

FINAL REPORT OF CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT MONITORING
OF EXCEPTIONAL STUDENT EDUCATION PROGRAMS IN

SUMTER COUNTY

DECEMBER 6 - 8, 2004



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

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July 12, 2005

Mr. Richard A. Shirley, Superintendent
Sumter County School District
2680 West County Road 476
Bushnell, Florida 33513-3574

Dear Superintendent Shirley:

We are pleased to provide you with the Final Report of Continuous Improvement Monitoring of Exceptional Student Education Programs in Sumter County that was conducted on December 6-8, 2004. This report was developed by integrating multiple sources, including information from the district presentation, interviews with school and district staff, student record reviews, and surveys of parents of exceptional students in the district. 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.

The Bureau has sent Ms. Sandra Bryan, ESE Director, an electronic copy of the system improvement plan for development. Within 30 days of the receipt of this electronic copy, the district is required to submit the completed system improvement plan for review by our office. The system improvement plan developed as a result of this visit may be incorporated into the district's existing continuous improvement plan, or may be developed independently. Bureau staff will work with Ms. Bryan and her staff to develop the required system improvement measures, including 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. After the system improvement plan has been approved, it will also be placed on the Bureau's website.

BAMBI J. LOCKMAN

Chief

Bureau of Exceptional Education and Student Services

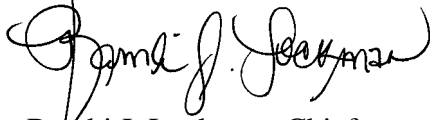
Superintendent Shirley
July 12, 2005
Page 2

An update of outcomes achieved and/or a summary of related activities, as identified in your district's plan, must be submitted by November 30 and May 31 of each school year for the next two years, unless otherwise noted on the plan.

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

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

Sincerely,



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

Enclosure

cc: Kenneth Jones, School Board Chair
Members of the School Board
Felix Adams, School Board Attorney
School Principals
Sandra Bryan, ESE Director
Eileen Amy
Evy Friend
Kim Komisar

**Sumter County Final Monitoring Report
Continuous Improvement Monitoring
December 6 - 8, 2004**

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**Sumter County School District
Continuous Improvement Monitoring
December 6 – 8, 2004**

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 December 6, 2004, the Florida Department of Education, Bureau of Exceptional Education and Student Services, conducted an on-site review of the exceptional student education programs in the Sumter County School District. In its continuing efforts to focus the monitoring process on student educational outcomes, the Bureau has identified key data indicators for students with disabilities and students identified as gifted, and all districts in the state have developed continuous improvement plans (CIPs) to address self-selected indicators for these populations. Sumter County was selected at random for a review of the strategies and interventions implemented thus far through the CIPs. The results of this review are reported here. In addition, this report includes information related to the implementation of specific programs and related services for exceptional students and the results of records and forms reviews.

Sandra Bryan, Director, Exceptional Student Education, served as the coordinator and point of contact for the district during the monitoring visit. In addition, the following district staff participated in the presentation: ESE Specialists Carol Zinner, Martha Grant, Marianne Rodgers, and Eileen Goodson; School Psychologists Susan Andrews and Melissa Joyner; and ESE Administrative Intern Mary Sue Camp. These participants were well prepared and presented an excellent overview of the district's activities and progress toward the goals in the district's continuous improvement plan monitoring.

Summary of Findings

Continuous Improvement Plan: Students with Disabilities

The key data indicators related to students with disabilities targeted by Sumter County School District for continuous improvement were: the disproportionate number of students in programs for students who are EMH; disparity between African-American EMH students and EMH students in the overall school population; and, the number of EMH student served in separate class placements. Strategies related to referral and evaluation have been utilized to reduce disproportionality and disparity, while strategies focusing on effective instruction have been implemented to increase the number of EMH student participating in the general education environment. The district is to be commended on its progress and continued efforts on each of its goals.

Continuous Improvement Plan: Students Identified as Gifted

The key data indicator related to gifted students targeted by Sumter County School District for continuous improvement was the under-representation of LEP students in the gifted program. Strategies related to characteristics of culturally and linguistically diverse learners were implemented to increase referrals of LEP students for evaluation. The district is to be commended on its progress and continued efforts in this area.

Services to ESE Students in Charter Schools

District and school staff from The Villages Charter School Elementary-Intermediate Campus work cooperatively to ensure the needs of students with disabilities and students identified as gifted are met. The charter school participates fully in district training and they have participated in the continuous improvement plan training sessions during the past two years.

Provision of Counseling to Students with Disabilities

Through interviews and record reviews targeting the provision of counseling as a related service, including psychological counseling, for students with disabilities, there was evidence of this need being addressed. It was reported that counseling is available for all students through school staff and through contract with Lifestream. There were no findings of noncompliance in this area.

Provision of Speech/Language Services to Students with Communication Needs

Through interviews and record reviews targeting communication needs of students with disabilities, there was evidence of this need being addressed. There was evidence that the communication needs of students with disabilities who are not eligible for programs for students who are speech impaired or language impaired are being met. It was reported that the IEP team considers the speech and language needs of a student, including information from screenings, teacher and parent input, and class performance, and that services would be provided either by a speech/language pathologist as a related service or by the students classroom teacher through academic or communication goals and objectives. There were no findings of noncompliance in this area.

Provision of Transition Services to Students with Disabilities

Through interviews and record reviews targeting transition services for students with disabilities, there was evidence of this need being addressed. Agency participation in transition activities is

available through agencies such as Developmental Disabilities, the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation, and Sumter County Agency for Retarded Citizens. If agency participation is not possible, ESE staff ensures they have all available information regarding the services provided by the agency and provide contact and appointment information to the student and parents. There were no findings of noncompliance in this area.

Review of Student Records

During the formal records review carried out as a part of the continuous improvement plan monitoring procedures, 21 individual educational plans (IEPs) and ten educational plans (EPs) were reviewed for compliance. There were no findings of noncompliance that would require a fund adjustment. Five IEP teams were required to reconvene to address a lack of measurable annual goals. One student did not have a current EP. During the onsite review of records, four records of students eligible for the EH program did not have social/emotional goals and objectives. Seven matrix of services documents for students reported at the 254 or 255 level were reviewed and all were found to be accurately reported. Additional information, including identification of the specific student records in question, has been provided to the district.

Special Category Records and Procedures

In a compliance review of student records relating to special categories and procedures there were three findings of noncompliance in two areas (i.e., initial eligibility and placements in a special program; and LEP student found not eligible for gifted program). Two of the three findings were related to the documentation provision of notices to parents in their native language.

Review of District Forms

Forms representing the thirteen areas were submitted to Bureau staff for a review to determine compliance with federal and state laws. Ten forms utilized by ESE staff for students with disabilities required changes to meet compliance standards. At the time of this report, the district has revised the ten forms and all forms meet compliance standards.

System Improvement Plan

In response to these findings, the district is required to revise its continuous improvement plan to address specific findings in this report. 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. 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.

Sumter County School District Continuous Improvement Monitoring System Improvement Plan

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

Note: The nature of these findings do not require development by the district of a separate system improvement plan. Instead, the district may select to incorporate strategies to target the identified findings into the existing continuous improvement plans for students with disabilities and gifted students.

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Category	Findings	ESE	All	System Improvement Strategy	Evidence of Change (Including target date)
Continuous Improvement Plan: Students with Disabilities	<p>The district has targeted:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • number of students in programs for students who are educable mentally handicapped (EMH) • disparity among African-American EMH students and the overall school population • number of EMH students served in separate class placements <p>Progress noted and verified.</p> <p>Recommendations are included in the <i>Recommendations and Technical Assistance</i> section of the report.</p>	X		The district will continue to address this issue through its continuous improvement plan.	The district will continue to provide semiannual reports of progress.

Category	Findings	ESE	All	System Improvement Strategy	Evidence of Change (Including target date)
Continuous Improvement Plan: Students Identified as Gifted	The district selected the percentage of LEP students identified as gifted. Progress noted and verified.	X		The district will continue with the current strategies in the continuous improvement plan.	The district will continue to provide semiannual reports of progress.
Services to ESE Students in Charter Schools	No findings of noncompliance in this area.				
Counseling as a Related Service	No findings of noncompliance in this area.				
Communication	No findings of noncompliance in this area.				
Transition Services	No findings of noncompliance in this area.				
Record Reviews	Five IEPs for students with disabilities were required to be reconvened. Systemic findings of noncompliance on IEPs were related to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • lack of documentation that the parent was provided a copy of the IEP • lack of sufficient present level of educational performance statements • lack of measurable annual goals • short-term objectives lacked measurement or benchmarks lacked time frame • lack of initial or recent 	X		IEP teams for identified students were reconvened to address findings of noncompliance. The district will be required to incorporate into its CIP for students with disabilities IEP training that targets these elements, and conduct periodic self-evaluation using protocols developed by the Bureau to ensure compliance.	Documentation of the meetings was provided to the Bureau. Through semiannual reports of progress, district self-assessment of a random sampling of 20 IEPs reveals 100% compliance with targeted components. May 2006 May 2007

Category	Findings	ESE	All	System Improvement Strategy	Evidence of Change (Including target date)
Record Reviews (continued)	evaluation results <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • lack of or inadequate progress reports to the parents • lack of evidence report of progress was provided as often as nondisabled population • lack of report of progress containing description of progress toward annual goal • lack of report of progress containing a description of the extent of sufficient achievement to attain goal by the end of the year Individual findings of noncompliance were made in 20 additional areas.				
	One EP was not current on the day of the review.	X		The district will be required to incorporate into its CIP for gifted students a system to monitor timeliness of EPs to ensure that all are current.	Through semiannual reports of progress, district self-assessment of a random sampling of 20 IEPs reveals 100% compliance with targeted components. May 2006 May 2007
Special Category Records and Procedures	Limited English proficient student found not eligible for gifted: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • lack of evidence of notification in the native language 	X		The district will be required to incorporate these specific elements into its CIPs for students with disabilities and	District report of self-assessment reveals compliance in targeted elements in 100% of the

Category	Findings	ESE	All	System Improvement Strategy	Evidence of Change (Including target date)
Special Category Records and Procedures (continued)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • lack of indication that testing was provided in the native language <p>Initial eligibility and placement in a special education program:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • lack of observations or anecdotal records by more than one person • lack documentation of two parent conferences 			for gifted students.	<p>records reviewed.</p> <p>May 2006 May 2007</p>
Review of District Forms	<p>Forms used to document the following activities required revision:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>IEP forms*</i> • <i>Notice and Consent for Initial Placement*</i> • <i>Informed Notice and Consent for Evaluation*</i> • <i>Informed Notice and Consent for Reevaluation*</i> • <i>Notification of Change of Placement*</i> • <i>Notification of Change of FAPE (Free Appropriate Public Education)*</i> • <i>Informed Notice of Refusal*</i> • <i>Documentation of Staffing/Eligibility Determination*</i> • <i>Informed Notice of Dismissal*</i> 	X		All forms have been corrected and submitted to the Bureau.	All forms have been corrected and submitted to the Bureau.

Category	Findings	ESE	All	System Improvement Strategy	Evidence of Change (Including target date)
Review of District Forms (continued)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li data-bbox="493 253 848 354"><i>Notice: Not Eligible for Exceptional Student Placement*</i> 				

Monitoring Process

Authority

The Florida Department of Education, Bureau of Exceptional Education and Student Services, in carrying out its roles of leadership, resource allocation, technical assistance, monitoring, and evaluation is required to oversee the performance of district school boards in the enforcement of all laws and rules (Sections 1001.03(8) and 1008.32, Florida Statutes (F.S.)). In fulfilling this requirement, the Bureau conducts monitoring activities of the exceptional student education (ESE) programs provided by district school boards in accordance with Sections 1001.42 and 1003.57, F.S. Through these monitoring activities, the Bureau examines and evaluates procedures, records, and programs of exceptional student education (ESE); provides information and assistance to school districts; and otherwise assists school districts in operating effectively and efficiently. One purpose of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) is to assess and ensure the effectiveness of efforts to educate children with disabilities (Section 300.1(d) of the Title 34, Code of Federal Regulations (CFR)). 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)).

The monitoring system established to oversee exceptional student education (ESE) programs reflects the Department's commitment to provide assistance and service to school districts. The system is designed to emphasize improved outcomes and educational benefits for students while continuing to conduct those activities necessary to ensure compliance with applicable federal and state laws, rules, and regulations. The system provides consistency with other state efforts, including the State Improvement Plan required by the IDEA.

Continuous Improvement Monitoring

The purpose of the continuous improvement monitoring visits conducted by the Bureau is two-fold. The primary purpose is to afford an opportunity for school districts to provide validation of the activities they have undertaken through their continuous improvement plans for students with disabilities and students identified as gifted. In addition, these monitoring visits provide an opportunity for the Bureau to review districts' compliance with specific state and federal requirements. Compliance components of continuous improvement monitoring visits include reviews of: services provided to exceptional education students enrolled in charter schools or Department of Juvenile Justice (DJJ) facilities; the implementation of specific programs and related services; and, records, forms, and special categories procedures.

Key Data Indicators

The Bureau of Exceptional Education and Student Services compiles an annual profile of key data indicators for each district in the state (LEA profile). 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, districts of

comparable size (enrollment group) and the state. The 2004 LEA profiles for all Florida school districts are available on the web at <http://www.firn.edu/doe/commhome/datapage.htm>. Specific key data indicators reported in the LEA profile are used in the continuous improvement monitoring process. Sumter County School District's LEA profile is included in this report in appendix A.

The eight key data indicators for students with disabilities utilized through the continuous improvement monitoring process are as follows:

- participation in statewide assessments
- percentage of students exiting with a standard diploma
- dropout rate
- percentage of students participating in regular classes (i.e., spending at least 80% of the school day with their nondisabled peers)
- performance on statewide assessments
- retention rate
- discipline rate
- disproportionality of student membership, which may include percentage of PK-12 students identified as educable mentally handicapped (EMH), racial/ethnic disparity of students identified as EMH, students identified as EMH served in separate class settings, or student membership for selected disabilities (specific learning disabled, emotionally handicapped, severely emotionally disturbed, and educable mentally handicapped)

The four key indicators for gifted students utilized through the continuous improvement monitoring process are as follows:

- performance on statewide assessments
- dropout rate
- disproportionality of student membership by racial/ethnic category, free/reduced lunch status, and limited English proficiency (LEP) status
- other, at district discretion

District Selection

Sumter County School District was one of four districts selected at random for a continuous improvement monitoring visit in 2004. It was selected from the pool of districts that had not participated in a monitoring visit by the Bureau for the previous three years. Sumter County's self-selected indicator for students with disabilities is the number of students in the educable mentally handicapped (EMH) program, disparity of African-American EMH student versus the total population, and the overrepresentation of EMH students in separate classes. The indicator for students identified as gifted is the under-representation of limited English proficient students in the gifted program. Sumter County's continuous improvement plans are included in appendix B.

Sources of Information

On-Site Monitoring Activities

The Bureau conducted the on-site continuous improvement monitoring visit from December 6-8, 2004. Two Bureau staff members participated. A listing of all participating monitors is provided as appendix C. The primary on-site activity conducted as part of the visit was a demonstration by

the district of the strategies implemented thus far through the continuous improvement plans (CIPs) for students with disabilities and gifted students. The components of the demonstration were determined by the district in collaboration with Bureau staff and were based on the areas targeted for improvement, and the types of activities conducted by the district.

Ms. Sandra Bryan, Director, Exceptional Student Education, served as the coordinator and point of contact for the district during the monitoring visit. In addition, the following district staff participated in the presentation: Carol Zinner, Martha Grant, Susan Andrews, Maryanne Rodgers, Melissa Joyner, Eileen Goodson, and Mary Sue Camp. These participants were well prepared and presented an excellent overview of the district's activities and progress toward the goals in the district's continuous improvement monitoring.

In addition to the district presentation, visits to selected school sites were conducted for the purpose of interviewing staff, observing classrooms and reviewing records. The following schools were visited:

- West Street School
- Webster Elementary School
- Wildwood Middle School
- Wildwood High School
- The Village Charter School Elementary–Intermediate Campus

Interviews

Interviews with selected district- and school-level personnel were conducted using interview protocols developed specifically to address the continuous improvement plan being implemented by the district. In addition, separate protocols were used to address the provision of services provided to students in charter schools; counseling as a related service, including psychological counseling; transition services; and, speech and language services. In Sumter County, interviews were conducted with 22 staff members, including two district-level staff, seven school-level administrative staff, seven ESE teachers, and six general education teachers.

Classroom Visits

Classroom visits were conducted in four ESE classrooms during the monitoring visit in Sumter 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. Data from each of the surveys are included as appendix D. In addition, Bureau staff conducts reviews of selected student records (individual educational plans (IEPs) and educational plans for gifted students (EPs), as well as special categories procedures and district forms. The results of the surveys and the records and forms reviews are included in this report.

Parent Surveys

Surveys were mailed to parents of students with disabilities and parents of students identified as gifted. 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.

In conjunction with the 2004 Sumter County monitoring activities, the parent survey was sent to parents of the 1,135 students with disabilities for whom complete addresses were provided by the district. A total of 101 parents (PK, n = 2; K-5, n = 43; 6-8, n = 25; 9 - 12, n = 31) representing 9% of the sample, returned the survey. Surveys were returned as undeliverable from 58 families, representing 5% of the sample. Parents represented the following students with disabilities: autistic, developmentally delayed, educable mentally handicapped, emotionally handicapped, language impaired, other health impaired, profoundly mentally handicapped, specific learning disabled, speech impaired, and trainable mentally handicapped,.

For gifted students, the survey was sent to parents of the 156 students identified as gifted for whom complete addresses were provided by the district. A total of 55 parents (KG-5, n = 34; 6-8, n = 17; 9 - 12, n = 4) representing 35% of the sample, returned the survey. Surveys were returned as undeliverable from nine families, representing 6% of the sample

Review of Student Records

Prior to the on-site monitoring visit, Bureau staff conducted a compliance review of a random sample of student records. In Sumter County, 31 records were reviewed for compliance, including 21 IEPs and ten EPs. During the on-site visit targeted components of an additional 53 records, including 44 IEPs and nine EPs were reviewed.

Review of Special Category Records and Procedures

In addition to the IEPs and EPs noted above, Bureau staff reviewed 21 special category records and procedures for compliance. This review included the following targeted special categories:

- four initial eligibility and placements in a special program
- three dismissals from exceptional student education
- two temporary assignment to exceptional student education
- three students found ineligible for exceptional student education
- one parentally-placed private school students
- three prekindergarten students who have transitioned from Part C to Part B
- three limited English proficient found eligible for programs for student with disabilities
- two limited English proficient ineligible for gifted

Review of District Forms

Bureau staff reviewed selected district forms and notices to determine if the required components were included. The results of the review of district forms are described in this report. A detailed explanation of the forms reviews is included as appendix E.

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. 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.

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

Final Report

Upon final review and revision by Bureau staff based on input from the ESE director, the final report is issued. Within 30 days of the district's receipt of the final report, a 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 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 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, the final report, including the plan, is posted on the Bureau's website at www.firn.edu/doe/commhome/mon-home.htm. Corrective actions are monitored through the submission of semiannual status reports of progress to be submitted to the Bureau on May 30th and November 30th of each year for the duration of the system improvement plan.

Reporting of Information

The data generated through the district presentation, surveys, individual interviews, and classroom visits are summarized in this report. Information regarding the district's progress in its continuous improvement plans for students with disabilities and gifted students is provided, as well as information related to services provided to ESE students in charter schools and the results of records and forms reviews. 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

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

Results

Students with Disabilities

This section provides information regarding the district's development and implementation of its continuous improvement plan for students with disabilities. The district's goals in its continuous improvement plan for students with disabilities are to decrease: the disproportionate representation of students in the program for students who are educable mentally handicapped (EMH); the racial disparity of students identified as EMH; and, the percentage of EMH students served at the separate class level (39% or less of the school day with nondisabled peers). During the 2000-2001 school year, 2.5% of the student population in the district was identified as EMH (compared to state rate of 1.2%); the district had a 32 point disparity between the percentage of students in the general student population who were African American and the percentage of students in the EMH program who were African American; and, 76% of the EMH students in the district were served at the separate class level (compared to the state rate of 62%). These data were the baseline for the targeted areas of Sumter County's CIP for students with disabilities.

In developing the CIP, the district involved a variety of stakeholders including the members from the ESE advisory committee, a guidance counselor, a school psychologist, a principal, and a parent of ESE students. Additionally, a survey was sent to parents and teachers, and workshops were held with school administrators. The emphasis was on the evaluation and decision-making processes. Strategies that were implemented included:

- development of an EMH eligibility report form

- developing a checklist for staffing teams to use when reviewing data for EMH identification
- ensuring every student was administered two individual tests of intelligence as part of the diagnostic evaluation
- carefully reviewing environmental factors
- eligibility staffing teams include a teacher of the same race as the student with knowledge about the student
- student by student review of participation with nondisabled peers prior to data entry
- requiring that district staff attend all eligibility staffing and IEP team meetings of potential EMH and/or EMH eligible students

As a result, since the established baseline in 2001, the district has reduced the percentage of EMH students in relation to the total population from 2.5% to 1.9%; the disparity rate has decreased from 32% to 30%; and, the percentage of EMH students being served in the self-contained environment has decreased from 75.7% to 56%.

In an effort to visit a range of schools in the district, the monitoring team visited: West Street School, a center school for students with emotional or behavioral difficulties; Webster Elementary School, serving the more rural southern portion of the county; The Villages Charter School Elementary-Intermediate Campus, one of four charter schools in the district; and, Wildwood Middle School and Wildwood High School, serving the less rural northern portion of the county.

The staff at the elementary school reported that communication with parents is an important component of the activities conducted prior to referral, and also is critical when evaluating the effect of environmental factors on the student. The Intervention Assistance Team (IAT) was reported to work diligently with classroom teachers to assist in identifying effective interventions for individual students prior to considering the student for referral for evaluation.

All elementary school staff interviewed reported participation in inclusion training during the summer months. Currently the school has two ESE teachers, one working as an inclusion teacher in the general education setting and the other teaching ESE pull-out classes. Students are able to be pulled out for ESE classes for any part of the day, up to and including the separate class level. The ESE teachers reported they work closely with the general education teachers to ensure that all students are progressing. Staff reported in the past year there has only been one student found eligible for the EMH program; that student transferred in from another county and was not initially identified by Sumter County school personnel. Four of the five staff members interviewed reported participating in accommodations training. The teachers reported finding the training quite useful in the classroom environment, not only with EMH students but with all students in general.

Staff from the middle and high schools reported that every attempt is made to involve all EMH students in at least one general education course. At the middle school, staff reported the use of co-teaching in math and language arts to assist lower performing students to progress in the general education classroom. Additionally, the middle school utilizes consultation, resource, and separate class placements for EMH students. The high school staff reported full inclusion for all

ninth grade students working toward a standard diploma with support from ESE teachers. The ESE teachers reported they work with the general education teachers to provide support to the students with disabilities. All staff reported having been involved in accommodations training at some time during the past two years. Staff members found the training to be beneficial and were able to apply methods such as peer tutoring and color coding to many instructional lessons. A higher proportion of EMH students at the middle school are enrolled in general education academic classes than at the high school.

In summary, the key data indicators related to students with disabilities targeted by Sumter County School District for continuous improvement were: the disproportionate number of students in programs for students who are EMH; disparity between African-American EMH students and EMH students in the overall school population; and, the number of EMH student served in separate class placements. Strategies related to referral and evaluation have been utilized to reduce disproportionality and disparity, while strategies focusing on effective instruction have been implemented to increase the number of EMH student participating in the general education environment. The district is to be commended on its progress and continued efforts on each of its goals.

Students Identified as Gifted

This section provides information regarding the district's development and implementation of its continuous improvement plan for gifted students. The district's goal is to increase the representation of limited English proficient students (LEP) in the gifted program to more closely reflect the LEP distribution of the student population as a whole. Based on data from the 2000-01 school year (baseline), 3.2% of the district's student population was considered to be LEP, and there were no LEP gifted students. The following strategies have been implemented to address this issue:

- provision of training and technical assistance to school psychologists in the selection and administration of culturally and linguistically appropriate instruments
- provision of in-service training to school staff on characteristics of giftedness in Hispanic student populations
- provision of training and technical assistance to school staff on issues related to cultural and linguistic diversity, including the use of effective instructional strategies and communication with families from diverse backgrounds
- revision of the district's Plan B criteria for the gifted program to address LEP students and students from low socio-economic status backgrounds
- modification to screening criteria for referring LEP students for evaluation for the gifted program
- request that each elementary school refer a minimum of one LEP student for evaluation for the gifted program.

In addition to these strategies, district staff enlisted the assistance of the two bilingual Home School Educators to assist in soliciting parent and community input into the referral and evaluation process for gifted identification. A Limited English Proficient Project Committee consisting of parents, school level administrators, district level administrators, ESE teachers, and general education teachers also was established.

Based on the most current data reported through survey 2 in October 2004, 5% of the student population in Sumter County is eligible for the LEP program (same rate as 2003), and 2% of the gifted students are LEP (increased from <1% in 2003).

The majority of staff interviewed regarding the gifted program (17 of 21, or 81%) reported participation in training on characteristics of giftedness with the last two years. Three additional staff members reported having previously participated in gifted training, but not within the last two years. Fourteen staff members who participated in the training found it to be beneficial and reported applying it within their respective areas in the school environment (82%). The gifted characteristics checklist was reported as being the most helpful tool when considering the referral of students for evaluation for the gifted program.

During the 2002-03 school year, 65 students were referred for evaluation for the gifted program. Of those, 15 were eligible for consideration under Plan B; three of those were found eligible (20%). A total of 17 of the 65 students were found to be eligible for the gifted program (26%). During the 2003-04 school year, 67 students were referred for gifted program eligibility. Eleven were eligible for consideration under Plan B; four of those were found eligible (36%). A total of 11 of the 67 students were found eligible for gifted programs that year (16%). Although major efforts were initiated to identify more LEP gifted students, the district still has less than 1% of the gifted population as LEP students.

In summary, the key data indicator related to gifted students targeted by Sumter County School District for continuous improvement was the under-representation of LEP students in the gifted program. Strategies related to characteristics of culturally and linguistically diverse learners were implemented to increase referrals of LEP students for evaluation. The district is to be commended on its progress and continued efforts in this area.

Services to ESE Students in Charter Schools

During the continuous improvement monitoring visit, the Bureau visited one of the four charter schools within the district. The Villages Charter School Elementary-Intermediate Campus was selected for the visit based on the continuous improvement plan areas. The Elementary-Intermediate Campus houses third through fifth grade students who have all been placed at the school by their parents, with the provision that their parents are currently working within The Villages community.

The Villages Charter School Elementary-Intermediate Campus has one ESE teacher and one teacher of the gifted. District and charter school staff reported that the charter schools participate in all Sumter County School District training events and meetings. The teachers and administrative staff interviewed reported having attended the trainings identified above related to each of districts continuous improvement plans.

The administrative staff interviewed reported that the charter school works closely with district staff to follow established district ESE procedures. The ESE teacher works mainly as a resource teacher; however, she meets with general education teachers to discuss issues surrounding ESE students enrolled in their classrooms. Both staff members reported that a district staff person is always available for technical assistance questions and attends all staffing meetings at the charter

school. Staff reported that the guidance counselor, a school administrator, parent, ESE teacher, referring teacher, and the district staffing specialist would be present at an IEP meeting. The ESE teacher works closely with general education teachers to ensure accommodations and modifications are appropriately provided in the classroom setting. ESE students are followed via the progress reporting process as well as regular checks by the ESE teacher with the general education teacher. The teacher of the gifted is an itinerant teacher and provides services to the students at the charter school for one full day every week.

In summary, district and school staff from The Villages Charter School Elementary-Intermediate Campus work cooperatively to ensure the needs of students with disabilities and students identified as gifted are met. The charter school participates fully in district training and they have participated in the continuous improvement plan training sessions during the past two years.

Provision of Counseling to Students with Disabilities

As part of the continuous improvement monitoring activities, the Bureau also conducted interviews related to the provision of counseling as a related service for students with disabilities. Most respondents reported that the IEP team always considers the educationally relevant counseling needs of a student, and that the team reviews parent and teacher input, classroom observations, and past and current student performance. Staff reported that school guidance counselors are available to address “individual incident” counseling, while the Lifestream organization provides more in-depth and regularly scheduled counseling needs. Parents provide signed consent for release of information so that school staff are able to communicate with the counselors from Lifestream. Counseling as a related service was evident on at least one IEP at every school visited. Of the 30 records of students in the program for students who are emotionally handicapped program that were reviewed onsite, 19 included counseling as a related service on the IEP (63%). There were no findings of noncompliance in this area.

Provision of Speech/Language Services to Students with Communication Needs

Through record reviews and interviews there was evidence that the communication needs of students with disabilities who are not eligible for programs for students who are speech impaired or language impaired are being met. It was reported that the IEP team considers the speech and language needs of a student, including information from screenings, teacher and parent input, and class performance. Although it was reported that communication needs that require the services of a speech or language pathologist would be addressed on the IEP as a related service, this was not evident in any of the records reviewed. If the needs are less significant, it was reported that this would be addressed through academic or communication goals and/or objectives, and the service would be provided by the ESE or general education teacher. There were no findings of noncompliance in this area.

Provision of Transition Services to Students with Disabilities

School and district staff reported that outside agencies are invited to transition IEP meetings and that the staffing specialist or ESE teacher often follows up with a telephone call to ensure the agency participant will be present at the meeting. If agency participation is not possible, ESE staff ensures they have all available information regarding the services provided by the agency and provide contact and appointment information to the student and parents. Many agencies such as Developmental Disabilities, the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation, Sumter County Agency

for Retarded Citizens, and the local technical school are regular participants in transition IEP meetings. There was evidence of agency being invited and agency participation in the records reviewed. There were no findings of noncompliance in this area.

Review of Student Records

Twenty-one IEPs and ten EPs, randomly selected from the population of exceptional students, were reviewed prior to the on-site visit. In order to be considered a systemic finding, a specific component of the IEP or EP must be found to be noncompliant in 25% or more of the records reviewed. For Sumter County that represents at least six IEPs and at least two EPs. Student specific corrective actions (e.g., funding adjustments; reconvening of the IEP teams) are required for some types of noncompliance, while others may require planning and implementation of targeted staff training and/or oversight of identified procedures. For the 21 IEPs reviewed, the following nine areas of noncompliance were systemic in nature:

- lack of initial or recent evaluation results (17)
- lack of report of progress containing a description of the extent of sufficient achievement to attain goal by the end of the year (16)
- lack of report of progress containing description of progress toward annual goal (13)
- short-term objectives lacked measurement or benchmarks lacked time frame (11)
- lack of evidence report of progress was provided as often as nondisabled population (11)
- lack of documentation that the parent was provided a copy of the IEP (10)
- lack of or inadequate progress reports to the parents (9)

In addition, the following individual or non-systemic findings were evident:

- lack of sufficient present level of educational performance statements (5)
- lack of measurable annual goals (5)
- lack of documentation of consideration of communication needs (4)
- lack of documentation student's preferences and interests were considered when not present at the transition IEP meeting (4)
- lack of adequate goals or statements of non-need for transition areas (4)
- lack of agency representation or information (transition component) (3)
- lack of correspondence between the annual goals, the short-term objectives or benchmarks, and the needs identified on the present level of educational performance statement (2)
- lack of individualization of accommodations on statewide assessments
- inadequate statement of extent to which student will not participate with nondisabled peers (2)
- lack of notice of change of FAPE (2)
- lack of documentation of parental input during reevaluation process (2)
- lack of documentation of pursuit of standard or special diploma (1)
- lack of consideration for the parents concerns for educational enhancement(1)
- lack of notice of change of placement (1)
- lack of a documented second notice attempt (1)
- lack of transition as a purpose of the meeting (1)
- lack of student invited to transition IEP meeting (1)
- inadequate statement of how the student's disability affects the student's involvement and progress in the general curriculum (1)

- lack of initiation/duration dates for accommodations and/or modifications (1)
- lack of documentation of parental consent prior to additional reevaluation testing (1)

For five of the 21 IEPs more than 50% of the goals were not measurable, and IEP teams were required to reconvene to address this finding. The district was notified of the specific students requiring reconvened IEP meetings in a letter dated December 13, 2004, and submitted documentation of the revised IEPs within the allotted timeline. There were no findings of noncompliance that would result in a fund adjustment.

In addition to the IEPs reviewed prior to the monitoring visit, targeted elements of additional records were reviewed on-site. During that review four IEPs of students classified as emotionally handicapped (EH) were found to not address the social/emotional needs of the students through goals or objectives.

There were no systemic findings of noncompliance regarding EPs. The EP of one student was not current.

Seven matrix of services documents for students reported at the 254 or 255 funding level were reviewed. Any services claimed on the matrix must be documented on the IEP and in evidence in the classroom. All were found to be accurately reported.

In summary, 21 IEPs and ten EPs were reviewed for compliance prior to the on-site visit. There were no findings of noncompliance that would require a fund adjustment. Five IEP teams were required to reconvene to address a lack of measurable annual goals. One student did not have a current EP. During the onsite review of records, four records of students eligible for the EH program did not have social/emotional goals and objectives. Seven matrix of services documents for students reported at the 254 or 255 level were reviewed and all were found to be accurately reported. Additional information, including identification of the specific student records in question, has been provided to the district.

Review of Special Category Records and Procedures

In addition to the IEP and EP reviews described above, Bureau staff reviewed a total of 21 special category records and procedures, representing the following actions:

- four initial eligibility and placements in a special program
- three dismissals from exceptional student education
- two temporary assignment to exceptional student education
- three students found ineligible for exceptional student education
- one parentally-placed private school students
- three prekindergarten students who have transitioned from Part C to Part B
- three limited English proficient eligible for programs for student with disabilities
- two limited English proficient not eligible for gifted

The district also was asked to provide records representing students for whom a surrogate parent had been assigned, but reported that it had no current records for which a surrogate was assigned.

There were no findings of noncompliance related to: dismissal from exceptional student education; students found ineligible for exceptional student education; and, parentally-placed private school students. Although there were no findings of noncompliance regarding temporary assignment of transferring ESE students, it should be noted that one of the temporary assignment records was for a student transitioning from Part C to Part B; this action represents an initial eligibility and not a temporary assignment.

Findings were noted in three records representing two procedures. Both records provided for LEP students who were found not eligible for gifted did not include evidence of parental notification in the native language. For the two LEP students found not eligible for gifted there was no evidence that language needs of the student were sufficiently addressed during assessment. The record of a student initially found eligible and placed in the EMH program did not include evidence of anecdotal records by more than one person or of two parent conferences. The district will be required to address these areas in its system improvement plan.

In summary, in a compliance review of student records relating to special categories and procedures there were three findings of noncompliance in two areas (i.e., initial eligibility and placements in a special program; and LEP student found not eligible for gifted program). Two of the three findings were related to the documentation provision of notices to parents in their native language.

Review of District Forms

Forms representing the thirteen areas identified below were submitted to Bureau staff for a review to determine compliance with federal and state laws prior to the onsite visit. Ten forms required changes, and a recommendation was noted for one form. The district was notified of the specific findings via a separate letter dated October 5, 2004. During the onsite visit, the revised forms were provided to Bureau staff and all were found to contain the required components. The district was notified of the approval and completion of forms revisions in a separate letter dated December 9, 2004.

- *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*

*indicates findings that require immediate attention

+indicates recommended changes

In summary, forms representing the thirteen areas were submitted to Bureau staff for a review to determine compliance with federal and state laws. Ten forms utilized by ESE staff for students with disabilities required changes to meet compliance standards. At the time of this report, the district has revised the ten forms and all forms meet compliance standards.

District Response

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. To the extent appropriate, the system improvement activities resulting from this monitoring visit should be incorporated into the district's existing continuous improvement plans. 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 monitoring activities, including debriefings with the monitoring team and district staff, suggestions and/or recommendations related to interventions or strategies are often 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.

Sumter County School District Continuous Improvement Monitoring System Improvement Plan

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

Note: The nature of these findings do not require development by the district of a separate system improvement plan. Instead, the district may select to incorporate strategies to target the identified findings into the existing continuous improvement plans for students with disabilities and gifted students.

Category	Findings	ESE	All	System Improvement Strategy	Evidence of Change (Including target date)
Continuous Improvement Plan: Students with Disabilities	<p>The district has targeted:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • number of students in programs for students who are educable mentally handicapped (EMH) • disparity among African-American EMH students and the overall school population • number of EMH students served in separate class placements <p>Progress noted and verified.</p> <p>Recommendations are included in the <i>Recommendations and Technical Assistance</i> section of the report.</p>	X		The district will continue to address this issue through its continuous improvement plan.	The district will continue to provide semiannual reports of progress.

Category	Findings	ESE	All	System Improvement Strategy	Evidence of Change (Including target date)
Continuous Improvement Plan: Students Identified as Gifted	The district selected the percentage of LEP students identified as gifted. Progress noted and verified.	X		The district will continue with the current strategies in the continuous improvement plan.	The district will continue to provide semiannual reports of progress.
Services to ESE Students in Charter Schools	No findings of noncompliance in this area.				
Counseling as a Related Service	No findings of noncompliance in this area.				
Communication	No findings of noncompliance in this area.				
Transition Services	No findings of noncompliance in this area.				
Record Reviews	Five IEPs for students with disabilities were required to be reconvened. Systemic findings of noncompliance on IEPs were related to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • lack of documentation that the parent was provided a copy of the IEP • lack of sufficient present level of educational performance statements • lack of measurable annual goals • short-term objectives lacked measurement or benchmarks • lacked time frame • lack of initial or recent 	X		IEP teams for identified students were reconvened to address findings of noncompliance. The district will be required to incorporate into its CIP for students with disabilities IEP training that targets these elements, and conduct periodic self-evaluation using protocols developed by the Bureau to ensure compliance.	Documentation of the meetings was provided to the Bureau. Through semiannual reports of progress, district self-assessment of a random sampling of 20 IEPs reveals 100% compliance with targeted components. May 2006 May 2007

Category	Findings	ESE	All	System Improvement Strategy	Evidence of Change (Including target date)
Record Reviews (continued)	evaluation results <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • lack of or inadequate progress reports to the parents • lack of evidence report of progress was provided as often as nondisabled population • lack of report of progress containing description of progress toward annual goal • lack of report of progress containing a description of the extent of sufficient achievement to attain goal by the end of the year Individual findings of noncompliance were made in 20 additional areas.				
	One EP was not current on the day of the review.	X		The district will be required to incorporate into its CIP for gifted students a system to monitor timeliness of EPs to ensure that all are current.	Through semiannual reports of progress, district self-assessment of a random sampling of 20 IEPs reveals 100% compliance with targeted components. May 2006 May 2007
Special Category Records and Procedures	Limited English proficient student found not eligible for gifted: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • lack of evidence of notification in the native language 	X		The district will be required to incorporate these specific elements into its CIPs for students with disabilities and	District report of self-assessment reveals compliance in targeted elements in 100% of the

Category	Findings	ESE	All	System Improvement Strategy	Evidence of Change (Including target date)
Special Category Records and Procedures (continued)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • lack of indication that testing was provided in the native language <p>Initial eligibility and placement in a special education program:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • lack of observations or anecdotal records by more than one person • lack of documentation of two parent conferences 			for gifted students.	<p>records reviewed.</p> <p>May 2006 May 2007</p>
Review of District Forms	<p>Forms used to document the following activities required revision:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>IEP forms*</i> • <i>Notice and Consent for Initial Placement*</i> • <i>Informed Notice and Consent for Evaluation*</i> • <i>Informed Notice and Consent for Reevaluation*</i> • <i>Notification of Change of Placement*</i> • <i>Notification of Change of FAPE (Free Appropriate Public Education)*</i> • <i>Informed Notice of Refusal*</i> • <i>Documentation of Staffing/Eligibility Determination*</i> • <i>Informed Notice of Dismissal*</i> 	X		All forms have been corrected and submitted to the Bureau.	All forms have been corrected and submitted to the Bureau.

Category	Findings	ESE	All	System Improvement Strategy	Evidence of Change (Including target date)
Review of District Forms (continued)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li data-bbox="493 253 848 354"><i>Notice: Not Eligible for Exceptional Student Placement*</i> 				

Recommendations and Technical Assistance

As a result of the continuous improvement monitoring activities conducted in Sumter County during December 6 – 8, 2004, the Bureau has identified specific findings. The following are recommendations for the district to consider when developing the system improvement plan and determining strategies that are most likely to effect change. The list is not all-inclusive, and is intended only as a starting point for discussion among the parties responsible for the development of the plan. A partial listing of technical assistance resources is also provided. These resources may be of assistance in the development and/or implementation of the system improvement plan.

Recommendations

- District staff should review all records of EMH eligible students to determine the actual number of students identified by Sumter County and the number of student who transfer into the district classified as EMH for data purposes in the continuous improvement monitoring plan.
- Readdress use of existing staff for communication needs and addressing the student's needs on the IEP. Incorporate training on appropriate documentation of needs and services (e.g., counseling as a related services; communication) into IEP training sessions
- Consider IEP training for ESE personnel within the district
- Consider district-wide training from the Florida Inclusion Network (FIN) to expand the inclusion initiatives currently in place.

Technical Assistance

Florida Inclusion Network (FIN)

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.

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:

Clearinghouse Information Center

cicbiscs@FLDOE.org

Monitoring

Eileen Amy, Administrator
Kim Komisar, Program Director
April Katine, Program Specialist
Barbara McAnelly, Program Specialist
Angela Nathaniel, Program Specialist
(850) 245-0476

Program Evaluation

Karen Denbroeder, Administrator
(850) 245-0475

Educable Mentally Handicapped

Sheryl Brainard, Program Specialist
(850) 245-0478

Gifted Services

Donnajo Smith, Program Specialist
(850) 245-0478

Parent Services

Cathy Burton, Program Specialist
(850) 245-0478

APPENDIX A:

LEA PROFILE



FLORIDA DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
BUREAU OF EXCEPTIONAL EDUCATION AND STUDENT SERVICES

2005 LEA PROFILE

JOHN WINN, COMMISSIONER

DISTRICT:	SUMTER	PK-12 POPULATION:	7,142
ENROLLMENT GROUP:	7,000 TO 20,000	PERCENT DISABLED:	16%
		PERCENT GIFTED:	2%

INTRODUCTION

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

LEA PROFILE 2005

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

DATA SOURCES

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

DISTRICTS IN SUMTER'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
Sumter	41%	37%	42%
Enrollment Group	41%	44%	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
Sumter	0%	0%	0%
Enrollment Group	2%	2%	2%
State	1%	1%	1%

STANDARD DIPLOMA THROUGH FCAT WAIVER:

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

	2002-03	2003-04
Sumter	12%	11%
Enrollment Group	8%	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
Sumter	4%	7%	5%	0%	0%	0%	3%	3%	3%
Enrollment Group	5%	5%	5%	<1%	0%	<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
Sumter	5%	9%	6%	3%	8%	4%
Enrollment Group	5%	5%	6%	5%	5%	5%
State	7%	7%	7%	5%	4%	5%

POSTSCHOOL OUTCOME DATA:

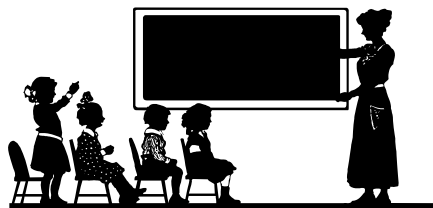
The Florida Education and Training Placement Information Program (FETPIP) is an interagency data collection system that obtains follow-up data on former students. The most recent FETPIP data available reports on students who exited Florida public schools during the **2002-03** school year. The table 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.
Sumter	34%	4%	100%	75%
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
Sumter	93%	39%	7%	95%	12%	5%
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
Sumter	59%	63%	67%	18%	16%	15%	24%	21%	19%
Enrollment Group	49%	52%	51%	27%	25%	25%	18%	16%	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
Sumter	2%	7%	6%	97%	93%	86%	2%	0%	8%
Enrollment Group	10%	16%	4%	68%	62%	70%	19%	21%	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
Sumter	52%	56%	45%
Enrollment Group	49%	47%	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
Sumter Enrollment Group State	Sumter	26%	16%	18%	8%	0%	<1%	<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

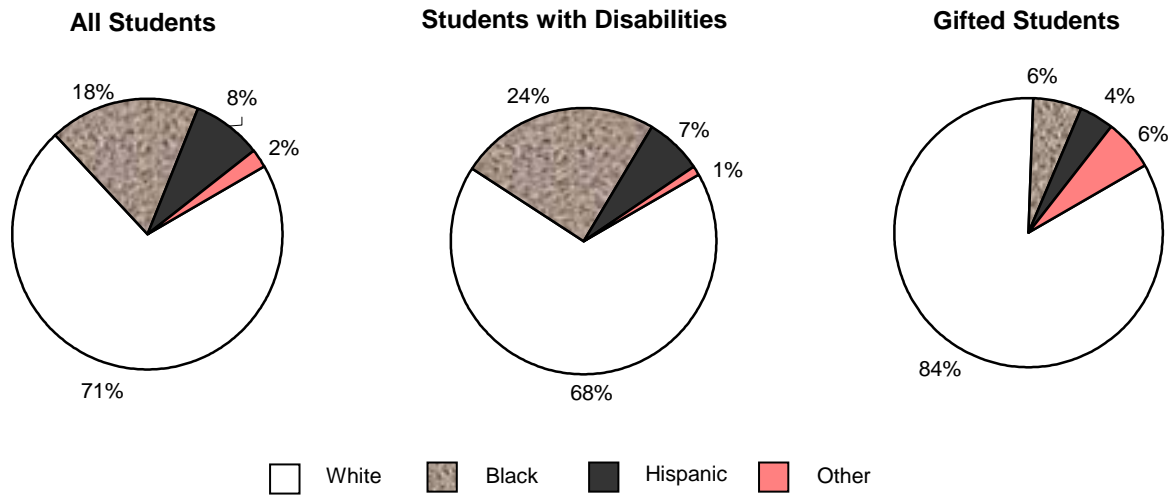
Prevalence refers to the proportion of the PK-12 population identified as exceptional at any given point in time. This section of the profile provides prevalence data by demographic characteristics.

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%	71%	68%	84%
Black	24%	28%	10%	18%	24%	6%
Hispanic	23%	19%	20%	8%	7%	4%
Asian/Pacific Islander	2%	<1%	4%	<1%	<1%	3%
Am Ind/Alaskan Native	<1%	<1%	<1%	<1%	<1%	0%
Multiracial	3%	2%	3%	1%	<1%	3%

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%	55%	32%
LEP	11%	3%	5%	2%

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%	71%	51%	77%	47%	57%	32%	41%
Black	24%	18%	24%	13%	39%	42%	51%	56%
Hispanic	23%	8%	22%	9%	12%	<1%	14%	2%
Asian/Pacific Islander	2%	<1%	<1%	0%	<1%	0%	<1%	1%
Am Ind/Alaskan Native	<1%	<1%	<1%	<1%	<1%	<1%	<1%	0%
Multiracial	3%	1%	2%	1%	2%	<1%	1%	0%

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%	5%	46%	55%
EH/SED	1%	2%	9%	10%
EMH	1%	<1%	7%	4%
SI	2%	2%	14%	10%



John Winn, Commissioner

APPENDIX B:

CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT PLANS AND STATUS REPORTS

FLORIDA DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
DIVISION OF PUBLIC SCHOOL AND COMMUNITY EDUCATION
 Bureau of Exceptional Education and Student Services

Continuous Improvement/Self Assessment Monitoring Plan
2002 – 2003

District: Sumter	District Contact: Sandra Bryan, ESE Director	Indicator: % of students identified as EMH (Disproportionality)
Purpose: The percentage of students identified EMH will reflect the state average percentage of EMH students.		
<p>Baseline Data 2000-2001 School Year</p> <p>State Average of PK-12 school population identified EMH is 1.2%</p> <p>17 school districts are over 2%.</p> <p>Sumter County has 2.5% of PK-12 school population identified EMH.</p> <p>See Charts 1, 2, 3, and 4 for complete data.</p> <p>Data regarding number of EMH students placed by outside agencies to foster homes in Sumter County was not available.</p> <p>Assessment Instruments used in identifying EMH students were the same for 2000-2001 and 2001-2002.</p>	<p>Improvement Strategies</p> <p>Reduce percentage of EMH students in Sumter County's PK-12 school population by:</p> <p>Increasing awareness of over identification of EMH population in our district, including administrators, teachers, guidance counselors, psychologists, and other pertinent personnel.</p> <p>Providing technical assistance and training to school psychologists in the selection and administration of culturally appropriate</p> <p>Providing technical assistance and training to school staff on issues related to cultural diversity, including the use of effective instructional strategies and communication with families.</p> <p>Providing training for eligibility staffing committees concerning EMH criteria.</p>	<p>Evidence of Change</p> <p>Goal: The percentage of EMH students in Sumter County will decrease by one percent (1%) by the end of the 2003-2004 school year.</p> <p>Benchmarks: In 2002-2003 the percentage of EMH students will decrease by .5 percent from the baseline level of 2.5%. In 2003-2004 the percentage of EMH student will decrease by .5 percent from the baseline of 2.0%. The percentage of EMH students will be monitored and reported to the Bureau of Exceptional Education and Student Services annually.</p>

**Continuous Improvement/Self Assessment Monitoring Plan
2002 – 2003**

<u>District:</u> Sumter	<u>District Contact:</u> Sandra Bryan, ESE Director	<u>Indicator:</u> % of students identified as EMH (Disproportionality)
<u>Purpose:</u> The racial/ethnic distribution of students identified as EMH will reflect the racial/ethnic distribution of the district population as a whole.		
<p>Baseline Data 2000-2001 School Year</p> <p>Statewide, Black, non-Hispanic students represent 24.8 percent of the total PK-12 school population and 53.7 percent of the statewide EMH population. There is a 28.9 percent disparity between the percentage of Black, non-Hispanic EMH students and the percentage of those students in the general school population.</p> <p>20 districts have over a 30 percent disparity.</p> <p>Sumter County has a 32 percent disparity.</p> <p>See Charts 1, 2 and 3 for complete data.</p>	<p>Improvement Strategies</p> <p>Reduce percentage of Black, non-Hispanic EMH students in Sumter County’s PK-12 school population by:</p> <p>Increasing awareness of over-identification of Black, EMH population in our district, including administrators, teachers, guidance counselors, psychologists, and other pertinent personnel.</p> <p>Providing technical assistance and training to school psychologists in the selection and administration of culturally appropriate assessment instruments.</p> <p>Providing technical assistance and training to school staff on issues related to cultural diversity, including the use of effective instructional strategies and communication with families.</p> <p>Providing training for eligibility staffing committees concerning EMH criteria.</p>	<p>Evidence of Change</p> <p>Goal: The percentage of Black EMH students in Sumter County will decrease by 5% by the end of the 2005 school year.</p> <p>Benchmarks: In the 2002-2003 school year, the disparity percentage of Black EMH students will decrease by 1.5 percent from the baseline level of 32%.</p> <p>In the 2003-2004 school year, the disparity percentage of Black EMH student will decrease by 1.5 percent from the 2002-2003 level of 30.5%.</p> <p>In the 2004-2005 school year, the disparity percentage of Black EMH students will decrease by 2.0 percent from the 2003-2004 level of 29%.</p> <p>The disparity percentage of Black EMH students will be monitored and reported to the Bureau of Exceptional Education and Student Services annually.</p>

**Continuous Improvement/Self Assessment Monitoring Plan
2002 – 2003**

District: Sumter	District Contact: Sandra Bryan, ESE Director	Indicator: Regular Class Placement
Purpose: EMH students will have increased time with nondisabled peers, including access to the general curriculum.		
<p>Baseline Data 2000-2001 School Year</p> <p>Statewide 61.5 percent of EMH student spent more than 60 percent of their school week outside the regular classroom.</p> <p>33 districts exceeded the state average.</p> <p>Sumter County data received by the DOE indicates that 75.7% of EMH students spent more than 60% of their school week outside the regular classroom. There were some inaccuracies in reporting the data to the DOE and further analysis (See Chart 3) indicates that 87% of EMH students spent more that 60% of their school week outside the regular classroom.</p> <p>See Chart 3 for complete data.</p>	<p>Improvement Strategies</p> <p>Increase student participation in the general education curriculum by:</p> <p>Continuing to support and expand initiatives that provide resources for schools to implement service delivery models and effective instructional strategies that promote successful participation in the general education curriculum.</p> <p>Providing training through the Florida Inclusion Network (FIN) to all school administrators and selected school and district staff in Quality Designs for Instruction (QDI).</p> <p>Expanding staff development efforts to general education teachers on instructional accommodations and modifications for students with disabilities.</p> <p>Continuing to support and expand initiatives that promote access to the general curriculum through the use of assistive technology.</p> <p>Continuing to support and expand initiatives that promote access to the</p>	<p>Evidence of Change</p> <p>Goal: The percentage of EMH students served at the separate class level will decrease from 87% to 62% by the end of the 2004-2005 school year.</p> <p>Benchmarks: In 2002-2003, the percentage will decrease from 87% to 80%.</p> <p>In 2003-2004, the percent will decrease from 80% to 71%.</p> <p>In 2004-2005, the percent will decrease from 71% to 62%.</p>

	<p>general curriculum through the use of assistive technology.</p> <p>Continuing to support and expand initiatives that allow for appropriate access to the general curriculum for students working on the Sunshine State Standards for Special Diploma.</p> <p>Training IEP committees to ensure that EMH students are provided access to the general curriculum.</p>	
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**Continuous Improvement/Self Assessment Monitoring Plan
2002 – 2003**

<u>District:</u> Sumter	<u>District Contact:</u> Sandra Bryan, ESE Director	<u>Indicator:</u> Disproportionality of Gifted LEP
<u>Purpose:</u> The percentage of Limited English Proficient (LEP) students identified as gifted will reflect the LEP distribution of the district population as a whole.		
<p>Baseline Data 2000-2001 School Year</p> <p>District Student Population – 6132 District Gifted Population - 166 District LEP Population – 199 District Percentage of LEP – 3.2% District LEP Gifted Population – 0 District Percentage of LEP Gifted – 0%</p> <p>2001-2002 School Year District Student Population – 6393 District Gifted Population - 166 District LEP Population – 207 District Percentage of LEP – 3.2% District LEP Gifted Population – 0 District Percentage of LEP Gifted – 0%</p> <p>See Charts 1, 2, and 3 for complete data.</p>	<p>Improvement Strategies</p> <p>Increase representation of LEP students in programs for the gifted by:</p> <p>Providing technical assistance and training to school psychologists in the selection and administration of culturally and linguistically appropriate instruments. Providing technical assistance and training to school staff on issues related to cultural and linguistic diversity, including the use of effective instructional strategies and communication with families from diverse backgrounds. Provide modified screening criteria for referring LEP students for evaluation for gifted program. Request each elementary school to refer a minimum of one LEP student for evaluation for the gifted program. The number requested per school will depend on the LEP population at each school.</p>	<p>Evidence of Change</p> <p>Goal: By the end of the 2004-2005 school year, the district will identify three (3) LEP students as gifted.</p> <p>Benchmarks: By the end of the 2002-2003 school year, the district will identify a minimum of one (1) LEP student as gifted. By the end of the 2003-2004 school year, the district will have identified a minimum of two (2) LEP students as gifted. By the end of the 2004-2005 school year, the district will have identified a minimum of three (3) LEP students as gifted.</p>

Sumter County Schools
Continuous Monitoring Report of Progress
Percentage of Students Identified EMH
September 2004

Sumter County assures that it continues to desire to decrease the percentage of Educably Mentally Handicapped (EMH) students in Sumter County to meet the State percentage. During the period of January 2004 to the present, the following strategies have been implemented:

1. We have adopted and implemented an EMH Eligibility Report. This report documents that the staffing committee carefully scrutinizes all information gathered in the assessment process before determining a student eligible for EMH. A copy of the EMH Eligibility Report form is available upon request.
2. We require that two individual tests of intelligence be administered to any potential referral where one score is 65 or above. We are considering environmental factors and requiring staffing committees to include at least one person who has knowledge of the child and is of the same race as the child (if at all possible).
3. We are strictly adhering to the intelligence scores, academic cluster or broad scores, and the adaptive behavior score, all being more than two standard deviations below the mean. We require parent input on adaptive behavior assessments. We have a school psychologist at all EMH eligibility staffings. While staffing committees are aware of these requirements for eligibility we cannot preclude the committee from considering each child on an individualized basis and making eligibility decisions based on the information presented.
4. We have discussed our efforts and asked for input on this and the other indicators of our Continuous Monitoring Project at each ESE Parent Advisory Committee Meeting.
5. In 2003-04 (as initiated in 2000-01) we have collected and analyzed data, which are available on a database to interested persons. While we do not pre-label referrals, our database captures profiles of students. From the data we are able to determine the number of students whose screening results indicate they may meet the eligibility for EMH. Data that we collect and analyze includes the following:
 - Number of Referrals for School Year
 - Number of Referrals of Students by Race
 - Percentage of Students of the Total Referrals, by Race
 - Percentage of EMH Referrals by Race
 - Number of EMH Students Eligible by Race

- Number of EMH Students by Grade Level District-wide
- Number of Transfer EMH Students

Summary

Data indicates that we have restricted the number of new placements of EMH students. In the last three years only eight new EMH students have been identified.

We projected a benchmark for 2003-04 that there will be a decrease of .5 percentage points in the EMH incidence rate from 2002-03 data which was 2.0%, thereby making the incidence rate 1.5%. The 2004 LEA Profile (October 2003 data) shows the Sumter incidence rate at 2%, with an internal calculation (June 2004) at 1.58%, indicating we were close to achieving this benchmark. Since the profile data do not express incidence rates to decimal points, more sensitive measures are needed. Based on an analysis of our district population in October of each year, and an internal count of the unduplicated count of the number of EMH students at the end of May of each year, the table below presents our incidence rates, expressed in decimal pints rather than rounded off, to coincide with our improvement plan.

	Pre-k – 12 Population	EMH Population (Unduplicated)	% Served (Incidence Rate)
2001-02	6,378	148	2.32%
2002-03	6,558	126	1.92%
2003-04	6,857	108	1.58%

The number of EMH students is gradually decreasing each year, the general population is increasing, and therefore the EMH incidence rate is decreasing. We believe we are on track to meet our goal of decreasing the incidence rate to 1% by 2004-05 (especially if we get to round down!).

Sumter County Schools
Continuous Monitoring Report of Progress
Disproportionality of Black EMH Students
September 2004

Sumter County assures that it continues to desire to decrease the disparity between the percentage of Black students in the district and the percentage of Black Educably Mentally Handicapped (EMH) students. During the period of January 2004 to the present, the following strategies have been implemented:

1. We have adopted and implemented an EMH Eligibility Report. This report documents that the staffing committee carefully scrutinizes all information gathered in the assessment process before determining a student eligible for EMH. A copy of the EMH Eligibility Report form is available upon request.
2. We require that two individual tests of intelligence be administered to any potential referral where one score is 65 or above. We are considering environmental factors and requiring staffing committees to include at least one person who has knowledge of the child and is of the same race as the child (if at all possible).
3. We are strictly adhering to the intelligence scores, academic cluster or broad scores, and the adaptive behavior score, all being more than two standard deviations below the mean. We require parent input on adaptive behavior assessment. We have a school psychologist at all EMH eligibility staffings. While staffing committees are aware of these requirements for eligibility we cannot preclude the committee from considering each child on an individualized basis and making eligibility decisions based on the information presented.
4. We have discussed our efforts and asked for input on this and the other indicators of our Continuous Monitoring Project at each ESE Parent Advisory Committee Meeting.
5. In 2003-04 (as initiated in 2000-01) we have collected and analyzed data which are available on a database. While we do not pre-label referrals, our database captures profiles of students. From the data we are able to determine the number of students whose screening results indicate they may meet the eligibility for EMH. Data that we collect and analyze includes the following:
 - Number of Referrals for School Year
 - Number of Referrals of Students by Race and Gender
 - Percentage of Students of the Total Referrals, by Race and Gender
 - Percentage of EMH
 - Percentage of EMH Referrals by Race
 - Number of EMH Students Eligible by Race
 - Number of EMH Students by Grade Level District-wide

- Number of Transfer EMH Students

Summary

The disparity rate between the percentage of Black students in Sumter County and the percentage of Black EMH students has decreased one percentage point from last school year, based on the DOE LEA Profiles. Our demographic information shows that our total district pk-12 population is increasing and the Black population is decreasing. This trend has impacted out disparity rate. The actual number of EMH students identified each year for the past four years has decreased and the number of Black EMH students identified has decreased annually for the past four years. We feel that while we did not meet this year's goal of our disparity rate being at 29% for 03-04, we are implementing the right strategies and moving in the right direction. The following information is provided from the 2002, 2003, and 2004 LEA Profiles:

Year	District % Black	% EMH Black	Disparity Rate	# Black EMH	# EMH Total
2001-2002	22%	53%	31%	79	148
2002-2003	22%	56%	34%	65	126
2003-2004	20%	53%	33%	58	108

Sumter County Schools
Continuous Monitoring Report of Progress
Separate Class Placement Rate for EMH
September 2004

Sumter County assures that it continues to desire to decrease the separate class placement rate for Educably Mentally Handicapped (EMH) students. During the period of August 2003 to date, we implemented the following activities:

1. An ESE Specialist attends all initial and IEP revision meetings for EMH students to ensure more inclusion of EMH students and to encourage IEP committees to consider LRE better for each student.
2. Each elementary school, with the exception of the charter schools, has an inclusion teacher and an inclusion aide working with the inclusion students, including the EMH students. These positions are funded through the FEFP program. The 2003-04 school year was the first year we had inclusion teachers in all five of the district elementary schools. We continue that this school year.
3. We, annually, conduct an internal review of time with non-disabled peers on our database compared to course schedules and IEP's. We have found minor discrepancies and made internal adjustments.
4. We have re-reviewed our original survey results on a program evaluation survey relative to EMH separate class placement, including Likert Scale rate items, as well as open-ended items. We feel that there has been substantial improvement in IEP team recommendations in placing EMH students in regular education to a much greater degree.

Summary

We projected a benchmark for 2002-03, that the separate class placement rate would be 80%. Based on the 2003 LEA Profile, Sumter County's 2002-03 separate class placement rate for EMH was 52%. We met that benchmark. We projected a benchmark for 2003-04, that our separate class placement rate would be 71%. Based on the 2004 LEA Profile, Sumter County's 2003-04 separate class placement rate for EMH was 56%. We met that benchmark.

We have already met our goal of decreasing the separate class placement rate for EMH to 62% by 2004-05. We have achieved a lower rate than the State average (62%) for the past two school years. We will continue our efforts to improve regular class placement for EMH and other students with disabilities.

Sumter County Schools
Continuous Monitoring Report of Progress
Disproportionality of Limited English Proficient (LEP) Gifted Students
September 2004

Sumter County assures that it continues to desire to increase the number of LEP students served in our gifted program. During the period of January 2004 to the present, the following strategies have been implemented:

1. On February 23, 2004, a bi-lingual school psychologist/consultant from Marion County provided staff development activities for our psychological services staff, as well as school guidance counselors.
2. Previously, we revised our Part B for Gifted to limit it to LEP and Low SES, in accordance with the revision to the gifted rule, which eliminated race-based screening and evaluation.
3. Each elementary and middle school was requested to refer a minimum of one LEP student for evaluation for the gifted program. The number of referrals from each school varies based on that school's LEP population. In the 2003-04 school year we received a total of 76 referrals for gifted and of that number, twenty-one (21) or 28% were LEO referrals. Thirteen of the referred students were evaluated by a bilingual psychologist and eight (8) by monolingual school psychologists. Of the students evaluated, it appears two may meet the eligibility for the gifted program under our Part B plan. At the beginning of this school year, one school rushed a referral to us, knowing we were desperately seeking LEP gifted. That student was evaluated and may be eligible under our Part B Plan.
4. We have enlisted our Home School Educators, both are bi-lingual paraprofessionals, to assist in soliciting more community and parent input in the referral/evaluation process. These two individuals also assist in contacting parents and interpreting when needed, as well as, making sure the parents understand the terminology used and what we are doing.

Summary

The benchmark for 2003-04 was that the LEP Gifted student membership would increase to three percent (3%) of the gifted population as a whole. As of October 2003 Survey, as reflected in the 2004 LEA Profile, there were 5% LEP of all students and less than 1% LEP gifted. We identified one gifted LEP student in the 2003-04 school year and that student moved away in the summer of 2004. We have two students who appear that they will meet the Part B eligibility (including one referred this school year). We did not meet our benchmark for 2003-04, but we believe we are on the right track to meet our goal in 2004-05.

APPENDIX C:

ESE MONITORING TEAM MEMBERS

**Sumter County School District
Continuous Improvement Monitoring
December 6-8, 2004**

ESE Monitoring Team Members

Department of Education Staff

Bambi J. Lockman, Chief of Exceptional Education and Student Services
Eileen Amy, Administrator, ESE Program Administration and Quality Assurance
Kim Komisar, Program Director, ESE Program Administration and Quality Assurance
Barbara McAnelly, Program Specialist
Angela Nathaniel, Program Specialist

APPENDIX D:
SURVEY RESULTS

**2004 Parent Survey Report
Students with Disabilities
Sumter County**

The parent survey was sent to parents of the 1135 students with disabilities for whom complete addresses were provided by the district. A total of 101 parents (PK, n = 2; K-5, n = 43; 6-8, n = 25; 9 - 12, n = 31), representing 9% of the sample, returned the survey. Surveys from 58 families were returned as undeliverable, representing 5% of the sample. Parents represented students with the following disabilities: educable mentally handicapped, trainable mentally handicapped, orthopedically impaired, speech impaired, language impaired, deaf or hard of hearing, visually impaired, emotionally handicapped, specific learning disabled, hospital/homebound, profoundly mentally handicapped, autistic, severely emotionally disturbed, developmentally delayed, and other health impaired.

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

Overall, I am satisfied with:

- the way I am treated by school personnel. 85
- the amount of time my child spends with regular education students. 77
- the exceptional education services my child receives. 76
- the way special education teachers and regular education teachers work together. 76
- how quickly services are implemented following an IEP (Individualized Educational Plan) decision. 75
- the effect of exceptional student education on my child's self-esteem. 73
- my child's academic progress. 72
- the level of knowledge and experience of school personnel. 69

My child:

- has friends at school. 81
- spends most of the school day involved in productive activities. 79
- is learning skills that will be useful later on in life. 79
- is happy at school. 78
- receives all the special education and related services on his/her IEP. 78

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

- all of my child's needs. 83
- ways that my child could spend time with students in regular classes. 72
- whether my child needed speech/language services. 66
- whether my child should get accommodations (special testing conditions), for example, extra time. 65
- whether my child would take the FCAT (Florida Comprehensive Assessment Test). 61
- whether my child needed services beyond the regular school year. 50
- whether my child needed physical and/or occupational therapy. 47
- * which diploma my child may receive. 46

*Questions answered by parents of students in grades 8 and above

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

- whether my child needed psychological counseling services. 42
- * the requirements for different diplomas. 40
- whether my child needed transportation. 35

My child's teachers:

- expect my child to succeed. 88
- set appropriate goals for my child. 88
- are available to speak with me. 83
- give homework that meets my child's needs. 70
- call me or send me notes about my child. 69
- give students with disabilities extra time or different assignments, if needed. 68

My child's school:

- encourages me to participate in my child's education. 78
- makes sure I understand my child's IEP. 77
- does all it can to keep students from dropping out of school. 77
- sends me information written in a way I understand. 73
- encourages acceptance of students with disabilities. 72
- informs me about all of the services available to my child. 71
- addresses my child's individual needs. 70
- involves students with disabilities in clubs, sports, or other activities. 69
- offers students with disabilities the classes they need to graduate with a standard diploma. 68
- explains what I can do if I want to make changes to my child's IEP. 68
- sends me information about activities and workshops for parents. 67
- provides students with disabilities updated books and materials. 66
- wants to hear my ideas. 61
- * offers a variety of vocational courses, such as computers and business technology. 61
- informed me, beginning when my child turned 14, that one purpose of the IEP meeting was to discuss a plan for my child's transition out of high school. 47
- * provides information to students about education and jobs after high school. 44

Parent Participation

- I meet with my child's teachers to discuss my child's needs and progress. 88
- I have attended my child's IEP meetings. 87
- I am comfortable talking about my child with school staff. 86
- I participate in school activities with my child. 64
- I attend meetings of the PTA/PTO. 41
- I attend meetings of organizations for parents of students with disabilities. 27

*Questions answered by parents of students in grades 8 and above

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

- I have heard about the Florida Diagnostic and Learning Resources System (“FDLRS”) and the services they provide to families of children with disabilities. 26
- I attend School Advisory Committee meetings concerning school improvement. 24
- I have used parent support services in my area. 21

**2004 Parent Survey Report
Students Identified as Gifted
Sumter County**

The parent survey was sent to parents of the 156 students identified as gifted for whom complete addresses were provided by the district. A total of 55 parents (KG-5, n = 34; 6-8, n = 17; 9 - 12, n = 4), representing 35% of the sample, returned the survey. Surveys from 9 families were returned as undeliverable, representing 6% of the sample.

	% Yes
Overall, I am satisfied with:	
• my child’s academic progress.	94
• gifted teachers’ subject area knowledge.	91
• gifted teachers’ expertise in teaching students identified as gifted.	91
• the effect of gifted services on my child’s self-esteem.	89
• how quickly services were implemented following an initial request for evaluation.	87
• regular teachers’ subject area knowledge.	85
• regular teachers’ expertise in teaching students identified as gifted.	74
• the gifted services my child receives.	69
In regular classes, my child:	
• has friends at school.	95
• is learning skills that will be useful later on in life.	91
• is usually happy at school.	87
• has his/her social and emotional needs met at school.	84
• has creative outlets at school.	67
• is academically challenged at school.	65
In gifted classes, my child:	
• has friends at school.	96
• has his/her social and emotional needs met at school.	91
• is learning skills that will be useful later on in life.	91
• is usually happy at school.	89
• has creative outlets at school.	89
• is academically challenged at school.	78
My child’s regular teachers:	
• expect appropriate behavior.	98
• are available to speak with me.	96
• set appropriate goals for my child.	85
• have access to the latest information and technology.	83
• provide coursework that includes representation of diverse ethnic, racial, and other groups.	83

	% Yes
• give homework that meets my child’s needs.	82
• relate coursework to students’ future educational and professional pursuits.	76
• call me or send me notes about my child.	65
 My child’s gifted teachers:	
• expect appropriate behavior.	100
• are available to speak with me.	92
• provide coursework that includes representation of diverse ethnic, racial, • and other groups.	85
• set appropriate goals for my child.	84
• have access to the latest information and technology.	81
• relate coursework to students’ future educational and professional pursuits.	75
• give homework that meets my child’s needs.	67
• call me or send me notes about my child.	48
 My child’s home school:	
• treats me with respect.	90
• sends me information written in a way I understand.	88
• encourages me to participate in my child’s education.	84
• wants to hear my ideas.	74
• addresses my child’s individual needs.	68
• sends me information about activities and workshops for parents.	63
• involves me in developing my child’s Educational Plan (EP or IEP).	63
• implements my ideas.	61
• provides students identified as gifted with appropriate books and materials.	61
• makes sure I understand my child’s EP or IEP.	61
• informs me about all of the services available to my child.	57
• explains what I can do if I want to make changes to my child’s EP or IEP.	55
 My child’s 2nd school:	
• treats me with respect.	100
• wants to hear my ideas.	80
• addresses my child’s individual needs.	80
• provides students identified as gifted with appropriate books and materials.	60
• implements my ideas.	50
• encourages me to participate in my child’s education.	50
• informs me about all of the services available to my child.	50
• sends me information written in a way I understand.	50
• involves me in developing my child’s Educational Plan (EP or IEP).	50
• makes sure I understand my child’s EP or IEP.	50
• explains what I can do if I want to make changes to my child’s EP or IEP.	33

% Yes

- sends me information about activities and workshops for parents. 25

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

- have the option of taking a variety of vocational courses. 75
- are provided with career counseling. 63
- are provided with information about options for education after high school. 57
- are provided with the opportunity to participate in externships or mentorships. 50

Parent Participation

- I participate in school activities with my child. 93
- I have attended one or more meetings about my child during this school year. 74
- I am a member of the PTA/PTO. 54
- I attend School Advisory Committee meetings concerning school improvement. 28
- I have used parent support services in my area. 13
- I belong to an organization for parents of students identified as gifted. 0

APPENDIX E:
FORMS REVIEW

**Sumter County
Continuous Improvement Monitoring
Forms Review**

This forms review was completed as a component of the continuous improvement monitoring visit originally schedule for the week of November 8, 2004, and rescheduled to the week of December 6, 2004. The following district forms were compared to the requirements of applicable State Board of Education rules, the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), and applicable sections of Part 300, Title 34 Code of Federal Regulations (34 CFR 300). The review includes recommended revisions based on programmatic or procedural issues and concerns. The results of the review are detailed below and list the applicable sources used for the review.

The following are non-computerized forms submitted by the district:

<p>Parent Notification of Individual Educational Plan (IEP) Meeting Form <i>Parent Notification Letter Form CI-EP-003</i> 34 CFR 300.345</p>

This form contains the components for compliance.

Recommendation:

- Transition Planning to promote movement from School to Adult Living should include the phrase “beginning at age 14 or in the 8th grade.”

<p>Individual Educational Plan (IEP) Meeting Form <i>Individual Educational Plan Form CI-EP-008A – 8E</i> 34 CFR 300.347</p>

The following must be addressed:

- A statement of how the student’s progress toward the annual goals will be measured must be added.

<p>Informed Notice and Consent for Evaluation Form <i>Notice and Consent to Evaluate Form CI-EP-002</i> 34 CFR 300.503 and 300.505</p>

The following must be addressed:

- The statement for procedural safeguards must indicate “the parents of a child with a disability have protections under the procedural safeguards...”
- Two sources must be indicated for the parents to contact to assistance in understanding the provision of IDEA.

Informed Notice and Consent for Reevaluation

Form *Informed Notice and Consent For Re-evaluation Form CI-EP-011*

34 CFR 300.503 and 300.505

The following must be addressed:

- The statement for procedural safeguards must indicate “the parents of a child with a disability have protections under the procedural safeguards...”
- Two sources must be indicated for the parents to contact to assistance in understanding the provision of IDEA.

Recommendation:

- A statement that “No formal evaluation needed” should be added to the recommendation of formal evaluations area.

Notice and Consent for Initial Placement

Form *Notice and Consent for Placement Form CI-EP-006*

34 CFR 300.503 and 300.505

The following must be addressed:

- The statement for procedural safeguards must indicate “the parents of a child with a disability have protections under the procedural safeguards...”

Notice of Change in Placement Form

Form *Notification of Change in Placement and/or FAPE Form CI-EP-032*

34 CFR 300.503 and 300.505

The following must be addressed:

- The statement for procedural safeguards must indicate “the parents of a child with a disability have protections under the procedural safeguards...”

Notice of Change in FAPE

Form *Notification of Change in Placement and/or FAPE Form CI-EP-032*

34 CFR 300.503 and 300.505

The following must be addressed:

- The statement for procedural safeguards must indicate “the parents of a child with a disability have protections under the procedural safeguards...”

Informed Notice of Refusal

Form *Informed Notice of Refusal To Take A Specific Action Form CI-EP-029*

34 CFR 300.503

The following must be addressed:

- The statement for procedural safeguards must indicate “the parents of a child with a disability have protections under the procedural safeguards...”

Notice of Dismissal

Form Notice of Ineligibility or Dismissal Form CI-EP-005

34 CFR 300.503 and 300.505

The following must be addressed:

- The statement for procedural safeguards must indicate “the parents of a child with a disability have protections under the procedural safeguards...”

Recommendation:

- Clear evidence of reevaluation is required prior to dismissal. It should be indicated that an IEP team makes the dismissal decision on the form.

Notice of Ineligibility

Form Notice of Ineligibility or Dismissal Form CI-EP-005

34 CFR 300.503 and 300.505

The following must be addressed:

- The statement for procedural safeguards must indicate “the parents of a child with a disability have protections under the procedural safeguards...”

Recommendation:

- It should be clearly indicated that a staffing committee finds a student ineligible for exceptional student education services.

Documentation of Staffing Form

Form Staffing Report and Notice and Consent For Placement Form CI-EP-004

34 CFR 300.534, 300.503

The following must be addressed:

- The boxes designated as “approved” and “disapproved” must be changed to “reviewed” by the ESE Administrator/Designee review area.

Confidentiality of Information

Form Notification of Rights under FERPA For Elementary and Secondary Institutions Form PP-SR-016

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

This form contains the components for compliance.

Educational Plan

Form *Gifted Program Educational Plan (EP) Form CI-EP-102A-B*

This form contains the basic components for compliance.

APPENDIX F:
GLOSSARY OF ACRONYMS

Glossary of Acronyms

Bureau	Bureau of Exceptional Education and Student Services
CFR	Code of Federal Regulations
CIP	Continuous Improvement Plan
DOE	Department of Education
EH	Emotionally handicapped
EMH	Educable mentally handicapped
EP	Educational plan for gifted students
ESE	Exceptional Student Education
FAPE	Free Appropriate Public Education
FS	Florida Statutes
IAT	Intervention Assistance Team
IDEA	Individuals with Disabilities Education Act
IEP	Individual educational plan
LEA	Local education agency
LEP	Limited English proficient
OCR	Office for Civil Rights
S/LI	Speech/Language Impaired
SLP	Speech and Language Pathologist