression, and prior knowledge of the student to ensure the accommodations are available when needed.</p> <p><i>Records</i></p> <p>None of the IEPs reviewed at Springstead H.S. stated that the accommodations would only be provided upon student request.</p> <p><i>Case Studies</i></p> <p>At 4 of 7 schools visited teachers reported providing individualized accommodations beyond those indicated on the case study students' IEPs.</p>	<p>teams or documented on the IEPs.</p>

Standard/Citation	Findings	Supporting Evidence	Concerns
Discipline and Positive Behavior Supports			
<p>34 CFR §300.520 Authority of school personnel.</p> <p>34 CFR §300.523(a) Manifestation determination review.</p> <p>34 CFR §300.346(a) (2) Development, review, and revision of the IEP.</p> <p>Rule 6A-6.03028 (6)(d), FAC, Development of Individual Educational Plans for Exceptional Students</p> <p>Rule 6A-6.03016, FAC, Special Programs for Students who are Emotionally Handicapped</p> <p>Rule 6A-6.03312(4), FAC, Discipline Procedures for Students with Disabilities</p>	<p>Manifestation determinations are not conducted for students who experience long term removals, as required by Rule 6A-6.03312(4), FAC.</p> <p>Functional behavior assessments are not conducted and behavior intervention plans are not developed and implemented for student who experience long term removals, as required by Rule 6A-6.03312(4), FAC.</p> <p>Individualized behavior intervention plans that have been developed based on functional behavioral assessments are not being implemented for some students; general class-wide management plans are implemented instead.</p>	<p><i>Focus Groups</i></p> <p>Consensus of students in both focus groups that Out-of-School Suspension is assigned for relatively minor infractions (e.g., skipping class); results in students accruing a high number of suspensions.</p> <p><i>Records:</i></p> <p>13 of 13 IEPs of students at Hernando H.S. who had extensive suspensions did not address behavior or did not target the behaviors that resulted in the suspensions.</p> <p>5 of 6 students at Hernando H.S. with >10 days of suspension had not had a manifestation determination.</p> <p>2 of 2 students at Central H.S. with >10 days of suspension had not had a manifestation determination.</p> <p><i>Interviews:</i></p> <p>Two staff members responsible for providing or acting on suspension reported that student-specific suspension data is not reported as often as required under district policy.</p>	<p>Administrative school staff do not notify staffing specialists of suspensions as outlined in district policy; this results in procedures regarding functional behavioral assessments (FBAs), behavior intervention plans (BIPs), and manifestation determinations not being followed.</p> <p>The district’s behavior specialists prepare BIPs for consideration by IEP teams subsequent to conducting FBAs; however, there is no evidence the BIPs are adopted or implemented; those in the records are labeled “draft.”</p>

Standard/Citation	Findings	Supporting Evidence	Concerns
FCAT Preparation			
<p>Rule 6A-6.03028(7) (a), FAC, Development of Individual Educational Plans for Exceptional Students</p> <p>S. 1003.43(11)(b) General requirements for high school graduation.</p>	<p>No findings of noncompliance in this area.</p>		
Student Course of Study and Diploma Option Decisions			
<p>34 CFR §300.347(b) Content of IEP.</p> <p>Rule 6A-6.03028(7), FAC, Development of Individual Educational Plans for Exceptional Students</p> <p>Rule 6-1.0996(13), FAC, Graduation Requirements for Certain Students with Disabilities.</p>	<p>No findings of noncompliance in this area.</p>	<p><i>Interviews:</i></p> <p>Middle school ESE teachers reported being unaware of the FCAT waiver.</p> <p>High school ESE teachers reported discussing the FCAT waiver process beginning in the 10th grade; few were aware of special diploma option 2.</p>	<p>ESE teachers at West Hernando M.S. were not aware of the FCAT waiver process.</p> <p>ESE teachers at Springstead H.S., Central H.S., and Hernando H.S. reported that the FCAT waiver process is not discussed until at least 10th grade.</p> <p>Special diploma option 2 is not considered for many students with disabilities who are participating in on-the-job training (OJT) and other vocational or career preparation programs.</p>

Standard/Citation	Findings	Supporting Evidence	Concerns
Staff Development			
34 CFR 300.382 Improvement strategies.	No findings of noncompliance.		
Counseling Services			
34 CFR §300.24 Related services. Rule 6A-6.03016(4) (d), FAC, Special Programs for Students Who Are Emotionally Handicapped	Counseling as a related service not consistently provided to and documented on IEPs of SED students.	<p><i>Records:</i></p> <p>IEPs of 3 SED students did not include counseling as a related service.</p> <p>21 of 32 records reviewed with an identified need for counseling as a related service to be considered by the IEP team had counseling identified as a related service on the IEP.</p> <p><i>Interviews:</i></p> <p>Teachers and/or IEP team participants of 6 of the remaining 11 students reported counseling had not been considered but likely should have been.</p> <p>Counseling on IEP of SED student on home instruction reportedly not provided.</p>	It is unclear that all students with disabilities who need counseling as a related service in order to benefit from their specially designed instruction are provided that service.

Standard/Citation	Findings	Supporting Evidence	Concerns
Communication Services			
<p>34 CFR §300.346(a)(2)(iv) Development, review, and revision of the IEP.</p> <p>Rule 6A-6.03028(6), FAC, Development of Individual Educational Plans for Students with Disabilities</p>	<p>IEP of one language impaired student did not address communication.</p>	<p><i>Records:</i></p> <p>1 of 15 records reviewed had an identified need for communication which was unaddressed.</p> <p>Remaining students had communication addressed through goals and objectives.</p>	
Transition Services			
<p>34 CFR §300.344(b) IEP team.</p> <p>Rule 6A-6.03028(3)-(4), FAC, Development of Individual Educational Plans for Exceptional Students</p>	<p>Three students at CHS for whom there was evidence of a need for agency involvement did not have an agency representative invited to the transition IEP meeting.</p> <p>Transition is not always included as a purpose of the IEP team meeting for students ages 14 and older.</p>	<p><i>Records:</i></p> <p>Transition IEPs from four schools with students ages 16 and older were reviewed on-site.</p> <p>3 of 5 student records reviewed at Central H. S. had evidence of needed transition agency linkages but the agency had not been invited to the transition IEP meeting.</p> <p>5 of 15 meeting notices for students ages 14 and older did not include transition as a purpose of the meeting.</p> <p><i>Focus Groups:</i></p> <p>1 of 17 special diploma students reported receiving transition assistance beyond school staff.</p>	

Standard/Citation	Findings	Supporting Evidence	Concerns
		<p><i>Surveys:</i></p> <p>52% of parents of students with disabilities responding to survey questions reported being informed of transition being a purpose of the IEP meeting always, almost always, or frequently.</p> <p>57% of parents of students with disabilities responding to survey questions reported transition services are discussed at the IEP meeting always, almost always or frequently.</p>	
Gifted Services			
<p>Section 1003.57, F.S. Exceptional Student Instruction</p> <p>Section 1003.01(3)(a), F.S. Definitions.</p> <p>Rule 6A-6.030191(5)(a), FAC, Development of Educational Plans for Exceptional Students Who Are Gifted</p>	<p>No findings of noncompliance</p>	<p><i>Records:</i></p> <p>10 of 10 EPs reviewed on-site were individualized</p> <p><i>Interviews</i></p> <p>5 of 5 teachers of the gifted reported services available to students in identified subject areas, depending on the grade level and school site.</p>	<p>Because the focus or content of the gifted services vary by school, there is a concern that the individual needs of all gifted students may not be met (e.g., student at the middle school who have needs beyond the general curriculum in science or math).</p>

Standard/Citation	Findings	Supporting Evidence	Concerns
Charter Schools			
<p>34 CFR §300.241(a) Treatment of charter schools and their students.</p> <p>34 CFR §300.312(a) Children with disabilities in public charter schools.</p>	<p>No findings of noncompliance</p>	<p>Records:</p> <p>4 of 4 student records reviewed included teacher-to-student monitoring taking place during extended school day hours in addition to the teacher-to-teacher consultation provided in accordance with the school’s charter.</p> <p>Interviews:</p> <p>Extended school day services are available to all students; parent must sign an agreement upon student enrollment that attendance at the extended day program is mandatory for students whose grades fall below a certain level.</p>	<p>If an IEP team determines that services beyond teacher-to-teacher consultation are required (e.g., teacher to student monitoring or support), this must be provided during the student attendance hours required by the charter school.</p>
Services to ESE Students in Department of Juvenile Justice Facilities			
<p>34 CFR §300.2(b) Applicability of this part to State, local, and private agencies.</p> <p>Rule 6A-6.05281(1)(c), FAC, Educational Programs for Youth in Department of Juvenile Justice Detention, Commitment, Day</p>	<p>IEPs not current on the day of review.</p>	<p>Records:</p> <p>2 of 5 records did not have current IEPs on the day of review (meetings have been scheduled for these students).</p> <p>Interviews:</p> <p>Administrative staff reported no standard procedure in place to ensure identification/ verification of special</p>	<p>Staff from the DJJ facility do not routinely communicate with district office staff to ensure ESE students are identified and served within the 10 days required under DJJ quality assurance standards.</p>

Standard/Citation	Findings	Supporting Evidence	Concerns
Treatment, or Early Delinquency Intervention Programs.		education status for incoming students, or for development of IEPs during the summer months.	
Matrix of Services			
S. 1011.62(1)(e), F.S. Funding model for exceptional student education programs.	Two matrix of service documents require correction due to inaccurate reporting.	Records: 2 of 9 records reviewed for matrix of service were not reported adequately.	
Student Record Reviews			
<p>34 CFR §300.340-300.350 Individualized Educational Programs</p> <p>Rule 6A-6.03028, FAC, Development of Individual Educational Plans for Exceptional Students.</p> <p>Rule 6A-6.030191, FAC, Development of Educational Plans for Exceptional Students who are Gifted.</p>	<p>4 findings of noncompliance required funding adjustments.</p> <p>19 IEP teams must reconvene to address identified findings.</p>	<p>124 IEPs were reviewed, in part or in whole</p> <p>20 EPs were reviewed, in part or in whole</p> <p>A detailed description of the findings related to student records can be found in Appendix D.</p>	

Standard/Citation	Findings	Supporting Evidence	Concerns
Forms			
<p>34 CFR §300.503 Prior written notice by the public agency; content of notice.</p> <p>34 CFR §300.347 Content of the IEP</p> <p>Rule 6A-6.03028, FAC, Development of Individual Educational Plans for Exceptional Students</p>	<p>13 forms require revisions to meet compliance.</p>	<p>A detailed description of the forms reviews was provided to the district in a letter dated August 10, 2005.</p>	

System Improvement Plan

In response to these findings, the district is required to develop a system improvement plan 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 system improvement plan, every effort should be made to link the system improvement activities resulting from this focused monitoring report to the district's continuous improvement plan. The promising practices, recommendations, and technical assistance resources included below should be considered when developing strategies and/or interventions targeting the critical issues identified by the Bureau as most significantly in need of improvement.

Promising Practices, Recommendations and Technical Assistance

Promising Practices

During the visit numerous promising practices were noted by district and school staff and by Bureau and peer monitors. Some of the reported promising practices were school specific, some were grade specific, and others were the results of district-wide initiatives. The District is encouraged to continue to promote an atmosphere where teachers and staff can share these practices. Some of the reported promising practices are listed below.

- Evidence at WHMS that IEP teams determine trial placements and frequent reviews are scheduled to ensure placement in a less restrictive environment as quickly as possible.
- All schools visited implemented inclusive practices (e.g., consultation, support facilitation, co-teaching) to support students with disabilities in the general education classroom; this was reported by staff to be very effective.
- Through case studies and staff interviews, there was evidence of a variety of individualized accommodations being implemented, particularly in the classrooms that utilized the co-teaching model.
- The use of a paraprofessional in the vocational classes at Hernando High School was reported to be an effective support to students with disabilities.
- The district has a procedure in place and staff designated to conduct comprehensive functional behavioral assessments and develop detailed individualized behavior intervention plans based on those results.
- The ESE department provides a wealth of staff development opportunities for ESE and general education teachers.
- Comprehensive transition planning reported by staff and evident in most IEPs.
- Gifted services are available across all school levels.
- Records contained comprehensive conference notes that clearly documented participation and discussion by families and staff regarding identification of the student's needs, goals, and services.

Recommendations

Recommendations have been proposed for the district to consider when developing the system improvement plan and determining strategies that are most likely to effect change. The list is not

all-inclusive, and is intended only as a starting point for discussion among the parties responsible for the development of the system improvement plan (SIP).

- Develop and implement procedures to ensure DJJ facilities adhere to state and federal regulations regarding ESE services.
- Develop parent and teacher training modules to address options and decision-making for diploma selection. Include strategies for increasing district, school, and parent expectations for academic achievement for students with disabilities.
- Develop training modules to address the appropriate dissemination of information regarding and use of the FCAT Waiver.
- Establish working relationship with the community college and other adult basic education entities and develop a method for tracking the number of students who graduate with a special diploma who
 - enroll in GED classes
 - take the GED test
 - pass the test
- When asked their opinions regarding the district's relatively low standard diploma rate, staff reported that there is a need to train general education teachers in provision of accommodations and modifications, to provide access to the general curriculum at all grade levels, and to focus on reading instruction so that students with disabilities will be less likely to be removed from the general education setting.

Technical Assistance

A partial listing of technical assistance resources also is provided. This information may be of assistance in the development and/or implementation of the system improvement plan. The following are some of the resources available through the Florida Department of Education. If there are additional topics or areas of concern that are not included, please contact the Bureau for assistance.

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://www.fmhi.usf.edu/cfs/dares/flpbs/>

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).

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.

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

Kim Komisar, Program Director
Kim.Komisar@fldoe.org

April Katine, Program Specialist
April.Katine@fldoe.org

Barbara McAnelly, Program Specialist
Barbara.Mcanelly@fldoe.org

Angela Nathaniel, Program Specialist
Angela.Nathaniel@fldoe.org

Denise Taylor, Program Specialist
Denise.Taylor@fldoe.org

Clearinghouse Information Center cicbiscs@FLDOE.org (850) 245-0477

Arlene Duncan, Program Director
Arlene.Duncan@fldoe.org

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

Karen Denbroeder, Administrator
Karen.Denbroeder@fldoe.org

Marie LaCap, Program Specialist
Marie.Lacap@fldoe.org

Virginia Sasser, Program Specialist
Virginia.Sasser@fldoe.org

ESE Program Development and Services (850) 245-0478

Evy Friend, Administrator
Evy.Friend@fldoe.org

Behavior/Discipline EH/SED

Lee Clark, Program Specialist
Lee.Clark@fldoe.org

Mentally Handicapped/Autism Sheryl Sandvoss, Program Specialist Sheryl.Sandvoss@fldoe.org

Assistive Technology Karen Morris, Program Specialist Karen.Morris@fldoe.org

Speech/Language Lezlie Cline, Program Director Lezlie.Cline@fldoe.org

Gifted Donnajo Smith, Program Specialist Donnajo.Smith@fldoe.org

Hernando County School District
Focused Monitoring
System Improvement Strategies

The district is required to provide system improvement strategies to address identified findings of noncompliance, 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. In addition to findings of noncompliance, the report includes areas of concern that the district is encouraged to address, either through this system improvement plan or through other avenues. Resources, suggestions and/or recommended actions are provided following this plan format.

Findings of Noncompliance	Improvement Strategies/Interventions	Outcome Measures and Timeline
Access to the General Curriculum		
<p>Removal of students with disabilities from the regular educational environment does not occur only when 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.</p> <p>The placement decision for students at Deltona E.S. is not always based on the child's IEP.</p> <p>The IEP for each child with a disability does not include an adequate explanation of the extent, if any, to which the child will not participate with nondisabled children in the regular class.</p>	<p>Training and/or technical assistance regarding requirements for trial placements and justification for removal during academic and nonacademic periods will be incorporated into the general staff development activities for ESE staff.</p> <p>District and/or school staff will conduct quarterly reviews of a sampling of IEPs (≥ 20 records) of students who are removed from the general education setting for some part of the school day to evaluate sufficiency of explanations justifying removal.</p> <p>Following an analysis of the record review results, district staff will determine if additional training is required or targeted meet compliance.</p>	<p>District report of self-assessment reveals compliance with targeted elements for 100% of IEPs reviewed.</p> <p>May 2006 November 2006</p>

Findings of Noncompliance	Improvement Strategies/Interventions	Outcome Measures and Timeline
Accommodations, Modifications, Supplemental Aids and Services, and Supports to School Personnel		
<p>Students at Springstead H.S. are not provided accommodations in accordance with their IEPs.</p> <p><i>Areas of concern are noted in the body of the report.</i></p>	<p>Training and/or technical assistance regarding implementation of accommodations will be incorporated into the general staff development activities for ESE staff.</p> <p>Referring to students' IEPs, district and/or school staff will interview students and their teachers regarding implementation of accommodations on the IEPs (≥ 10 students, semi-annually).</p> <p><i>The district is encouraged to include strategies to address concerns noted in the body of this report.</i></p>	<p>District report of self-assessment reveals implementation of required accommodations for 100% of IEPs reviewed.</p> <p>May 2006 November 2006</p>
Discipline and Positive Behavior Supports		
<p>Manifestation determinations are not conducted for students who experience long term removals.</p> <p>Functional behavior assessments are not conducted and behavior intervention plans are not developed and implemented for student who experience long term removals.</p> <p>Individualized behavior intervention plans that have been developed based on functional behavioral assessments are not being implemented for some students; general class-wide management plans are implemented instead.</p>	<p>Training and/or technical assistance regarding manifestation determinations, functional behavior assessments, and implementation of positive behavior intervention plans will be incorporated into the general staff development activities for ESE and administrative staff.</p> <p>District and/or school staff will conduct quarterly reviews of a sampling of IEPs (≥ 10 records) of students who have been assigned >10 days of out-of-school suspension ensure that manifestation determinations and functional behavior assessments are conducted and behavior intervention plans are developed and implemented.</p> <p>Following an analysis of the record review results, district staff will determine if additional training is required or targeted meet compliance.</p>	<p>District report of self-assessment reveals compliance with targeted elements for 100% of IEPs reviewed.</p> <p>May 2006 November 2006</p>

Findings of Noncompliance	Improvement Strategies/Interventions	Outcome Measures and Timeline
<i>Areas of concern are noted in the body of the report.</i>	<i>The district is encouraged to include strategies to address concerns noted in the body of this report.</i>	
FCAT Preparation		
No findings of noncompliance in this area.		
Student Course of Study and Diploma Option Decisions		
No findings of noncompliance in this area. <i>Areas of concern are noted in the body of the report.</i>	<i>The district is encouraged to include strategies to address concerns noted in the body of this report.</i>	
Staff Development		
No findings of noncompliance in this area.		
Counseling as a Related Service		
Counseling as a related service not consistently provided to and documented on IEPs of SED students. <i>Areas of concern are noted in the body of the report.</i>	The IEP teams for the identified students will reconvene to determine if reevaluation of the student is warranted and to ensure that all required services are documented and provided on the IEP. District or school level staff will identify the appropriate service provider and implement services. <i>The district is encouraged to include strategies to address concerns noted in the body of this report.</i>	Documentation submitted and accepted by the Bureau within prescribed timeline.

Findings of Noncompliance	Improvement Strategies/Interventions	Outcome Measures and Timeline
Communication		
IEP of one language impaired student did not address communication.	The IEP team for the identified student will be reconvene to determine if reevaluation of the student is warranted and to ensure that all the student's needs that result from the disability are addressed.	Documentation submitted and accepted by the Bureau within prescribed timeline.
School to Post-school Transition		
Three (3) students at Central H.S. for whom there was evidence of a need for agency involvement did not have an agency representative invited to the transition IEP meeting.	<p>Training and/or technical assistance regarding transition planning procedures (e.g., inviting transition agencies to participate in transition IEP team meetings whenever they may be expected to provide or pay for transition services; including transition as a purpose of the meeting on meeting notices) will be incorporated into the general staff development activities for ESE staff.</p> <p>District and/or school staff will conduct quarterly reviews of a sampling of IEPs (≥ 10 records) of students ages 14 or older to ensure that all transition requirements are addressed.</p> <p>Following an analysis of the record review results, district staff will determine if additional training is required or targeted meet compliance.</p>	<p>District report of self-assessment reveals compliance with targeted elements for 100% of IEPs reviewed.</p> <p>May 2006 November 2006</p>
Services to Gifted Students		
<p>No findings of noncompliance.</p> <p><i>Areas of concern are noted in the body of the report.</i></p>	<p><i>The district is encouraged to include strategies to address concerns noted in the body of this report.</i></p>	

Findings of Noncompliance	Improvement Strategies/Interventions	Outcome Measures and Timeline
Services to Exceptional Students in Charter Schools		
<p>No findings of noncompliance.</p> <p><i>Areas of concern are noted in the body of the report.</i></p>	<p><i>The district is encouraged to include strategies to address concerns noted in the body of this report.</i></p>	
Services to ESE Students in Department of Juvenile Justice Facilities		
<p>Two IEPs were not current on the day of review.</p> <p><i>Areas of concern are noted in the body of the report.</i></p>	<p>IEPs for the two students have been developed.</p> <p>The district will review the process at the DJJ facility for identification and verification of special education services and development and implementation of IEPs, with specific emphasis on summer months. Based on that review, a procedure will be developed and implemented to ensure that students are identified and verified and an IEP developed and implemented within the required DJJ Quality Assurance Standard of 10 business days.</p> <p>Facility and/or district staff will conduct compliance reviews of a random sample of records for students enrolled May through September, at least once per month, to ensure timely identification and services.</p> <p><i>The district is encouraged to include strategies to address concerns noted in the body of this report.</i></p>	<p>Documentation submitted and accepted by the Bureau within prescribed timeline.</p> <p>District report of self-assessment reveals compliance with targeted elements for 100% of IEPs reviewed.</p> <p>May 2006 November 2006</p>

Findings of Noncompliance	Improvement Strategies/Interventions	Outcome Measures and Timeline
Matrix of Services		
Two (2) matrix of services documents require correction due to inaccurate reporting.	The district will identify the five schools with the greatest number of students claimed at the 254 or 255 levels. Using protocols developed by the Bureau, district staff will conduct reviews of two IEPs per school (first and last record from alphabetical list of 254/255 records). For students whose IEPs do not support the services on the matrix or for whom the services are not in evidence, the district will submit an amendment to the Automated Student Information System database for the open window of correction.	District report of self-assessment reveals compliance with targeted elements for 100% of IEPs reviewed. May 2006 November 2006
Student Record Reviews		
Four (4) findings of noncompliance required funding adjustments. IEP teams for nineteen (19) students must reconvene to address identified findings.	The IEP teams for the identified students will reconvene to address identified findings. The identified noncompliant elements will be targeted in the district's IEP and EP training. Pre-and post- training surveys will be conducted to determine perceived effectiveness of the training. Using protocols developed by the Bureau, school and/or district staff will conduct semi-annual compliance reviews of a random sample of 15 IEPs and 5 EPs developed by staff who participated in the training session.	Documentation submitted and accepted by the Bureau within prescribed timeline. District report of self-assessment reveals compliance with targeted elements for 100% of IEPs reviewed. May 2006 November 2006
Review of District Forms		
Thirteen (13) forms require revisions to meet compliance.	The district will revise forms as required and submit them to the Bureau for review.	February 2006

Appendix A:

District Data



FLORIDA DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
BUREAU OF EXCEPTIONAL EDUCATION AND STUDENT SERVICES

2005 LEA PROFILE

JOHN WINN, COMMISSIONER

DISTRICT:	HERNANDO	PK-12 POPULATION:	20,586
ENROLLMENT GROUP:	20,000 TO 40,000	PERCENT DISABLED:	17%
		PERCENT GIFTED:	2%

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

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 HERNANDO'S ENROLLMENT GROUP:

ALACHUA, BAY, CLAY, HERNANDO, LAKE, LEON, OKALOOSA, SANTA ROSA, ST. JOHNS, ST. LUCIE



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
Hernando	67%	43%	38%
Enrollment Group	52%	45%	52%
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
Hernando	0%	0%	1%
Enrollment Group	3%	2%	1%
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
Hernando	6%	3%
Enrollment Group	6%	8%
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
Hernando Enrollment Group State	4%	4%	6%	<1%	0%	<1%	2%	2%	3%
	5%	5%	4%	<1%	<1%	<1%	3%	3%	3%
	5%	4%	5%	<1%	<1%	<1%	3%	3%	3%

	EH/SED			SLD		
	2001-02	2002-03	2003-04	2001-02	2002-03	2003-04
Hernando Enrollment Group State	3%	2%	9%	4%	5%	5%
	7%	7%	6%	5%	5%	4%
	7%	7%	7%	5%	4%	5%

POSTSCHOOL OUTCOME DATA:

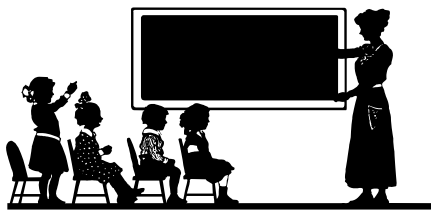
The Florida Education and Training Placement Information Program (FETPIP) is an interagency data collection system that obtains follow-up data on former students. The most recent FETPIP data available reports on students who exited Florida public schools during the **2002-03** school year. The table 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.
Hernando Enrollment Group State	37%	12%	55%	73%
	51%	24%	40%	73%
	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
Hernando Enrollment Group State	82%	29%	18%	90%	10%	10%
	86%	21%	14%	92%	8%	8%
	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
Hernando	56%	68%	76%	31%	22%	15%	12%	10%	9%
Enrollment Group	46%	50%	58%	28%	26%	21%	21%	20%	16%
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
Hernando	6%	6%	4%	52%	50%	42%	42%	44%	54%
Enrollment Group	5%	5%	6%	66%	66%	59%	23%	25%	32%
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
Hernando	53%	43%	42%
Enrollment Group	60%	59%	62%
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
Hernando		21%	15%	15%	8%	0%	0%	0%	0%
Enrollment Group		10%	7%	14%	7%	<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

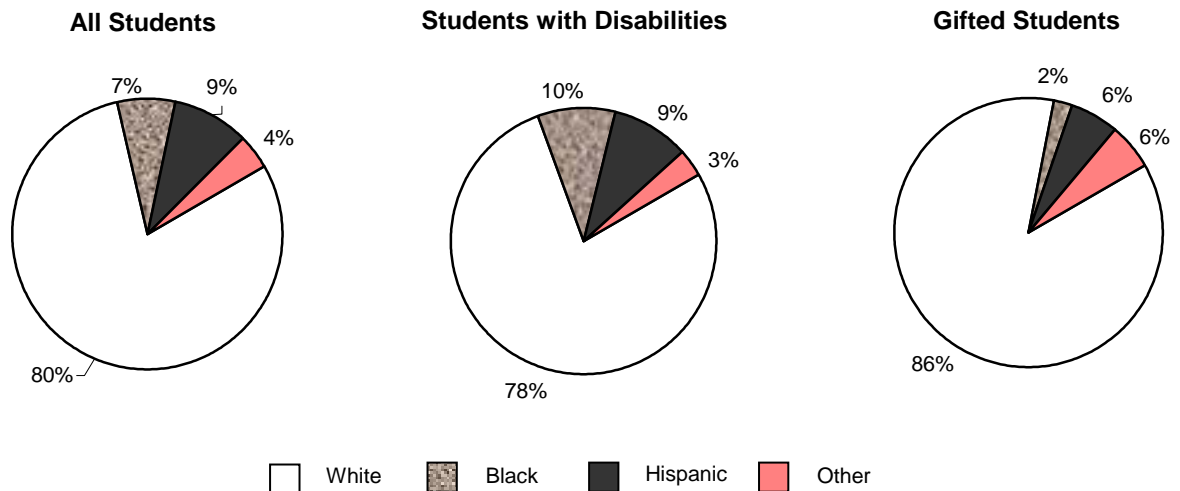
Prevalence refers to the proportion of the PK-12 population identified as exceptional at any given point in time. This section of the profile provides prevalence data by demographic characteristics.

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%	80%	78%	86%
Black	24%	28%	10%	7%	10%	2%
Hispanic	23%	19%	20%	9%	9%	6%
Asian/Pacific Islander	2%	<1%	4%	<1%	<1%	4%
Am Ind/Alaskan Native	<1%	<1%	<1%	<1%	<1%	<1%
Multiracial	3%	2%	3%	3%	3%	1%

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%	45%	25%
LEP	11%	3%	2%	<1%

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%	80%	51%	79%	47%	73%	32%	70%
Black	24%	7%	24%	9%	39%	17%	51%	17%
Hispanic	23%	9%	22%	10%	12%	8%	14%	11%
Asian/Pacific Islander	2%	<1%	<1%	<1%	<1%	0%	<1%	0%
Am Ind/Alaskan Native	<1%	<1%	<1%	<1%	<1%	<1%	<1%	<1%
Multiracial	3%	3%	2%	2%	2%	1%	1%	1%

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
Hernando County School District**

Districts Rank-Ordered on Standard Diploma Rate for Students with Disabilities

Based on data reported to the FDOE for Survey 5 (2003-04), the rates at which students with disabilities graduated with a standard diploma were used to rank-order the districts.

District	# Completers	# St. Dip.	%	Rank
Glades	6	1	17%	1
Columbia	40	7	18%	2
Liberty	15	3	20%	3
Nassau	4	1	25%	4
Baker	17	5	29%	5
Polk	680	233	34%	6
Escambia	315	110	35%	7
Jackson	60	22	37%	8
Suwannee	46	17	37%	9
Hamilton	24	9	38%	10
Madison	33	13	39%	11
Duval	663	268	40%	12
Alachua	173	70	40%	13
Hernando	97	42	43%	14
Hardee	30	13	43%	15
Marion	401	175	44%	16
Manatee	356	159	45%	17
Putnam	106	48	45%	18
Bradford	58	27	47%	19
Osceola	278	130	47%	20
Jefferson	17	8	47%	21
Orange	1,073	512	48%	22
Hendry	71	34	48%	23
Gadsden	31	15	48%	24
Lee	430	211	49%	25
Dixie	20	10	50%	26
Highlands	114	57	50%	27
Lafayette	12	6	50%	28
Okeechobee	65	33	51%	29
Broward	933	483	52%	30
DeSoto	44	23	52%	31
Sumter	65	34	52%	32
Holmes	35	19	54%	33
Collier	297	163	55%	34

District	# Completers	# St. Dip.	%	Rank
Lake	252	139	55%	35
Leon	230	129	56%	36
Volusia	483	275	57%	37
Citrus	151	89	59%	38
Pasco	526	314	60%	39
Hillsborough	1,010	613	61%	40
St. Lucie	226	142	63%	41
Santa Rosa	151	95	63%	42
Levy	54	34	63%	43
St. Johns	127	80	63%	44
Monroe	46	30	65%	45
Indian River	134	88	66%	46
Pinellas	784	521	66%	47
Franklin	6	4	67%	48
Sarasota	329	221	67%	49
Martin	126	87	69%	50
Miami Dade	1,515	1,053	70%	51
Clay	288	201	70%	52
Bay	146	102	70%	53
Palm Beach	813	568	70%	54
Seminole	336	235	70%	55
Gulf	10	7	70%	56
Wakulla	20	14	70%	57
Washington	27	19	70%	58
Brevard	440	314	71%	59
Gilchrist	20	15	75%	60
Calhoun	22	17	77%	61
Okaloosa	255	199	78%	62
Taylor	30	24	80%	63
Walton	28	23	82%	64
Charlotte	159	133	84%	65
Union	13	12	92%	66
Flagler	54	54	100%	67
District Total	15,420	8,812	57%	

Note: Shaded districts have been monitored during the last 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
Hernando 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

April Katine, Program Specialist, Team Co-Leader
Barbara McAnelly, Program Specialist, Team Co-Leader
Angela Nathaniel, Program Specialist
Denise Taylor, Program Specialist
Demetria Harvell, Program Specialist

Peer Reviewers and Contracted Staff

Theresa Hall, Hardee County Schools
Melinda Young, Wakulla County Schools
Mark Mlawer, Educational Consultant

Appendix C:

Survey Results

**Florida Department of Education
Bureau of Exceptional Education and Student Services
2005 Focused Monitoring
Hernando 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 the University of Miami 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 3,651 students with disabilities for whom complete addresses were provided by the district. A total of 423 parents (PK, n = 0; K-5, n = 94; 6-8, n = 48; 9-12, n = 59), representing 12% of the sample, returned the survey. Surveys from 67 families were returned as undeliverable, representing 2% of the sample. Parents represented the following students with disabilities: educable mentally handicapped, trainable mentally handicapped, orthopedically impaired, speech impaired, language impaired, deaf or hard of hearing, visually impaired, emotionally handicapped, specific learning disabled, hospital/homebound, autistic, developmentally delayed, and other health impaired.

**% Very Strongly Agree,
Strongly Agree,
Agree combined**

Overall, I am satisfied with:

- | | |
|---|----|
| • the way I am treated by school personnel. | 81 |
| • the amount of time my child spends with general education students. | 80 |
| • the level of knowledge and experience of school personnel. | 74 |
| • the way special education teachers and general education teachers work together. | 73 |
| • the effect of exceptional student education on my child's self-esteem. | 72 |
| • the exceptional education services my child receives. | 71 |
| • how quickly services are implemented following an IEP (Individual Educational Plan) decision. | 69 |
| • my child's academic progress. | 67 |

My child:

- | | |
|---|----|
| • has friends at school. | 85 |
| • is learning skills that will be useful later in life. | 78 |
| • spends most of the school day involved in productive activities. | 76 |
| • is happy at school. | 75 |
| • receives all the special education and related services on his/her IEP. | 71 |

**% Very Strongly Agree,
Strongly Agree,
Agree combined**

At my child's IEP meetings we have talked about:

- all of my child's needs. 84
- ways that my child could spend time with students in general education classes. 76
- whether my child should get accommodations (special testing conditions), for example, extra time. 72
- whether my child needed speech/language services. 72
- whether my child would take the FCAT (Florida Comprehensive Assessment Test). 64
- whether my child needed services beyond the regular school year. 62
- whether my child needed physical and/or occupational therapy. 59
- * the transition services my child needs to achieve his/her goals. 57
- whether my child needed transportation. 56
- the specific skills my child needs to work on in preparation for the FCAT. 55
- whether my child needed psychological counseling services. 54
- * which diploma my child may receive. 54
- * my child's goals after high school. 52
- * the requirements for different diplomas. 51

My child's special education teachers:

- expect my child to succeed. 85
- are available to speak with me. 84
- set appropriate goals for my child. 81
- encourage students to ask for help if they need it. 81
- give students with disabilities extra time or different assignments, if needed. 79
- individualized instruction for my child. 73
- give homework that meets my child's needs. 71
- call me or send me notes about my child. 71

My child's general education teachers:

- are available to speak with me. 76
- expect my child to succeed. 75
- encourage students to ask for help if they need it. 72
- set appropriate goals for my child. 71
- give homework that meets my child's needs. 65
- give students with disabilities extra time or different assignments, if needed. 65
- call me or send me notes about my child. 64
- individualized instruction for my child. 58

*These questions were answered by parents of students grades 8 and above.

**% Very Strongly Agree,
Strongly Agree,
Agree combined**

My child's school:

- makes sure I understand my child's IEP and the services my child will receive. 81
- encourages me to participate in my child's education. 80
- sends me information written in a way I understand. 78
- sends me information about activities and workshops for parents. 75
- encourages acceptance of students with disabilities. 75
- handles discipline problems appropriately. 75
- does all it can to keep students from dropping out of school. 71
- wants to hear my ideas. 68
- addresses my child's individual needs. 68
- offers students with disabilities the classes they need to graduate with a standard diploma. 68
- provides students with disabilities updated books and materials. 67
- explains what I can do if I want to make changes to my child's IEP. 66
- * offers a variety of vocational courses, such as computers and business technology. 66
- involves students with disabilities in clubs, sports, or other activities. 63
- informs me about all of the services available to my child. 60
- * informed me, beginning when my child turned 14, that one purpose of the IEP meeting was to discuss a plan for my child's transition out of school. 52
- * provides information to students about education and jobs after high school. 50

Parent Participation

- I have attended my child's IEP meetings. 92
- I meet with my child's teachers to discuss my child's needs and progress. 90
- I am comfortable talking about my child with school staff. 87
- My input is considered in the development of my child's IEP. 81
- I participate in school activities with my child. 74
- I have heard about the Florida Diagnostic and Learning Resources System ("FDLRS") and the services they provide to families of children. 50
- I attend meetings of organizations for parents of students with disabilities. 40
- I have used parent support services in my area. 36
- I attend School Advisory Committee meetings concerning school improvement. 34
- I attend meetings of the PTA/PTO. 31

*These questions were answered by parents of students grades 8 and above.

**Florida Department of Education
Bureau of Exceptional Education and Student Services
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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 University of Miami 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 616 teacher surveys representing approximately 48% of ESE and general education teachers in the district were returned. Data are from 17 (81%) of the district's 21 schools.

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

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

- ensures that students with disabilities feel comfortable when taking classes with general education students. 91
- modifies and adapts curriculum for students as needed. 90
- places students with disabilities into general education classes whenever possible. 89
- implements co-teaching for some or all classes. 87
- addresses each students' individual needs. 86
- implements support facilitation and/or consultation by ESE teachers for students in general education classes. 84
- gives ESE teachers access to adequate instructional materials, including technology. 84
- offers teachers professional development opportunities regarding curriculum and support for students with disabilities. 84
- ensures that the general education curriculum is taught in ESE classes to the maximum extent possible. 83
- encourages collaboration among ESE teachers, GE teachers and service providers. 78
- provides adequate support for GE teachers who teach students with disabilities. 70

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

- provides students with appropriate testing accommodations. 93
- provides ESE teachers with FCAT test preparation materials. 90
- aligns curriculum for students with the standards that are tested on the FCAT. 88
- gives students in ESE classes updated textbooks. 87
- provides extra help or remediation before or after school. 80

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

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
- develops IEPs according to student needs. 93
- allows students to make up credits lost due to disability-related absences. 92
- makes an effort to involve parents in their child's education. 91
- ensures that classroom material is grade- and age- appropriate. 89
- ensures that classroom material is culturally appropriate. 89
- encourages participation of students with disabilities in extracurricular activities. 86
- tracks student attendance to identify students with attendance problems. 83
- uses a child study team to develop strategies for students identified as having an attendance problem. 81
- ensures that students are taught strategies to manage their behavior as needed. 78
- provides adequate counseling services for students who need it. 78
- provides social skills training to students as needed. 77
- implements dropout prevention activities. 75

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. 92
- encourages students to aim for a standard diploma when appropriate. 90
- provides extra help to students who need to retake the FCAT. 88
- provides students with information about options after graduation. 87
- informs students through the IEP process of the different diploma options and their requirements. 87
- teaches transition skills for future employment and independent living. 73
- provides students with job training. 71
- coordinates on-the-job training with outside agencies. 69

**Florida Department of Education
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2005 Focused Monitoring
Hernando 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 University of Miami to develop and administer a student survey as a component of the Bureau's focused monitoring activities.

In conjunction with the 2005 Hernando 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 323 students, representing approximately 27% of the students with disabilities in grades 9-12 in the district. Data are from 4 (44%) of the district's 9 schools with students in grades 9-12.

	% YES
I am taking the following ESE classes:	
• Math	54
• English	44
• Science	32
• Social Studies	24
• Electives (physical education, art, music)	18
• Learning Strategies or Unique Skills	17
• Vocational (woodshop, computers)	12
At my school:	
• ESE teachers believe that ESE students can learn.	85
• ESE teachers give students extra help, if needed.	84
• ESE teachers encourage students to ask for help if they need it.	84
• ESE teachers understand ESE students' needs.	79
• ESE teachers give students extra time or different assignments, if needed.	78
• ESE teachers teach students in ways that help them learn.	77
• ESE teachers teach students things that will be useful later on in life.	72
• ESE teachers provide students with updated books and materials.	60

	% YES
I am taking the following general education/mainstream classes:	
• Electives (physical education, art, music)	67
• English	57
• Science	57
• Vocational (woodshop, computers)	51
• Math	49
• Social Studies	49
At my school:	
• general education teachers believe that ESE students can learn.	79
• general education teachers give students extra help, if needed.	74
• general education teachers encourage students to ask for help if they need it.	74
• general education teachers teach students things that will be useful later on in life.	72
• general education teachers teach ESE students in ways that help them learn.	66
• general education teachers understand ESE students' needs.	64
• general education teachers provide students with updated books and materials.	61
• general education teachers give students extra time or different assignments, if needed.	58
At my school, ESE students:	
• can take vocational classes such as computers and business technology.	82
• get the help they need to do well in school.	81
• are encouraged to stay in school.	79
• fit in at school.	76
• spend enough time with general education students.	75
• participate in clubs, sports, and other activities.	75
• are treated fairly by teachers and staff.	74
• get information about education after high school.	71
• get work experience (on-the-job training) if they are interested.	70
Diploma Option	
• I know what courses I have to take to get my diploma.	75
• I know the difference between a standard and a special diploma.	71
• I agree with the type of diploma I am going to receive.	70
• I will probably graduate with a standard diploma.	63
• I had a say in the decision about which diploma I would get.	51
IEP	
• I was invited to attend my IEP meeting this year.	73
• I attended my IEP meeting this year.	70
• I had a say in the decision about which classes I would take.	62
• I had a say in the decision about special testing conditions I might get for the FCAT or other tests.	41
• I had a say in the decision about whether I need to take the FCAT or a different test.	33

	% YES
FCAT	
• I took the FCAT this year.	80
• Teachers help ESE students prepare for the FCAT.	66
• In my English/reading classes, we work on the kinds of skills that are tested on the reading part of the FCAT.	60
• In my math classes, we work on the kinds of problems that are tested on the math part of the FCAT.	60
• I received accommodations (special testing conditions) for the FCAT.	53

**Florida Department of Education
Bureau of Exceptional Education and Student Services
2005 Focused Monitoring
Hernando 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 University of Miami to develop and administer a parent survey as part of the Bureau's monitoring activities.

The parent survey was sent to parents of the 546 students identified as gifted for whom complete addresses were provided by the district. A total of 171 parents (KG-5, n = 61; 6-8, n = 50; 9 - 12, n = 23), representing 31% of the sample, returned the survey. One survey was returned as undeliverable, representing 0% of the sample.

	%YES
Overall, I am satisfied with:	
• gifted teachers' subject area knowledge.	86
• my child's academic progress.	85
• the effect of gifted services on my child's self-esteem.	84
• general education teachers' subject area knowledge.	81
• gifted teachers' expertise in teaching students identified as gifted.	80
• how quickly services were implemented following an initial request for evaluation.	70
• the gifted services my child receives.	69
• general education teachers' expertise in teaching students identified as gifted.	63
In general education classes, my child:	
• has friends at school.	98
• is usually happy at school.	89
• has his/her social and emotional needs met at school.	86
• is learning skills that will be useful later on in life.	84
• has creative outlets at school.	71
• is academically challenged at school.	50
In gifted classes, my child:	
• has friends at school	99
• is usually happy at school.	92
• has his/her social and emotional needs met at school.	89
• is learning skills that will be useful later on in life.	87
• has creative outlets at school.	79
• is academically challenged at school.	78

	%YES
My child's general education teachers:	
• expect appropriate behavior.	94
• are available to speak with me.	89
• provide coursework that includes representation of diverse ethnic, racial, and other groups.	81
• have access to adequate instructional materials, including technology.	81
• set appropriate goals for my child.	70
• give homework that meets my child's needs.	66
• relate coursework to students' future educational and professional pursuits.	64
• call me or send me notes about my child.	47
My child's gifted teachers:	
• expect appropriate behavior.	98
• are available to speak with me.	93
• set appropriate goals for my child.	87
• have access to adequate instructional materials, including technology.	87
• provide coursework that includes representation of diverse ethnic, racial, and other groups.	85
• relate coursework to students' future educational and professional pursuits.	75
• give homework that meets my child's needs.	72
• call me or send me notes about my child.	56
My child's home school:	
• treats me with respect.	92
• handles discipline problems appropriately.	88
• sends me information written in a way I understand.	83
• sends me information about activities and workshops for parents.	76
• makes sure I understand my child's EP or IEP.	75
• encourages me to participate in my child's education.	71
• provides students identified as gifted with appropriate books and materials.	65
• addresses my child's individual needs.	62
• involves me in developing my child's Educational Plan (EP or IEP).	62
• wants to hear my ideas.	61
• informs me about all of the services available to my child.	54
• explains what I can do if I want to make changes to my child's EP or IEP.	50
• implements my ideas.	49
My child's 2nd school:	
• treats me with respect.	98
• handles discipline problems appropriately.	95
• sends me information written in a way I understand.	89
• encourages me to participate in my child's education.	84
• provides students identified as gifted with appropriate books and materials.	83
• addresses my child's individual needs.	78
• sends me information about activities and workshops for parents.	77

	%YES
My child's 2nd school: (continued)	
• makes sure I understand my child's EP or IEP.	75
• wants to hear my ideas.	66
• informs me about all of the services available to my child.	66
• involves me in developing my child's Educational Plan (EP or IEP).	65
• implements my ideas.	56
• explains what I can do if I want to make changes to my child's EP or IEP.	56
Students identified as gifted:	
• are provided with information about options for education after high school.	83
• have the option of taking a variety of vocational courses.	80
• are provided with the opportunity to participate in externships or mentorships.	74
• are provided with career counseling.	65
Parent Participation	
• I have attended one or more meetings about my child during this school year.	79
• I participate in school activities with my child.	79
• I am a member of the PTA/PTO.	39
• I attend School Advisory Committee meetings concerning school improvement.	30
• I have used parent support services in my area.	9
• I belong to an organization for parents of students identified as gifted.	4

Appendix D:
Regulatory Citations

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

Regulatory Citations

Requirements related to exceptional student education are found in the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, its implementing regulations in Title 34 of the Code of Federal Regulations, Florida statutes, and the Florida State Board of Education rules. The following legal provisions apply to the issues referenced in this report:

Related to Access to the General Curriculum

Title 34 Section 300.26(a) (3), Code of Federal Regulations (CFR), Special Education states “Specially designed instruction means adapting, as appropriate to the needs of the eligible child under this part, the content, methodology, or delivery of instruction—**(i)** To address the unique needs of the child that result from the child’s disability; and **(ii)** To ensure access of the child to the general curriculum, so that he or she can meet the educational standards within the jurisdiction of the public agency that apply to all children.

34 CFR 300.347(a)(4) Content of IEP states “The IEP for each child with a disability must include... an explanation of the extent, if any, to which the child will not participate with nondisabled children in the regular class...”

34 CFR §300.500 (b) General LRE Requirements states “Each public agency shall 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.”

34 CFR 300.552, Placements states ”In determining the educational placement of a child with a disability, including a preschool child with a disability, each public agency shall ensure that – **(a)** The placement decision - **(1)** Is made by a group of persons, including the parents, and other persons knowledgeable about the child, the meaning of the evaluation data, and the placement options; and **(2)** Is made in conformity with the LRE provisions of this subpart including §§ 300.500 – 300.554: **(b)** The child’s placement – **(1)** Is determined at least annually; **(2)** Is based on the child’s IEP; and **(3)** Is as close as possible to the child’s home. **(c)** Unless the IEP of a child with a disability requires some other arrangement, the child is educated in the school that he or she would attend if nondisabled: **(d)** In selecting the LRE, consideration is given to any potential harmful effect on the child or on the quality of services that he or she needs: and **(e)** A child with a disability is not removed from education in age-appropriate regular classrooms solely because of needed modifications in the general curriculum.”

34 CFR § 300.553 Nonacademic settings states “In providing or arranging for the provision of nonacademic and extracurricular services and activities, including meals, recess periods, and the services and activities set forth in § 300.306, each public agency shall ensure that each child with a disability participates with nondisabled children in those services and activities to the maximum extent appropriate to the needs of that child.”

Rule 6A – 6.0311 (1), Florida Administrative Code (FAC), Eligible Special Programs for Exceptional Students requires a continuum of placements and states... “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 is the provision of assistance to school staff in basic, vocational or exceptional classes. **(b)** Resource room special instruction is supplemental instruction to exceptional students who receive their major educational program in other basic, vocational or exceptional classes. **(c)** Special class is the provision of instruction to exceptional students who receive the major portion of their educational program in special classes located in a regular school. **(d)** A special day school is a school which is administratively separate from regular schools and is organized to serve one or more types of exceptional students. **(e)** A residential school is a special school which in addition to providing special education and related services provides room and board. **(f)** Special class in a hospital or facility operated by a noneducational agency. **(g)** Individual instruction in a hospital or home. **(h)** In addition, districts may provide supplementary instructional personnel to public or nonpublic preschool or day care programs for the instruction of pre-kindergarten exceptional students.”

Related to Services, Accommodations, Modifications, and Supports

34 CFR 300.342(b)(3) When IEPs must be in effect states “Each public agency shall ensure that each teacher and provider described in paragraph (b)(2) of this section is informed of (i) his or her specific responsibilities related to implementing the child’s IEP; and (ii) the specific accommodation, modifications, and supports that must be provided for the child in accordance with the IEP.”

34 CFR 300.347 (a) Content of IEP states “The IEP for each child with a disability must include... **(3)** A statement of the special education and related services and supplementary aids and services to be provided to the child, or on behalf of the child, and a statement of the program modifications or supports for school personnel that will be provided for the child **(i)** To advance appropriately toward attaining the annual goals; **(ii)** To be involved and progress in the general curriculum in accordance with paragraph (a) (1) of this section and to participate in extracurricular and other nonacademic activities; and **(iii)** To be educated and participate with other children in the activities described in this section; **(4)** An explanation of the extent, if any, to which the child will not participate with nondisabled children in the regular class and in the activities described in paragraph (a) (3) of this section: **(5) (i)** A statement of any individual modifications in the administration of State or district-wide assessments of student achievement that are needed in order for the child to participate in the assessment; and **(ii)** If the IEP team determines that the child will not participate in a particular State or district-wide assessment of student achievement (or part of an assessment), a state of – **(A)** Why that assessment is not appropriate for the child; and **(B)** How the child will be assessed.”

34 CFR 300.350(a) IEP—accountability states “...each public agency must—(1) Provide special education and related services to a child with a disability in accordance with the child’s IEP, and (2) make a good faith effort to assist the child to achieve the goals and objectives or benchmarks listed in the IEP.”

Rule 6A-6.03028 (7), FAC, Development of Individual Educational Plans for Students with Disabilities, states “ (c) A statement of the specially designed instruction and related services and supplementary aids and services to be provided to the student, or on behalf of the student, and a statement of the classroom accommodations, modifications or supports for school personnel that will be provided for the student to advance appropriately toward attaining the annual goals; to be involved and progress in the general curriculum in accordance with paragraph (7) (a) of this rule; to participate in extracurricular and other nonacademic activities; and to be educated and participate with other students with disabilities and nondisabled students in the activities described in this paragraph. (e) A statement of any individual accommodations in the administration of the state or district assessments of student achievement that are needed in order for the student to participate in state or district assessments. A parent must provide signed consent for a student to receive instructional accommodations that would not be permitted on the statewide assessments and must acknowledge in writing that he or she understands the implications of such accommodations. Accommodations that negate the validity of a statewide assessment are not allowable in accordance with Section 1008.22(3) (c) 6. Florida Statutes. If the IEP team determines that the student will not participate in the Florida Comprehensive Assessment Test (FCAT) or district assessment of student achievement or part of an assessment, a statement of why that assessment is not appropriate for the student and how the student will be assessed. If a student does not participate in the FCAT, the district must notify student’s parent and provide the parent with information regarding the implications of such nonparticipation in accordance with Section 1008.22 (3), 6 Florida Statutes.”

Related to Discipline and Positive Behavioral Supports

34 CFR 300.520 (b) Authority of school personnel states “ (1) Either before or not later than 10 business days after either first removing the child for more than 10 school days in a school year or commencing a removal that constitutes a change of placement under § 300.519, including the action described in paragraph (a) (2) of this section – (i) If the LEA did not conduct a functional behavioral assessment and implement a behavioral intervention plan for the child before the behavior that resulted in the removal described in paragraph (a) of this section, the agency shall convene an IEP meeting to develop an assessment plan. (ii) If the child already has a behavioral intervention plan, the IEP team shall meet to review the plan and its implementation, and modify the plan and its implementation as necessary, to address the behavior. (2) As soon as practicable after developing the plan described in paragraph (b) (1) (i) of this section, and completing the assessments required by the plan, the LEA shall convene an IEP meeting to develop appropriate behavioral interventions to address those interventions.”

34 CFR 300.523 (a) Manifestation determination review states ” If an action is contemplated regarding behavior described in §§ 300.520 (a) (2) or 300.521, or involving a removal that constitutes a change of placement under § 300.519 for a child with a disability who has engaged in other behavior that violated any rule or code of conduct of the LEA that applies to all children

– (1) Not later than the date on which the decision to take that action is made, the parents must be notified of that decision and provided the procedural safeguards notice described in § 300.504; and (2) Immediately, if possible, but in no case later than 10 school days after the date on which the decision to take that action is made, a review must be conducted of the relationship between the child’s disability and the behavior subject to the disciplinary action.”

34 CFR §300.346(a)(2)(i) Development, review, and revision of the IEP states “Consideration of special factors. The IEP team also shall— (i) 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.”

Rule 6A-6.03028 (6) (d), FAC, Development of individual educational plans for students with disabilities states... “In the case of a student whose behavior impedes learning or the learning of others, if appropriate, strategies, including positive behavioral interventions, strategies, and supports to address that behavior.”

Rule 6A-6.03312 (4), FAC, Discipline Procedures for Students with Disabilities states “ (a) The school district must notify the parent of the removal decision and provide the parent with a copy of the notice of procedural safeguards as referenced in Rule 6A-6.03311,FAC., on the same day as the date of the removal decision; (b) An IEP meeting must be held immediately if possible but in no case later than ten (10) school days after the removal decision to conduct a manifestation determination review as described in subsection (3) of this rule; (c) Services consistent with subsection (5) of this rule must be provided; (d) Either before or not later than ten (10) business days after either first removing the student for more than ten (10) school days in a school year or beginning with a removal that constitutes a change in placement: 1. If the school district did not conduct a functional behavioral assessment (FBA) and implement a positive behavioral intervention plan (PBIP) for the student before the behavior that resulted in the removal, the IEP team must meet to develop an assessment plan. 2. As soon as practicable after developing the assessment plan and completing the FBA, as prescribed in subparagraph (4)(d) 1., of this rule, the IEP team must meet to develop an appropriate PBIP to address the behavior and shall implement the PBIP. 3. If the student has a PBIP, the IEP team shall meet to review the plan and its implementation and revise the plan and its implementation as necessary to address the behavior.”

Rule 6.03016 (4), FAC, Special Programs for Students Who Are Emotionally Handicapped states “Criteria for eligibility for programs for severely emotionally disturbed... (d) Provides extensive support services specifically designed for severely emotionally disturbed 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.”

Related to FCAT Participation and Preparation

Links to the full text of the following IDEA Regulations and State Board of Education Administrative Rules related to IEPs are available on the Bureau website at www.firn.edu/doe/commhome/linkhome.htm

Rule 6A-6.03028 (7) (a), FAC, Development of Individual Educational Plans for Exceptional Students, “A statement of the student’s present level of educational performance, including how the student’s disability affects the student’s involvement and progress in the general curriculum. For students with disabilities who participate in the general statewide assessment program, consistent with the provision of Rule 6A-1.0943, FAC., a statement of the remediation needed for the student to achieve a passing score on the statewide assessment...”

Related to Student Course of Study and Diploma Option

34 CFR 300.347(b), FAC, Content of the IEP states “The IEP must include... For each student with a disability beginning at age 14 (or younger, if determined appropriate by the IEP team), and updated annually, 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 (such as participation in advanced-placement courses or a vocational education program)...”

Rule 6A-6.03028 (7), FAC, Development of Individual Educational Plans for Students with Disabilities states “Each district, in collaboration with the student’s parents, shall develop an IEP for each student with a disability. For children with disabilities ages three (3) through five (5) years, districts may develop an IEP or a family support plan in accordance with Rule 6A-6.03029, FAC. The IEP for each student with a disability must include: (h) 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. “

Rule 6-1.0996(13), FAC, Graduation Requirements for Certain Students with Disabilities states “Sunshine State Standards. For student with disabilities as defined in this rule, mastery of the Sunshine State Standards through successful completion of courses that meet graduation requirements for a standard diploma, specified in Rule 6A-1.09401(1)(a-g), FAC., shall be accepted in lieu of Sunshine State Standards for Special Diploma noted in subsection (12) of this rule for awarding of a special diploma.

Related to Staff Development

Links to the full text of the following IDEA Regulations is available on the Bureau website at www.firn.edu/doe/commhome/linkhome.htm

34 CFR §300.382 Improvement Strategies Each State must describe the strategies the State will use to address the needs identified under §300.381. These strategies must include how the State will address the identified needs for in-service and pre-service preparation to ensure that all personnel who work with children with disabilities (including both professional and paraprofessional personnel who provide special education, general education, related services, or early intervention services) have the skills and knowledge necessary to meet the needs of children with disabilities

Related to Counseling as Related Service

34 CFR 300.24 (a) Related services states “As used in this part, the term *related services* means transportation and such development, corrective, and other supportive services as are required to assist a child with a disability to benefit from special education, and includes speech-language pathology audiology services, psychological services, physical and occupational therapy, recreation, early identification and assessment of disabilities in children, counseling services...”

Rule 6.03016 (4), FAC, Special Programs for Students Who Are Emotionally Handicapped states “Criteria for eligibility for programs for severely emotionally disturbed... (d) Provides extensive support services specifically designed for severely emotionally disturbed 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.

Related to the Communication Needs of Students with Disabilities

34 CFR 300.346 (a) Development, review, and revision of IEP states “(1) in developing each child’s IEP, the IEP team shall consider... (2) Consideration of special factors. The IEP team shall consider... (iv) The communication needs of the child, and in the case of a child who is deaf or hard of hearing, consider the child’s language and communication needs, opportunities for direct communications with peers, and professional personnel in the child’s language and communication mode, academic level, and full range of needs, including opportunities for direct instruction in the child’s language and communication mode.”

34 CFR §300.347(a) (2)(i)(ii), Content of the IEP A statement of measurable annual goals, including short-term objectives, related to – (i) Meeting the needs of the child that result from the child’s disability to enable the child to be involved in and progress in the general curriculum (i.e. the same curriculum as for nondisabled children), or for preschool children, as appropriate, to participate in appropriate activities; and (ii) Meeting each of the child’s other educational needs that result from the child’s disability.”

Rule 6A-6.03028 (6), FAC, Development of Individual Educational Plans for Students with Disabilities states “ The IEP team shall consider the following in IEP development, review, and revision: (g) The communication needs of the student, and in the case of a student who is deaf or hard of hearing, the student’s language and communication needs, opportunities for direct communications with peers and professional personnel in the student’s language and communication mode, academic level, and full range of needs, including opportunities for direct instruction in the student’s language and communication mode.

Related to Transition from School to Post-school Living

34 CFR 300.344 (b), IEP Team states “(1) Under paragraph (a) (7) of this section, the public agency shall invite a student with a disability of any age to attend his or her IEP meeting if a purpose of the meeting will be the consideration of – (3) (i) In implementing the requirements of § 300.347 (b) (2), the public agency also shall invite a representative of any other agency that is likely to be responsible for providing or paying for transition services.”

Rule 6A.6.03028 (3)(b)(2), FAC, Development of Individual Educational Plans for Students with Disabilities “For Students with a disability, beginning at age 16 (or younger if determined appropriate by the IEP team), the notice must indicate that a purpose of the meeting is the consideration of needed transition services for the student as required in paragraph (7)(i) and (j) of this rule, indicate that the school district will invite the student, and indicate any other agency that will be invited to send a representative.”

Rule 6A.6.03028 (4), FAC, Development of Individual Educational Plans for Students with Disabilities states “The IEP team, with a reasonable number of participants, shall include: (i) To implement the requirements of paragraph (7) (j) of this rule, the school district shall invite a representative of any other agency that may be responsible for providing or paying for transition services, when the purpose of the IEP meeting is to consider transition services. If an agency invited to send a representative to a meeting does not do so, the school district shall take other steps to obtain the participation of the agency in the planning of any transition services.”

Related to Exceptional Educational Students Enrolled in Charter Schools

34 CFR 300.312 (a) Children with disabilities in public charter schools states “Children with disabilities who attend public charter schools and their parents retain all rights under this part.”

34 CFR 300.241 (a) (b), Treatment of charter schools and their students states “(a) The LEA must have on file with the SEA information to demonstrate that in carrying out this part with respect to charter schools that are public schools of the LEA, the LEA will serve children with disabilities attending those schools in the same manner as it serves children with disabilities in its other schools; and (b) Provide funds under Part B of the Act to those schools in the same manner as it provides those funds to its other schools.”

Related to Exceptional Educational Students Enrolled in Facilities Operated by the Department of Juvenile Justice

34 CFR 300.2 (b) Applicability of this part to State, local, and private agencies states “The provisions of this part – (1) Apply to all political subdivisions of the State that are involved in the education of children with disabilities.”

Rule 6A.6.05281, (1) (c), FAC, Educational Programs for Youth in Department of Juvenile Justice Detention, Commitment, Day Treatment, or Early Delinquency Intervention Programs states “All students placed in a DJJ program, who meet the eligibility criteria for exceptional student education, shall be provided a free appropriate public education consistent with the requirements of Chapter 6A-6, FAC. Students with disabilities, as defined by Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act, shall be provided the necessary aids and services.”

Related to the Matrix of Services Document

Section 1011.62(1) (c) (e), F.S., Funds for operations of schools, states that “Cost factors based on desired relative cost differences between the following program shall be established in the

annual General Appropriations Act. The Commissioner of Education shall specify a matrix of services and intensity levels to be used by districts in the determination of the two weighted cost factors for exceptional students with the highest levels of need...and (e) 1.a. The funding model uses basic, at-risk, support levels IV and V for exceptional students and career Florida Education Finance Program cost factors, and a guaranteed allocation for exceptional student education programs. Exceptional education cost factors are determined by using a matrix of services to document the services that each exceptional student will receive...and 1.b. In order to generate funds using one of the two weighted cost factors, a matrix of services must be completed at the time of the student's initial placement into an exceptional student education program and at least once every 3 years by personnel who have received approved training..."

Related to the Individual Educational Plans

Links to the full text of the following IDEA Regulations and State Board of Education Administrative Rules related to IEPs are available on the Bureau website at www.firn.edu/doe/commhome/linkhome.htm

34 CFR 300.340-300.350 describe the requirements related to IEPs for students with disabilities, including: §300.340, definitions related to IEPs; §300.341, responsibility of SEA and other public agencies for IEPs; §300.342, when IEPs must be in effect; §300.343, IEP meetings; §300.344, IEP team; §300.345, parent participation; §300.346, development, review, and revision of IEPs; §300.347, content of IEPs; §300.348, agency responsibilities for transition services; §300.349, private school placements by public agencies; and, §300.350, IEP accountability.

Rule 6A-6.03028, FAC, Development of Individual Educational Plans for Exceptional Students, states that "An Individual Educational Plan (IEP) or an Individual Family Support Plan (IFSP) must be developed, reviewed, and revised for each eligible child with a disability served by a school district or other state agency that provides special education and related services either directly, by contract, or through other arrangements, in accordance with this rule..." The rule includes requirements related to: (1) the role of parents; (2) definitions; (3) parent participation for students with disabilities; (4) IEP team participants; (5) timelines; (6) considerations in IEP development, review, and revision for students with disabilities; (7) contents of the IEP for students with disabilities; (8) transition services for students beginning at age sixteen (or younger, if determined appropriate by the IEP team); (9) transition of children with disabilities from the infants and toddlers early intervention program to prekindergarten programs that provide specially designed instruction and related services operated by the school district; (10) review and revision of the IEP; (11) IEP implementation and accountability; and, (12) students with disabilities placed in private schools or community facilities through contractual arrangements by the school district.

Related to Educational Plans

A link to the full text of the following State Board of Education Administrative Rule related to EPs is available on the Bureau website at www.firn.edu/doe/commhome/linkhome.htm.

Rule 6A-6.030191, FAC, Development of Educational Plans for Exceptional Students Who Are Gifted, states that “Educational Plans (EPs) are developed for students identified solely as gifted. Parents are partners with schools and school district personnel in developing, reviewing, and revising the educational plan (EP) for their child. Procedures for the development of the EPs for exceptional students who are gifted, including procedures for parent involvement, shall be set forth in each district’s Policies and Procedures for the Provision of Specially Designed Instruction and Related Services to Exceptional Students document and shall be consistent with the following requirements:...” The rule includes requirements related to: (1) the role of parents; (2) parent participation; (3) EP team participants; (4) contents of the EPs; (5) considerations in EP development; (6) timelines; and, (7) EP implementation.

Related to Forms

Links to the full text of the following IDEA Regulations and State Board of Education Administrative Rules related to IEPs are available on the Bureau website at www.firn.edu/doe/commhome/linkhome.htm

34 CFR §300.347 Content of IEP “The content for each child with a disability must include....”

34 CFR §300.503 Prior Notice By the Public Agency; Content of Notice “(a) Notice. (1) Written notice that meets the requirements of paragraph (b) of this section must be given to the parents of a child with a disability a reasonable time before the public agency -- ...”

Rule 6A-6.03028(7), FAC, Development of Individual Educational Plans for Exceptional Students, Contents of the IEP for students with disabilities. Each district, in collaboration with the student’s parents, shall develop an IEP for each student with a disability.”

Rule 6A-6.03028(3) (b), FAC, Development of Individual Educational Plans for Exceptional Students, “A written notice to the parent must indicate the purpose, time and location of the meeting, and who, by title or position, will be attending...”

Appendix E:
Student Record Reviews

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

Student Record Reviews

A total of 31 student records of students with disabilities and ten records of students identified as gifted, randomly selected from the population of ESE students, were reviewed. The records were from 14 schools in the district. Fifteen of the records represented transition IEPs for students aged 14 or older. Targeted or partial reviews of an additional 84 records 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 nine 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.

To be determined systemic in nature, an item must be found noncompliant in at least 25% of the records reviewed. In Hernando County, at least five of the IEPs and three of the EPs must have been noncompliant on a given item to be considered a systemic finding. For six of the 31 IEPs more than 50% of the goals were not measurable, and IEP teams must be reconvened to address this finding. The district was notified of the specific students requiring reconvened IEP meetings in a letter dated October 12, 2005.

Systemic findings were made in the following areas:

- Lack of individualized supports to school personnel (29)
- Lack of measurable goals (17)
- Lack of short term objectives or benchmarks containing criteria or time frame (17)
- Lack of special education service or specially designed instruction (12)
- Lack of an explanation of the extent, if any, to which the student will not participate with nondisabled students in the regular class (8)
- Lack of complete information in the present level of performance statement (7)
- Lack of correspondence between the present level of performance and the annual goals and short-term objectives or benchmarks (6)
- Lack of consent of parent for student to receive instructional accommodations not permitted on statewide assessment and understanding of the implications of such accommodations (6)
- Lack of identification of the frequency of special education services/specially designed instruction (5)
- Lack of a statement of how progress toward annual goals will be measured (5)
- Lack of transition identified as a purpose on the meeting notice (5)

Individual or non systemic findings were noted in 20 additional areas.

Of the ten EPs reviewed, there were six systemic findings of noncompliance:

- Lack of documentation of consideration of students strengths and needs beyond the general curriculum (10)
- Lack of statement identifying how progress toward annuals goals will be measured and parents informed of that progress (10)
- Lack of EPs reviewed and revised within specified timelines established in District SP&P and within three years during K-8 grades (5)
- Lack of specially designed instruction (4)
- Lack of appropriate team members present at EP meeting: interpreter of instructional implications and general education teacher (4)
- Lack of documentation of a second attempt to involve parents when no response to first attempt was provided (4)

In addition, individual or non-systemic findings were noted in six additional areas.

Appendix F:
Glossary of Acronyms

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

Glossary of Acronyms

BIP	Behavior Intervention Plan
Bureau	Bureau of Exceptional Education and Student Services
CFR	Code of Federal Regulations
DJJ	Department of Juvenile Justice
DOE	Department of Education
EH	Emotionally Handicapped
EMH	Educable Mentally Handicapped
EP	Educational Plan (for gifted students)
ESE	Exceptional Student Education
F.S.	Florida Statutes
FAC	Florida Administrative Code
FAPE	Free Appropriate Public Education
FBA	Functional Behavioral Assessment
FCAT	Florida Comprehensive Assessment Test
FDLRS	Florida Diagnostic Learning and Resource System
GED	General Educational Development diploma
IDEA 2004	Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act
IEP	Individual Educational Plan (for students with disabilities)
K	Kindergarten
LEA	Local Educational Agency
LRE	Least Restrictive Environment
OCR	Office for Civil Rights
OJT	On-the-Job Training
OSEP	Office of Special Education Programs (USDOE)
OSS	Out-of-School Suspension
PBIP	Positive Behavior Intervention Plan
PBS	Florida's Positive Behavioral Support Project
SED	Severely Emotionally Disturbed
SP&P	Policies and Procedures for the Provision of Specially Designed Instruction and Related Services for Exceptional Students