

FINAL REPORT OF FOCUSED MONITORING OF
EXCEPTIONAL STUDENT EDUCATION PROGRAMS IN

LEVY COUNTY

APRIL 12 - 14, 2004



FLORIDA DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
BUREAU OF EXCEPTIONAL EDUCATION AND STUDENT SERVICES
ESE PROGRAM ADMINISTRATION AND QUALITY ASSURANCE

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June 6, 2005

Mr. Clifton V. Norris, Superintendent
Levy County School District
P.O. Drawer 129
Bronson, Florida 32621-0129

Dear Superintendent Norris:

We are pleased to provide you with the Final Report of Focused Monitoring of Exceptional Student Education Programs in Levy County. This report was developed by integrating multiple sources of information including student record reviews; interviews with school and district staff; information from focus groups; and parent, teacher, and student survey data from our visit on April 12-14, 2004. 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 Rosalind Hall, 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, due on May 31, 2005, has been received. A verification monitoring visit to your district will take place two years after your original monitoring visit.

BAMBI J. LOCKMAN
Chief

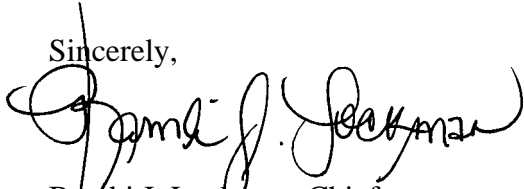
Bureau of Exceptional Education and Student Services

Superintendent Norris
June 6, 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 Levy County.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Bambi J. Lockman". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial "B" and "L".

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

Enclosure

cc: Frank Etheridge, School Board Chairman
Members of the School Board
Sheree Lancaster, School Board Attorney
School Principals
Rosalind Hall, ESE Director
Eileen Amy
Evy Friend
Kim Komisar

**Levy County Final Monitoring Report
 Focused Monitoring Visit
 April 12-14, 2004**

Table of Contents

Executive Summary 1

Monitoring Process 15

 Authority 15

 Focused Monitoring 15

 Key Data Indicators 15

 District Selection 16

 Sources of Information 16

 On-Site Monitoring Activities 16

 Interviews 16

 Focus Group Interviews 16

 Student Case Studies 17

 Classroom Visits 17

 Off-Site Monitoring Activities 17

 Parent Surveys 17

 Teacher Surveys 18

 Student Surveys 18

 Reviews of Student Records and District Forms 18

 Reporting Process 18

 Interim Reports 18

 Preliminary Report 19

 Final Report 19

Reporting of Information 21

 Results 21

 General Information 21

 Administration and Policy 22

 Curriculum and Instruction 24

 Discipline and Classroom Management 26

 Staff Development 28

 Parental Involvement 29

 Stakeholder Opinions Related to the Dropout Rate for Students with Disabilities 30

 Services to Gifted Students 30

 Services to Exceptional Education Students Enrolled in Charter Schools 31

 Additional Compliance 32

 Student Record Reviews 33

 District Forms Review 34

System Improvement Plan 35

System Improvement Plan	37
Recommendations and Technical Assistance	47
Recommendations.....	47
Technical Assistance.....	48
Appendix A: District Data	51
Appendix B: ESE Monitoring Team Members	63
Appendix C: Survey Results.....	67
Appendix D: Forms Review	81
Appendix E: Glossary of Acronyms.....	87

**Levy County School District
Focused Monitoring Visit
April 12-14, 2004**

Executive Summary

The Florida Department of Education, Bureau of Exceptional Education and Student Services (Bureau), 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 Act (IDEA) is to assess and ensure the effectiveness of efforts to educate children with disabilities (Section 300.1(d) of the Title 34, Code of Federal Regulations (CFR)), and districts are required to make a good faith effort to assist children with disabilities to achieve their stated goals and objectives in the least restrictive environment (34 CFR Sections 300.350(a)(2) and 300.556). In accordance with the IDEA the Department is responsible for ensuring that the requirements of 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 Section 300.600(a)(1) and (2)).

During the week of April 12, 2004, the ESE Program Administration and Quality Assurance section of the Bureau conducted an on-site review of the exceptional student education programs in Levy County Public Schools. Ruthann Ross, then director of Exceptional Student Education for the district, served as the coordinator and point of contact during the monitoring visit. In its continuing efforts to focus the monitoring process on student educational outcomes, the Bureau has 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, participation in statewide assessments by students with disabilities. Levy County was selected for monitoring on the basis of its dropout rate for students with disabilities. The results of the monitoring process are reported under six categories or topical issues that are considered to impact or contribute to the key data indicator. In addition, information related to services for gifted students and the results of records and forms reviews are reported.

Summary of Findings

General Information

The majority of students with disabilities in Levy County who dropped out of school during 2002-03 were identified as specific learning disabled (SLD) and were in the 9th or 11th grades at the time of their withdrawal. The most common reasons given for students with disabilities

dropping out of high school were leaving school voluntarily with no intention of returning and withdrawal for nonattendance.

Administration and Policy

The data used to calculate the district's dropout rate is not consistently amended to correct for students who have re-enrolled in Levy County or other districts, and therefore may not be accurate. New Path Academy and Hilltop Alternative School are reported to be two successful programs for students who exhibit behavioral, academic, and/or attendance difficulties, although students may only attend Hilltop Alternative School one time during their school career. Staff and students at several schools reported that stringent attendance policies contribute to student retention and the dropout rate. Findings of noncompliance and/or concerns that must be addressed by the district in its system improvement plan include the use of home instruction as an alternative educational placement and the lack of child study teams to address student nonattendance.

Curriculum and Instruction

Teaching activities in all classrooms observed during the on-site monitoring visit were found to be consistently planned and implemented in ways that promote student learning and ensure access to the appropriate (general or modified) curriculum. While some students with disabilities reported feeling well supported in their general education classrooms, others reported that they had little support. At the middle school level, some students who fail courses have access to opportunities for mid-year promotion, although this is not available in all schools. All high schools provide instruction and remediation for students who have failed the FCAT; results of this remediation vary across schools. The district is encouraged to review the dropout prevention and instructional remediation programs being implemented in different schools to determine if effective programs can be replicated across the district.

Discipline and Classroom Management

In-school-suspension (ISS) rates in Levy County are significantly higher than the state or enrollment group averages. Although faculty and staff at Bronson Middle/High School and Williston High School have focused on discipline as a targeted area for improvement, there continue to be concerns in this area. At Bronson Middle/High School the concerns relate primarily to: the effect the use of a progressive discipline plan has on the number of suspensions (ISS and OSS) that students are assigned; inconsistent or inadequate development and implementation of functional behavioral assessments and behavior intervention plans; procedures involving manifestation determination conferences; and, provisions for ensuring that students with disabilities who are suspended for more than ten days in a school year are provided the opportunity to continue to progress in the general curriculum and advance toward achieving their IEP goals. At Williston High School the concerns related primarily to the high rate of assignment to ISS and OSS as well as the manner in which ISS is implemented.

Staff Development

It appears that staff knowledge and training in the area of curriculum and instruction is sufficient. However, a review of district data related to discipline and the results of interviews indicate that classroom management, disciplinary policy, and other social/emotional or behavioral issues are areas in which additional or alternative staff development is needed.

Parental Involvement

While the district provides many activities designed to encourage parental involvement in their child's education, including providing transportation to meetings or other school functions, school-based libraries for parents of ESE students, and parent newsletters, parental participation is seen by staff as an area of concern. Parents who responded to the survey indicated that they attend meetings related to their child's specific needs (e.g., IEP team meetings) to a significantly greater extent than they attend other, more general, school-related meetings (e.g. PTA/PTO meetings).

Stakeholder Opinions Related to the Dropout Rate for Students with Disabilities

When administrators, faculty and staff were asked their opinion on the likely contributors to the relatively high dropout rate for students with disabilities in Levy County, inaccurate data reporting, strict attendance policies, multiple retentions, and the level of poverty in the community were the most frequently cited reasons.

Services to Gifted Students

Direct services to gifted students are available for students in elementary and middle school, while in the high school gifted students' needs currently are addressed through enrollment in honors, advanced placement, and community college dual enrollment programs. Teachers expressed a concern that new teachers are not being trained to identify gifted students, but generally reported school and district support for the gifted program.

Services to Exceptional Education Students Enrolled in Charter Schools

New Hope Middle/High Charter School serves students who have a history of learning difficulties. The program is designed to provide support to at-risk students through a variety of methods, including home visits conducted by staff members and flexibility in the implementation of attendance policies. Direct and consultative services are available for students with disabilities. Support is provided by the district in the areas of data and exceptional student education.

Additional Compliance

Record reviews and staff interviews indicated that the communication needs of students who are not eligible as speech or language impaired are documented on the IEP and are addressed by the students' ESE teachers. Counseling, including psychological counseling, is available through a variety of sources for students who need it, but it is not consistently documented on the IEPs of students who require counseling as a related service, and there may be a fee when the service is provided by an outside agency. Transition support is provided by Vocational Rehabilitation, but there are systemic findings of noncompliance related to some transition components of the IEP.

Student Record Reviews

Of the 37 records reviewed, including five matrix of services documents, eight IEPs were required to be reconvened due to the lack of a majority of measurable annual goals; there were no findings of noncompliance that required funding adjustments. Systemic findings of noncompliance on IEPs were noted in nine areas that the district will be required to address through its system improvement plan.

District Forms Review

Forms representing the following actions were found to require modification or revision:

- IEP forms
- Documentation of Staffing/Eligibility Determination
- Annual Notice of Confidentiality

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 monitoring plan. The format for the system improvement plan, including a listing of the critical issues identified by the Bureau as most significantly in need of improvement, is provided with this executive summary.

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

Levy County School District Focused Monitoring System Improvement Plan

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

Category	Findings	ESE	All	System Improvement Strategy	Evidence of Change and Target Date
Administration and Policy	The data used to calculate the district’s dropout rate is not consistently amended to correct for students who have re-enrolled in Levy County or other districts, and therefore may not be accurate.		X	<p>The district has requested a Data Quality Review from Education Information and Accountability Services at the DOE to ensure that withdrawal codes are coded and edited accurately. Data used to determine dropout rate was determined to be accurate for 99% of records.</p> <p>District staff will implement recommended strategies indicated as a result of the data quality review, and conduct periodic self-assessments to determine accuracy of data.</p>	<p>District self-assessment conducted subsequent to the data quality review indicates 100% accuracy in dropout data reported to the DOE.</p> <p>May 2006</p>

Category	Findings	ESE	All	System Improvement Strategy	Evidence of Change and Target Date
Administration and Policy (continued)	Home instruction is used as an alternative placement for some students without a clear plan for reentry into school.	X		<p>The district currently is developing a process that will include (a) guidelines to follow when home instruction is being considered and (b) the requirement to include behavior strategies on the IEP for students who need them.</p> <p>District and/or school staff have reviewed the IEPs of students with disabilities served on home instruction to ensure that a plan for reentry is included, and to ensure that there are positive behavioral supports that include strategies or resources that have a good “expectation” of being effective. One student will be on home instruction at the start of the 2005-06 school year; district staff will ensure that the IEP in place at that time addresses those areas.</p> <p>On-going: District staff will review the IEPs of students placed on home instruction throughout the school year; IEP teams will be required to reconvene if positive behavioral supports and a plan for reentry are not in place.</p>	<p>The review of students currently on home instruction, including needed IEP team meetings, will be completed within 45 days of receipt of this report.</p> <p>Documentation of plans for reentry will be submitted to the Bureau (e.g., conference notes; IEPs).</p> <p>Report of self-review of students on home instruction reveals use of positive behavioral supports and plans for reentry.</p> <p>May 2005 May 2006</p>

Category	Findings	ESE	All	System Improvement Strategy	Evidence of Change and Target Date
Administration and Policy (continued)	Child study teams are not convened to address nonattendance as required under Section 1003.26(1)(b), F.S., at most schools in the district.		X	<p>The district will develop and implement a procedure to ensure that all students who are absent five or more instances in a month or 10 or more instances in a 90 day period are served by a child study team.</p> <p>During the 2004-05 school year principals were informed at an administrators' meeting that child study teams are to address nonattendance, as required under Section 1003.26(1)(b), F.S.</p> <p>A memo will be sent to school-based administrators, guidance counselors, and truant officer regarding this requirement.</p> <p>ESE staff, and truant officers will be required to monitor this.</p>	<p>ESE staff, along with the counties truant officer will monitor the use of child study teams for attendance.</p> <p>A self assessment will be conducted, with a goal of 100% of students meeting the criteria having been brought before a child study team.</p> <p>May 2005 May 2006</p>
Curriculum and Instruction	<p>No findings of noncompliance.</p> <p>Recommendations in this area are included in the <i>Recommendations and Technical Assistance</i> section of this report.</p>			<p>The district has conducted a Curriculum Fair for ESE teachers.</p> <p>Staff training has been provided in:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dealing With Differences • Orton-Gillingham Reading • Self-Determination • Inclusion Training • Five Components of Reading 	

Category	Findings	ESE	All	System Improvement Strategy	Evidence of Change and Target Date
Discipline and Classroom Management	Functional behavior assessments (FBAs) and behavior intervention plans (BIPs) are not consistently developed and implemented for students with disabilities who require them.	X		<p>The district will review, and revise as needed, its procedures for conducting functional behavior assessments (FBAs) and developing behavior intervention plans (BIPs) to ensure the proper procedures are followed. Pertinent staff will be trained on the procedures.</p> <p>Three training sessions on FBAs and BIPs were conducted with school staff during the 2004-05 school year, and training on manifestation determinations has been provided to school-based administrators, teachers, and staff.</p> <p>Records of students with more than ten days of OSS in the school year will be reviewed for compliance with the requirements related to FBAs, BIPs, and manifestation determinations.</p>	<p>A self-assessment was conducted for 20 randomly selected students (of students needing behavioral interventions).</p> <p>Manifestation determination meetings had been held for 50%, and 85% had FBAs and BIPs. Targeted training and oversight will continue until 100% of sample is compliant.</p> <p>May 2005 May 2006</p>
	It is unclear how students with disabilities who have been suspended for more than ten days in a school year are provided the opportunity to progress in the general curriculum and achieve annual	X		School-level policies related to the provision of services to students with disabilities who have been suspended for more than ten days in the school year will be reviewed, and revised as needed, to ensure compliance with state and federal requirements.	<p>Staff will be trained in procedures for students who are suspended for more than 10 cumulative days in a school year.</p> <p>A self review of up to 10</p>

Category	Findings	ESE	All	System Improvement Strategy	Evidence of Change and Target Date
Discipline and Classroom Management (continued)	goals on the IEP.			Pertinent staff will be trained on the procedures.	students will be conducted to ensure proper procedures are followed. May 2005 May 2006
	Students with disabilities are assigned to ISS and OSS at a very high rate without clear evidence that positive behavioral supports are being provided.	X		Training and implementation of positive behavioral supports will be provided and implemented in all schools.	Positive behavioral strategies training will be conducted. A random self assessment of IEPs of students who require positive behavioral interventions will be conducted. May 2005 May 2006
Staff Development	No findings of noncompliance. Recommendations in this area are included in the <i>Recommendations and Technical Assistance</i> section of this report.			In addition to staff training included in other sections of the plan, the following were provided during the 2004-05 school year: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Kurzweil Educational Systems • Victor Program (Recordings for the Blind & Dyslexic) • Targeted training for elementary ESE department chairs • Targeted training for middle & high school ESE department chairs meeting • Nonviolent Crisis Prevention 	

Category	Findings	ESE	All	System Improvement Strategy	Evidence of Change and Target Date
Staff Development (continued)				Institute (CPI) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Nonviolent Crisis Prevention Institute (CPI) refresher course • Secondary Transition • Section 504 	
Parental Involvement	No findings of noncompliance. Recommendations in this area are included in the <i>Recommendations and Technical Assistance</i> section of this report.			During the 2004-05 school year quarterly parent meetings were held. Parents requested and were provided workshops on: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • IEP Development • Referral Process • Learning Strategies • Reading Comprehension • Accommodations and Modifications: What Parents Need to Know • Transition: The Passage from Youth to Adulthood An Agency Fair is scheduled for May 14, 2005.	
Gifted Services	No findings of noncompliance. Recommendations in this area are included in the <i>Recommendations and Technical Assistance</i> section of this report.			During the 2004-05 school year staff development was provided to guidance counselors on identifying gifted students.	

Category	Findings	ESE	All	System Improvement Strategy	Evidence of Change and Target Date
Charter Schools	No findings of noncompliance.				
Additional Compliance	<p>Communication No findings of noncompliance.</p> <p>Recommendations in this area are included in the <i>Recommendations and Technical Assistance</i> section of this report.</p>				
	<p>Counseling as a Related Service There may be a fee involved for some students with disabilities to receive counseling as a related service through outside agencies; counseling as a related service is not always documented on the IEP.</p>	X		<p>The district will review, and revise as needed, its policies and procedures related to the provision of counseling, including psychological counseling, as a related service to ensure that such services are documented on the IEP and are provided at no cost to the parent. IEP teams will reconvene to address counseling as a related service for any student records found noncompliant.</p> <p>Five IEPs for SED students were reviewed. Four out of five (80%) included counseling as a related service. The IEP team for the one student will reconvene prior to the 2005-06 school year to address counseling.</p>	<p>District self-assessment reveals 100% compliance with requirements related to counseling as a related service.</p> <p>May 2006</p>

Category	Findings	ESE	All	System Improvement Strategy	Evidence of Change and Target Date
Additional Compliance (continued)				All school staff were provided with the DOE technical assistance document on the provision of counseling as a related service.	
	Transition Findings in this area are addressed under Records Reviews below.	X			
Record Reviews	Eight IEPs must be reconvened due to a lack of a majority of measurable annual goals.	X			Documentation of the reconvened IEPs has been submitted to the Bureau.
	Findings of noncompliance on IEPs primarily were related to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • lack of measurable annual goals and short-term objectives or benchmarks • transition not indicated as a purpose on parent notice • student not invited to transition IEP • all transition areas not addressed on transition IEP • frequency of services not clearly identified • lack of diploma option being determined) • location of accommodations and/or modifications not clearly specified 	X		The identified noncompliant elements will be targeted in the district's IEP training. During 2004-05 training was provided in: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Transition IEPs • Measurable annual goals • Electronic IEPs 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 compliance reviews of a random sample of 20 IEPs developed by staff who participated in the training session.	Report of self-assessment reveals 14 out of 20 had measurable goals. The district will continue to do random self assessment to assure 100% compliance. May 2005 May 2006

Category	Findings	ESE	All	System Improvement Strategy	Evidence of Change and Target Date
Record Reviews (continued)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the present level of performance statement and the annual goals and short-term objectives and benchmarks do not support the services on the IEP • lack of correspondence between the present level of performance and annual goals and short term objectives or benchmarks 				
	Three of five matrix of services records (60%) reviewed were reported inaccurately, with services identified on the matrix not in evidence or not provided to the students.	X		<p>Documentation of data correction for these students through the automated student information database has been provided to the Bureau.</p> <p>Matrix training has been provided to staff.</p>	
Forms Review	<p>Forms used to document the following activities must be revised:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • IEP forms • Documentation of Staffing/Eligibility Determination • Annual Notice of Confidentiality 	X		Forms will be revised and submitted to the Bureau for review and approval.	All forms have been submitted with the required corrections. May 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 Act (IDEA) is to assess and ensure the effectiveness of efforts to educate children with disabilities (Section 300.1(d) of the Title 34, Code of Federal Regulations (CFR), and districts are required to make a good faith effort to assist children with disabilities to achieve their stated goals and objectives in the least restrictive environment (34 CFR §§300.350(a)(2) and §300.556). In accordance with the IDEA the Department is responsible for ensuring that the requirements of 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 established to oversee ESE programs reflects the Department's commitment to provide assistance and service to school districts. The system is designed to emphasize improved outcomes and educational benefits for students while continuing to conduct those activities necessary to ensure compliance with applicable federal and state laws, rules, and regulations. The system provides consistency with other state efforts, including the State Improvement Plan required by the IDEA.

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 that were 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.

Key Data Indicators

Four key data indicators were recommended by the monitoring stakeholders' workgroup and were adopted for implementation by the Bureau. The key data indicators for the 2004 school year and their sources of data are as follows:

- percentage of students with disabilities participating in regular classes (i.e., spending at least 80% of the school day with their nondisabled peers) (Data source: Survey 9)
- dropout rate for students with disabilities (Data source: Survey 5)

- percentage of students with disabilities exiting with a standard diploma (Data source: Survey 5)
- participation in statewide assessments by students with disabilities (Data sources: performance data from the assessment files and Survey 3 enrollment data)

District Selection

Districts were selected to be monitored based on a review of data from the 2002-03 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 2004 LEA profiles for all Florida school districts are available on the web at <http://www.firn.edu/doe/commhome/datapage.htm>.

In making the decision to include Levy County in this year's focused monitoring visits, Bureau staff reviewed data related to the dropout rate for students with disabilities from survey 5. This review indicated that Levy County's rate of 8.6% approached the highest dropout rate for students with disabilities for all districts in the state. Levy County School District's current 2004 LEA profile and the 2003 listing of districts rank-ordered on dropout rate for students with disabilities, which was used for district selection, are included in this report as appendix A.

Sources of Information

On-Site Monitoring Activities

The Bureau conducted the on-site focused monitoring visit from April 12 - 14, 2004. Four Bureau staff members and four peer monitors conducted site-visits to the following six schools:

- Bronson Elementary School
- Williston Middle School
- Bronson Middle/High School
- Williston High School
- Chiefland High School (focus group only)
- New Hope Middle/High Charter School

Peer monitors are exceptional student education personnel from other school districts who are trained to assist with the DOE's monitoring activities. A listing of all participating monitors is provided as appendix B.

Interviews

Interviews with selected district- and school-level personnel are conducted to gather information from multiple sources about the key data indicator. In addition to the protocol developed specifically to examine dropout rate for students with disabilities, separate protocols are used to address services to gifted students. In Levy County interviews were conducted with 38 people, including five district-level administrators or support staff, 14 school-level administrators or support staff, ten ESE teachers, and nine general education teachers.

Focus Group Interviews

Focus groups for students are conducted by Bureau staff to gather information related to the dropout rate for students with disabilities. In order to provide maximum opportunity for input

about the district's ESE services, a minimum of two separate focus group interviews are conducted. The participant groups include: students with disabilities who are pursuing a standard diploma and students with disabilities who are pursuing a special diploma. Separate sessions are conducted for each participant group.

In conjunction with the 2004 Levy County School District monitoring activities focus groups were conducted at two high schools. At Williston High School there were 17 participants in the standard diploma student focus group and 11 participants in the focus group for students pursuing a special diploma. At Chiefland High School there were 12 participants in the standard diploma student focus group and an equal number in the special diploma focus group.

Student Case Studies

Student case studies are conducted for the purpose of performing an in-depth review of the services a student receives in accordance with his or her individual educational plan (IEP). The on-site selection of students for the case studies at each school is based on criteria that have been identified as being characteristic of students at risk of dropping out. As part of this process, the student's records are reviewed, Bureau staff or peer monitors may observe the case study student in class, and teachers are interviewed regarding the implementation of the student's IEP. In-depth case studies were conducted for four students in Levy County.

Classroom Visits

Classroom visits are conducted in both ESE and general education (GE) classrooms. Some visits are conducted in conjunction with individual student case studies, while others are conducted as general observations of classrooms that include exceptional students. Curriculum and instruction, classroom management and discipline, and classroom design and resources are observed during the general classroom visits. A total of six ESE and six regular education classrooms were observed during the focused monitoring visit to Levy County.

Off-Site Monitoring Activities

Surveys are designed by the University of Miami research staff in order to provide maximum opportunity for input about the district's ESE services from parents of students with disabilities and students identified as gifted, ESE and regular education teachers, and students with disabilities in grades 9-12. Results of the surveys are discussed in the body of this report. Data from each of the surveys are included as appendix C. For the purposes of this report, responses of "always," "almost always," and "frequently" are combined into a single affirmative response.

Parent Surveys

The survey that is sent to parents is printed in English, Spanish, and Haitian Creole where applicable. It includes a cover letter and a postage paid reply envelope.

The parent survey was sent to parents of the 1,486 students with disabilities for whom complete addresses were provided by the district. A total of 144 parents (PK, n = 3; K-5, n = 73; 6-8, n = 33; 9 - 12, n = 35), representing 10% of the sample, returned the survey. Two hundred thirty-five surveys were returned as undeliverable, representing 16% of the sample. Respondents were parents of the following students with disabilities: educable mentally handicapped, trainable mentally handicapped, orthopedically impaired, speech impaired, language impaired,

emotionally handicapped, specific learning disabled, hospital/homebound, autistic, developmentally delayed, and other health impaired.

The parent survey was sent to parents of the 200 students identified as gifted for whom complete addresses were provided by the district. A total of 63 parents (KG-5, n = 43; 6-8, n = 19; 9 - 12, n = 1), representing 32% of the sample, returned the survey. Eighteen surveys were returned as undeliverable, representing 9% of the sample.

Teacher Surveys

Surveys developed for teachers and other service providers were mailed to each school, with a memo explaining the key data indicator and the monitoring process. All teachers and other service providers, both general education and ESE, were provided an opportunity to respond. The Bureau received 245 teacher surveys representing approximately 55% of ESE and GE service providers in the district. Data are from 11 (92%) of the district's 12 schools.

Student Surveys

A sufficient number of surveys were provided to allow all students with disabilities, grades 9-12, to respond. Instructions for administration of the survey by classroom teachers, including a written script, were provided for each class or group of students. Since participation in this survey is not appropriate for some students whose disabilities might impair their understanding of the survey, professional judgment is used to determine appropriate participants. We received 205 surveys representing approximately 47% of students with disabilities in grades 9-12 in the district. Data are from 6 (75%) of the district's 8 schools with students in grades 9-12.

Reviews of Student Records and District Forms

Prior to the on-site monitoring visit, Bureau staff conducts a compliance review of student records that are randomly selected from the population of exceptional students. The record of at least one student with a matrix rating of 254 or 255 may be reviewed at each school during the on-site visit, if available. In addition to the compliance reviews, selected student records are reviewed at the school site in conjunction with student case studies and classroom visits. In Levy County, 24 IEPs and 10 educational plan (EP) records were reviewed for compliance prior to the visit, and five matrices were reviewed on-site.

In addition, Bureau staff review selected district forms and notices to determine if the required components are included. The results of the reviews of student records and district forms are described in this report.

Reporting Process

Interim Reports

Daily debriefing sessions are conducted by the monitoring team members in order to review findings, as well as to determine if there is a need to address additional issues or visit additional sites. Preliminary findings and concerns are shared with the exceptional student education (ESE) director and/or designee through daily debriefings with the monitoring team leader during the monitoring visit. In addition, the district ESE director is invited to attend the final team debriefing with Bureau staff and peer monitors. During the course of these activities, suggestions

for interventions or strategies to be incorporated into the district's system improvement plan may be proposed. Within two weeks of the visit, Bureau administrative staff conducted a telephone conference with the ESE director to review major findings.

Preliminary Report

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

The report is developed to include the following elements: an executive summary, a description of the monitoring process, and the results section. Appendices with data specific to the district accompany each report.

Final Report

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

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

Reporting of Information

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

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

Information related to services for gifted students, services to students in charter schools, and the results of records and forms reviews also are reported.

To the extent possible, this report focuses on systemic issues rather than on isolated instances of noncompliance or need for improvement. Systemic issues are those that occur at a sufficient enough frequency that the monitoring team could reasonably infer a system-wide problem. Findings are presented in a preliminary report, and the district has the opportunity to clarify items of concern. In a collaborative effort between the district and Bureau staff, system improvement areas are identified. Findings are addressed through the development of strategies for improvement, and evidence of change will be identified as a joint effort between the district and the Bureau. Strategies that are identified as long-term approaches toward improving the district's issue related to the key data indicator are also addressed through the district's continuous improvement plan.

Results

General Information

This section provides demographic and background information specific to the district as well as information regarding the identification of students with disabilities who are most likely to drop out. Levy County School District has a total school population of 6,191 (PreK-12), with 24% identified as students with disabilities (including 3% identified eligible as speech impaired only), and 3% identified as gifted.

Levy County is considered a “small” district and is one of 25 districts in this enrollment group. Respondents reported that Levy County is essentially a rural community. Based on data reported to DOE, 56% of the students in Levy County are eligible for free or reduced lunch, compared to 44% across the state as a whole. Levy County School District is comprised of three traditional elementary schools, one K-2 school, one K-8 school, one PK-12 school, two middle schools, one middle/high school, two high schools, one alternative school, one Department of Juvenile Justice facility, and two charter schools.

Data provided to the Department of Education (DOE) through survey 5 detailed the dropout information for the 2002-03 school year for students enrolled in Levy County in grades 9-12. A review of the data indicated that a total of 39 students were reported to the DOE as having dropped out of high school in Levy County during the 2002-03 school year. Data from the cohort of students in grades 9-12 provide the basis for calculation of the dropout rate. An additional three students were in eighth grade at the time of withdrawal with a dropout code, and therefore were not included in the calculation of the dropout rate. For the 42 students reported as dropping out during 2002-03, withdrawals were due to the following: leaving school voluntarily with no intention of returning (29); nonattendance (8); unknown (3); hardship (1); and, medical reasons (1).

Of the 42 students with disabilities who dropped out during the 2002-03 school year, 22 were identified as SLD, 11 as emotionally handicapped (EH), seven as educable mentally handicapped (EMH), one as trainable mentally handicapped (TMH), and one as orthopedically impaired (OI). The largest number of students dropped out during 9th and 11th grades.

In summary, the majority of students with disabilities in Levy County who dropped out of school during 2002-03 were identified as SLD and were in the 9th or 11th grades at the time of their withdrawal. The most common reasons given for students with disabilities dropping out of high school were leaving school voluntarily with no intention of returning and withdrawal for nonattendance.

Administration and Policy

The IDEA requires that school districts establish performance indicators and assess progress related to dropout rates for students with disabilities (34 CFR § 300.137). This section provides information related to administrative policies and/or special programs that may affect the dropout rate for students with disabilities.

During the interview process, staff indicated that the data related to dropout rate might not be accurate, and that data correction procedures related to student withdrawal codes are not consistently carried out. While student withdrawal codes may be corrected at any time during the year, data is disseminated to districts by the DOE twice during the school year, following survey 2 and survey 5, through the use of the Student Dropout Match Information Format (additional information is available through the Education Information and Accountability Services at www.firn.edu/doe/eias/home0050.htm). Districts are encouraged to review this dissemination of records to make corrections for any students who are reported as dropouts but who are actually enrolled in other districts or programs. Follow-up of individual students by Levy County ESE

staff revealed that some students reported as dropouts in fact have re-enrolled in Levy County or other public school districts.

In an effort to address the needs of students who have had significant problems with attendance, behavior, and multiple retentions, Levy County Public Schools provides alternative education programs for at-risk secondary students. Most students who attend these programs are overage and in danger of dropping out. New Path Academy is a school for students with disabilities identified as emotionally handicapped or severely emotionally disturbed whose needs cannot be met on a regular school campus. Hilltop Alternative School is a school for students who have been expelled from school, have severe academic or discipline problems, or who become pregnant and choose an alternate placement during their pregnancy. Students in both of these programs use the Compass Lab program to move through a competency-based computerized curriculum. These programs are reported by district and school level staff to be effective and to have had a positive impact on student performance and attendance, although students who have attended Hilltop Alternative School and transitioned back to their home schools do not have an opportunity to return to Hilltop if they continue to exhibit disciplinary or academic problems. It was reported that students who continue to struggle with discipline and attendance are placed on home instruction. The use of home instruction as an alternative placement for students with disabilities is considered to be a very restrictive placement, and should only be utilized on a temporary basis and with a plan for reentry in place. This is an area of concern that the district will be required to address in its system improvement plan.

Poor attendance is one factor related to students being at risk of dropping out. Data reported by the DOE in the Florida School Indicators Report, reveals that the state average for high school students who are absent for 21 or more days during the 2002-03 school year was 14.5% (available on the web at <http://info.doe.state.fl.us/fsir/>). The rates for New Hope Charter School (26%), Cedar Key High School (22.3%), and Bronson High School (14.9%) exceeded the state average. The rates for Chiefland Middle School (11.9%), and Bronson Middle School (11.1%), also exceeded the state average of 10.9% for middle schools for the 2002-03 school year. Elementary schools above the state average of 6.1% were Chiefland Elementary School (10.7%), Yankeetown School (10.2%), Bronson Elementary School (7.7%), and Joyce M. Bullock Elementary School (7.6%).

Section 1003.26(1)(b), F.S., requires that a student who has had at least five unexcused absences within a calendar month or ten unexcused absences within a 90-calendar-day period must be referred to the school's child study team to determine if early patterns of truancy are developing. It was reported that Yankeetown School, Williston Elementary School, Williston Middle School, Chiefland Middle School, and Hilltop Alternative School currently have active child study teams, but that the remaining schools in the district do not. The following schools had students drop out who met the requirements to mandate a child study team meeting: Chiefland High School, Williston High School, Cedar Key High School, and Bronson High School. Of the 42 students who dropped out, 31 (74%) met the statutory requirement needed to convene a child study team to address attendance; each of these students attended a school that does not comply with this requirement. It was noted that all high schools send letters to the Highway Safety Patrol to inform them of student's nonattendance so their license to drive will be suspended. The

district will be required to address the lack of implantations of child study teams to target nonattendance in the identified schools to ensure that this statutory requirement is met.

Levy County School Board policy regarding attendance allows a student a maximum of eight days of absence during a nine week period (one quarter). All absences, both excused and unexcused, are counted toward this total. When the student reaches the ninth day of absence, written notification is provided to the parents indicating that the student will receive failing grades for that nine week period. Parents may appeal to the principal if there are extenuating circumstances for the absences. Several staff members indicated that this policy is very stringent, perhaps exacerbating the district's retention rate and ultimately leading to students dropping out. Students in the focus group reported that some students have difficulty getting their parents to contact the principal to justify excused absences.

In accordance with the school board policy, all high school students in the district who miss 10-15 days in a semester in a given course must pass the final exam in that course in order to receive credit. Students who miss more than 15 days in a given course do not receive credit for that course, even if they have earned passing grades on all assignments and pass the exam. Students in the focus groups at Williston High reported that some of the students they knew who had dropped out of school the previous year did so because they repeatedly missed ten or more days of school and felt they were not making progress towards graduation. Several students in the standard diploma focus group indicated that they were unsure what grade they were in due to failing classes under this policy.

In summary, the data used to calculate the district's dropout rate is not consistently amended to correct for students who have re-enrolled in Levy County or other districts, and therefore may not be accurate. New Path Academy and Hilltop Alternative School are reported to be two successful programs for students who exhibit behavioral, academic, and/or attendance difficulties, although students may only attend Hilltop Alternative School one time during their school career. Staff and students at several schools reported that stringent attendance policies contribute to student retention and the dropout rate. The use of home instruction as an alternative educational placement and the lack of child study teams to address student nonattendance are areas that must be addressed by the district in its system improvement plan.

Curriculum and Instruction

In accordance with 34 CFR §300.26(b)(3)(ii), "specially-designed instruction means adapting, as appropriate to the needs of an eligible child, the content, methodology, or delivery of instruction...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." This section provides information related to the way in which students with disabilities are provided access to the general curriculum, the effectiveness of instruction, and any programs specifically designed to provide instruction to students at risk of dropping out.

The monitors observed instruction in 15 classrooms (five ESE and ten general education classrooms) across the six schools visited. During classroom observations conducted during the on-site monitoring visit teaching activities in all classrooms observed were found to be consistently planned and implemented in ways that promote student learning and ensure access

to the appropriate curriculum (both Sunshine State Standards and Sunshine State Standards for Special Diploma).

While staff across the district reported ways in which instructional support is provided to students with disabilities, the results of the parent and teacher surveys and the student focus groups indicated that this support may not be provided consistently. Results of the survey for teachers and other service providers indicate that: 91% of respondents feel that their school develops IEPs based on student needs; 75% feel their school addresses each student's individual needs; 74% feel their school ensures that classroom materials are grade- and age-appropriate; and, 67% feel their school teaches transition skills for future employment and independent living. Results of the survey for parents of students with disabilities indicate that: 83% of respondents report talking about all of their child's needs at the IEP team meeting; 70% are satisfied with the ESE services their child receives; and, 69% are satisfied with their child's academic progress. Students in both groups reported that they felt they are "treated like everyone else" in their general education courses. However, while the students in the standard diploma focus group at Chiefland High School reported that they receive the help they need to be successful in their regular education classes, the students at Williston High School reported that few academic supports are available to assist ESE students in general education classes.

There is a dropout prevention program (BETA) at Williston Middle School, but it is only available for general education students. The program is facilitated by two counselors from The Corner Drug Store, an agency located in Gainesville, Florida. It provides academic counseling and instruction to students who have been retained at least once and are considered at risk of dropping out; these students can attain midyear promotion if they meet their program goals. All staff interviewed at the school reported that the program has been very successful. ESE students can receive a similar contract from the principal, allowing the student to be promoted midyear if they attain their contract goals. While students with disabilities do not have access to the BETA program counselors, the school's guidance counselors work with these students on their academic, behavioral and attendance goals.

District and school staff expressed concern over the number of secondary ESE students failing courses district-wide. Chiefland High School provides three periods of dropout prevention classes per day. At the time of the monitoring visit no other school in the district provided dropout prevention classes for ESE students.

Remediation and support is provided at Bronson Middle/High School through small group tutorials for students who have failed either portion of the FCAT. This program is implemented by two instructional aides in the computer lab. The Read 180 program also is used to remediate reading difficulties with ESE students. Williston High School offers FCAT remediation provided by ESE teachers before and after school. Although it is open to all students, school staff indicated that many ESE students do not attend on a regular basis due to lack of transportation outside of regular school hours. It was reported that, for the 2002-03 school year, none of the students who participated in this remediation and were re-administered the FCAT passed the FCAT, and instead required the FCAT waiver to graduate. Chiefland High School offers remedial instruction after school hours, provided by general education teachers certified in

English and math. All students who participated in this remediation and were re-administered the FCAT passed the test and graduated with a standard diploma.

In summary, teaching activities in all classrooms observed during the on-site monitoring visit were found to be consistently planned and implemented in ways that promote student learning and ensure access to the appropriate (general or modified) curriculum. While some students with disabilities felt well supported in their general education classrooms, others reported that they had little support. At the middle school level, some students who fail courses have access to opportunities for mid-year promotion, although this is not available in all schools. All high schools provide instruction and remediation for students who have failed the FCAT; results of this remediation vary across schools. The district is encouraged to review the dropout prevention and instructional remediation programs being implemented in different schools to determine if effective programs can be replicated across the district.

Discipline and Classroom Management

In accordance with 34 FR 300.346(a)(2)(i), the IEP team must "...In the case of a child with a disability whose behavior impedes his or her learning or that of others, consider, if appropriate, strategies, including positive behavioral interventions, strategies, and supports to address that behavior." Regulatory requirements related to discipline are found at 34 CFR 300.519 through 300.529. This section of the report provides information related to classroom and behavioral management in general as well as disciplinary procedures used with students with disabilities. Discipline policies may impact dropout rate in that students who serve a large number of days of suspension, whether in-school-suspension (ISS) or out-of-school suspension (OSS), may not receive the same intensity of instruction that they would receive in the classroom. The opportunity to complete class assignments differs qualitatively from the opportunity to participate in classroom instructional activities, and will affect student achievement. In addition, frequent absences from school, whether due to suspensions, illness, or truancy, may affect a student's sense of the school setting as a welcoming environment. These are often factors in students' decisions to drop out.

Interviews with district-level administrators and staff revealed that discipline problems are a significant concern. In-school-suspension (ISS) rates in Levy County are significantly higher than the state or enrollment group average. For the 2002-03 school year the ISS rate for students with disabilities was 29% for the district, compared to 15% for the enrollment group and 13% for the state (see appendix A). For nondisabled students the ISS rates for 2002-03 were 21% for Levy County, 11% for the enrollment group, and 8% for the state. Out-of-school (OSS) suspension rates for students with disabilities more closely reflect those across the state (15% for the district; 13% for the enrollment group; 14% for the state).

Bronson Elementary uses a variety of interventions when students are misbehaving. Morning work detail, withholding privileges, lunch detention, and ISS are used for most infractions. Staff reported that students only receive OSS when all other options have been ineffective or when the student commits an offense that is automatically an OSS consequence (i.e., sexual acts; drugs and weapons violations).

At Bronson Middle/High School the administration and faculty reported classroom management and discipline to be a priority concern. Administrators were using positive strategies such as “Slurpee reward tickets,” rewards provided at the end of each nine week grading period, and rewards scheduled for the end of the year to encourage students to follow all rules, attend class on time, and do well in class. Administrators periodically conduct “tardy sweeps” in the hallways to ensure that students are getting to their classes in a timely manner. When consequences must be applied, staff try to ensure that they are timely, effective, and do not disrupt instruction (e.g., lunch detentions held on the day of or immediately following an infraction).

While there was evidence of progress in the way disciplinary issues are addressed at Bronson Middle/High School, there also were issues of concern to the monitors. Staff reported that functional behavior assessments (FBAs) and behavior intervention plans (BIPs) are filed separately from the students IEPs, but that teachers can “check out” a BIP from the assistant principal. Behavior intervention plans must be readily available for implementation. The student’s teachers and administration that is likely to deal with that student should have a copy in order for the plan to be effective. The school operates under a “progressive discipline plan” by which students are assigned consequences based on the number of times they have been disciplined rather than the number of times they have broken a certain rule, thus accelerating the progression through the discipline process for some students. The review of records on-site revealed that FBAs are not always conducted and BIPs are not always developed for students with disabilities for whom they appeared necessary. When questioned about decisions to conduct FBAs and manifestation determination meetings for specific students with more than 10 days of OSS in the school year, staff frequently reported that none was required due to the suspensions not representing a change in placement. Staff reported that students are not provided an opportunity to make up assignments missed while in ISS. Monitors were unable to verify this practice for students with disabilities, but if so it is unclear in what way such students are provided the opportunity to continue to progress the general curriculum and advance toward achieving their IEP goals in accordance with 34 CFR 300.121(d). The district is required to address this issue in its system improvement plan.

In part as a result of the progressive discipline plan, many records at Bronson Middle/High School documented students receiving OSS for periods in excess of 20 days in a school year, often for relatively minor infractions (e.g., being out of assigned area during the school day). In the intervening time period since this monitoring visit took place, Rule A-6.03312, Florida Administrative Code (FAC), Discipline Procedures for Students with Disabilities, was adopted by the State Board of Education. Under this rule, FBAs and BIPs must be provided for any students who are removed for more than 10 days in a school year, whether consecutive or cumulative days, and a manifestation determination meeting must be held for those students. The district will be required to provide professional development to staff regarding these new requirements in its system improvement plan.

During the site-visit to Bronson Middle/High School the monitors observed students on the campus to be well behaved, polite, and appearing to make a real effort to get to class on time. Faculty and students report that students who are assigned to ISS do have their work sent with them and it is a productive use of their time. It should also be noted that although Levy County

allows corporal punishment, this administrative team has chosen not to use corporal punishment and an atmosphere of mutual respect between students and staff was evident.

Williston High School administration and faculty also reported discipline to be a major concern. The dean of discipline reported that excessive tardiness to class was a major problem that is dealt with through assignment to ISS, and that students who did not wish to attend ISS would be offered “swats” as an alternative, or be assigned one day of OSS in exchange for three days of ISS. The majority of students in the special diploma focus group reported that they had taken “swats”, been in ISS, or assigned OSS at some point in their high school career, and students in both groups indicated they had traded ISS for “swats” on occasion. Despite this policy, several administrators reported that they felt corporal punishment did not positively impact student behavior. This policy needs to be reviewed to determine the effectiveness or the lack thereof. In addition to students selecting OSS in place of ISS, staff reported that students who disrupt the ISS classroom are assigned OSS in its stead. However, when they return from OSS they must serve their remaining ISS. It was reported by district and school staff that students sometimes continue to repeat this cycle of ISS/OSS due to the inability to behave appropriately in ISS.

Regarding the implementation of ISS at Williston High School, observations by Bureau staff did not support statements by some staff that student aides deliver students’ assignments to the ISS classroom, and students are forbidden to talk or socialize in any way. In contrast, students in the focus groups and some staff reported that teachers often do not provide assignments, and therefore the students often disrupt ISS due to lack of active engagement. During an observation of the ISS classroom, only one student in the class had an assignment, while the other students had no evident work assigned. Instead, they were sitting together, talking among themselves and reading leisure magazines. During this period, two student aides were sent to retrieve work; when they returned they stated to the paraprofessional who staffs the ISS room that the teachers reported that there was no work the students could do without being present in class that day.

In summary, ISS rates in Levy County are significantly higher than the state or enrollment group average. Although faculty and staff at Bronson Middle/High School and Williston High School have focused on discipline as a targeted area for improvement, there continue to be concerns in this area. At Bronson the concerns relate primarily to the effect the use of a progressive discipline plan has on the number of suspensions (ISS and OSS) that students are assigned, inconsistent or inadequate development and implementation of functional behavioral assessments and behavior intervention plans, procedures involving manifestation determination conferences, and provisions for ensuring that students with disabilities who are suspended for more than ten days in a school year are provided the opportunity to continue to progress the general curriculum and advance toward achieving their IEP goals. At Williston High School the concerns related primarily to the high rate of assignment to ISS and OSS as well as the manner in which ISS is implemented.

Staff Development

This section provides information related to staff development activities that directly target interventions to prevent students with disabilities from dropping out as well as those that might indirectly act to decrease the dropout rate by enhancing the students’ school experience through increased academic engagement and achievement. Interviews with district- and school-level

administrators and staff revealed extensive staff development opportunities are available at some schools in Levy County.

At Bronson Elementary School staff reported that they have ample opportunity for staff development. Reading is currently a priority topic (e.g., Literacy through Leadership; Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy Skills (DIBELS); phonemic awareness; the Orton Gillingham program). In addition, training related to social/emotional and behavioral issues has been provided (e.g., Training for the Troubled Student; use of grouping as a behavioral intervention; non-violent crisis intervention).

Administration and staff at all middle and high schools visited reported that they have had access to extensive training opportunities in the areas of reading and FCAT preparation. However, no staff development in the areas of classroom management, positive behavioral interventions, or other social/emotional or behavioral concerns were reported at the secondary level.

In summary, it appears that staff knowledge and training in the area of curriculum and instruction is sufficient. However, a review of district data related to discipline and the results of interviews indicate that classroom management, disciplinary policy, and other social/emotional or behavioral issues are areas in which additional or alternative staff development is needed.

Parental Involvement

This section provides information related to parent involvement as it relates directly to the likelihood that a student with a disability will drop out of school. In addition to IEP meetings, district and school staff reported a variety of opportunities exist for parent involvement. IEP meetings are scheduled in such a way to encourage parent participation. The district's parent liaison reported that the parents' group has quarterly meetings to keep parents informed of pertinent information and to plan parent training sessions. The parent liaison maintains an ESE parent library at each elementary school, and publishes a parent's newsletter on topics relevant to students with disabilities and their families. An agency fair was planned for May of 2004, and transportation to the event was provided for parents who needed a ride from the student's home high school. Despite these efforts, it was reported that parent participation continues to be a concern, especially with regard to those students most at-risk of dropping out.

Of the 235 parents of students with disabilities who responded to the parent survey, 95% indicated that they have attended their children's IEP team meetings, 90% indicated that they meet with their children's teachers to discuss the students' needs and progress, and 88% reported being comfortable talking about their children with school staff. In contrast, 33% indicated that they attend meetings of the PTA/PTO and 24% reported that they attend meetings of organizations for parents of students with disabilities. It should be noted that the lack of parental involvement in general, and lack of parental support for the value of remaining in school to earn a diploma in particular, were cited repeatedly by district- and school-level staff as primary contributors to the problem of students dropping out. This impression was contradicted by comments made by students in both of the student focus groups, many of whom reported that they had considered dropping out, but had been convinced to stay in school by their families.

In summary, while the district provides many activities designed to encourage parental involvement in their child's education, including providing transportation, school-based libraries and parent newsletters, parental participation is seen by staff as an area of concern. Parents who responded to the survey indicated that they attend meetings related to their child's specific needs (e.g., IEP team meetings) to a significantly greater extent than they attend other, more general, school-related meetings (e.g. PTA/PTO meetings).

Stakeholder Opinions Related to the Dropout Rate for Students with Disabilities

This section provides information related to respondents' views on issues directly related to the dropout rate for students with disabilities. When asked their opinion on the likely contributors to dropout rate for students with disabilities in Levy County, the following issues were cited most frequently:

- inaccurate data reporting that misrepresents the numbers of students who have actually dropped out
- strict attendance policies cause students to fail courses; as a result, the students fall farther behind their peers, and a sense of not progressing in school is fostered
- lack of transportation when students miss the bus causes high absenteeism; which leads to students failing their courses
- students who have multiple retentions become discouraged and drop out
- the poverty level and rural nature of the community does not support students staying in school
- some parents do not value education and do not encourage their children to stay in school

In summary, when administrators, faculty and staff were asked their opinion on the likely contributors to the relatively high dropout rate for students with disabilities in Levy County, inaccurate data reporting, strict attendance policies, multiple retentions, and the level of poverty in the community were the most frequently cited reasons.

Services to Gifted Students

This section provides information related to the provision of services to students identified as gifted as outlined in Rule 6A-6.03019, FAC. Levy County currently provides services to approximately 180 eligible students. Gifted students in Levy County are served in a range of placements. Instruction for kindergarten through second grade is provided at Joyce M. Bullock Elementary School. Williston Elementary School serves students in grades three through five through a gifted class that meets daily. Students in grades six through eight are served at Williston Middle School through a history course that is provided on a three-year cycle (i.e., American History; Western Civilization; Eastern History). There are no classes specifically for gifted students at any of the high schools; the needs of high school gifted students are met through each high school's honors, advanced placement, or dual enrollment community college programs. Of the 63 parents of gifted students who responded to the parent survey, 68% indicated that they were satisfied with the gifted services their children receive. In addition, 82% report that their children are academically challenged in their gifted classes, with 70% reporting that their children are academically challenged in their general education classes.

Districts are not required to provide either direct or consultative services to gifted students if the EP team has determined that the specific needs of the individual student related to the students

giftedness are met through services available to all students. However, the district should have a policy and procedure for ensuring that the needs of each student are being met, and that administrative convenience is not the basis for students not being served in the gifted program. The district must review the provision of services to gifted high school students through its system improvement plan to ensure the needs of the students are met.

Identification procedures described by staff for referring students suspected of being gifted include parent and/or teacher recommendation and the use of the Slosson Full Range Intelligence Test (S-FRIT) screening instrument. When the results of the screening indicate that a student may qualify, a formal evaluation is conducted. In the past, faculty in all schools received training on screening and referral procedures for the gifted program, but some staff reported that new teachers have not received the training and were concerned that it may no longer be provided. Of the respondents to the survey for parents of gifted students, 79% reported they were satisfied with how quickly services were implemented following the initial request for an evaluation. Staff indicated that students generally are only dismissed from the program at parent request.

Teachers reported support for the program, in particular at the middle school level. The Florida Diagnostic Learning and Resource System (FDLRS) also is available for support if additional training is needed. The majority of parents (82%) reported that they are satisfied with their child's gifted teacher's expertise in teaching gifted students.

Levy County currently is addressing disproportionate representation of minority students in its continuous improvement plan for gifted students. Data from the October 2003 survey 2 indicates that 16% of the district's general student population are Black and 5% of the gifted students are Black.

In summary, direct services to gifted students are available for students in elementary and middle school, while in the high school students' needs currently are addressed through enrollment in honors, advanced placement, and community college dual enrollment programs. Teachers expressed a concern that new teachers are not being trained to identify gifted students, but generally reported school and district support for the gifted program.

Services to Exceptional Education Students Enrolled in Charter Schools

Levy County School District includes two charter schools. The site visited during this focused monitoring visit was New Hope Middle/High Charter School, a school that serves students who have a history of learning difficulties. There is one ESE teacher for a fulltime classroom for students served at the separate level, and all other students with disabilities are provided consultative services by a staff member with ESE certification who also serves as the assistant principal and the guidance counselor. There are currently no gifted students enrolled in the school.

Although the school had two students drop out during the 2003-04 school year, staff described significant efforts on their part to encourage students to remain in school. Staff from the school conduct home visits, work with students and families to address attendance issues, and provide academic counseling and tutoring when students are struggling. The attendance policy implemented at the school allows staff to take the student's individual circumstances into

account when determining consequences for absences. Students are given credit for any missed assignments that they make up. Staff reported that several of the seniors at this school had previously dropped out of their home zone high school but have been successful in this setting. The school accepts students from Levy and two surrounding counties.

Staff at the school reported that the district ESE office is very supportive of their efforts, and that a district staff member with expertise in data and in exceptional student education provides support and assistance to the school.

In summary, New Hope Middle/High Charter School serves students who have a history of learning difficulties. The program is designed to provide support to at-risk students through a variety of methods, including home visits conducted by staff members and flexibility in the implementation of attendance policies. Direct and consultative services are available for students with disabilities. Support is provided by the district in the areas of data and exceptional student education.

Additional Compliance

In addition to monitoring categories related to the 2004 focused visit, the Bureau conducted interviews related to the provision of speech and language services to students with disabilities who have communication needs, counseling as a related service, and transition services. Record reviews and staff interviews indicated students who are not eligible for programs for students who are speech or language impaired have communication goals written on their IEPs and their communication needs are addressed by their ESE teachers. These services are incorporated in to the students' daily instruction and are not provided through speech or language therapy as a related service.

Regarding counseling as a related service, staff reported that students receive counseling from guidance counselors or mental health counselors from Meridian or the White Foundation. Students may be referred to Meridian or the White Foundation by teachers, guidance counselors, and on occasion by the students themselves. The decision to refer a student for counseling was not reported to be an IEP team decision and counseling often is not documented on the IEP. In addition to the funds provided by the district for counseling, funding is provided through Medicaid, through private insurance, or on a sliding scale by the parents. It was unclear whether a student would receive counseling determined by the IEP team to be necessary for the provision of FAPE if the student did not have the financial means to pay for the service. The district will be required to review its procedures regarding the provision at no cost to the parent of educationally relevant therapy determined by the IEP team to be a necessary related service.

Regarding the provision of transition services, it was widely reported that Vocational Rehabilitation works well with students in Levy County. They regularly attend IEP meetings and some students in the focus groups reported having the agency representatives attend their meetings. Through the student record review process there were systemic findings of noncompliance related to transition in the following areas: transition not indicated as a purpose of the transition IEP meeting; students ages 14 and older not being invited to the transition IEP meeting; lack of evidence of diploma option decision for students in grades 8-12.

In summary, record reviews and staff interviews indicated that the communication needs of students who are not eligible as speech or language impaired are documented on the IEP and are addressed by the students' ESE teachers. Counseling is available through a variety of sources for students who need it, but it is not consistently documented on the IEPs of students who require counseling as a related service, and there may be a fee when the service is provided by an outside agency. Transition support is provided by Vocational Rehabilitation, but there are systemic findings of noncompliance related to some transition components of the IEP.

Student Record Reviews

This section provides information related to student record reviews. A total of 32 student records, randomly selected from the population of exceptional students in Levy County, were reviewed for compliance. The records were sent to the DOE for review by Bureau staff prior to the on-site visit. The review included: 16 IEPs for students with disabilities, excluding students eligible as "speech only"; two IEPs for students eligible as speech impaired; two IEPs for students eligible for low-incidence disabilities; two IEPs for students at charter schools; and, 10 IEPs for students identified as gifted. The sample group included records of 15 elementary students, nine middle school students, and eight high school students.

Of the 22 IEPs reviewed, eight required reconvening of the IEP team because of a lack of a majority of measurable annual goals. Documentation of the revised IEPs was submitted to the Bureau. There were no findings of noncompliance that required a fund adjustment.

Systemic findings are those that occur at a sufficient enough frequency (at least 25% of the records) that the monitoring team could reasonably infer a system-wide problem. The following findings of noncompliance appear to be systemic in nature:

- lack of measurable annual goals and short-term objectives or benchmarks (14 records with at least one annual goal not measurable)
- frequency of services not clearly identified (10)
- transition not indicated as a purpose for the meeting for students 14 or older or in the 8th grade (8)
- lack of students in the 8th grade or 14 year old or older being invited to their transition IEPs (8)
- lack of indication as to whether the IEP team determined whether the student was pursuing a standard or special diploma (7)
- location of accommodations and/or modifications not clearly specified (6)
- lack of addressing employability skills on transition IEP (6)
- the present level of performance statement and the annual goals and short-term objectives and benchmarks do not support the services on the IEP (6 records)
- lack of correspondence between the present level of performance, annual goals and short term objectives or benchmarks (6)

In addition, the following represent items of individual or non-systemic findings of noncompliance:

- supplemental aids and services not clearly specified (5)
- lack of indication that the parent received a copy of the IEP (4)
- lack of student input into transition IEP(4)
- lack of post school adult living addressed on transition IEP (4)

- lack of indication as to who served as the interpreter of instructional implications at the IEP meeting (3)
- lack of sufficient statement to describe the students current educational performance (3)
- lack of a statement indicating how the student's disability affects the students involvement and progress in the general curriculum (3)
- related services not clearly specified (3)
- lack of indication that supports for school personnel was addressed (3)
- lack of explanation of the extent to which the student will participate with nondisabled peers (3)
- lack of prior written notice of change of FAPE (3)
- lack of regular education teacher at the IEP meeting (2)
- lack of indication as to who served as LEA at the IEP meeting (2)
- lack of indication that community experiences were discussed at this transition IEP (2)
- program accommodations and/or modification not clearly specified (1)
- initiation and duration dates of accommodations and/or modifications not specified (1)
- lack of indication as to why this student will not participate in state-wide assessment (1)
- lack of strategies and supports to address behavior in the case of a student whose behavior impedes their learning (1)
- lack of documentation that the most recent evaluation or state-wide assessment were taken into account (1)
- lack of indication of prevision for adaptive physical education (PE) (1)
- lack of prevision for assistive technology (1)
- lack of steps to gain information from an outside agency on transition IEP (1)

Ten EPs for gifted students were reviewed for compliance. All were found to be compliant.

In addition to the IEPs reviewed prior to the site-visit, five matrix of services documents for students reported at the 254 or 255 level were reviewed. Of those reviewed three were found to be inaccurately reported. The district was required to provide an amendment to the data provided to the DOE through the Automated Student Information System database for surveys 2 and 3 for the 2003-04 school year. Documentation of these corrections was submitted to the Bureau.

Additional information regarding these findings, including identification of the specific student records that required reconvening of the IEP or EP teams, has been provided to the district under separate cover.

In summary, of the 37 records reviewed, including five matrix of services documents, eight IEPs were required to be reconvened due to the lack of a majority of measurable annual goals; there were no findings of noncompliance that required funding adjustments. Systemic findings of noncompliance on IEPs were noted in nine areas that the district will be required to address through its system improvement plan.

District Forms Review

Forms representing the thirteen areas identified below were submitted to Bureau staff for a review to determine compliance with federal and state laws. Findings that required changes were noted in three of the areas on the current forms. The following reflects the review of forms currently in use:

- *Notification of Individual Educational Plan Meeting*
- *IEP forms**
- *Informed Notice of Consent for Evaluation*
- *Informed Notice and Consent for Reevaluation*
- *Notice and Consent for Initial Placement*
- *Notice of Change of Placement*
- *Notice of Change of FAPE*
- *Informed Notice of Refusal*
- *Notice of Dismissal*
- *Notice of Ineligibility*
- *Documentation of Staffing/Eligibility Determination**
- *Annual Notice of Confidentiality**
- *Procedural Safeguards*

*indicates findings that require immediate attention

The district was notified of the specific findings via a separate letter dated April 26, 2004. A detailed explanation of the specific findings may be found in appendix D.

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. Following is the format for the system improvement plan, including a listing of the critical issues identified by the Bureau as most significantly in need of improvement.

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

Levy County School District Focused Monitoring System Improvement Plan

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

Category	Findings	ESE	All	System Improvement Strategy	Evidence of Change and Target Date
Administration and Policy	The data used to calculate the district’s dropout rate is not consistently amended to correct for students who have re-enrolled in Levy County or other districts, and therefore may not be accurate.		X	<p>The district has requested a Data Quality Review from Education Information and Accountability Services at the DOE to ensure that withdrawal codes are coded and edited accurately. Data used to determine dropout rate was determined to be accurate for 99% of records.</p> <p>District staff will implement recommended strategies indicated as a result of the data quality review, and conduct periodic self-assessments to determine accuracy of data.</p>	<p>District self-assessment conducted subsequent to the data quality review indicates 100% accuracy in dropout data reported to the DOE.</p> <p>May 2006</p>

Category	Findings	ESE	All	System Improvement Strategy	Evidence of Change and Target Date
Administration and Policy (continued)	Home instruction is used as an alternative placement for some students without a clear plan for reentry into school.	X		<p>The district currently is developing a process that will include (a) guidelines to follow when home instruction is being considered and (b) the requirement to include behavior strategies on the IEP for students who need them.</p> <p>District and/or school staff have reviewed the IEPs of students with disabilities served on home instruction to ensure that a plan for reentry is included, and to ensure that there are positive behavioral supports that include strategies or resources that have a good “expectation” of being effective. One student will be on home instruction at the start of the 2005-06 school year; district staff will ensure that the IEP in place at that time addresses those areas.</p> <p>On-going: District staff will review the IEPs of students placed on home instruction throughout the school year; IEP teams will be required to reconvene if positive behavioral supports and a plan for reentry are not in place.</p>	<p>The review of students currently on home instruction, including needed IEP team meetings, will be completed within 45 days of receipt of this report.</p> <p>Documentation of plans for reentry will be submitted to the Bureau (e.g., conference notes; IEPs).</p> <p>Report of self-review of students on home instruction reveals use of positive behavioral supports and plans for reentry.</p> <p>May 2005 May 2006</p>

Category	Findings	ESE	All	System Improvement Strategy	Evidence of Change and Target Date
Administration and Policy (continued)	Child study teams are not convened to address nonattendance as required under Section 1003.26(1)(b), F.S., at most schools in the district.		X	<p>The district will develop and implement a procedure to ensure that all students who are absent five or more instances in a month or 10 or more instances in a 90 day period are served by a child study team.</p> <p>During the 2004-05 school year principals were informed at an administrators' meeting that child study teams are to address nonattendance, as required under Section 1003.26(1)(b), F.S.</p> <p>A memo will be sent to school-based administrators, guidance counselors, and truant officer regarding this requirement.</p> <p>ESE staff, and truant officers will be required to monitor this.</p>	<p>ESE staff, along with the counties truant officer will monitor the use of child study teams for attendance.</p> <p>A self assessment will be conducted, with a goal of 100% of students meeting the criteria having been brought before a child study team.</p> <p>May 2005 May 2006</p>
Curriculum and Instruction	<p>No findings of noncompliance.</p> <p>Recommendations in this area are included in the <i>Recommendations and Technical Assistance</i> section of this report.</p>			<p>The district has conducted a Curriculum Fair for ESE teachers.</p> <p>Staff training has been provided in:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dealing With Differences • Orton-Gillingham Reading • Self-Determination • Inclusion Training • Five Components of Reading 	

Category	Findings	ESE	All	System Improvement Strategy	Evidence of Change and Target Date
Discipline and Classroom Management	Functional behavior assessments (FBAs) and behavior intervention plans (BIPs) are not consistently developed and implemented for students with disabilities who require them.	X		<p>The district will review, and revise as needed, its procedures for conducting functional behavior assessments (FBAs) and developing behavior intervention plans (BIPs) to ensure the proper procedures are followed. Pertinent staff will be trained on the procedures.</p> <p>Three training sessions on FBAs and BIPs were conducted with school staff during the 2004-05 school year, and training on manifestation determinations has been provided to school-based administrators, teachers, and staff.</p> <p>Records of students with more than ten days of OSS in the school year will be reviewed for compliance with the requirements related to FBAs, BIPs, and manifestation determinations.</p>	<p>A self-assessment was conducted for 20 randomly selected students (of students needing behavioral interventions).</p> <p>Manifestation determination meetings had been held for 50%, and 85% had FBAs and BIPs. Targeted training and oversight will continue until 100% of sample is compliant.</p> <p>May 2005 May 2006</p>
	It is unclear how students with disabilities who have been suspended for more than ten days in a school year are provided the opportunity to progress in the general curriculum and achieve annual	X		School-level policies related to the provision of services to students with disabilities who have been suspended for more than ten days in the school year will be reviewed, and revised as needed, to ensure compliance with state and federal requirements.	<p>Staff will be trained in procedures for students who are suspended for more than 10 cumulative days in a school year.</p> <p>A self review of up to 10</p>

Category	Findings	ESE	All	System Improvement Strategy	Evidence of Change and Target Date
Discipline and Classroom Management (continued)	goals on the IEP.			Pertinent staff will be trained on the procedures.	students will be conducted to ensure proper procedures are followed. May 2005 May 2006
	Students with disabilities are assigned to ISS and OSS at a very high rate without clear evidence that positive behavioral supports are being provided.	X		Training and implementation of positive behavioral supports will be provided and implemented in all schools.	Positive behavioral strategies training will be conducted. A random self assessment of IEPs of students who require positive behavioral interventions will be conducted. May 2005 May 2006
Staff Development	No findings of noncompliance. Recommendations in this area are included in the <i>Recommendations and Technical Assistance</i> section of this report.			In addition to staff training included in other sections of the plan, the following were provided during the 2004-05 school year: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Kurzweil Educational Systems • Victor Program (Recordings for the Blind & Dyslexic) • Targeted training for elementary ESE department chairs • Targeted training for middle & high school ESE department chairs meeting • Nonviolent Crisis Prevention 	

Category	Findings	ESE	All	System Improvement Strategy	Evidence of Change and Target Date
Staff Development (continued)				Institute (CPI) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Nonviolent Crisis Prevention Institute (CPI) refresher course • Secondary Transition • Section 504 	
Parental Involvement	No findings of noncompliance. Recommendations in this area are included in the <i>Recommendations and Technical Assistance</i> section of this report.			During the 2004-05 school year quarterly parent meetings were held. Parents requested and were provided workshops on: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • IEP Development • Referral Process • Learning Strategies • Reading Comprehension • Accommodations and Modifications: What Parents Need to Know • Transition: The Passage from Youth to Adulthood An Agency Fair is scheduled for May 14, 2005.	
Gifted Services	No findings of noncompliance. Recommendations in this area are included in the <i>Recommendations and Technical Assistance</i> section of this report.			During the 2004-05 school year staff development was provided to guidance counselors on identifying gifted students.	

Category	Findings	ESE	All	System Improvement Strategy	Evidence of Change and Target Date
Charter Schools	No findings of noncompliance.				
Additional Compliance	<p>Communication No findings of noncompliance.</p> <p>Recommendations in this area are included in the <i>Recommendations and Technical Assistance</i> section of this report.</p>				
	<p>Counseling as a Related Service There may be a fee involved for some students with disabilities to receive counseling as a related service through outside agencies; counseling as a related service is not always documented on the IEP.</p>	X		<p>The district will review, and revise as needed, its policies and procedures related to the provision of counseling, including psychological counseling, as a related service to ensure that such services are documented on the IEP and are provided at no cost to the parent. IEP teams will reconvene to address counseling as a related service for any student records found noncompliant.</p> <p>Five IEPs for SED students were reviewed. Four out of five (80%) included counseling as a related service. The IEP team for the one student will reconvene prior to the 2005-06 school year to address counseling.</p>	<p>District self-assessment reveals 100% compliance with requirements related to counseling as a related service.</p> <p>May 2006</p>

Category	Findings	ESE	All	System Improvement Strategy	Evidence of Change and Target Date
Additional Compliance (continued)				All school staff were provided with the DOE technical assistance document on the provision of counseling as a related service.	
	Transition Findings in this area are addressed under Records Reviews below.	X			
Record Reviews	Eight IEPs must be reconvened due to a lack of a majority of measurable annual goals.	X			Documentation of the reconvened IEPs has been submitted to the Bureau.
	Findings of noncompliance on IEPs primarily were related to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • lack of measurable annual goals and short-term objectives or benchmarks • transition not indicated as a purpose on parent notice • student not invited to transition IEP • all transition areas not addressed on transition IEP • frequency of services not clearly identified • lack of diploma option being determined) • location of accommodations and/or modifications not clearly specified 	X		The identified noncompliant elements will be targeted in the district's IEP training. During 2004-05 training was provided in: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Transition IEPs • Measurable annual goals • Electronic IEPs 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 compliance reviews of a random sample of 20 IEPs developed by staff who participated in the training session.	Report of self-assessment reveals 14 out of 20 had measurable goals. The district will continue to do random self assessment to assure 100% compliance. May 2005 May 2006

Category	Findings	ESE	All	System Improvement Strategy	Evidence of Change and Target Date
Record Reviews (continued)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the present level of performance statement and the annual goals and short-term objectives and benchmarks do not support the services on the IEP • lack of correspondence between the present level of performance and annual goals and short term objectives or benchmarks 				
	Three of five matrix of services records (60%) reviewed were reported inaccurately, with services identified on the matrix not in evidence or not provided to the students.	X		<p>Documentation of data correction for these students through the automated student information database has been provided to the Bureau.</p> <p>Matrix training has been provided to staff.</p>	
Forms Reviews	<p>Forms used to document the following activities must be revised:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • IEP forms • Documentation of Staffing/Eligibility Determination • Annual Notice of Confidentiality 	X		Forms will be revised and submitted to the Bureau for review and approval.	All forms have been submitted with the required corrections. May 2005.

Recommendations and Technical Assistance

As a result of the focused monitoring activities conducted in Levy County during the week of April 12-14, 2004, the Bureau has identified specific findings related to dropout rate for students with disabilities in the district. The following are recommendations 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 plan. A partial listing of technical assistance resources is also provided. These resources may be of assistance in the development and/or implementation of the system improvement plan.

Recommendations

- Develop and implement strategies at the high school level that actively target dropout retrieval.
- Conduct school-level analyses of discipline data to address questions such as:
 - ✓ Which students have the highest referral rates, and for what types of infractions?
 - ✓ Do some staff members have significantly higher or lower referral rates than others, and what might be the cause?
 - ✓ Are some interventions or consequences more effective than others in changing student behavior?
 - ✓ Are there policies in place for some infractions that have unintended consequences (e.g., If a student receives ten days of OSS for one period of out of area, the result is actually more than ten days of missed instruction).
 - ✓ Do instructional practices in the in-school suspension (ISS) setting promote student learning, especially for students with disabilities, or are they primarily designed for independent task completion and skill maintenance?
 - ✓ Is a revision to existing progressive discipline policies needed to ensure improved students behavior and increased school attendance?
- Implement school-wide discipline through the use of Positive Behavioral Support, including the provision of staff training and support in this process.
- Documentation that schools are utilizing the standard procedures for suspensions to include FBA/BIPs and IEP meetings following 10 days
- Provide staff training through the Dealing with Differences program.
- Investigate positives strategies to involve parents and share those with all school having difficulty with parental support.
- Review and evaluate the effectiveness of the methods for providing remediation used in schools across the district; encourage implementation of those methods shown to be most effective.
- Provide both consultative and support facilitation services to support students with disabilities enrolled in general education classes.
- Review the provision of services to gifted high school students to ensure that a mechanism is in place to address the needs of students whose needs can not adequately be met through course offerings available to all students (e.g., providing consultative services).

Technical Assistance

Florida Inclusion Network

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

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

Florida's Positive Behavioral Supports Project

(813) 974-6440

Fax: (813) 974-6115

<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).

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

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April Katine, Program Specialist

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Anitra Moreland, Program Specialist

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Angela Nathaniel, Program Specialist

Angela.Nathaniel@fldoe.org

Special Programs Information, Clearinghouse, and Evaluation

(850) 245-0475

Karen Denbroeder, Administrator

Karen.Denbroeder@fldoe.org

Marie LaCap, Program Specialist

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Virginia Sasser, Program Specialist

Virginia.Sasser@fldoe.org

Clearinghouse Information Center

cicbiscs@FLDOE.org

(850) 245-0477

Arlene Duncan, Program Director

Arlene.Duncan@fldoe.org

ESE Program Development and Services

(850) 245-0478

Evy Friend, Administrator
Evy.Friend@fldoe.org

Speech/Language

Lezlie Cline, Program Director
Lezlie.Cline@fldoe.org

**Behavior/Discipline
EH/SED**

Lee Clark, Program Specialist
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Assistive Technology

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

Gifted

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

Mentally Handicapped/Autism

Sheryl Brainard, Program Specialist
Sheryl.Brainard@fldoe.org

**Education Information and
Accountability Services**

Lavan Dukes, Bureau Chief
(850) 245-0400
e-mail: <mailto:askeias@fldoe.org>

Student Support Services

(850) 922-3727

Bettye Weir-Hyle, Team Leader
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Rich Downs, School Guidance Consultant
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Helen Lancashire, School Guidance
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Jessie Simmons, Student Assistance
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Roger Henry, Student Assistance
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APPENDIX A:
DISTRICT DATA



**FLORIDA DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
BUREAU OF INSTRUCTIONAL SUPPORT AND COMMUNITY SERVICES**

2004 LEA PROFILE

JIM HORNE, COMMISSIONER

DISTRICT:	LEVY	PK-12 POPULATION:	6,191
ENROLLMENT GROUP:	LESS THAN 7,000	PERCENT DISABLED:	24%
		PERCENT GIFTED:	3%

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*)

- Graduation 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 2004.

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 2004

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 LEVY'S ENROLLMENT GROUP:

Baker, Bradford, Calhoun, DeSoto, Dixie, Franklin, Gadsden, Gilchrist, Glades, Gulf, Hamilton, Hardee, Holmes, Jefferson, Lafayette, Levy, Liberty, Madison, Sumter, Suwannee, Taylor, Union, Wakulla, Walton, Washington



SECTION ONE: EDUCATIONAL BENEFIT

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

STANDARD DIPLOMA STUDENTS MEETING ALL GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS:

The number of students with disabilities graduating with a standard diploma (withdrawal code W06) 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 **2000-01** through **2002-03**.

	2000-01	2001-02	2002-03
Levy	49%	44%	54%
Enrollment Group	42%	41%	44%
State	51%	48%	45%

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 **2000-01** through **2002-03**.

	2000-01	2001-02	2002-03
Levy	0%	2%	0%
Enrollment Group	2%	2%	2%
State	1%	1%	1%

STANDARD DIPLOMA THROUGH FCAT WAIVER:

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

	2002-03
Levy	10%
Enrollment Group	8%
State	9%

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 **2000-01** through **2002-03**.

	Students with Disabilities			Gifted Students			All Students		
	2000-01	2001-02	2002-03	2000-01	2001-02	2002-03	2000-01	2001-02	2002-03
Levy	7%	6%	9%	0%	0%	0%	4%	3%	4%
Enrollment Group	5%	5%	5%	<1%	<1%	0%	4%	3%	3%
State	5%	5%	4%	<1%	<1%	<1%	4%	3%	3%

	EH/SED			SLD		
	2000-01	2001-02	2002-03	2000-01	2001-02	2002-03
Levy	11%	7%	13%	6%	6%	8%
Enrollment Group	7%	5%	5%	5%	5%	5%
State	9%	7%	7%	5%	5%	4%

POSTSCHOOL OUTCOME DATA:

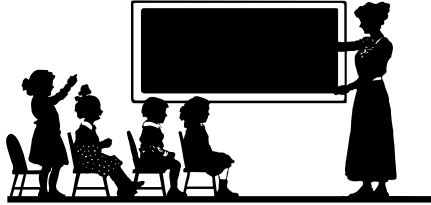
The Florida Education and Training Placement Information Program (FETPIP) is an interagency data collection system that obtains follow-up data on former students. The most recent FETPIP data available reports on students who exited Florida public schools during the **2001-02** school year. The table below displays percent of students with disabilities and students identified as gifted exiting school in 2001-02 who were found employed between October and December 2002 or in continuing education (enrolled for the fall or preliminary winter/spring semester) in 2002.

	Students with Disabilities		Gifted Students	
	Employed	Cont. Ed.	Employed	Cont. Ed.
Levy	45%	17%	0%	0%
Enrollment Group	39%	16%	60%	70%
State	45%	20%	38%	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 **2002-03**.

	2002-03					
	Students with Disabilities			All Students		
	Promoted	Promoted with Cause	Retained	Promoted	Promoted with Cause	Retained
Levy	87%	13%	13%	91%	4%	9%
Enrollment Group	74%	19%	26%	85%	6%	15%
State	74%	17%	26%	85%	6%	15%



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 **2001-02** through **2003-04**.

		Regular Class			Resource Room			Separate Class		
		2001-02	2002-03	2003-04	2001-02	2002-03	2003-04	2001-02	2002-03	2003-04
Levy	Enrollment Group	51%	54%	57%	31%	28%	30%	17%	17%	13%
	State	46%	49%	52%	27%	27%	25%	20%	18%	16%
	State	48%	48%	50%	26%	26%	24%	22%	22%	22%

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 **2001-02** through **2003-04**.

		Early Childhood Setting or Home			Part-Time Early Childhood/ Part-Time Early Childhood Special Education Setting			Early Childhood Special Education Setting		
		2001-02	2002-03	2003-04	2001-02	2002-03	2003-04	2001-02	2002-03	2003-04
Levy	Enrollment Group	5%	1%	4%	64%	73%	70%	30%	26%	26%
	State	10%	10%	16%	67%	68%	62%	20%	19%	21%
	State	7%	7%	7%	59%	57%	57%	30%	31%	31%

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 **2001-02** through **2003-04**.

	2001-02	2002-03	2003-04
Levy	43%	47%	39%
Enrollment Group	56%	49%	47%
State	62%	61%	62%

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 **2002-03**.

		2002-03							
		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
Levy	Enrollment Group	29%	21%	15%	7%	0%	<1%	<1%	<1%
State		15%	11%	13%	8%	<1%	<1%	<1%	<1%
		13%	8%	14%	7%	<1%	<1%	<1%	<1%

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



SECTION THREE: PREVALENCE

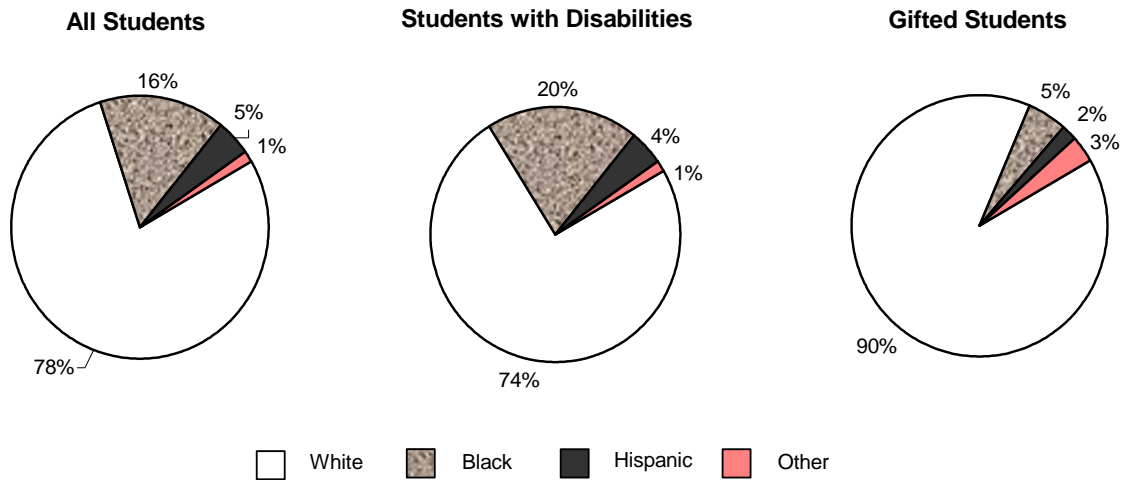
Prevalence refers to the proportion of the PK-12 population identified as exceptional at any given point in time. This section of the profile provides prevalence data by demographic characteristics.

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 2003** (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	50%	51%	64%	78%	74%	90%
Black	24%	28%	10%	16%	20%	5%
Hispanic	22%	18%	19%	5%	4%	2%
Asian/Pacific Islander	2%	<1%	4%	<1%	<1%	3%
Am Ind/Alaskan Native	<1%	<1%	<1%	<1%	<1%	0%
Multiracial	2%	2%	3%	<1%	<1%	<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 2003** (survey 2).

	State		District	
	All Students	Gifted Students	All Students	Gifted Students
Free/Reduced Lunch	44%	21%	56%	27%
LEP	11%	3%	3%	0%

SELECTED DISABILITIES BY RACIAL/ETHNIC CATEGORY:

Racial/ethnic data for all students as well as students with a primary disability of specific learning disabled (SLD), emotionally handicapped or severely emotionally disturbed (EH/SED), and educable mentally handicapped (EMH) are presented below. The data are presented for the state and the district as reported in **October 2003** (survey 2).

	All Students		SLD		EH/SED		EMH	
	State	District	State	District	State	District	State	District
White	50%	78%	52%	76%	48%	67%	32%	57%
Black	24%	16%	24%	19%	39%	28%	52%	39%
Hispanic	22%	5%	21%	5%	11%	2%	13%	3%
Asian/Pacific Islander	2%	<1%	<1%	<1%	<1%	<1%	<1%	0%
Am Ind/Alaskan Native	<1%	<1%	<1%	<1%	<1%	0%	<1%	0%
Multiracial	2%	<1%	2%	<1%	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 2003** (survey 2).

	All Students		All Disabled	
	State	District	State	District
SLD	7%	12%	46%	51%
EH/SED	1%	2%	9%	9%
EMH	1%	2%	7%	10%
SI	2%	3%	14%	13%



Jim Horne, Commissioner

**Department of Education
Bureau of Exceptional Education and Student Services
2004 Focused Monitoring**

Districts Rank-Ordered on Dropout Rate for Students with Disabilities

District	Dropout Rate	Rank
Lafayette	13.5%	1
Hardee	11.4%	2
Lee	11.1%	3
Glades	9.2%	4
Levy	8.6%	5
Citrus	7.8%	6
Sumter	7.5%	7
Highlands	7.3%	8
Okeechobee	7.1%	9
Bradford	6.5%	10
Lake	6.4%	11
Wakulla	6.3%	12
Suwannee	6.2%	13
Collier	6.1%	14
Polk	5.9%	15
Sarasota	5.9%	16
Duval	5.8%	17
Hendry	5.8%	18
Pinellas	5.8%	19
Gadsden	5.7%	20
Baker	5.6%	21
Gilchrist	5.5%	22
Monroe	5.4%	23
Hillsborough	5.3%	24
Pasco	5.2%	25
Taylor	5.2%	26
Marion	5.1%	27
Dixie	4.9%	28
Indian River	4.9%	29
Jefferson	4.9%	30
Washington	4.9%	31
Miami Dade	4.8%	32
Holmes	4.8%	33
Okaloosa	4.8%	34

District	Dropout Rate	Rank
Gulf	4.7%	35
Jackson	4.7%	36
Escambia	4.5%	37
Palm Beach	4.5%	38
Calhoun	4.3%	39
St. Johns	4.2%	40
Hernando	4.0%	41
Charlotte	3.8%	42
Clay	3.7%	43
Franklin	3.7%	44
Orange	3.7%	45
Osceola	3.7%	46
Hamilton	3.6%	47
Nassau	3.6%	48
Leon	3.3%	49
Putnam	3.3%	50
Union	3.3%	51
Alachua	2.9%	52
Volusia	2.7%	53
DeSoto	2.6%	54
St. Lucie	2.6%	55
Manatee	2.5%	56
Santa Rosa	2.5%	57
Seminole	2.5%	58
Bay	2.2%	59
Walton	1.9%	60
Columbia	1.8%	61
Martin	1.8%	62
Brevard	1.7%	63
Broward	1.2%	64
Flagler	1.1%	65
Madison	0.6%	66
Liberty	0.0%	67
District Total	4.5%	

APPENDIX B:
ESE MONITORING TEAM MEMBERS

**Florida Department of Education
Bureau of Exceptional Education and Student Services
Levy County School District
Focused Monitoring Visit
April 12-14, 2004**

ESE Monitoring Team Members

Department of Education Staff

Michele Polland, Acting Chief, Bureau of Exceptional Education and Student Services
Eileen Amy, Administrator, ESE Program Administration and Quality Assurance
Kim Komisar, Program Director, Monitoring
April Katine, Program Specialist
Gail Best, Program Specialist
Karen Morris, Program Specialist
Barbara McAnelly, Program Specialist

Peer Reviewers

Sherry Boland, Jefferson County Public Schools
Renee Ginn, Seminole County Public Schools
Deborah Johns, Polk County Public Schools
Kathy Nelson, Highlands County Public Schools

APPENDIX C:
SURVEY RESULTS

**Levy County School District
2004 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 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 district monitoring activities.

The Parent Survey was sent to parents of the 1486 students with disabilities for whom complete addresses were provided by the district. A total of 144 parents (PK, n = 3; K-5, n = 73; 6-8, n = 33; 9 - 12, n = 35) representing 10% of the sample, returned the survey. Surveys were returned as undeliverable from 235 households, representing 16% of the sample. Parents represented the following students with disabilities: autistic, developmentally delayed, educable mentally handicapped, emotionally handicapped, hospital/homebound, language impaired, orthopedically impaired, specific learning disabled, speech impaired, trainable mentally handicapped, and other health impaired.

**% Always, Almost Always,
Frequently Combined**

Overall, I am satisfied with:

- the amount of time my child spends with regular education students. 77
- the level of knowledge and experience of school personnel. 73
- the way special education teachers and regular education teachers work together. 73
- the way I am treated by school personnel. 72
- how quickly services are implemented following an IEP (Individual Educational Plan) decision. 70
- the exceptional education services my child receives. 70
- the effect of exceptional student education on my child's self-esteem. 70
- my child's academic progress. 69

My child:

- has friends at school. 81
- is happy at school. 78
- spends most of the school day involved in productive activities. 75
- is learning skills that will be useful later on in life. 73
- receives all the special education and related services on his/her IEP. 71

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

- all of my child's needs. 83
- ways that my child could spend time with students in regular classes. 74

**% Always, Almost Always,
Frequently Combined**

- whether my child should get accommodations (special testing conditions), for example, extra time. 73
- whether my child would take the FCAT (Florida Comprehensive Assessment Test). 66
- whether my child needed services beyond the regular school year. 57
- whether my child needed speech/language services. 52
- * which diploma my child may receive. 46
- whether my child needed psychological counseling services. 38
- * the requirements for different diplomas. 36
- whether my child needed physical and/or occupational therapy. 34
- whether my child needed transportation. 29

My child's teachers:

- expect my child to succeed. 86
- are available to speak with me. 79
- set appropriate goals for my child. 76
- give students with disabilities extra time or different assignments, if needed. 68
- give homework that meets my child's needs. 66
- call me or send me notes about my child. 64

My child's school:

- makes sure I understand my child's IEP. 82
- encourages me to participate in my child's education. 77
- sends me information written in a way I understand. 75
- encourages acceptance of students with disabilities. 72
- addresses my child's individual needs. 68
- offers students with disabilities the classes they need to graduate with a standard diploma. 67
- wants to hear my ideas. 65
- explains what I can do if I want to make changes to my child's IEP. 62
- provides students with disabilities updated books and materials. 62
- involves students with disabilities in clubs, sports, or other activities. 61
- informs me about all of the services available to my child. 61
- does all it can to keep students from dropping out of school. 58
- sends me information about activities and workshops for parents. 53
- * offers a variety of vocational courses, such as computers and business technology. 50
- * provides information to students about education and jobs after high school. 46
- 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 high school. 43

*These questions answered by parents of students grade 8 and above

**% Always, Almost Always,
Frequently Combined**

Parent Participation

- I have attended my child's IEP meetings. 95
- 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. 88
- I participate in school activities with my child. 72
- I attend meetings of the PTA/PTO. 33
- I attend School Advisory Committee meetings concerning school improvement. 28
- I attend meetings of organizations for parents of students with disabilities. 24
- I have heard about the Florida Diagnostic and Learning Resources System ("FDLRS") and the services they provide to families of children with disabilities. 19
- I have used parent support services in my area. 19

**Levy County School District
2004 Parent Survey Report
Students Identified as Gifted**

The parent survey was sent to parents of the 200 students identified as gifted for whom complete addresses were provided by the district. A total of 63 parents (KG-5, n = 43; 6-8, n = 19; 9 - 12, n = 1) representing 32% of the sample, returned the survey. Surveys were returned as undeliverable from 18 households, representing 9% of the sample.

	% Yes
Overall, I am satisfied with:	
• gifted teachers' subject area knowledge.	95
• regular teachers' subject area knowledge.	87
• the effect of gifted services on my child's self-esteem.	86
• my child's academic progress.	85
• gifted teachers' expertise in teaching students identified as gifted.	82
• regular teachers' expertise in teaching students identified as gifted.	80
• how quickly services were implemented following an initial request for evaluation.	79
• the gifted services my child receives.	68
 In regular classes, my child:	
• has friends at school.	97
• is usually happy at school.	93
• is learning skills that will be useful later on in life.	88
• has his/her social and emotional needs met at school.	87
• has creative outlets at school.	80
• is academically challenged at school.	70
 In gifted classes, my child:	
• has friends at school.	95
• is usually happy at school.	90
• has creative outlets at school.	88
• is learning skills that will be useful later on in life.	87
• has his/her social and emotional needs met at school.	86
• is academically challenged at school.	82
 My child's regular teachers:	
• expect appropriate behavior.	98
• are available to speak with me.	96
• give homework that meets my child's needs.	85
• call me or send me notes about my child.	85

% Yes

- provide coursework that includes representation of diverse ethnic, racial, and other groups. 85
- have access to the latest information and technology. 84
- set appropriate goals for my child. 82
- relate coursework to students' future educational and professional pursuits. 74

My child's gifted teachers:

- expect appropriate behavior. 96
- are available to speak with me. 96
- provide coursework that includes representation of diverse ethnic, racial, and other groups. 96
- set appropriate goals for my child. 89
- have access to the latest information and technology. 88
- give homework that meets my child's needs. 83
- call me or send me notes about my child. 79
- relate coursework to students' future educational and professional pursuits. 78

My child's home school:

- sends me information written in a way I understand. 94
- treats me with respect. 92
- encourages me to participate in my child's education. 90
- makes sure I understand my child's EP or IEP. 87
- involves me in developing my child's Educational Plan (EP or IEP). 81
- wants to hear my ideas. 81
- sends me information about activities and workshops for parents. 74
- implements my ideas. 72
- informs me about all of the services available to my child. 72
- addresses my child's individual needs. 71
- explains what I can do if I want to make changes to my child's EP or IEP. 69
- provides students identified as gifted with appropriate books and materials. 68

My child's 2nd school

- treats me with respect. 100
- involves me in developing my child's Educational Plan (EP or IEP). 89
- sends me information written in a way I understand. 88
- makes sure I understand my child's EP or IEP. 88
- provides students identified as gifted with appropriate books and materials. 75
- sends me information about activities and workshops for parents. 75
- wants to hear my ideas. 67
- encourages me to participate in my child's education. 67
- explains what I can do if I want to make changes to my child's EP or IEP. 63

	% Yes
• informs me about all of the services available to my child.	57
• addresses my child's individual needs.	56
• implements my ideas.	50

**The following questions relate primarily to high school students.
Students identified as gifted:**

• are provided with career counseling.	75
• are provided with information about options for education after high school.	67
• have the option of taking a variety of vocational courses.	60
• are provided with the opportunity to participate in externships or mentorships.	0

Parent Participation

• I have attended one or more meetings about my child during this school year.	97
• I participate in school activities with my child.	95
• I attend School Advisory Committee meetings concerning school improvement.	38
• I am a member of the PTA/PTO.	32
• I have used parent support services in my area.	10
• I belong to an organization for parents of students identified as gifted.	3

**Levy County School District
2004 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 contracted with the University of Miami to develop and administer a student survey as part of the Bureau's focused monitoring activities.

In conjunction with the 2004 Levy 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.

The Bureau received 205 surveys representing approximately 47% of students with disabilities in grades 9-12 in the district. Data are from 6 (75%) of the district's 8 schools with students in grades 9-12.

I am taking the following ESE classes:	% Yes
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • English • Math • Social Studies • Science • Electives (physical education, art, music) • Vocational (woodshop, computers) 	<p>62</p> <p>49</p> <p>46</p> <p>23</p> <p>22</p> <p>16</p>
At my school:	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ESE teachers believe that ESE students can learn. • ESE teachers give students extra help, if needed. • ESE teachers teach students in ways that help them learn. • ESE teachers understand ESE students' needs. • ESE teachers give students extra time or different assignments, if needed. • ESE teachers teach students things that will be useful later on in life. • ESE teachers provide ESE students with updated books and materials. 	<p>90</p> <p>85</p> <p>85</p> <p>81</p> <p>79</p> <p>79</p> <p>61</p>
I am taking the following regular/mainstream classes:	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Electives (physical education, art, music) • Vocational (woodshop, computers) • Science • Math • English • Social Studies 	<p>77</p> <p>57</p> <p>51</p> <p>42</p> <p>41</p> <p>38</p>

At my school:

- Regular education teachers believe that ESE students can learn. 84
- Regular education teachers teach ESE students things that will be useful later on in life. 79
- Regular education teachers understand ESE students' needs. 70
- Regular education teachers provide students with updated books and materials. 68
- Regular education teachers give ESE students extra help if needed. 67
- Regular education teachers teach ESE students in ways that help them learn. 67
- Regular education teachers give ESE students extra time or different assignments if needed. 60

At my school, ESE students:

- get the help they need to well in school. 87
- participate in clubs, sports, and other activities. 83
- are encouraged to stay in school. 83
- get information about education after high school. 78
- can take vocational classes such as computers and business technology. 78
- spend enough time with regular education students. 76
- fit in at school. 75
- are treated fairly by teachers and staff. 73
- get work experience (on-the-job training) if they are interested. 69

Diploma Option

- I agree with the type of diploma I am going to receive. 85
- I know the difference between a regular and a special diploma. 81
- I know what courses I have to take to get my diploma. 75
- I had a say in the decision about which diploma I would get. 71
- I will probably graduate with a regular diploma. 69

IEP meeting

- I was invited to attend my IEP meeting this year. 63
- I had a say in the decision about which classes I would take. 58
- I attended my IEP meeting this year. 55
- I had a say in the decision about special testing conditions I might get for the FCAT or other tests. 39
- I had a say in the decision about whether I need to take the FCAT or a different test. 30

% Yes

FCAT

- Teachers help ESE students prepare for the FCAT. 79
- I took the FCAT this year. 74
- In my math classes, we work on the kinds of problems that are tested on the math part of the FCAT. 69
- In my English/reading classes, we work on the kinds of skills that are tested on the reading part of the FCAT. 68
- I received accommodations (special testing conditions) for the FCAT. 60

**Levy County School District
2004 Teacher Survey Report
Students with Disabilities**

Responding to the need to increase the involvement of the service providers of students with disabilities 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 teacher survey in conjunction with the Bureau's district monitoring activities.

The Bureau received 245 teacher surveys representing approximately 55% of ESE and general education teachers in the district. Data are from 11 (92%) of the district's 12 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. 94
- places students with disabilities into general education classes whenever possible. 93
- modifies and adapts curriculum for students as needed. 93
- addresses each student's individual needs. 92
- provides adequate support to GE teachers who teach students with disabilities. 89
- ensures that the general education curriculum is taught in ESE classes to the maximum extent possible. 84
- encourages collaboration among ESE teachers, GE teachers and service providers. 82
- offers teachers professional development opportunities regarding curriculum and support for students with disabilities. 74

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

- provides students with appropriate testing accommodations. 99
- aligns curriculum for students with the standards that are tested on the FCAT. 95
- provides teachers with FCAT test preparation materials. 94
- gives students in ESE classes updated textbooks. 90

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

- makes an effort to involve parents in their child's education. 97
- develops IEPs according to student needs. 96
- conducts ongoing assessments of individual students' performance. 95
- ensures that classroom material is grade- and age-appropriate. 95
- ensures that classroom material is culturally appropriate. 94
- allows students to make up credits lost due to disability-related absences. 91
- encourages participation of students with disabilities in extracurricular activities. 91
- provides positive behavioral supports. 91

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

- ensures that students are taught strategies to manage their behavior as needed. 84
- provides social skills training to students as needed. 78
- implements dropout prevention activities. 69

The items below relate primarily to middle and high school students.

To encourage students with disabilities to stay in school, my school:

- implements an IEP transition plan for each student. 97
- provides students with information about options after graduation. 94
- teaches transition skills for future employment and independent living. 82
- coordinates on-the-job training with outside agencies. 75
- provides students with job training. 75

To ensure that as many students with disabilities as possible graduate with a standard diploma, my school:

- encourages students to aim for a standard diploma when appropriate. 99
- provides extra help to students who need to retake the FCAT. 97
- informs students through the IEP process of the different diploma options and their requirements. 96

APPENDIX D:
FORMS REVIEW

**Levy County
Focused Monitoring Report
Forms Review**

This forms review was completed as a component of the focused monitoring visit conducted the week of April 12, 2004. The following district forms were compared to the requirements of applicable State Board of Education rules, the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), and applicable sections of Part 300, Code of Federal Regulations. The review includes required revisions and recommended revisions based on programmatic or procedural issues and concerns. The results of the review are detailed below and list the applicable sources used for the review.

Parent Notification of Individual Educational Plan (IEP) Meeting

Form *Notice of Conference*

Title 34 of the Code of Federal Regulation Section 300.345

This form contains the components for compliance.

Individual Educational Plan (IEP) Meeting

Form *Individual Education Plan*

Title 34 of the Code of Federal Regulation Section 300.347

The following must be addressed:

- On the Transition page of the IEP Related Service (as it relates to transition) is a required component that needs to be added.

Informed Notice and Consent for Evaluation

Form *Informed Notice And Consent For Evaluation Form 2*

Title 34 of the Code of Federal Regulation Sections 300.503 and 300.505

This form contains the components for compliance.

Informed Notice and Consent for Reevaluation

Form *Informed Notice And Consent For Re-evaluation*

Title 34 of the Code of Federal Regulation Sections 300.503 and 300.505

This form contains the components for compliance.

Notice and Consent for Initial Placement

Form *Informed Notice of Eligibility And Consent For Educational Placement Form3*

Title 34 of the Code of Federal Regulation Sections 300.503 and 300.505

This form contains the components for compliance.

Notice of Change in Placement Form

Form *Informed Notice Of Intent To Change ESE Eligibility/Placement/FAPE Form 3*

Title 34 of the Code of Federal Regulation Sections 300.503 and 300.505

This form contains the components for compliance.

Notice of Change in FAPE

Form *Informed Prior Notice Of Change Of FAPE Form 3*

Title 34 of the Code of Federal Regulation Sections 300.503 and 300.505

This form contains the components for compliance.

Informed Notice of Refusal

Form *Informed Notice of Refusal to Take a Specific Action Form 4*

Title 34 of the Code of Federal Regulation Section 300.503

This form contains the components for compliance.

Notice of Dismissal

Form *Informed Notice of Dismissal Form 3*

Title 34 of the Code of Federal Regulation Sections 300.503 and 300.505

This form contains the components for compliance.

Notice of Ineligibility

Form *Informed Notice of Ineligibility Form 3*

Title 34 of the Code of Federal Regulation Sections 300.503 and 300.505

This form contains the components for compliance.

Documentation of Staffing Form

Form *Staffing Committee Process Documentation Form 1*

Title 34 of the Code of Federal Regulation Sections 300.534, 300.503

The following must be addressed:

- The statement indicating that the ESE administrator “approved” or “disapproved” the staffing committee decision must be revised to indicate that the ESE administrator “reviewed” the recommendation of the staffing committee.

Confidentiality of Information

Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act, Part 99 Title 34 of the Code of Federal Regulation Title 34 of the Code of Federal Regulation Section 300.503

The following must be addressed:

- The right to seek amendment of the student’s educational records and the procedures to request an amendment are required components of the confidentiality of information notification.

Educational Plan

Form *Gifted Program Educational Plan (EP) Form HSB0445*

Recommendation:

- The Special Programs & Procedures document for Levy County indicates that the student shall be a participant at the EP meeting, yet the only place for the student to sign is as an “other”.

It was noted that the district utilizes the procedural safeguards wording provided by the Bureau of Exceptional Education and Student Services.

APPENDIX E:
GLOSSARY OF ACRONYMS

Glossary of Acronyms

BIP	Behavior Intervention Plan
Bureau	Bureau of Exceptional Education and Student Services
CCC	Computer Curriculum Corporation
CFR	Code of Federal Register
CIP	Continuous Improvement Plan
CPI	Crisis Prevention Intervention
CST	Child Study Team
DIBELS	Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy Skills
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
FAPE	Free Appropriate Public Education
FBA	Functional Behavior Assessment
FCAT	Florida Comprehensive Assessment Test
FDLRS	Florida Diagnostic Learning and Resource System
FIN	Florida Inclusion Network
FS	Florida Statutes
FUSE	Florida Uniting Students in Education
GE	General Education
IDEA	Individuals with Disabilities Act
IEP	Individual Educational Plan (for students with disabilities)
ISS	In-school Suspension
LEA	Local Educational Agency
MIS	Management Information System
OI	Orthopedically Impaired
OSS	Out-of-school Suspension
PBS	Positive Behavioral Supports
PE	Physical Education
PreK (PK)	Pre-Kindergarten
QDI	Quality Designs for Instruction
SARC	Student Attendance Review Committee
SED	Severely Emotionally Disturbed
SFCC	South Florida Community College
S-FRIT	Slosson Full Range Intelligence Test
SLD	Specific Learning Disability
TMH	Trainable Mentally Handicapped