

FINAL REPORT: FOCUSED MONITORING  
EXCEPTIONAL STUDENT EDUCATION PROGRAMS

# MONROE COUNTY

APRIL 12 - 15, 2005



FLORIDA DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION  
BUREAU OF EXCEPTIONAL EDUCATION AND STUDENT SERVICES

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telephone: (850) 245-0477

FAX: (850) 245-0987

Suncom: 205-0477

e-mail: [cicbiscs@fldoe.org](mailto:cicbiscs@fldoe.org)

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December 12, 2005

Mr. Randy Acevedo, Superintendent  
Monroe County School District  
P.O. Box 1788  
Key West, Florida 33041-1788

Dear Superintendent Acevedo:

We are pleased to provide you with the Final Report of Focused Monitoring of Exceptional Student Education Programs in Monroe 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 12-15, 2005. The report includes a system improvement plan outlining the findings of the monitoring team. The final report will be placed on the Bureau of Exceptional Education and Student Services' website and may be viewed at [www.firn.edu/doe/commhome/mon-home.htm](http://www.firn.edu/doe/commhome/mon-home.htm).

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

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

**BAMBI J. LOCKMAN**  
*Chief*

*Bureau of Exceptional Education and Student Services*

Superintendent Acevedo  
December 12, 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](mailto:Eileen.Amy@fldoe.org).

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

Sincerely,



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

Enclosure

cc: Eileen Quinn, School Board Chair  
Members of the School Board  
Shawn Smith, School Board Attorney  
School Principals  
Lesley Messier, ESE Director  
Eileen Amy  
Evy Friend  
Kim Komisar

**Monroe County Final Monitoring Report**  
**Focused Monitoring**  
**April 12-15, 2005**

**Table of Contents**

Executive Summary .....	1
Monitoring Process .....	15
Authority .....	15
Focused Monitoring .....	15
Key Data Indicators .....	16
District Selection.....	16
Sources of Information .....	16
On-Site Monitoring Activities .....	16
Interviews.....	16
Focus Group Interviews.....	17
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
Requirements .....	22
Data.....	23
Findings.....	23
Curriculum and Instruction.....	24
Requirements .....	24
Data.....	25
Findings.....	26
Discipline and Classroom Management .....	26
Requirements .....	27
Data.....	27
Findings.....	27

Staff Development .....	28
Requirements .....	28
Data .....	28
Findings.....	28
Parental Involvement .....	29
Requirements .....	29
Data .....	29
Findings.....	29
Stakeholder Opinions Related to the Key Data Indicator .....	30
Services to ESE Students in DJJ Facilities .....	30
Requirements .....	30
Data .....	30
Findings.....	31
Services to ESE Students in Charter Schools .....	31
Requirements .....	31
Data .....	31
Findings.....	32
Counseling as a Related Service .....	33
Requirements .....	33
Data .....	33
Findings.....	34
Speech and Language Services as Related Services .....	34
Requirements .....	34
Data .....	35
Findings.....	35
Transition Services.....	35
Requirements .....	35
Data .....	36
Findings.....	36
Services to Gifted Students .....	37
Requirements .....	37
Data .....	37
Findings.....	38
Review of Student Records.....	38
Findings.....	38
Review of District Forms.....	39
System Improvement Plan .....	40
General Recommendations and Technical Assistance .....	41
Recommendations.....	41
Technical Assistance.....	41
Appendix A: District Data .....	43
Appendix B: Monitoring Team Participants.....	55
Appendix C: Survey Results.....	59
Appendix D: Review of District Forms .....	73
Appendix E: Glossary of Acronyms .....	81

# **Monroe County Final Monitoring Report**

## **Focused Monitoring**

### **April 12-15, 2005**

## **Executive Summary**

The Florida Department of Education, Bureau of Exceptional Education and Student Services, in carrying out its roles of leadership, resource allocation, technical assistance, monitoring, and evaluation is required to oversee the performance of district school boards in the enforcement of all laws and rules (Sections 1001.03(8) and 1008.32, Florida Statutes (F.S.)). In fulfilling this requirement, the Bureau conducts monitoring activities of the exceptional student education (ESE) programs provided by district school boards in accordance with Sections 1001.42 and 1003.57, F.S. Through these monitoring activities, the Bureau examines and evaluates procedures, records, and programs of exceptional student education (ESE); provides information and assistance to school districts; and otherwise assists school districts in operating effectively and efficiently. One purpose of the Individuals with Disabilities Education 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 the IDEA are carried out and that each educational program for children with disabilities administered in the state meets the educational requirements of the state (34 CFR Section 300.600(a)(1) and (2)).

During the week of April 11, 2005 the Florida Department of Education, Bureau of Exceptional Education and Student Services, conducted an on-site review of the exceptional student education (ESE) programs in Monroe County Public Schools. Doug Sayre, Exceptional Student Education Director, served as the coordinator and point of contact for the district during the monitoring visit. In its continuing effort to focus the monitoring process on student educational outcomes, the Bureau identified four key data indicators: percentage of students with disabilities participating in regular classes (i.e., spending at least 80% of the school day with their nondisabled peers); dropout rate for students with disabilities; percentage of students with disabilities exiting with a standard diploma; and percentage of students with disabilities participating in statewide assessments. Monroe County was selected for monitoring on the basis of the dropout rate for students with disabilities. The results of the monitoring process are reported under categories or related areas that are considered to impact or contribute to the key data indicator. In addition, information related to the following are addressed: services provided to ESE students in Department of Juvenile Justice(DJJ) facilities and charter schools; counseling as a related service, including psychological counseling; speech and language services as related services; transition services; services for gifted students; review of student records, and, review of district forms.

## **Summary of Findings**

### **Administration and Policy**

There were no findings of noncompliance in this area. While there was evidence of implementation of the statutory attendance requirements related to the convening of school child study teams for students with poor attendance, concerns were noted regarding inconsistent monitoring of attendance interventions to evaluate their effectiveness and/or revise as needed (e.g. Coral Shores High School). Staff reported limited and/or inconsistent dropout prevention programs across the county, which may affect the continuity and effectiveness of programs over the long run.

The district is encouraged to provide guidance and training to staff regarding attendance interventions and appropriate follow-up timelines and additional activities to attempt when original interventions are not working and to conduct a review of existing drop out prevention programs operating in schools throughout the county, determine effectiveness, and replicate effective programs at other schools.

### **Curriculum and Instruction**

At Coral Springs High School a teacher was assigned responsibility for the operation of the school's childcare center at the same time the teacher was responsible for an ESE algebra course. Alternate arrangements must be made for the operation of the childcare center at Coral Springs High School; a teacher with assigned teaching duties during a given period may not simultaneously operate the program.

While there was evidence in most schools visited of support for inclusive placements, a concern was noted in the limited opportunities in two of the district's three high schools visited (i.e., Coral Shores and Key West) for students with disabilities to participate in general education classrooms with support. The district is encouraged to support students with disabilities and their general education teachers through the implementation and/or expansion of various strategies to include but not limited to: consultation between ESE and general education teachers; support facilitation for students with disabilities in general education classes; co-teaching by ESE and general education teachers; and, Learning Strategies and/or Unique Skills classes.

### **Discipline and Classroom Management**

There were no findings of noncompliance in this area. While effective behavior management was reported by staff and observed in most of the schools visited, a concern was noted in the inconsistent implementation of behavior management plans and discipline strategies, both school-wide and classroom-level, at Key West High School. The district is encouraged to provide training to administrative and instructional staff at the school regarding effective behavior management strategies.

### **Staff Development**

There were no findings of noncompliance in this area. Staff responsible for providing services to students in SED classrooms requested additional training be provided, including follow-up training to ensure that staff are using the most effective instructional and behavioral strategies available. The district is encouraged to provide staff development for all teachers of the severely



emotionally disturbed (SED), to keep teachers informed regarding appropriate strategies and best practices.

### **Parental Involvement**

There were no findings of noncompliance in this area. A concern was noted regarding the lack of documentation that parents who did not attend their children's IEP team meetings were provided copies of the IEPs. The district is encouraged to develop and implement a procedure to ensure that parents are provided copies of IEPs when they do not attend the IEP team meeting, and document this provision.

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

Stakeholders reported the high dropout rate for students with disabilities is related to limited vocational opportunities, lucrative job options within the community not requiring a high school diploma, and limited alternative program options for male students. Additionally, staff reported the transition from middle school to high school is a crucial point for students and those students who create a strong relationship with someone within the high school are more likely to remain in school.

### **Services to ESE Students in Department of Juvenile Justice Facilities**

There were no findings of noncompliance in this area. All students with disabilities at PACE South (Lower) DJJ are consultative services only, despite evidence in prior IEPs of significant differences in the needs of the students. The district is encouraged to provide targeted technical assistance addressing service delivery options to IEP team members at the facility, and conduct periodic self-assessments to ensure that the decisions are based on the individual student needs.

### **Services to ESE Students in Charter Schools**

Two IEPs for students at Montessori Island Charter School were not current on the day of review; there will be an adjustment of federal funds for those two records. The IEPs for some students transferring to the school do not reflect the services that school staff and parents have determined will be provided. A concern was noted that complete ESE files are not maintained at the charter school (neither originals nor complete copies). The charter school will be required to develop and implement a coordinated plan for ensuring IEPs are reviewed annually and to ensure that IEPs are developed to reflect the individual needs of the student and the actual services provided to the students. District staff are encouraged to assist in the development of the plan and in staff training regarding ESE processes and procedures.

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

Counseling services are available to students through a variety of sources. There were no systemic findings of noncompliance in this area. The IEP of one SED student did not include counseling as related service as required under State Board of Education rule. The district is required to reconvene the IEP team for that student to address the need for counseling.

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

There were no findings of noncompliance in this area. The communication needs of students with disabilities at Coral Shores High School are not consistently documented on the students' IEPs, although staff reported the needs being addressed through various classroom activities. The

district is encouraged to develop guidelines and provide training to staff to ensure students with disabilities receiving speech/language services have those services appropriately documented on the IEP.

### **Transition Services**

Students are notified at least one year prior to their 18<sup>th</sup> birthday that their rights will transfer at that time. However, a separate and distinct notice of the transfer of rights is not provided at the time the student turns 18 as required. The district is required to establish a procedure to ensure that a separate and distinct notice of transfer of rights is provided close to the 18<sup>th</sup> birthday of a student with a disability, including a system for self-assessment of compliance with this requirement.

Staff reported that information about agency services are provided to families even when agency representatives do not attend transition IEP team meetings, but this is not documented on the IEP or conference notes. The district is encouraged to document the provision of this information. A concern was noted regarding the lack of documentation that parents and students are provided with agency information when agencies are not present at transition meetings.

### **Services to Gifted Students**

While an array of services for gifted students were available at the elementary and K-8 schools visited, this was not evident at the high schools. The EPs of students at Coral Shores High School and Key West High School inaccurately indicate that they are served through consultation, and the services at these schools were not individualized to meet the specific needs of the students stemming from their giftedness. The district is required to conduct a review of the service delivery models available by school, and to develop and implement a coordinated plan to ensure that sufficient supports and services are available for students who are gifted at all grade levels.

### **Review of Student Records**

Findings of noncompliance included three findings requiring the adjustment of federal funding; two systemic findings of noncompliance on IEPs for students with disabilities; ten systemic findings of noncompliance on EPs for gifted students; and, inaccurate matrix of services documents for five students. The district is required to reconvene the IEP teams for 12 students to address identified findings; correct the matrix funding level for the five students with disabilities; and develop training to address systemic issues in the IEPs and EPs

### **Review of District Forms**

Ten forms required changes to meet compliance standards and recommendations were made regarding 11 forms.

### **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. Compliance and procedural issues regarding the IEP and direct services to students are required to be resolved by a date, designated by the monitoring team leader, not to exceed 90 days. In addition, long-term and/or systemic

issues may be required to be included in the district's continuous improvement plan. The district may be required to address an issue for an extended period of time, identifying benchmarks to reach acceptable changes. In developing the 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. Also included in this report will be a list of recommendations and technical assistance available to the district.



## Monroe County School District Focused Monitoring System Improvement Strategies

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

Category	Findings	ESE	All	System Improvement Strategies	Evidence of Change and Reporting Date
Administration and Policy	<p>There are no findings of noncompliance.</p> <p>Recommendations are included in the respective section of this report and/or under <i>General Recommendations and Technical Assistance</i>.</p>				
Curriculum and Instruction	<p>At Coral Springs High School a teacher was assigned responsibility for the operation of the school’s childcare center at the same time the teacher was responsible for an ESE algebra course.</p> <p>Recommendations are included in the respective section of this report and/or under <i>General Recommendations and Technical Assistance</i>.</p>	X		<p>The district is required to make alternate arrangements for the operation of the school’s childcare center; a teacher with assigned teaching duties during a given period may not simultaneously operate the program.</p>	<p>Documentation of the resolution of this situation (e.g., teacher schedules) must be submitted to the Bureau by December 15, 2005.</p> <p>Schedule and changes made prior to the start of the August 2005 school year.</p>

<b>Category</b>	<b>Findings</b>	<b>ESE</b>	<b>All</b>	<b>System Improvement Strategies</b>	<b>Evidence of Change and Reporting Date</b>
Discipline and Classroom Management	There are no findings of noncompliance. Recommendations are included in the respective section of this report and/or under <i>General Recommendations and Technical Assistance</i> .				
Staff Development	There are no findings of noncompliance. Recommendations are included in the respective section of this report and/or under <i>General Recommendations and Technical Assistance</i> .				
Parental Involvement	There are no findings of noncompliance.				
DJJ Facilities	There are no findings of noncompliance. Recommendations are included in the respective section of this report and/or under <i>General Recommendations and Technical Assistance</i> .				
Charter Schools	Two IEPs were not current on the day of review. Recommendations are included in the <i>Recommendations and Technical Assistance</i> section of this report.	X		Director of Student Services and Charter School Directors to meet and discuss requirements. The LEA will organize coordinated and ensure IEPs are reviewed annually IEP and facilitate meetings for the Charter	District report of self-assessment indicates that ESE records are current and accurate for all ESE students enrolled in the district's charter school(s).

Category	Findings	ESE	All	System Improvement Strategies	Evidence of Change and Reporting Date
Charter Schools (continued)				<p>Schools. The LEA's Charter School contact will monitor the compliance issues related to Charter Schools. The Charter School will be responsible for development and implementation of each student IEP.</p> <p>The charter school will be required to develop and implement a coordinated plan for ensuring IEPs are reviewed annually.</p> <p>School and/or district staff will conduct quarterly reviews of student enrollment at the school to verify that all ESE records are current and accurate.</p>	<p>May 2006 May 2007</p>
Counseling as a Related Service	<p>The record of one SED student did not have counseling documented on the IEP.</p> <p>Recommendations are included in the respective section of this report and/or under <i>General Recommendations and Technical Assistance</i>.</p>	X		The district will be required to reconvene the IEP team of the student in question to address the identified deficiency.	The district has provided documentation of completion of the reconvene requirement effective October 5, 2005.
Speech and Language	<p>There are no findings of noncompliance.</p> <p>Recommendations are included in the respective section of this report and/or</p>	X			

Category	Findings	ESE	All	System Improvement Strategies	Evidence of Change and Reporting Date
	under <i>General Recommendations and Technical Assistance</i> .				
Transition	<p>Lack of separate and distinct notice of transfer of rights.</p> <p>Recommendations are included in the respective section of this report and/or under <i>General Recommendations and Technical Assistance</i>.</p> <p>We request that the #13t transfer form that has been approved by the FDOE be accepted rather than requiring a self assessment. Based upon the memo 2005-35 sent on April 1, 2005 with the audit held April 11, 2005.</p>	X		<p>The district will be required to establish a procedure to ensure that a separate and distinct notice that rights have transferred is provided at the time a student turns 18, including a procedure for self-assessment of this requirement.</p> <p>The self-assessment procedure must include periodic sampling of the records of students age 18 and older.</p>	<p>District report of self-assessment indicates that appropriate notice of transfer of rights is provided to students with disabilities at the time of their 18<sup>th</sup> birthday (for 100% of records reviewed).</p> <p>May 2006 May 2007</p>
Gifted	<p>The EPs of students at Coral Shores High School and Key West High School inaccurately indicate that they are served through consultation.</p> <p>Services provided to students at the two high schools visited were not individualized to meet the specific needs of the students stemming from their giftedness.</p> <p>Recommendations are included in the respective section of this report and/or under <i>General Recommendations and Technical Assistance</i>.</p>	X		<p>The district is required to conduct a review of the service delivery models available by school, and to develop and implement a coordinated plan to ensure that sufficient supports and services are available for gifted students at all grade levels.</p>	<p>A plan for this review will be submitted to the Bureau by November 2005.</p> <p>The results of the review, including a plan for service delivery, will be provided to the Bureau by May 2006.</p>



Category	Findings	ESE	All	System Improvement Strategies	Evidence of Change and Reporting Date
Review of Student Records	<p>Systemic findings of noncompliance on IEPs were related to</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• inadequate statement of the student's present level of educational performance</li> <li>• inadequate statement of remediation needed to pass FCAT</li> </ul> <p>Individual or non-systemic findings of noncompliance were noted on 28 additional IEP components.</p> <p>For 12 IEPs more than 50% of the annual goals were not measurable.</p> <p>Three IEPs were not current on the day of the on-site visit.</p> <p>The services identified on five of the 11 matrix of services documents reviewed were not in evidence on the students IEPs (45%), although provision of the services was confirmed through classroom visits.</p> <p>Systemic findings of noncompliance on EPs were related to</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• lack of a statement that parents had the right to bring someone with special knowledge and expertise about their child to the</li> </ul>	X		<p>Twelve IEP teams must reconvene to address specific findings described in a letter dated June 17, 2005.</p> <p>The district will be required to target noncompliant elements included under "Findings" in its training on IEP and EP development and conduct a self-evaluation using protocols developed by the Bureau to ensure compliance.</p> <p>Pre- and post- training surveys will be conducted to determine perceived effectiveness of the training.</p> <p>Using protocols developed by the Bureau, school and/or district staff will conduct compliance reviews of a random sample of 15 IEPs and 5 EPs developed by staff who participated in the training session</p> <p>The DOE will adjust the federal funds for three students whose records did not include current IEPs on the day of the review.</p> <p>The district will submit revisions</p>	<p>Documentation of the reconvened IEPs was submitted to the Bureau and accepted October 5, 2005.</p> <p>Documentation of corrections to the matrix of services documents was submitted to the Bureau on October 5, 2005.</p> <p>District report of self-assessment reveals compliance with all targeted elements for 100% of IEPs and EPs reviewed.</p> <p>Results of the matrix review will be reported annually.</p> <p>May 2006</p> <p>May 2007</p>

Category	Findings	ESE	All	System Improvement Strategies	Evidence of Change and Reporting Date
Review of Student Records (continued)	<p>meeting</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• no evaluation schedule for each outcome identified</li> <li>• no statement of how the student's progress toward annual goals would be measured</li> <li>• no statement of how the parents would be informed of the progress toward the annuals goals</li> <li>• no documentation that the results of recent evaluations, class work, and district and statewide assessments were considered</li> <li>• lack of a general education teacher present at the EP meeting</li> <li>• lack of documentation that parents had received or been provided a copy of the EP</li> <li>• EPs not reviewed within the required time period</li> </ul> <p>Individual or non-systemic findings of noncompliance were noted on 2 additional EP components.</p>			<p>to its data through the Automated Student Database for the five students whose matrix of services documents were found to be inaccurately reported.</p> <p>Using protocols developed by the Bureau, district staff will conduct reviews of two IEPs per school for students reported through the FEFP at the 254 or 255 level of funding (first and last record from alphabetical list of 254/255 records). For students whose IEPs do not support the services on the matrix or for whom the services are not in evidence, the district will submit an amendment to the Automated Student Information System database for the open window of correction.</p>	
Review of District Forms  Review of	<p>The following forms require revision to demonstrate compliance:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Notice and Consent for Initial Placement</i></li> <li>• <i>Informed Notice and Consent for</i></li> </ul>	X			Revised forms were submitted to the Bureau and approved September 13, 2005.

Category	Findings	ESE	All	System Improvement Strategies	Evidence of Change and Reporting Date
District Forms (continued)	<p><i>Evaluation</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Informed Notice and Consent for Reevaluation</i></li> <li>• <i>Notification of Change of Placemen/FAPE</i></li> <li>• <i>Informed Notice of Refusal</i></li> <li>• <i>Informed Notice of Dismissal</i></li> <li>• <i>Notice: Not Eligible for Exceptional Student Placement</i></li> <li>• <i>Annual Notice of Confidentiality</i></li> </ul> <p>Recommendations were indicated for 10 forms.</p>				



# Monitoring Process

## Authority

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

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

## Focused Monitoring

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

## **Key Data Indicators**

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

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

## **District Selection**

In making the decision to include Monroe County School District in this year's focused monitoring visits, the dropout data from Survey 5 for the 2003-04 school year were reviewed. Districts were rank-ordered on the dropout rate of their students with disabilities. Monroe County School District's rate of 6.7% approached the highest in the state. The district's current 2005 LEA profile and the listing of districts rank ordered on data related to the key data indicator, which was used for district selection, are included as appendix A. The most current LEA profiles for all Florida school districts are available on the web at <http://www.firn.edu/doe/commhome/datapage.htm>.

## **Sources of Information**

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

The Bureau conducted the on-site focused monitoring visit from April 12-15, 2005. Seven Bureau staff members conducted site-visits to the following seven schools and one Department of Juvenile Justice (DJJ) facility:

- Coral Shores High School
- Gerald Adams Elementary School
- Horace O'Bryant Middle School
- Key West High School
- Montessori Island Charter School
- Plantation Key School K-8
- PACE South (Lower) DJJ

A listing of the Bureau staff who conducted the monitoring activities for this visit is included as appendix B.

### ***Interviews***

A total of 71 interviews, including 12 district-level staff, 18 school-level administrators or other student support staff (e.g., guidance counselors), 17 ESE teachers (including gifted) or other service providers, and 14 general education teachers were conducted.

### ***Focus Group Interviews***

In conjunction with the 2005 Monroe County focused monitoring visit, two focus groups for students with disabilities were conducted. Thirteen students participated in the focus group for students pursuing a standard diploma and eight students participated in the focus group for students pursuing a special diploma.

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

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

### ***Classroom Visits***

Classroom visits are conducted in conjunction with individual student case studies as well as during general observations of classrooms that include exceptional students. In addition to implementation of a student's IEP, curriculum and instruction, classroom management and discipline, and classroom design and resources are observed during general classroom visits. Teachers of the classes visited are interviewed regarding practices related to students with disabilities. A total of 18 classrooms (eight ESE and ten general education) were visited during the focused monitoring visit to Monroe 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 general education teachers, and students with disabilities in grades 9-12. The survey that is sent to parents is printed in English, Spanish, and Haitian Creole, where applicable. It includes a cover letter and a postage paid reply envelope. Data from the surveys are incorporated into the body of this report. The results of the surveys are included as appendix C.

### ***Parent Surveys***

The parent survey was sent to parents of the 1,506 students with disabilities for whom complete addresses were provided by the district. A total of 201 parents (PK, n = 0; K-5, n = 94; 6-8, n = 48; 9 - 12, n = 59) representing 13% of the sample, returned the survey. Surveys were returned as undeliverable from 48 families, representing 3% of the sample. Parents represented the following students with disabilities: autistic, deaf or hard of hearing, developmentally delayed, educable mentally handicapped, emotionally handicapped, hospital/homebound, language impaired, other health impaired, profoundly mentally handicapped, speech impaired, severely emotionally disturbed, specific learning disabled, and visually impaired.

Surveys were sent to parents of the 339 students identified as gifted for whom complete addresses were provided by the district. A total 134 parents (KG-5, n = 61; 6-8, n = 50; 9 - 12, n = 23), representing 40% of the sample, returned the survey. Surveys were returned as undeliverable from 7 families, representing 2% 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. A total of 300 teachers, representing approximately 50% of ESE and general education teachers in the district, returned the survey. Data are from 13 (87%) of the district's 15 schools.

### ***Student Surveys***

A sufficient number of surveys were provided to allow all students with disabilities, grades 9-12, to respond. Instructions for administration of the survey by classroom teachers, including a written script, were provided for each class or group of students. Since participation in this survey is not appropriate for some students whose disabilities might impair their understanding of the survey, professional judgment is used to determine appropriate participants. Surveys from 141 students, representing approximately 27% of students with disabilities in grades 9-12 in the district, were returned. Data are from 3 (43%) of the district's 7 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. In Monroe County, 25 IEPs for students with disabilities and ten educational plans (EPs) for gifted students were reviewed for compliance. Seven of the IEPs represented transition IEPs. In addition, 11 matrix of services documents were reviewed during the on-site visit. An additional 133 records were reviewed on-site in conjunction with student case studies and to collect information related to additional compliance areas designated by the Bureau.

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

## **Reporting Process**

### ***Interim Reports***

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



### ***Preliminary Report***

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

### ***Final Report***

Upon final review and revision by Bureau staff, the final report is issued. The report is sent to the district, and is posted to the Bureau's website at [www.firn.edu/dae/commhome/mon-home.htm](http://www.firn.edu/dae/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 30<sup>th</sup> and November 30<sup>th</sup> 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. In addition, the results from the review of student records and district forms are presented in the report. This report provides conclusions with regard to the key data indicator and specifically addresses related areas that may contribute to or impact the indicator. For the dropout rate of 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 key data indicator

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

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

In addition, information related to services provided to ESE students in Department of Juvenile Justice (DJJ) facilities and charter schools, services for gifted students, the results of reviews of student records, and the results of 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. In accordance with established Bureau monitoring procedures, a finding of a systemic violation will be made if evidence of such a violation is found in 25% or more of the pertinent data sources. Findings are presented in a preliminary report, and the district has the opportunity to clarify items of concern. In a collaborative effort between the district and Bureau staff, system improvement areas are identified. Findings are addressed through the development of strategies for improvement, and evidence of change will be identified as a joint effort between the district and the Bureau. Strategies that are identified as long-term approaches toward improving the district's issue related to the key data indicator are also addressed through the district's continuous improvement plan.

## **Results**

### **General Information**

This category provides demographic and background information specific to the district as well as information regarding the students with disabilities who dropped out of school during the past year.

Based on the 2005 LEA profile, Monroe County School District has a total school population (PK-12) of 8,623 with 18% of students being identified as students with disabilities (including 2% identified as eligible for the program for speech impaired only), and 4% identified as gifted. Monroe County is considered a “medium/small” district and is one of 15 districts in this enrollment group. Monroe County School District is comprised of five elementary schools, one middle school, three PK-8 schools, three high schools, three charter schools and two DJJ facilities.

According to the most recent data provided by the district, 35 (6.7%) of Monroe County’s exceptional education students dropped out of school during the 2003-04 school year. The ESE students who dropped out of school were eligible for the following programs (including gifted):

- 25 specific learning disabled (71%)
- 6 emotionally handicapped (18%)
- 2 educable mentally handicapped (5%)
- 1 speech impaired (3%)
- 1 gifted (3%)

The ESE students who dropped out were in the following grades:

- Two 7<sup>th</sup> grade students (6%)
- Fifteen 9<sup>th</sup> grade students (43%)
- Eight 10<sup>th</sup> grade students (23%)
- Five 11<sup>th</sup> grade students (14%)
- Five 12<sup>th</sup> grade students (14%)

## **Administration and Policy**

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

### ***Requirements***

The IDEA requires that the state establish performance indicators and assess progress related to dropout rates for students with disabilities (34 CFR § 300.137). This section provides information related to specific administrative policies that may affect the dropout rate for students with disabilities. Dropout rate is calculated by dividing the number of students grades 9-12 for whom a dropout withdrawal reason (DNE, W05, W11, W13-W23) was reported by the total enrollment of grade 9-12 students and students who did not enter school as expected (DNE) as reported at the end of the school year (survey 5). While student withdrawal codes may be corrected at any time during the year, data is provided by DOE to the districts 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](http://www.firn.edu/doe/eias/home0050.htm)).

Dropout prevention and academic intervention are addressed at section 1003.53, F.S., which requires that the educational program for dropout prevention provide curricula, character

development and law education, and related services that support the program goals and lead to improved performance in the areas of academic achievement, attendance, and discipline.

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

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

### ***Data***

Specific programs referenced by staff that are available to provide additional support to students with disabilities who may be at risk of dropping out include alternative education classes provided in some schools and the PACE for Girls program. The GED exit option also was described as a resource to assist at-risk students. Through this option, under-credited students who have passed the FCAT have the opportunity to earn a standard diploma if they also pass the GED exam. It also should be noted that students in both the standard diploma and the special diploma focus groups reported being able to discuss issues such as dropping out with teachers and/or the school's guidance counselor. Eighty-three percent of teachers responding to the survey reported the district implements dropout prevention programs.

Staff across the district reported consistent implementation of the requirements related to chronic nonattendance, and there was evidence of interventions being implemented to target attendance in selected student records. However, at Coral Shores High School, reviews of 28 student records indicated that interventions may not always be monitored for effectiveness. Many students continued to incur a large number of absences, with no evidence of revisions to the strategies. Of teachers responding to the survey, 88% indicated that student attendance is tracked to identify problems.

There was no evidence that inaccurate reporting of student withdrawal codes has resulted in an inflated dropout rate for students with disabilities.

### ***Findings***

- Finding(s) of Noncompliance
  - None noted.

- Area(s) of Concern
  - Attendance interventions are not consistently monitored to evaluate their effectiveness and/or revise as needed (e.g. Coral Shores High School).
  - Limited and/or inconsistent dropout prevention programs across the county effects the continuity and effectiveness of programs over the long term.
  
- Corrective Action(s)
  - None required.
  
- Recommended Action(s)
  - Provide guidance and training to staff regarding attendance interventions and appropriate follow-up timelines and additional activities to attempt when original interventions are not working.
  - Conduct a review of existing drop out prevention programs operating in schools throughout the county, evaluate their effectiveness, and replicate effective programs at other schools.
  
- Area(s) of Strength/Commendation
  - Statutory attendance requirements related to convening of school child study teams are implemented consistently across settings.

## **Curriculum and Instruction**

This section provides information related to curriculum and instruction that may affect the dropout rate for students with disabilities. These include the continuum of services and provision of specially designed instruction for student with disabilities.

### ***Requirements***

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

Rule 6A-6.0311(1)(a)-(h), Florida Administrative Code (FAC), *Eligible Special Programs for Exceptional Students*, describes the continuum of placements as follows: "...Special programs shall be organized so that an exceptional student shall receive instruction in one or more of the following ways: (a) Supplementary consultation or related services; (b) Resource room; (c) Special class; (d) Special Day School; (e) Residential school; (f) Special class in a hospital or facility operated by a noneducational agency; (g) Individual instruction in a hospital or home; (h) supplementary instructional personnel to public or nonpublic preschool or day care programs for the instruction of pre-kindergarten exceptional students." Rule 6A-6.03411(3)(a)3, FAC, *Policies and Procedures for the Provision of Specially Designed Instruction and Related Services for Exceptional Students*, clarifies that regular class placement is included in the continuum of placements.

Section 300.550(b)(1)(2) of Title 34, Code of Federal Regulations, requires each public agency to ensure "...(1) that to the maximum extent appropriate, children with disabilities, including

children in public or private institutions or other care facilities, are educated with children who are nondisabled; and (2) That special classes, separate schooling or other removal of children with disabilities from the regular educational environment occurs only if the nature or severity of the disability is such that education in regular classes with the use of supplementary aids and services cannot be achieved satisfactorily.”

### *Data*

A range of service delivery options is available across the district, with some students with disabilities accessing the general curriculum through enrollment in general education classes and others receiving instruction in the general Sunshine State Standards in ESE classrooms. The latter is most common at the high school level. At the high schools visited, staff were unable to describe differences in content or instruction between ESE and general education sections of the same courses, although it was noted that the ESE classes generally are smaller. Inclusive programs, including co-teaching, were observed at Gerald Adams Elementary School, Plantation Key School, and Horace O’Bryant Middle School.

An alternative education program (ALPHA) at Gerald Adams Elementary School was reported by staff to provide effective instruction to a variety of struggling learners. This program is available in one grade level each year; staff annually review students by grade level and determine which grade is most in need of this resource. Staff at Plantation Key School also reported extensive use of student data to determine class placement and to provide early identification of at-risk students.

The most recent placement data (see LEA profile, appendix A) indicates a steady increase in regular class placement rate for students with disabilities over the past three years, from 54% in 2002-03 to 65% in 2004-05. Despite this, administrators and teachers at all levels reported a need for more extensive supports for students with disabilities in general education classes, with most significant need reported at the high school level. Of teachers responding to the survey, 75% reported adequate support for general education teachers who teach students with disabilities. Seventy-five percent of parents who responded reported that special education and general education teachers work together.

Students in the standard diploma focus group reported frustration at having to enroll in FCAT preparation classes after having passed the test, due to the small number of elective courses. Staff reported that options for secondary students often are limited to enrollment in general education classes for the majority of core courses with little or no support, or enrollment in ESE classes for the majority of core courses; this was supported by the on-site review of records. Students in the special diploma focus group reported that the ESE classes they take are not sufficiently challenging (e.g., classes are “too easy,” students “don’t have to work hard”). Of particular concern was an ESE algebra class observed at Coral Springs High School. The teacher of the course was responsible for operating the school’s childcare center at the same time the class was in session, resulting in repeated disruptions to instruction. Under no circumstances is it appropriate for a teacher to be charged with teaching a course and overseeing a day care center where neither is receiving appropriate supervision.

Through the student case-study process, there was evidence of students leaving school (either for extended absences or by dropping out) to work with family members or local businesses (e.g., fishing industry). Of the students who responded to the surveys, 84% reported they are encouraged to stay in school. General education and ESE teachers reported a need for more vocational classes, alternative education classes or programs, and industry-related courses that would be relevant to future employment; these programs could be used to encourage students to stay in school. It was reported that access to the existing programs is limited and not sufficient for the needs of many students with disabilities. Of parents surveyed, 71% reported schools offer a variety of vocational courses.

### ***Findings***

- Finding(s) of Noncompliance
  - At Coral Springs High School a teacher was assigned responsibility for the operation of the school's childcare center at the same time the teacher was responsible for an ESE algebra course.
- Area(s) of Concern
  - There was limited evidence in the high schools visited (i.e., Coral Shores and Key West) that IEP teams considered the supplemental supports and services available to students with disabilities enrolled in standard courses, prior to placing them in ESE sections of the courses.
- Corrective(s) Actions
  - Alternate arrangements must be made for the operation of the childcare center at Coral Springs High School; a teacher with assigned teaching duties during a given period may not simultaneously operate the program. This must be verified with the Bureau as soon as possible.
- Recommended Action(s)
  - Utilize the Florida Inclusion Network and Project Central to expand training and opportunities for expansion of inclusionary models.
  - To support students with disabilities and their general education teachers, implement and/or expand the use of: consultation between ESE and general education teachers; support facilitation for students with disabilities in general education classes; co-teaching by ESE and general education teachers; and, Learning Strategies and/or Unique Skills classes.
- Area(s) of Strength/Commendation
  - Inclusive programs at some schools
  - NovaNet program to assist with credit recovery
  - ALPHA alternative education program

### **Discipline and Classroom Management**

This section provides information related to classroom and behavioral management in general as well as disciplinary procedures used with students with disabilities. Behavioral factors often are



cited as affecting the IEP team's determination of the least restrictive environment appropriate for a given student.

### ***Requirements***

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

### ***Data***

Teachers and administrators across the district reported that discipline and classroom management are not significant areas of concern in the district, although some teachers indicated that certain students with disabilities have made limited progress in social and/or behavioral skills. Data from the 2003-04 school year (see LEA profile, appendix A) indicate that both in-school and out-of-school suspension rates for both students with disabilities and nondisabled students are below the state rate and the rate of districts in the same enrollment group.

Seven of the 35 (20%) students who dropped out during the 2003-04 school year had significant disciplinary histories. There was evidence of interventions targeting attendance and behavioral issues in the records of these students. Teachers reported the use of behavior management plans and point systems to deal with problematic student behaviors, and this was supported by the case studies. Use of behavior management plans and point systems were individual to teachers and no school-wide programs were present. Of teachers responding to the survey, 85% reported that students are taught strategies to manage their behavior. Seventy-six percent of parents responding to the survey reported staff handles discipline appropriately. Staff in several schools visited reported that the district's behavior specialist is available to assist with particularly difficult students.

In the majority of schools visited, teachers were observed to implement effective classroom management strategies and hallways and common areas were orderly. Interview respondents at Key West High School (both instructional and administrative) reported difficulties with behavior management and student discipline. This was supported by three classroom observations (both ESE and general education) as well as the monitors' observations of the campus at large. Administrative staff at Key West High School reported the use of classroom management plans by all teachers; however, classroom observations revealed inconsistent implementation of the plans, both those relying on positive interventions and those relying on negative consequences.

### ***Findings***

- Finding(s) of Noncompliance
  - None noted.
- Area(s) of Concern
  - Inconsistent implementation of behavior management plans and discipline strategies, both school-wide and classroom-level, at Key West High School.

- Corrective Action(s)
  - None required.
- Recommended Action(s)
  - Provide training to administrative and instructional staff at Key West High School regarding effective behavior management strategies.
- Area(s) of Strength/Commendation
  - Effective behavior management strategies in the classrooms observed at Coral Shores High, Horace O’Bryant Middle, and Plantation Key schools; report by staff at these schools that classroom management is not an area of concern.

### **Staff Development**

This category refers to in-service training or other staff development activities designed to prepare general education and ESE teachers to address the learning and behavioral needs of students with disabilities and to assist teachers and administrators in identifying and intervening with students at-risk for school failure and/or dropping out.

#### ***Requirements***

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

Section 1003.02, F.S., delineates the responsibilities of district school boards, which include “...staff development, public K-12 school student education including education for exceptional students and students in juvenile justice facilities, special programs, adult education programs, and career and technical education programs.”

#### ***Data***

Teachers and administrators reported extensive opportunities for staff training in a variety of areas, with a focus on reading initiatives, the use of instructional and assessment accommodations, and discipline and/or classroom management. Although none of the training referenced by school or district staff specifically targeted dropout prevention, several teachers commented that any effective teacher training is, in fact, good dropout prevention training. Eighty percent of teachers responding to the survey reported professional development activities available regarding curriculum and support for student with disabilities. The program for severely emotionally disturbed students (SED) in the district is operated through the Bertha Abess Children’s Center (BACC). Of note were comments by some teachers of SED students that additional intensive initial and follow-up training in working with this challenging population is required in order for the program to be effective.

#### ***Findings***

- Finding(s) of Noncompliance
  - None noted.

- Area(s) of Concern
  - Need identified by staff in the SED classrooms for additional initial and ongoing training.
- Corrective Action(s)
  - None required.
- Recommended Action(s)
  - Provide staff development for all teachers of SED students, during the school year.
- Area(s) of Strength/Commendation
  - Other than the exception noted above, staff in all schools visited reported access to training initiatives they felt were beneficial.

### **Parental Involvement**

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

#### ***Requirements***

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

#### ***Data***

Staff at the schools visited reported communicating with parents via phone calls home, email, and weekly or daily notes home. In addition, the district's website provides an extensive array of resources available for parents to access. Staff reported that parent attendance at IEP meetings generally is good; parent signatures indicating participation in the meetings were evident on 80% of the IEPs reviewed. For 16% of the meetings for the IEPs reviewed, parents did not attend and there was no documentation that they were provided copies of the IEPs, although staff reported that copies are sent home. Students in both the special diploma focus group and the standard diploma focus group reported attending and participating in their IEP meetings. Of the survey respondents, 95% of teachers reported that their school makes an effort to involve parents in their child's education and 95% of parents reported participating in IEP meetings.

#### ***Findings***

- Finding(s) of Noncompliance
  - None noted.

- Area(s) of Concern
  - Lack of documentation that parents who did not attend their children’s IEP team meetings were provided copies of the IEPs.
- Corrective Action(s)
  - None required.
- Recommended Action(s)
  - Develop and implement a procedure to document the provision of copies of IEPs to parents when they do not attend the IEP team meeting.
- Area(s) of Strength/Commendation
  - Evidence through interviews with staff, teacher and parent surveys, and record reviews of consideration of the concerns of parents in the development of IEPs.
  - Parents were in attendance for 80% of the IEPs reviewed.

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

This section provides information related to the opinions of district staff as to why they believe the district’s dropout rate for students with disabilities is high in relation to other districts in the state. When asked their opinion on the likely contributors to the relatively high dropout rate for students with disabilities in Monroe County, the following factors were cited:

- limited vocational training opportunities
- lack of an effective alternative education program for at-risk male students, such as that provided to female students through PACE for Girls
- availability of profitable jobs and family businesses within the community
- lack of support (e.g., academic/instructional, social/emotional) for students transitioning from middle to high school

**Services to ESE Students in DJJ Facilities**

This section provides information related to the services provided to ESE students placed in DJJ facilities.

***Requirements***

Rule 6A-6.05281(1)(c), FAC, requires that all ESE students placed in a DJJ program be provided a free appropriate public education consistent with state board rules pertaining to special programs for exceptional students.

***Data***

The DJJ facility visited during the on-site visit was PACE for Girls. This is a day reporting facility for juvenile offenders on probation and also serves as an alternative education placement for parents seeking a more individualized program for their daughters. ESE services are provided through a consultative model, with no direct services available. Class size is smaller than on a traditional school campus (e.g. average of 13 students in classes visited). Students in the program are able to pursue a standard diploma, a special diploma, or the GED. Enrollment in vocational

classes is available through a program at Key West High School. Weekly group counseling is provided to all students; topics alternate between social/academic issues and transition/vocational concerns. In order to assist with the process of transitioning back into the traditional school environment, the student, the parents, and program staff visit the receiving school 30 days prior to reentry for a planning session, and a transition counselor is available to support the students for a period of three years following program completion.

### ***Findings***

- Finding(s) of Noncompliance
  - None noted.
  
- Area(s) of Concern
  - ESE students in the facility are provided consultative services only, despite evidence in prior IEPs of significant differences in the needs of the students.
  
- Corrective Action(s)
  - None required.
  
- Recommended Action(s)
  - Provide targeted technical assistance (TA) addressing service delivery options to IEP team members at the facility, and conduct periodic self-assessments to ensure that the services are based on the individual student needs.
  
- Area(s) of Strength/Commendation
  - Reentry planning session with receiving school.
  - Transition counselor to work with students for three years following program completion.
  - All instruction is individualized.

### **Services to ESE Students in Charter Schools**

This section provides information related to the services provided to ESE students in charter schools. Students with disabilities and gifted students who are enrolled in the district must be provided a free appropriate public education, including special education and related services.

### ***Requirements***

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

Section 300.241, Title 34, CFR, requires that school districts “(a) Serve children with disabilities attending those schools [charter schools] in the same manner as it serves children with disabilities in its other schools; and (b) Provide funds under Part B of the Act to those schools in the same manner as it provides those funds to its other schools.”

### ***Data***

Montessori Island Charter School was the charter school visited. There are two full-time and one part-time ESE teachers and an ESE paraprofessional on staff at the school; additional ESE

services are available through contract with outside agencies (i.e., speech and language pathologist; occupational therapist; physical therapist). Service delivery models available for students with disabilities include pullout instruction for varying amounts of the day as well as support in the general classroom from the paraprofessional or ESE teacher. The staffing specialist from Plantation Key School is available upon request to assist the charter school staff in the implementation of appropriate ESE procedures. The nature of the curriculum implemented in the Montessori program provides for instruction that is individualized, student driven, and targeted to the specific instructional level of the student. Cross-grade groupings allow for students to work at their own levels. Gifted students at the school are served through consultative services by the gifted teacher from Plantation Key School.

On the day of the site-visit, two of the IEPs reviewed were not current. This finding is addressed under the Records Review section of this report. Through interviews and record reviews it was determined that IEPs are not immediately reviewed and/or developed when students enroll in Montessori Island Charter School, and IEPs from the sending schools are not always implemented while awaiting development of new IEP. Instead, staff and parents may agree informally on placement or services. As a result, the IEP of record may not reflect services actually being provided to a student (e.g., an EMH student whose IEP reflected alternate assessment was administered the FCAT, based on staff discussion with the parent). It also was noted that certain services provided through outside contracts are provided to students based on the therapists' schedules rather than the students' IEPs. As a result, some students with disabilities were reported by their teachers to be receiving a greater amount of services than required by the IEP (e.g., if a given therapist is on campus twice per week, a student likely will receive that service both days, even if the IEP indicates once weekly).

### ***Findings***

- Finding of Noncompliance
  - Two IEPs were not current on the day of review.
  - The IEPs for some students transferring to Montessori Island Charter School do not reflect the services that school staff and parents have determined will be provided.
- Area of Concern
  - Lack of complete ESE teacher files (copies or originals) maintained at the charter school.
- Corrective Actions
  - IEP teams for the non-current IEPs are required to convene; there will be an adjustment of federal funds for those two records.
  - The charter school will be required to develop and implement a coordinated plan for ensuring IEPs are reviewed annually and to ensure that IEPs are developed to reflect the individual needs of the student and the actual services provided to the students. District staff are encouraged to assist in the development of the plan and in staff training regarding ESE processes and procedures.
- Recommended Actions
  - Develop and implement procedures to ensure required documentation for the provision of services to students with disabilities is available at the schools; utilize district staffing specialist to provide oversight.

- Areas of Strength/Commendation
  - Small class size.

## **Counseling as a Related Service**

This section provides information related to the provision of counseling as a related service, including psychological counseling, to ESE students who need it in order to benefit from special education services.

### ***Requirements***

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

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

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

### ***Data***

The district provides counseling as a related service, including psychological counseling, to students who need, it in a variety of ways. Counseling is provided by district staff as well as through outside agencies. In addition, counseling services are provided to SED students through a contract with the Bertha Abess Program. Teachers and staff reported that the need for educationally relevant counseling would be considered for every student, and that if educationally relevant counseling was necessary it would be recorded as a related service on the IEP.

Seventy records of students in the EH or SED programs were reviewed on-site. Of those, 37 (53%) included counseling as a related service. An additional 25 records randomly selected from the population of students with disabilities were reviewed prior to the on-site visit. Of those, four had a perceived need for counseling to be considered, and three of those included counseling as a related service (75%). The IEP of one SED student did not have counseling as a related service included; however, the student was receiving counseling services. The IEP team for that student is required to reconvene to address this need. Of the survey respondents, 77% of teachers reported that their school provides adequate counseling services to students and 61% of parents

reported that the IEP team had discussed whether their child required psychological counseling services.

### ***Findings***

- Finding(s) of Noncompliance
  - The record of one SED student did not have counseling documented on the IEP, although counseling was being provided.
  
- Area(s) of Concern
  - None noted.
  
- Corrective Action(s)
  - The IEP team for the SED student noted above is required to reconvene to appropriately document counseling as a related service.
  
- Recommended Action(s)
  - None noted.
  
- Area of Strength/Commendation
  - Availability of counseling services at all schools visited.

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

This section provides information related to the speech and language services provided to ESE students.

#### ***Requirements***

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

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

In accordance with 34 CFR 300.24, related services are "...developmental, corrective, and other supportive services as are required to assist a child with a disability to benefit from special education, and include speech-language pathology and audiology services..." In addition, to the need for speech or language services as related services, the IEP team must "consider the communication needs of the child." during the development of the IEP (34 CFR 300.346(2)(iv)).



### ***Data***

Teachers and administrative staff reported the communication needs of all students are considered at the IEP meeting, and that speech and language pathologists provide support and consultation to ESE and general education teachers. Of the 25 records reviewed at the Bureau, six had evidence of communication need and for five of those the communication need was addressed formally through goals and objectives on the IEP (83%). Of the records reviewed on-site, the majority at the elementary and middle school levels included goals and objectives to address identified communication needs; this was less likely at the high school level. In particular, of eight IEPs with identified needs in the area of communication at Coral Shores High School, communication goals and/or objectives or benchmarks were included on 2 (25%). However, ESE and general education teachers described the manner in which the communication needs are addressed, despite lack of documentation on the IEPs.

### ***Findings***

- Findings of Noncompliance
  - None noted.
- Area of Concern
  - Communication needs of students with disabilities at Coral Shores High School are not always documented on the students' IEPs.
- Corrective Actions
  - None required.
- Recommended Actions
  - Develop guidelines and provide training to staff to ensure students with disabilities receiving speech/language services have those services appropriately documented on the IEP.
- Areas of Strength/Commendation
  - Availability of speech and language pathologists to provide support in ESE and general education classrooms.
  - Although not documented as a related service, there was evidence in all schools visited of communication needs of students being addressed.

### ***Transition Services***

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

### ***Requirements***

In accordance with 34 CFR 300.347 (b)(1), beginning at age 14, and updated annually, IEP teams are required to provide "...a statement of the transition service needs of the student under the applicable components of the student's IEP that focuses on the student's courses of study ..." and, at the age of 16, provide "...a statement of needed transition services for the student,

including, if appropriate, a statement of the interagency responsibilities or any needed linkage” (34 CFR 300.347 (b)(2)).

### ***Data***

District staff and teachers at the two high schools visited reported that agency representatives are routinely invited to transition IEP team meetings, and that written information also is available to provide to parents. Seven of the IEPs selected at random for Bureau review prior to the on-site visit were for students ages 14 and older. Five of the seven transition IEPs had transition included as a purpose of the meeting as required, and two did not (29%). An additional 13 transition IEPs were reviewed on-site. Agency representatives were invited to the meetings for 15 of the 20 transition IEPs reviewed (75%), and participated in four of those 15 meetings (27%). For the remaining 11 meetings, there was no evidence in IEPs that the families were provided information regarding agency resources. Interagency agreements for assisting in transition planning and provision of services are in place between the district and Vocational Rehabilitation, Children’s Medical Services, Florida Keys Community College and the Developmental Disabilities Council.

Four of the records reviewed were for students ages 18 or older. Each included documentation that transfer of rights notification had been provided at least one year prior to the student’s 18<sup>th</sup> birthday. There was no evidence, however, of a separate and distinct notice being provided at the time of the student’s birthday.

### ***Findings***

- Finding of Noncompliance
  - Separate and distinct notice of transfer of rights not provided at the time the student turns 18.
  - Two notice of meeting forms did not contain transition as a purpose of the meeting.
- Area of Concern
  - Lack of documentation that parents and students are provided with agency information when agencies are not present at transition meetings.
- Corrective Action
  - The district will be required to establish a procedure to ensure that a separate and distinct notice of transfer of rights is provided close to the 18<sup>th</sup> birthday of a student with a disability, including a system for self-assessment of compliance with this requirement.
- Recommended Actions
  - Develop guidelines and provide training to staff to ensure the documentation of transition agency information being provided to students and parents at Transition IEP meetings.
- Area of Strength/Commendation
  - Interagency agreements for services exist with Vocational Rehabilitation, Children’s Medical Services, Florida Keys Community College and Developmental Disabilities Council.

## **Services to Gifted Students**

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

### ***Requirements***

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

The Florida Department of Education Course Code Directory and Instructional Personnel Assignments document describes the various service delivery models currently in use in the state for exceptional education students. Consultation is defined as general education and ESE teachers meeting "...regularly to plan, implement, and monitor instructional alternatives designed to ensure that the student with an exceptionality is successful in the general education classroom." Under the "support facilitation" model the ESE teacher provides support directly to the student, within the general education classroom. Under the "content mastery or learning lab (limited pull-out)" model the ESE teacher pulls the student out for assistance or support with specific and time-limited tasks (e.g., students not scheduled on a regular basis, but rather as needed).

### ***Data***

For the 2004-05 school year, 4% of the student population in Monroe County was identified as gifted. The district's eligibility requirements for the gifted program include a plan for increasing the participation of students from under-represented groups.

The manner in which gifted students are served varies across the district. At Plantation Key School the students are provided direct services, with the curriculum focusing on science and students utilizing a variety of creative outlets to present projects and complete assignments. At Horace O'Bryant Middle School gifted teachers work with teachers in the honors classes to provide gifted services in those classes.

At Coral Shores and Key West High Schools gifted students participate in honors or advanced placement courses, but do not receive direct services. Fifty-three percent of parents responding to the survey reported that teachers do not relate coursework to the student's future educational and professional pursuits. Many of the EPs of students at these schools indicate that they receive consultative services, although the services they receive do not meet the requirements of consultation as defined in the Course Code Directory and Instructional Personnel Assignments document disseminated by the DOE. Students at Coral Shores High School are invited to participate in monthly group topical sessions conducted by a gifted-endorsed teacher. These sessions are informal and attendance is voluntary. A designated staff member at Key West High School meets with a gifted-endorsed teacher from a different school to discuss ways to enhance specific course content; this consultation is not targeted at the needs of individual students, but rather at the course as a whole. Of the parents of gifted students who responded to the survey, 66% indicated that they were satisfied with the gifted services their children receive.

### ***Findings***

- Finding(s) of Noncompliance
  - The EPs of students at Coral Shores High School and Key West High School inaccurately indicate that they are served through consultation.
  - Services provided to students at the two high schools visited were not individualized to meet the specific needs of the students stemming from their giftedness.
- Corrective Action(s)
  - The district is required to conduct a review the service delivery models available by school, and to develop and implement a coordinated plan to ensure that sufficient supports and services are available for gifted students at all grade levels.
- Areas of Strength/Commendation
  - Extent of gifted services provided at elementary and K-8 schools.
  - Co-teaching model at Plantation key with gifted and general teachers.

### **Review of Student Records**

This section provides information related to the IEP reviews conducted during the monitoring visit to Monroe County. A total of 25 student records of students with disabilities and 10 records of students identified as gifted, randomly selected from the population of ESE students, were reviewed. The records represented students enrolled in 13 different schools in the district. Seven of the records were transition IEPs. Targeted or partial reviews of an additional 113 records were conducted on-site in conjunction with student case studies and to collect information related to additional compliance areas designated by the Bureau. In addition to IEP reviews, the Bureau conducted reviews of 11 matrix of services documents for students reported at the 254 or 255 funding level through the Florida Education Finance Program (FEFP). Any services claimed on the matrix must be documented on the IEP and must be in evidence in the classroom.

Systemic findings are those that occur with such a frequency that the monitoring team could reasonably infer that a system-wide problem exists. To be determined systemic in nature, an item must be found noncompliant in at least 25% of the records reviewed. In Monroe County, at least seven of the IEPs and three of the EPs must have been noncompliant on a given item to be considered a systemic finding. Student- and item-specific feedback on the record reviews was provided to Monroe County staff to assist in the provision of targeted technical assistance on IEP development.

### ***Findings***

- Finding(s) of Noncompliance
  - On IEPs, systemic findings of noncompliance were in the areas of:
    - Inadequate statement of the student's present level of educational performance (11)
    - Inadequate statement of remediation needed to pass FCAT (8)
    - For 12 IEPs more than 50% of the annual goals were not measurable.
  - Three IEPs were not current on the day of the on-site visit.
  - The services identified on five of the 11 matrix of services documents reviewed were not in evidence on the students IEPs (45%), although provision of the services was confirmed through classroom visits.

- Individual or non-systemic findings were noted in 28 additional components of the IEPs.
- On EPs, systemic findings of noncompliance were in the areas of:
  - Lack of a statement that parents had the right to bring someone with special knowledge and expertise about their child to the EP meeting (10)
  - EPs did not contain an evaluation schedule for each outcome identified (10)
  - EPs did not contain a statement of how the student's progress toward annual goals would be measured (10)
  - EPs did not contain a statement of how the parents would be informed of the progress toward the annual goals (10)
  - EPs did not contain documentation that the results of recent evaluations, class work, and district and statewide assessments were considered (6)
  - Lack of a general education teacher present at the EP meeting (4)
  - Lack of documentation that parents had received or been provided a copy of the EP (3)
  - EPs not reviewed within the required time period (3)
  - Individual or non-systemic findings were noted on two additional components of the EPs.
- Areas of Concern
  - No other areas of concern noted.
- Corrective Actions
  - The district must provide an amendment to the data provided to the DOE through the Automated Student Information System database for surveys 2 and 3 for the 2004-05 school year for any matrix of services documents found to be in error.
  - The IEP teams for 12 students must reconvene to address the lack of measurable annual goals.
  - An adjustment of federal funds will be made by the DOE for three students whose IEPs were not current.
  - The district will be required to target the areas noted above in its existing IEP training procedures, and to develop and implement a system of self-assessment to ensure compliance with required elements. This system must include the requirement that district and/or school staff periodically review at least 30 IEPs and five EPs to determine compliance with these requirements.
- Recommended Actions
  - Utilize the student- and item-specific feedback on the record reviews provided to assist in the provision of targeted technical assistance on IEP development.
  - The district should seek technical assistance from the Bureau Program Development Section in the area of gifted services.

### **Review of District Forms**

This section provides information related to district forms used to document specific procedures regarding the provision of specially designed instruction and related services to students with disabilities. Forms representing the thirteen areas identified below were submitted to Bureau staff for a review to determine compliance with federal and state laws. The district was notified

of the specific findings via a separate letter dated May 18, 2005. A detailed explanation of the specific findings is included as appendix D.

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

\*indicates findings that require immediate attention

+ indicates recommended changes

## **System Improvement Plan**

In response to these findings, the district is required to develop a 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.

## **General Recommendations and Technical Assistance**

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

### **Recommendations**

- Enlist the services of the Positive Behavioral Support Project to assist with training of effective behavior management strategies at schools with identified needs in this area.
- Enlist the services of the Program Development Section of the Bureau for assistance with gifted 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. Technical assistance on literacy strategies, curriculum adaptations, suggestions for resource allocations, and expanding models of service delivery, positive behavioral supports, ideas on differentiating instruction, and suggestions for building and maintaining effective school teams is available.

#### **Project CENTRAL**

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

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

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

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

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

## **Florida's Positive Behavioral Supports Project**

<http://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  
[Eileen.Amy@fldoe.org](mailto:Eileen.Amy@fldoe.org)

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

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

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

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

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

**Clearinghouse Information Center**  
[Karen.Denbroeder@fldoe.org](mailto:Karen.Denbroeder@fldoe.org)  
Karen Denbroeder, Administrator

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

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

[cicbiscs@FLDOE.org](mailto:cicbiscs@FLDOE.org)  
(850) 245-0477

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

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

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

### **Behavior/Discipline EH/SED**

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

### **Gifted**

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

### **Speech/Language**

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



**Appendix A:**

**District Data**



**FLORIDA DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION  
BUREAU OF EXCEPTIONAL EDUCATION AND STUDENT SERVICES****2005 LEA PROFILE****JOHN WINN, COMMISSIONER**

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DISTRICT:	<b>MONROE</b>	PK-12 POPULATION:	<b>8,623</b>
ENROLLMENT GROUP:	<b>7,000 TO 20,000</b>	PERCENT DISABLED:	<b>18%</b>
		PERCENT GIFTED:	<b>4%</b>

**INTRODUCTION**

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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**LEA PROFILE 2005**

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

**DATA SOURCES**

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

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

CHARLOTTE, CITRUS, COLUMBIA, FLAGLER, HENDRY, HIGHLANDS, INDIAN RIVER, JACKSON, MARTIN, MONROE, NASSAU, OKEECHOBEE, PUTNAM, SUMTER



## SECTION ONE: EDUCATIONAL BENEFIT

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

### STANDARD DIPLOMA STUDENTS MEETING ALL GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS:

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

	2001-02	2002-03	2003-04
Monroe	61%	64%	57%
Enrollment Group	52%	45%	47%
State	48%	45%	42%

### STANDARD DIPLOMA THROUGH GED EXIT OPTION:

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

	2001-02	2002-03	2003-04
Monroe	0%	2%	2%
Enrollment Group	3%	2%	2%
State	1%	1%	1%

### STANDARD DIPLOMA THROUGH FCAT WAIVER:

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

	2002-03	2003-04
Monroe	0%	7%
Enrollment Group	6%	11%
State	9%	14%

**DROPOUT RATE:**

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

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

	EH/SED			SLD		
	2001-02	2002-03	2003-04	2001-02	2002-03	2003-04
Monroe	7%	14%	6%	6%	3%	8%
Enrollment Group	7%	7%	6%	5%	5%	5%
State	7%	7%	7%	5%	4%	5%

**POSTSCHOOL OUTCOME DATA:**

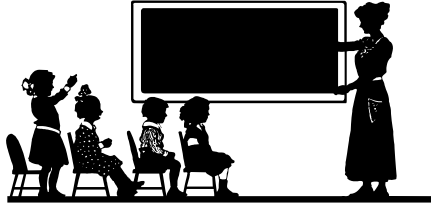
The Florida Education and Training Placement Information Program (FETPIP) is an interagency data collection system that obtains follow-up data on former students. The most recent FETPIP data available reports on students who exited Florida public schools during the **2002-03** school year. The table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

	Students with Disabilities		Gifted Students	
	Employed	Cont. Ed.	Employed	Cont. Ed.
Monroe	40%	21%	0%	50%
Enrollment Group	45%	17%	45%	70%
State	44%	20%	37%	72%

**THIRD GRADE PROMOTION AND RETENTION RATE:**

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

	2003-04					
	Students with Disabilities			All Students		
	Promoted	Promoted with Cause	Retained	Promoted	Promoted with Cause	Retained
Monroe	81%	21%	19%	91%	9%	9%
Enrollment Group	84%	28%	16%	91%	10%	9%
State	82%	30%	18%	89%	11%	11%



## SECTION TWO: EDUCATIONAL ENVIRONMENT

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

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

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

	Regular Class			Resource Room			Separate Class		
	2002-03	2003-04	2004-05	2002-03	2003-04	2004-05	2002-03	2003-04	2004-05
Monroe	58%	64%	65%	26%	19%	21%	17%	16%	14%
Enrollment Group	46%	50%	51%	28%	26%	25%	21%	20%	20%
State	48%	50%	55%	26%	24%	21%	22%	22%	20%

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

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

	Early Childhood Setting or Home			Part-Time Early Childhood/ Part-Time Early Childhood Special Education Setting			Early Childhood Special Education Setting		
	2002-03	2003-04	2004-05	2002-03	2003-04	2004-05	2002-03	2003-04	2004-05
Monroe	4%	8%	12%	81%	83%	79%	14%	9%	6%
Enrollment Group	5%	5%	4%	66%	66%	70%	23%	25%	21%
State	7%	7%	7%	57%	57%	56%	31%	31%	33%

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

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

	2002-03	2003-04	2004-05
Monroe	51%	47%	55%
Enrollment Group	60%	59%	56%
State	61%	62%	57%

**DISCIPLINE RATES:**

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

		2003-04							
		In-School Suspensions		Out-of-School Suspensions		Expulsions		Alternative Placement*	
		Students with Disabilities	Nondisabled Students	Students with Disabilities	Nondisabled Students	Students with Disabilities	Nondisabled Students	Students with Disabilities	Nondisabled Students
Monroe		12%	6%	13%	6%	0%	0%	<1%	<1%
Enrollment Group		15%	11%	14%	7%	<1%	<1%	<1%	<1%
State		14%	9%	15%	7%	<1%	<1%	<1%	<1%

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





### SECTION THREE: PREVALENCE

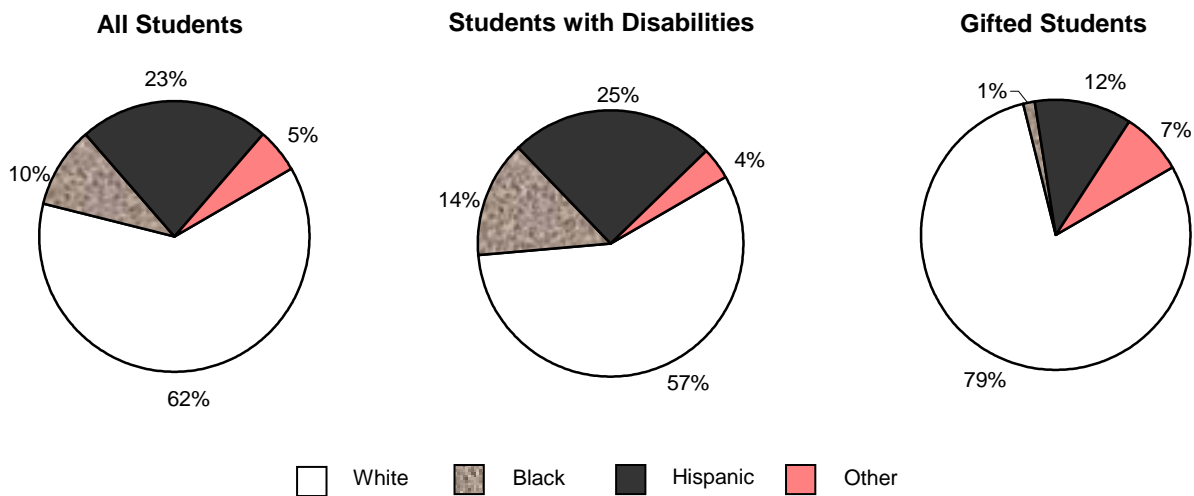
Prevalence refers to the proportion of the PK-12 population identified as exceptional at any given point in time. This section of the profile provides prevalence data by demographic characteristics.

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

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

	State			District		
	All Students	Students with Disabilities	Gifted Students	All Students	Students with Disabilities	Gifted Students
White	49%	50%	63%	62%	57%	79%
Black	24%	28%	10%	10%	14%	1%
Hispanic	23%	19%	20%	23%	25%	12%
Asian/Pacific Islander	2%	<1%	4%	1%	<1%	<1%
Am Ind/Alaskan Native	<1%	<1%	<1%	<1%	<1%	0%
Multiracial	3%	2%	3%	3%	3%	7%

District Membership by Race/Ethnicity



**FREE/REDUCED LUNCH AND LEP:**

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

	State		District	
	All Students	Gifted Students	All Students	Gifted Students
Free/Reduced Lunch	46%	22%	37%	14%
LEP	11%	3%	9%	<1%

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

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

	All Students		SLD		EH/SED		EMH	
	State	District	State	District	State	District	State	District
White	49%	62%	51%	60%	47%	47%	32%	35%
Black	24%	10%	24%	10%	39%	27%	51%	37%
Hispanic	23%	23%	22%	26%	12%	23%	14%	24%
Asian/Pacific Islander	2%	1%	<1%	<1%	<1%	<1%	<1%	2%
Am Ind/Alaskan Native	<1%	<1%	<1%	0%	<1%	<1%	<1%	0%
Multiracial	3%	3%	2%	3%	2%	1%	1%	1%

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

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

	All Students		All Disabled	
	State	District	State	District
SLD	7%	11%	46%	55%
EH/SED	1%	2%	9%	10%
EMH	1%	<1%	7%	4%
SI	2%	2%	14%	10%



John Winn, Commissioner

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

**Districts Rank-Ordered on Dropout Rate for Students with Disabilities**

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

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

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

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



**Appendix B:**  
**ESE Monitoring Team Participants**



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

**ESE Monitoring Team Participants**

**Department of Education Staff**

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

Barbara McAnelly, Program Specialist, Team Leader  
April Katine, Program Specialist  
Angela Nathaniel, Program Specialist  
Allison Cruz-Mitchell, Program Specialist  
Demetria Harvell, Program Specialist  
Lisa Robinson, Program Specialist





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



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

**Parent Survey Report: Students with Disabilities**

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

The parent survey was sent to parents of the 1,506 students with disabilities for whom complete addresses were provided by the district. A total of 201 parents (PK, n = 0; K-5, n = 94; 6-8, n = 48; 9-12, n = 59), representing 13% of the sample, returned the survey. Surveys from 48 families were returned as undeliverable, representing 3% of the sample. Parents represented the following students with disabilities: trainable mentally handicapped, autistic, deaf or hard of hearing, developmentally delayed, educable mentally handicapped, emotionally handicapped, hospital/homebound, language impaired, orthopedically impaired, other health impaired, profoundly mentally handicapped, severely emotionally disturbed, specific learning disabled, speech impaired, and visually impaired.

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

**Overall, I am satisfied with:**

- |   |    |
|---|----|
| • the amount of time my child spends with general education students.                           | 84 |
| • the way I am treated by school personnel.   | 83 |
| • the way special education teachers and general education teachers work together.              | 75 |
| • the level of knowledge and experience of school personnel.                                    | 74 |
| • the effect of exceptional student education on my child's self-esteem.                        | 72 |
| • how quickly services are implemented following an IEP (Individual Educational Plan) decision. | 71 |
| • the exceptional education services my child receives.   | 69 |
| • my child's academic progress.   | 66 |

**My child:**

- |   |    |
|---|----|
| • has friends at school.  | 88 |
| • is learning skills that will be useful later in life.                   | 80 |
| • is happy at school.   | 78 |
| • spends most of the school day involved in productive activities.        | 74 |
| • receives all the special education and related services on his/her IEP. | 69 |

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

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

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

- whether my child should get accommodations (special testing conditions), for example, extra time. 87
- all of my child's needs. 85
- whether my child would take the FCAT (Florida Comprehensive Assessment Test). 80
- ways that my child could spend time with students in general education classes. 79
- whether my child needed services beyond the regular school year. 71
- whether my child needed speech/language services. 71
- the specific skills my child needs to work on in preparation for the FCAT. 69
- \* which diploma my child may receive. 64
- whether my child needed psychological counseling services. 61
- whether my child needed physical and/or occupational therapy. 61
- whether my child needed transportation. 60
- \* the transition services my child needs to achieve his/her goals. 55
- \* the requirements for different diplomas. 53
- \* my child's goals after high school. 51

**My child's special education teachers:**

- expect my child to succeed. 87
- are available to speak with me. 86
- set appropriate goals for my child. 83
- give students with disabilities extra time or different assignments, if needed. 83
- encourage students to ask for help if they need it. 82
- individualized instruction for my child. 77
- give homework that meets my child's needs. 74
- call me or send me notes about my child. 69

**My child's general education teachers:**

- are available to speak with me. 84
- expect my child to succeed. 81
- encourage students to ask for help if they need it. 73
- give homework that meets my child's needs. 72
- set appropriate goals for my child. 71
- give students with disabilities extra time or different assignments, if needed. 71
- call me or send me notes about my child. 65
- individualized instruction for my child. 59

**My child's school:**

- makes sure I understand my child's IEP and the services my child will receive. 82
- encourages acceptance of students with disabilities. 80
- sends me information written in a way I understand. 79
- encourages me to participate in my child's education. 77

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

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

**My child's school: (continued)**

- handles discipline problems appropriately. 76
- offers students with disabilities the classes they need to graduate with a standard diploma. 74
- wants to hear my ideas. 73
- involves students with disabilities in clubs, sports, or other activities. 72
- addresses my child's individual needs. 71
- does all it can to keep students from dropping out of school. 71
- \* offers a variety of vocational courses, such as computers and business technology. 71
- provides students with disabilities updated books and materials. 69
- explains what I can do if I want to make changes to my child's IEP. 66
- informs me about all of the services available to my child. 63
- \* informed me, beginning when my child turned 14, that one purpose of the IEP meeting was to discuss a plan for my child's transition out of school. 63
- \* provides information to students about education and jobs after high school. 60
- sends me information about activities and workshops for parents. 54

**Parent Participation**

- I have attended my child's IEP meetings. 95
- I am comfortable talking about my child with school staff. 89
- I meet with my child's teachers to discuss my child's needs and progress. 88
- I participate in school activities with my child. 80
- My input is considered in the development of my child's IEP. 78
- I attend School Advisory Committee meetings concerning school improvement. 42
- I attend meetings of the PTA/PTO. 38
- I have used parent support services in my area. 32
- I have heard about the Florida Diagnostic and Learning Resources System ("FDLRS") and the services they provide to families of children. 27
- I attend meetings of organizations for parents of students with disabilities. 27

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

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

**Teacher Survey Report: Students with Disabilities**

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

A sufficient number of surveys were sent to each school in the district for all teachers and other service providers to participate. A total of 300 teacher surveys representing approximately 50% of ESE and general education teachers in the district were returned. Data are from 13 (87%) of the district's 15 schools.

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

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

- modifies and adapts curriculum for students as needed. 94
- places students with disabilities into general education classes whenever possible. 93
- ensures that students with disabilities feel comfortable when taking classes with general education students. 93
- addresses each students' individual needs. 92
- ensures that the general education curriculum is taught in ESE classes to the maximum extent possible. 89
- gives ESE teachers access to adequate instructional materials, including technology. 88
- implements support facilitation and/or consultation by ESE teachers for students in general education classes. 85
- encourages collaboration among ESE teachers, GE teachers and service providers. 84
- offers teachers professional development opportunities regarding curriculum and support for students with disabilities. 80
- implements co-teaching for some or all classes. 80
- provides adequate support for GE teachers who teach students with disabilities. 75

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

- aligns curriculum for students with the standards that are tested on the FCAT. 96
- provides students with appropriate testing accommodations. 95
- provides ESE teachers with FCAT test preparation materials. 93
- gives students in ESE classes updated textbooks. 92
- provides extra help or remediation before or after school. 90

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

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

- conducts ongoing assessments of individual students' performance. n/a
- provides positive behavioral supports. n/a
- allows students to make up credits lost due to disability-related absences. 95
- makes an effort to involve parents in their child's education. 95
- develops IEPs according to student needs. 94
- ensures that classroom material is grade- and age- appropriate. 94
- ensures that classroom material is culturally appropriate. 94
- encourages participation of students with disabilities in extracurricular activities. 91
- tracks student attendance to identify students with attendance problems. 88
- ensures that students are taught strategies to manage their behavior as needed. 85
- implements dropout prevention activities. 83
- uses a child study team to develop strategies for students identified as having an attendance problem. 82
- provides social skills training to students as needed. 81
- provides adequate counseling services for students who need it. 77

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

**My school:**

- implements an IEP transition plan for each student. 96
- encourages students to aim for a standard diploma when appropriate. 92
- provides extra help to students who need to retake the FCAT. 92
- provides students with information about options after graduation. 91
- informs students through the IEP process of the different diploma options and their requirements. 89
- teaches transition skills for future employment and independent living. 77
- coordinates on-the-job training with outside agencies. 65
- provides students with job training. 60

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

**Student Survey Report: Students with Disabilities**

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

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

Surveys were received from 141 students, representing approximately 27% of the students with disabilities in grades 9-12 in the district. Data are from 3 (43%) of the district's 7 schools with students in grades 9-12.

	<b>% YES</b>
<b>I am taking the following ESE classes:</b>	
• Learning Strategies or Unique Skills	65
• English	41
• Math	38
• Science	26
• Social Studies	21
• Vocational (woodshop, computers)	19
• Electives (physical education, art, music)	14
<b>At my school:</b>	
• ESE teachers give students extra time or different assignments, if needed.	92
• ESE teachers give students extra help, if needed.	90
• ESE teachers believe that ESE students can learn.	90
• ESE teachers encourage students to ask for help if they need it.	89
• ESE teachers understand ESE students' needs.	85
• ESE teachers teach students in ways that help them learn.	85
• ESE teachers teach students things that will be useful later on in life.	77
• ESE teachers provide students with updated books and materials.	6



	<b>% YES</b>
<b>I am taking the following general education/mainstream classes:</b>	
• Science	70
• English	67
• Social Studies	66
• Math	65
• Electives (physical education, art, music)	65
• Vocational (woodshop, computers)	50
<b>At my school:</b>	
• general education teachers believe that ESE students can learn.	85
• general education teachers encourage students to ask for help if they need it.	84
• general education teachers teach students things that will be useful later on in life.	81
• general education teachers give students extra help, if needed.	72
• general education teachers understand ESE students' needs.	70
• general education teachers teach ESE students in ways that help them learn.	69
• general education teachers give students extra time or different assignments, if needed.	69
• general education teachers provide students with updated books and materials.	59
<b>At my school, ESE students:</b>	
• get the help they need to do well in school.	88
• can take vocational classes such as computers and business technology.	84
• are encouraged to stay in school.	84
• fit in at school.	83
• spend enough time with general education students.	82
• participate in clubs, sports, and other activities.	81
• get work experience (on-the-job training) if they are interested.	80
• are treated fairly by teachers and staff.	78
• get information about education after high school.	74
<b>Diploma Option</b>	
• I know the difference between a standard and a special diploma.	90
• I agree with the type of diploma I am going to receive.	83
• I know what courses I have to take to get my diploma.	81
• I had a say in the decision about which diploma I would get.	71
• I will probably graduate with a standard diploma.	66
<b>IEP</b>	
• I was invited to attend my IEP meeting this year.	89
• I attended my IEP meeting this year.	74
• I had a say in the decision about which classes I would take.	69
• I had a say in the decision about special testing conditions I might get for the FCAT or other tests.	52
• I had a say in the decision about whether I need to take the FCAT or a different test.	35

	<b>% YES</b>
<b>FCAT</b>	
• Teachers help ESE students prepare for the FCAT.	76
• I took the FCAT this year.	68
• In my English/reading classes, we work on the kinds of skills that are tested on the reading part of the FCAT.	68
• In my math classes, we work on the kinds of problems that are tested on the math part of the FCAT.	66
• I received accommodations (special testing conditions) for the FCAT.	55

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

**Parent Survey Report: Gifted Students**

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

The parent survey was sent to parents of the 339 students identified as gifted for whom complete addresses were provided by the district. A total of 134 parents (KG-5, n = 61; 6-8, n = 50; 9 - 12, n = 23), representing 40% of the sample, returned the survey. Surveys from 7 families were returned as undeliverable, representing 2% of the sample.

	<b>%YES</b>
<b>Overall, I am satisfied with:</b>	
• gifted teachers' subject area knowledge.	84
• the effect of gifted services on my child's self-esteem.	83
• my child's academic progress.	81
• gifted teachers' expertise in teaching students identified as gifted.	81
• general education teachers' subject area knowledge.	76
• the gifted services my child receives.	66
• how quickly services were implemented following an initial request for evaluation.	60
• general education teachers' expertise in teaching students identified as gifted.	60
<b>In general education classes, my child:</b>	
• has friends at school.	95
• has his/her social and emotional needs met at school.	84
• is learning skills that will be useful later on in life.	82
• is usually happy at school.	81
• has creative outlets at school.	70
• is academically challenged at school.	51
<b>In gifted classes, my child:</b>	
• has friends at school	97
• has his/her social and emotional needs met at school.	93
• is usually happy at school.	93
• has creative outlets at school.	92
• is learning skills that will be useful later on in life.	92
• is academically challenged at school.	82

	<b>%YES</b>
<b>My child's general education teachers:</b>	
• are available to speak with me.	95
• expect appropriate behavior.	93
• provide coursework that includes representation of diverse ethnic, racial, and other groups.	88
• have access to adequate instructional materials, including technology.	77
• set appropriate goals for my child.	66
• give homework that meets my child's needs.	62
• call me or send me notes about my child.	60
• relate coursework to students' future educational and professional pursuits.	53
<b>My child's gifted teachers:</b>	
• expect appropriate behavior.	95
• provide coursework that includes representation of diverse ethnic, racial, and other groups.	94
• are available to speak with me.	92
• set appropriate goals for my child.	88
• have access to adequate instructional materials, including technology.	85
• relate coursework to students' future educational and professional pursuits.	83
• give homework that meets my child's needs.	74
• call me or send me notes about my child.	59
<b>My child's home school:</b>	
• treats me with respect.	94
• sends me information written in a way I understand.	89
• handles discipline problems appropriately.	83
• encourages me to participate in my child's education.	82
• wants to hear my ideas.	80
• makes sure I understand my child's EP or IEP.	73
• addresses my child's individual needs.	64
• involves me in developing my child's Educational Plan (EP or IEP).	63
• provides students identified as gifted with appropriate books and materials.	59
• informs me about all of the services available to my child.	58
• explains what I can do if I want to make changes to my child's EP or IEP.	57
• implements my ideas.	56
• sends me information about activities and workshops for parents.	51
<b>My child's 2nd school:</b>	
• treats me with respect.	92
• sends me information written in a way I understand.	91
• handles discipline problems appropriately.	91
• addresses my child's individual needs.	88
• wants to hear my ideas.	81
• encourages me to participate in my child's education.	77
• provides students identified as gifted with appropriate books and materials.	77

	<b>%YES</b>
<b>My child's 2nd school:</b>	
• makes sure I understand my child's EP or IEP.	73
• explains what I can do if I want to make changes to my child's EP or IEP.	64
• implements my ideas.	60
• involves me in developing my child's Educational Plan (EP or IEP).	59
• informs me about all of the services available to my child.	55
• sends me information about activities and workshops for parents.	52
<b>Students identified as gifted:</b>	
• have the option of taking a variety of vocational courses.	63
• are provided with information about options for education after high school.	62
• are provided with the opportunity to participate in externships or mentorships.	60
• are provided with career counseling.	55
<b>Parent Participation</b>	
• I participate in school activities with my child.	90
• I have attended one or more meetings about my child during this school year.	86
• I attend School Advisory Committee meetings concerning school improvement.	44
• I am a member of the PTA/PTO.	42
• I belong to an organization for parents of students identified as gifted.	11
• I have used parent support services in my area.	8



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





**Monroe County  
Focused Monitoring Report  
Review of District Forms**

Due to the discovery of outdated forms being used as part of the forms review for the monitoring visit conducted the week of April 11, 2005, a new forms review has been conducted utilizing forms faxed to the Bureau from the consultant working with Monroe County Schools. This letter replaces the previous correspondence dated June 7, 2005. The following district forms were compared to the requirements of applicable State Board of Education rules, the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), and applicable sections of Title 34, Section 300, Code of Federal Regulations. The review includes recommended revisions based on programmatic or procedural issues and concerns. The results of the review conducted on the most recent forms are detailed below and list the applicable sources used for the review.

**Individual Educational Plan (IEP) Meeting**

**Form** *Individual Educational Plan ESE #13 pages 1 – 3 & 3A(revised 8/04), 4 (revised 8/0) 4a (revised 8/03), #13o(revised 8/02), #13k(revised 8/01), #13r(revised 8/02), #35(revised 8/04)*  
**34 CFR 300.347**

This form contains the components for compliance.

**Recommendations:**

- While not required to be part of the IEP, there must be documentation of a statement providing understanding and consent of the parent for a student receiving instructional accommodations not permitted on statewide assessments and the implications of such accommodations. (*Note: this may be a separate form*).
- It is recommended that a definite line or area to write the explanation of the extent to which a student will not participate with nondisabled students be included.
- It is recommended that a definite line or area for identifying the alternate assessment be included.

**Educational Plan (EP) Meeting**

**Form** *Gifted Educational Plan (EP) ESE#14A – D(revised 8/04)*  
**34 CFR 300.347**

This form contains the components for compliance.

**Recommendations:**

- While not required to be a part of the EP, the following should have documentation of consideration of the language needs of the student with limited English proficiency.
- It is recommended that the “ESE services” and “specially designed instruction” be combined into the same box.

**Parent Notification of IEP or EP Meeting**

**Form** *Meeting Participation Form ESE #11 (revised 8/04)*  
**34 CFR 300.345**

This form contains the components for compliance.

**Notice and Consent for Initial Placement**

*Form Eligibility Determination and Staffing Form ESE #12(revised 8/04)*

**34 CFR 300.503 and 300.505**

**The following must be addressed:**

- At the next printing of this form, the rights statement should be changed to read “As parent(s)/guardian(s) of a child with a disability you have protections under the procedural safeguards of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA).”
- At the next printing of this form, a rights statement regarding procedural safeguards for gifted should be added to read, “As parent(s)/guardian(s) of a gifted student, you have protections under the procedural safeguards of Rule 6A-6.03313, FAC.”

**Recommendations:**

- In order to ensure that parents are able to receive assistance in understanding the provisions of IDEA without undue delay, it is strongly recommended that telephone numbers be included with sources to contact.
- It is recommended that you add “test, record or report” to the evaluation instruments administered to ensure all actions implemented during the evaluation procedures are included.
- It is recommended that the statement regarding further explanation of your rights include the location of the ESE Director (district office) and the guidance counselor (school).

**Informed Notice and Consent for Evaluation**

*Form Parental Notice/Consent for Evaluation SST #9(revised 8/04)*

**34 CFR 300.503 and 300.505**

**The following must be addressed:**

- At the next printing of this form, the rights statement should be changed to read “As parent(s)/guardian(s) of a child with a disability you have protections under the procedural safeguards of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA).”
- At the next printing of this form, a rights statement regarding procedural safeguards for gifted should be added to read, “As parent(s)/guardian(s) of a gifted student, you have protections under the procedural safeguards of Rule 6A-6.03313, FAC.”

**Recommendations:**

- It is recommended that the statement regarding further explanation of your rights include the location of the ESE Director (district office) and the guidance counselor (school).
- In order to ensure that parents are able to receive assistance in understanding the provisions of IDEA without undue delay, it is strongly recommended that telephone numbers be included with sources to contact.

**Informed Notice and Consent for Reevaluation**

*Form Parent Notice/Consent for Reevaluation ESE #19(revised 8/04)*

**34 CFR 300.503 and 300.505**

**The following must be addressed:**

- At the next printing of this form, the rights statement should be changed to read “As parent(s)/guardian(s) of a child with a disability you have protections under the procedural safeguards of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA).”

**Recommendations:**

- It is recommended that the statement regarding further explanation of your rights include the location of the ESE Director (district office) and the guidance counselor (school).
- In order to ensure that parents are able to receive assistance in understanding the provisions of IDEA without undue delay, it is strongly recommended that telephone numbers be included with sources to contact.

**Notice of Change in Placement Form and Change of FAPE**

**Form *Informed Notice of Change of Placement and/or Free Appropriate Public Education (FAPE) ESE #13n(revised 8/04)***

**34 CFR 300.503 and 300.505**

**The following must be addressed:**

- At the next printing of this form, the rights statement should be changed to read “As parent(s)/guardian(s) of a child with a disability you have protections under the procedural safeguards of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA).”
- At the next printing of this form, a rights statement regarding procedural safeguards for gifted should be added to read, “As parent(s)/guardian(s) of a gifted student, you have protections under the procedural safeguards of Rule 6A-6.03313, FAC.”

**Recommendations:**

- It is recommended that the statement regarding further explanation of your rights included the location of the ESE Director (district office) and the guidance counselor (school).
- In order to ensure that parents are able to receive assistance in understanding the provisions of IDEA without undue delay, it is strongly recommended that telephone numbers be included with sources to contact.

**Informed Notice of Refusal**

**Form *Notice of Refusal to Take A Specific Action ESE # 13g(revised 8/04)***

**34 CFR 300.503**

**The following must be addressed:**

- At the next printing of this form, the rights statement should be changed to read “As parent(s)/guardian(s) of a child with a disability you have protections under the procedural safeguards of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA).”
- At the next printing of this form, a rights statement regarding procedural safeguards for gifted should be added to read, “As parent(s)/guardian(s) of a gifted student, you have protections under the procedural safeguards of Rule 6A-6.03313, FAC.”

**Recommendations:**

- It is recommended that the statement regarding further explanation of your rights include the location of the ESE Director (district office) and the guidance counselor (school).
- In order to ensure that parents are able to receive assistance in understanding the provisions of IDEA without undue delay, it is strongly recommended that telephone numbers be included with sources to contact.

**Documentation of Staffing Form**

**Form** *Eligibility Determination and Staffing Form ESE #12(revised 8/04)*

**34 of CFR 300.534, 300.503**

This form contains the components for compliance.

**Notice of Dismissal**

**Form** *Eligibility/Ineligibility Staffing Form#12 (revised 8/04)*

**Form 34 CFR 300.503 and 300.505**

**The following must be addressed:**

- An explanation of why the proposed or refused action was taken must be included (e.g., student is successful in the general curriculum without special education support).
- A description of other options considered must be included (e.g., continuing to provide services through consultation was considered; it was determined not to be needed).
- Evidence of a reevaluation prior to dismissal must be moved to the “eligibility recommendations” area as it is not a placement decision.
- At the next printing of this form, the rights statement should be changed to read “As parent(s)/guardian(s) of a child with a disability you have protections under the procedural safeguards of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA).”

**Recommendations:**

- It is recommended that you add “test, record or report” to the evaluation instruments administered to ensure all actions implemented during the evaluation procedures are included.
- It is recommended that the action proposed include “dismissed” or “dismissal.”
- It is recommended that the statement regarding further explanation of your rights include the location of the ESE Director (district office) and the guidance counselor (school).
- In order to ensure that parents are able to receive assistance in understanding the provisions of IDEA without undue delay, it is strongly recommended that telephone numbers be included with sources to contact.

**Notice of Ineligibility**

**Form** *Eligibility Determination and Staffing Form ESE #12(revised 8/04)*

**34 CFR 300.503 and 300.505**

**The following must be addressed:**

- An explanation of why the proposed or refused action was taken must be included (e.g., to determine educational services to meet your child’s needs).

- A description of other options considered must be included (e.g., eligibility for specially designed instruction was considered; services were determined not to be needed).
- At least two sources for parents to contact for assistance in understanding the provisions of IDEA.
- At the next printing of this form, the rights statement should be changed to read “As parent(s)/guardian(s) of a child with a disability you have protections under the procedural safeguards of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA).”
- At the next printing of this form, a rights statement regarding procedural safeguards for gifted should be added to read, “As parent(s)/guardian(s) of a gifted student, you have protections under the procedural safeguards of Rule 6A-6.03313, FAC.”

**Recommendations:**

- It is recommended that you add “test, record or report” to the evaluation instruments administered to ensure all actions implemented during the evaluation procedures are included.
- In order to ensure that parents are able to receive assistance in understanding the provisions of IDEA without undue delay, it is strongly recommended that telephone numbers be included with sources to contact.

**Confidentiality of Information**

*Form Annual Notice of Confidentiality ESE#24*

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

**The following must be addressed:**

- A statement indicating the right to inspect and review the student’s education records, including the procedures to exercise those rights must be included.
- A statement regarding the right to file a complaint with the US Department of Education concerning alleged failures by the agency to comply with the requirements of FERPA must be added.
- If the district has a policy of disclosing education records to school officials determined to have a legitimate educational interest, the specification for determining who constitutes a school official and what constitutes a legitimate educational interest must be specified.

**Recommendation:**

- It is recommended that Section 1002.23(3), Florida Statute; Rule 6A-5.0955(b), Florida Administrative Code; and Sections 300.561 – 300.572, Title 34, Code of Federal Regulations, be referenced in the Annual Notice of Confidentiality.

**Service Plan for Privately Placed Students**

*Form Service Plan ESE #13s*

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

This form contains the components for compliance.

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



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





## Glossary of Acronyms

AE	Alternative Education
BIP	Behavior Intervention Plan
Bureau	Bureau of Exceptional Education and Student Services
CBI	Community-Based Instruction
CFR	Code of Federal Regulations
CIP	Continuous Improvement Plan
DJJ	Department of Juvenile Justice
DNE	Did Not Enter
DOE	Department of Education
DVR	Division of Vocational Rehabilitation
EH	Emotionally Handicapped
EMH	Educable Mentally Handicapped
EP	Educational Plan (for gifted students)
ESE	Exceptional Student Education
ESY	Extended School Year
F.S.	Florida Statutes
FAC	Florida Administrative Code
FAPE	Free Appropriate Public Education
FBA	Functional Behavioral Assessment
FCAT	Florida Comprehensive Assessment Test
FERPA	The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act
FIN	Florida Inclusion Network
GE	General Education
GED	General Educational Development diploma
IDEA	Individuals with Disabilities Education Act
IEP	Individual Educational Plan (for students with disabilities)
OJT	On-the-Job Training
PBS	Florida's Positive Behavioral Support Project
SED	Severely Emotionally Disturbed
S/L	Speech and Language
SSS	Sunshine State Standards
UM	University of Miami
USC	United States Code