

FINAL REPORT OF FOCUSED MONITORING OF
EXCEPTIONAL STUDENT EDUCATION PROGRAMS IN

FRANKLIN COUNTY

APRIL 22 - 26, 2002



FLORIDA DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
BUREAU OF INSTRUCTIONAL SUPPORT AND COMMUNITY SERVICES

FLORIDA DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION



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June 17, 2003

Ms. Jo Ann Gander, Superintendent
Franklin County School District
155 Avenue E
Apalachicola, Florida 32320

Dear Superintendent Gander:

We are pleased to provide you with the Final Report of Focused Monitoring of Exceptional Student Education Programs in Franklin County. The report from our visit on April 22-26, 2002, includes the system improvement plan proposed by your staff.

An update of outcomes achieved and/or a summary of related activities, as identified in your district's system improvement plan, must be submitted by December 30, 2003 and June and December of each school year for the next two years, unless otherwise noted on the improvement plan.

If my staff can be of any assistance as you continue to 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 Franklin County.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Shan Goff".

Shan Goff, Chief
Bureau of Instructional Support and Community Services

Enclosure

cc: Jimmy Gander, School Board Chairman
Members of the School Board
Barbara Sanders, School Board Attorney
School Principals
Brenda Wilson, ESE Director
Jim Warford, Chancellor

SHAN GOFF
Chief
Bureau of Instructional Support and Community Services

JIM HORNE
Commissioner of Education



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Franklin County School District
Focused Monitoring Visit
April 22-26, 2002

Executive Summary

During the week of April 22-26, 2002, the Florida Department of Education, Bureau of Instructional Support and Community Services, conducted an on-site review of the exceptional student education programs in Franklin County Public Schools. In its continuing efforts to focus the monitoring process on student educational outcomes, the Bureau has identified four key data indicators or “triggers.” Franklin County was selected for monitoring on the basis of its rate of participation in statewide assessments for students with disabilities. The results of the monitoring process are reported under eight categories or related areas that are considered to impact or contribute to the trigger. It was noted in the schools that an obvious and strong collaboration exists among ESE and regular education teachers. Students with disabilities seem to be accepted by their peers and in the school environments.

District Activities

Prior to the site visit, the district began to address activities related to the key data indicator in an attempt to be proactive and increase student participation in statewide assessments. The following is a summary of the district initiatives.

- Prepared and distributed a Memorandum from the ESE Director to principals, counselors, and ESE teachers, which explained extended time on the FCAT as allowable accommodations, and requesting schools to identify students for IEP revisions so that more students would take the FCAT in March, 2002.
- Pursuant to the Memorandum, IEP meetings were scheduled and conducted resulting in more ESE students participating in FCAT, especially in grades seven and eight.
- On January 7, 2002, the Counselor at Brown School conducted a workshop for teachers on accommodations for students with disabilities.
- All schools received in-service on accommodations by FDLRS/PAEC and received resource materials during March 4-8, 2002.
- Parent workshops were held on accommodations March 4, 2002 at school sites conducted by FDLRS/PAEC.
- The ESE Director reviewed student files at all schools and when necessary made sure the regular education teachers were provided copies of the accommodation page.

- An in-service on alternate assessment was provided by the State Alternate Assessment Project staff, for ESE teachers and guidance counselors from all schools, January 17-18, 2002. Participants received LCCE materials and assessments.

Summaries of Findings

Focus groups, Individual Interviews, Case Studies, and Classroom Visits

Testing and Instructional Accommodations

It appeared that students with disabilities were participating in the Florida Comprehensive Assessment Test (FCAT) as appropriate. However, school and district staff reported the perception that students received appropriate accommodations on the FCAT, while students and parents had a conflicting perspective. It should be noted that the low number of parent and student participants and survey respondents has the potential to impact the interpretation of the results in a negative manner.

Access to the General Education Curriculum

It appears that most students with disabilities in Franklin County have appropriate access to the general education curriculum in regular and ESE classes. In general, there is collaboration between ESE and regular education teachers, and accommodations and modifications are made to the extent necessary to allow students to participate in the general curriculum. Apalachicola High School did have some exceptions to the above, however, the number of students for which a concern was noted is not sufficient to infer a problem on a district-wide basis.

Preparation of Students to Take the FCAT

It appears that students with disabilities are adequately included in preparation activities for the FCAT. Parents are notified, as appropriate, and individual schools make efforts all year long to help students prepare for the test.

Staff Knowledge and Training

The district reported having offered and implemented ample training opportunities regarding FCAT and accommodations to all teachers at all schools.

Decision Making

It appears that decisions about participation in both the FCAT and the general education curriculum are made at IEP team meetings, and that students have appropriate access to both. There are no findings or concerns in this area.

Routine Assessments

Routine assessments are being used to track student progress. Academic progress is primarily followed, but some teachers also reported tracking behavioral and emotional progress as well. There are no findings or concerns in this area.

Stakeholder Opinions Related to the Trigger

The stakeholders in Franklin County had a wide variety of opinions and concerns regarding the participation of students with disabilities in the FCAT. One concern was that, overall, the staff

in Franklin County had more negative than positive opinions about the value of FCAT participation for students with disabilities. Opinions from school and/or district staff that the FCAT scores of students with disabilities could negatively affect overall school scores, or affect teacher wages, could certainly affect decisions on student FCAT participation.

Student Record and District Forms Reviews

Student Record Reviews

Individual findings for student records were noted in 17 areas, as noted above. Systemic findings were identified in the areas of measurable annual goals; short-term objectives or benchmarks; present levels of performance, goals and objectives which do not support the services on the IEP; the effect of the disability on involvement in the general curriculum; and, supports for school personnel. None of the records reviewed during this portion of the record review process were found to require a funding adjustment, although nine records were found to require a reconvening of the IEP team in order to develop measurable annual goals. A list of the students was provided under separate cover.

District Forms Review

Forms representing 13 areas were submitted to Bureau staff for a review to determine compliance with federal and state laws. A finding was noted on the Informed Notice of Dismissal and on the Annual Notice of Confidentiality.

System Improvement Plan

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

Monitoring Process

Authority

The Florida Department of Education, Bureau of Instructional Support and Community Services, in carrying out its roles of leadership, resource allocation, technical assistance, monitoring, and evaluation is required to: examine and evaluate procedures, records, and programs of exceptional student education; provide information and assistance to school districts; and, otherwise assist school districts in operating effectively and efficiently (Section 229.565, Florida Statutes). In accordance with the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), the Department is responsible for ensuring that the requirements of IDEA are carried out, and that each educational program for children with disabilities administered in the state, meets the educational requirements of the state (Section 300.600(a)(1) and (2) of Title 34, Code of Federal Regulations).

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.

Method

With guidance from a work group charged with the responsibility of recommending revisions to the Bureau's monitoring system, substantial revisions to the Bureau's monitoring practices were initiated during the 2000-2001 school year. Three types of monitoring processes were established as part of the system of monitoring and oversight. Those monitoring processes are identified as follows:

- Focused Monitoring
- Continuous Improvement/Self Assessment Monitoring
- Random Monitoring

During the 2000-2001 school year, the Bureau developed and piloted activities for focused monitoring in four districts, examining programs and services for students with disabilities and students identified as gifted. Based on staff and peer monitor feedback, along with further suggestions from the work group, the focused monitoring procedures were further developed and/or revised. It was also determined that the focused monitoring activities will examine only programs and services for students with disabilities.

Focused Monitoring

The purpose of the focused monitoring process is to implement a methodology that targets the Bureau's monitoring intervention on key data indicators ("triggers") that were identified as significant for educational outcomes for students. Through this process, the Bureau will use such

data to inform the monitoring process, thereby, implementing a strategic approach to intervention and commitment of resources that will improve student outcomes.

Key Data Indicators

Beginning in the 2000-2001 school year, the following triggers were recommended by the monitoring restructuring work group and were adopted for implementation by the Bureau. The triggers and their sources of data are

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

It is anticipated that these triggers will continue to inform the Bureau's focused monitoring process over a period of several years.

District Selection

Franklin County School District was selected for monitoring based on the results of a review of data submitted electronically to the Department of Education Information Database for Surveys 2, 3, 5, 9, and from the assessment files. The district was selected due to its having a low percentage of students with disabilities participating in the Florida Comprehensive Assessment Test (FCAT). When all the districts were ranked by percentage of the discrepancy of participation in the FCAT, Franklin was identified as having the lowest participation rate for students with disabilities.

On-Site Monitoring Activities

The on-site monitoring visit took place during the week of April 22-26, 2002. The on-site activities were conducted by a team composed of four Department of Education (DOE) staff and four University of Miami research staff.

On-site monitoring activities consisted of:

- interviews with district and school level staff to gather information about the participation in statewide assessment trigger from multiple sources offering different points of view
- focus group interviews with parents, students and teachers to provide a more in-depth perspective about the participation in statewide assessment trigger.
- student case studies involving classroom visits to investigate classroom practices and interventions that might contribute to whether or not an individual student participates in the statewide assessment

Prior to the on-site visit, Bureau staff notified district staff of the selection of the following schools to be visited based on the data related to the participation of students with disabilities in the statewide assessment (FCAT): Apalachicola High School, Carrabelle High School, Chapman

Elementary School, and H.G. Brown Elementary School. The on-site selection of students for the case studies at each school was based on students whose disability was such that they might reasonably have been expected to participate in FCAT testing but did not do so. Schools were asked to provide a listing of students who were

- identified as educable mentally handicapped (EMH), specific learning disabled (SLD), and/or emotionally handicapped (EH)
- identified as not participating in the statewide assessment (FCAT)

Off-Site Monitoring Activities

Surveys were 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, ESE and regular education teachers, and students with disabilities in grades 9-12. Results of the surveys will be discussed in the body of this report. Data from each of the surveys are included as Appendix A.

Parent Surveys

Surveys were mailed to 235 parents of students with disabilities with 29 parents responding. Two per cent of the sample was undeliverable. The survey that was sent to parents was printed in both English and Spanish and included a cover letter and postage paid reply envelope.

Teacher Surveys

Surveys for all teachers were mailed to each school with a memo explaining the trigger and the monitoring process. Seventy teachers from four schools responded to the teacher survey. Surveys were sent to 132 teachers with a response rate of 53% of the sample.

Student Surveys

For students with disabilities across the district in grades 9-12, a teacher conducted the student survey following a written script. Nineteen students from one school completed the survey. This is 37% of the sample of 52. Since participation in this survey was not appropriate for some students whose disabilities might impair their understanding of the survey, professional judgment was used to determine appropriate participants.

Reviews of Student Records and District Forms

At the Department of Education (DOE), Bureau staff members conducted a compliance review of student records that were randomly selected from the population of students with disabilities prior to the on-site monitoring visit. In addition, Bureau staff reviewed selected district forms and notices to determine if the required components were included. The results of the review of student records and district forms will be described in the report.

Reporting Process

Exit Conference

On the last day of the monitoring visit, a meeting was held with the district ESE administrator and district staff. Preliminary findings and concerns were shared at this time.

Preliminary Report

Following the on-site visit, Bureau staff prepares a written report. The preliminary report is sent to the district, and Bureau program specialists are assigned to assist the district in developing appropriate system improvements for necessary areas. Data for the report are compiled from sources that have been discussed previously in this document, including the following:

- LEA profile
- parent, teacher, and student surveys
- reviews of student records
- reviews of forms
- parent, teacher, and student focus groups
- case studies
- classroom visits
- interview with district and school staff

The report is developed to include the following elements: a description of the monitoring process, background information specific to the district, reported information from monitoring activities, and a summary. Appropriate appendices with data specific to the district accompany each report.

Final Report

In completing the system improvement section of the report, every effort should be made to link the system improvement activities for focused monitoring to the district's continuous improvement monitoring plan. 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.

Within 30 days of the district's receipt of the preliminary report, the district is required to submit a system improvement section, including strategies and activities targeting specific findings, to the Bureau for review. Within 30 days of the Bureau's review, a final report including the system improvement strategies will be released.

Background

Demographic Information

The data contained in this section of the report is a summary of the 2000-2001 data presented in the annual data profile provided to each district. Each element is reported over a period of three years and is presented with comparison data from the state and enrollment group for the district. Profiles are available from the Bureau and from individual districts upon request.

Franklin County has a total school population (PK-12) of 1,442 with 17% being identified as students with disabilities and 1% as gifted. Franklin County is considered a “small” district and is one of 25 districts in this enrollment group. Of the total Franklin school population: 82% are white; 16% are black; and less than 1% are Hispanic. Of the students with disabilities: 86% are white; 13% are black; and less than 1% are Hispanic. Sixty-two percent of the district’s population is receiving free/reduced lunch.

Franklin County is comprised of two elementary schools, two high schools, one adult center, and one charter school.

According to the 2000-2001 data, as of November 2001, Franklin County has the lowest participation of students with disabilities in the FCAT rate. An examination of the participation rate when Franklin County is compared to other districts in its enrollment group and the state shows a participation rate for students with disabilities that

- decreased for students in grades 4, 5, and 8 when compared to the 1998-99 rate in both reading and math
- decreased for students in grade 10 when compared to the 1999-00 rate in both reading and math
- was lower than its enrollment group and state rates

According to the data, 57% of students with disabilities graduated with a standard diploma in 2000-2001 while in 1998-99 and 1999-00 the rates were 100% and 57%, respectively, indicating a significant drop from 1998-99. The dropout rate for students with disabilities (10%) is higher than the dropout rate for all students in the district (4%). The dropout rate for students with disabilities is also higher than the districts with similar enrollment (5%) and the state (5%).

Franklin County reports that 32% of its students with disabilities (ages 6-21) spend 80% or more of their school week with their non-disabled peers. This rate is lower than both the enrollment group and state rates (46% and 48%, respectively).

The data also indicate a lower in-school suspension rate for students with disabilities (7%) than their non-disabled peers (8%) in Franklin. The out-of-school suspension rate for students with disabilities (10%) is higher than the rate for their non-disabled peers (6%). The in-school and out-of-school suspension rates for students with disabilities are lower than the state rate (13% and 15%, respectively) and that of districts of similar enrollment (16% and 14%, respectively).

It should be noted that Franklin County identified the participation rate of students with disabilities in the FCAT as the focus of its Continuous Improvement/Self Assessment Monitoring. The data collected through that process in addition to the data collected and reported through this focused monitoring approach is anticipated to contribute to the understanding of the issues.

Reporting of Information

Sources of Information

Data for this report are compiled from a variety of sources accessed before and during the on-site visit. This data includes

- compliance review of sixteen student records
- review of district forms
- surveys returned by twenty-nine parents
- surveys returned by seventy teachers representing four schools
- surveys completed by nineteen students representing one school
- one focus group interview with three parents representing three students with disabilities
- one focus group interview with ten teachers representing grades 1 through 6
- two student focus groups (group one consisting of three students pursuing a standard diploma and group two consisting of three students pursuing a special diploma)
- twenty-eight individual district and building level staff interviews
- nine case studies
- fifteen classroom visits at the four schools visited

The data generated through the surveys, focus group interviews, individual interviews, case studies, and classroom visits are summarized beginning on page 11, while the results from the review of student records and district forms are presented beginning on page 18 of this report. This report provides conclusions with regard to the participation in the FCAT trigger and specifically addresses related areas that may contribute to or impact the trigger. These areas include

- provision of testing and instructional accommodations
- access to the general education curriculum
- preparation of students to take the FCAT
- staff knowledge and training
- decision making process
- routine assessments
- general supervision
- stakeholder opinions related to the trigger

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 areas of concern 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 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.

District Activities

Prior to the site visit, the district began to address activities related to the key data indicator in an attempt to be proactive and increase student participation in statewide assessments. The following is a summary of the district initiatives.

- Prepared and distributed a Memorandum from the ESE Director to principals, counselors, and ESE teachers, which explained extended time on the FCAT as allowable accommodations, and requesting schools to identify students for IEP revisions so that more students would take the FCAT in March, 2002.
- Pursuant to the Memorandum, IEP meetings were scheduled and conducted resulting in more ESE students participating in FCAT, especially in grades seven and eight.
- On January 7, 2002, the Counselor at Brown School conducted a workshop for teachers on accommodations for students with disabilities.
- All schools received in-service on accommodations by FDLRS/PAEC and received resource materials during March 4-8, 2002.
- Parent workshops were held on accommodations March 4, 2002 at school sites conducted by FDLRS/PAEC.
- The ESE Director reviewed student files at all schools and when necessary made sure the regular education teachers were provided copies of the accommodation page.
- An in-service on alternate assessment was provided by the State Alternate Assessment Project staff, for ESE teachers and guidance counselors from all schools, January 17-18, 2002. Participants received LCCE materials and assessments.

Focus Group Interviews, Individual Interviews, Case Studies, and Classroom Visits

Testing and Instructional Accommodations

The interviews with district and school staff indicated that testing and instructional accommodations are individualized based on the students' needs. Accommodations implemented for students who participate in state and district wide assessments were cited as: extra time, reading directions, reading of math problems, repeating directions, restroom breaks, snacks, separate setting, small group setting, pencil grips, and stretching and moving breaks. In addition, 86% of the teachers responding to the teacher survey indicated that they felt that students are provided with appropriate accommodations when administered the FCAT. During the visits to the classrooms, Bureau staff observed instructional accommodations, including: small group instruction, use of peers, assistance with taking notes, one-on-one paraprofessional assistance, modified work assignments, and use of extended time to complete assignments.

Sixty-two percent of the parents who returned a survey (across all grade levels) indicated that discussions were held during their child's IEP meeting about whether their child should take the FCAT and whether they should receive accommodations during testing. Two of the three parents who participated in the focus group interview disagreed about the level of FCAT participation among students with disabilities in the district. One parent expressed shock that Franklin County was being monitored for having a low rate of FACT participation while one parent maintained that not enough students with disabilities were tested. All three parents report that their children took the FCAT this year. Two of the parents reported that their children were

provided with extended time during the FCAT administration. One parent indicated that an adaptive technology device was supposed to be used as an accommodation, but was not.

The three students in the special diploma group who were interviewed all said they did not take the FCAT, however, it was reported by district and school staff that many students who are removed from the regular classroom setting for the majority of the day did take the FCAT. On the other hand, the three students in the regular diploma group indicated taking the FCAT. However, these students reported not receiving accommodations on the FCAT, a statement that is supported by the student survey results that indicated that only 44% of responding students reported having received accommodations on the FCAT. In addition, most of the focus group students reported feeling ill-prepared to take the FCAT. The math section was viewed as being particularly difficult, in part, because it included items they had not covered in their classes, such as algebra. For classroom assignments, 100% of the students who responded to the student survey indicated they are given extra time as an accommodation. However, this percentage is based on a return of only 19 of 52 surveys representing only one school.

In summary, it appeared that students with disabilities were participating in the FCAT as appropriate. However, school and district staff reported the perception that students received appropriate accommodations on the FCAT, while students and parents had a conflicting perspective. It should be noted that the low number of parent and student participants and survey respondents has the potential to impact the interpretation of the results in a negative manner.

Access to the General Education Curriculum

It is noteworthy that Franklin County's percentage of students with disabilities graduating with a standard diploma is higher than the other districts in Franklin's enrollment group and the state averages. In order for students to graduate with a standard diploma, they must pass the FCAT, using general education curriculum content.

Individual interviews with staff from the schools indicated that ESE students have access to the general curriculum in "mainstreamed" settings. Resource rooms are used to provide assistance with assignments, special projects such as the science fair, and test taking. It was reported that students in the regular classroom setting are provided with one-on-one instruction when they are in the resource room. Peer tutors are also used to help the ESE students. Generally, the interviews did not elaborate on the students' access to the general education curriculum for those students with disabilities who are not receiving instruction in regular education classes. In addition, in some cases, it was difficult to determine what curriculum the regular education classes followed.

Two of the parents participating in the focus group interview reported that their children were accessing the same curriculum and materials as regular education students, although below grade level. Conversely, the other participant was concerned that her child was not given access to the regular education curriculum. The teachers who participated in their focus group interview believed that the materials used with students with disabilities are appropriate and that students are taught the general education curriculum with modifications. Regular education teachers reported working collaboratively with ESE teachers to help students with disabilities.

Students who participated in the standard diploma focus group interview were familiar with the two diploma options, but had some misconceptions about the opportunities available after high school with each type of diploma. Students reported that accommodations were provided in regular education classes such as extra help from school staff and additional time to complete assignments.

Analysis of Franklin County's student responses to the surveys reported the following percentages of ESE students participating in regular education classes:

- Electives (i.e., physical education, art, music) 76%
- Social Studies 65%
- Vocational (i.e., woodshop, computers) 56%
- Science 50%
- English 44%
- Math 38%

The classroom visits at Apalachicola High, Carrabelle High, Chapman Elementary, and H.G. Brown Elementary Schools indicated that, generally

- instructional strategies are individualized (with some exceptions at Apalachicola High)
- skills are taught and assessed in the context of real life activities and daily routines
- students participate in individual, small group and large group instruction (with some exceptions at Apalachicola High)
- students use age appropriate curriculum and activities
- each student spends most of his/her time engaged in learning activities
- instructional prompts and assistance used are individualized and based on skill and student performance
- students are exposed to culturally relevant curricula (with an exception at Apalachicola High)
- students have appropriate access to general education curriculum
- teachers provide students with accommodations indicated on the IEP (with an exception at Apalachicola High)
- schedules reflect a variety of instructional formats for each learner including independent work, small group, one-to-one instruction, socialization, and free time (with an exception at Apalachicola High)

Eighty-seven percent of the teachers responding to the survey indicated that, in order to provide students with disabilities access to the general curriculum, students are placed in regular education classes whenever possible. Seventy-four percent reported that the general curriculum is taught in ESE classes, whenever possible. The case studies verified that generally students are participating in the general education curriculum (and classroom) for electives such as physical education, music, and library and in academic subject areas such as science and social studies. For three of the students in the case studies (total number of case studies = 9) who spend at least part of their time in an ESE classroom, their instruction in ESE classes was described as the general education curriculum. Access to the general education curriculum in an ESE classroom appears to occur for many students identified as EH.

One area of concern, when examined in conjunction with the *Testing and Instructional Accommodations* section above, is the perception of the three focus group students that they did not feel prepared for the math section of the FCAT and, as stated previously in this section, only 38% of the student survey respondents reported having a regular education math class. This perception is corroborated in part by the student survey, which indicates that only about two-thirds of student respondents felt that their math classes gave them practice for the kinds of problems they would be doing on the FCAT. This is an area which may warrant further examination by the district.

In summary, the data indicates that there is a possible concern in the district about students having access to the general education math curriculum that may impact student performance on the FCAT. However, it appears that most students with disabilities in Franklin County have appropriate access to the general education curriculum in regular and ESE classes. In general, there is collaboration between ESE and regular education teachers, and accommodations and modifications are made to the extent necessary to allow students to participate in the general curriculum. Apalachicola High School did have some exceptions to the above, however, the number of students for which a concern was noted is not sufficient to infer a problem on a district-wide basis.

Preparation of Students to Take the FCAT

The results from interviews with district and school personnel indicated that students who are planning to take the FCAT are being prepared through a number of approaches during school, including:

- remedial education classes
- the FCAT Explorer program
- Blast Off series,
- Computer programs at the CCC lab
- FCAT preparation activities
- simulations of FCAT for reading and math
- Saxon Math
- Saxon Phonics

Seventy-six percent of the teachers responding to the survey indicated that their school provided teachers with FCAT test preparation materials. The case studies and classroom visits verified that students are provided with test taking strategies, and that standard test preparation materials and activities are used. For individual students, teachers reported a consideration of the student's abilities in including them in preparation activities, or, as appropriate, planning to discuss the possible inclusion of students in at least a portion of the FCAT to the IEP team. In addition, Carrabelle High School and Chapman Elementary School reported offering a workshop and conducting an open house for parents, students, and teachers to encourage preparation for the FCAT.

Two of the three parents who participated in the focus group interview felt that their children were adequately prepared for the FCAT, the other did not. The two parents stated that they were given information about how to help their children prepare for the FCAT, including receiving

flyers with guidance on how to prepare their children for the test and being made aware that a website with test practice examples was available.

The students who participated in the focus group interviews reported that the school did not offer supplemental FCAT preparation outside of normal classes. Moreover, participants believed extra support and tutoring were not made available to students who had failed the FCAT and were planning to retake the test.

In summary, it appears that students with disabilities are adequately included in preparation activities for the FCAT. Parents are notified, as appropriate, and individual schools make efforts all year long to help students prepare for the test. Again, while the student focus group reported overall dissatisfaction with the preparations, it should be noted that there were only three participants in the group.

Staff Knowledge and Training

The district reported having provided training related to the participation of students with disabilities in state and district-wide assessments, provision of testing accommodations, and diploma options for students with disabilities. All the teachers who participated in the focus group interview and most teachers who were interviewed reported that they received FCAT preparation materials, reference manuals, and information about using appropriate accommodations and modifications. Through district-wide and school-based staff development activities, regular education teachers and ESE teachers can receive the same training and information. It was reported that every school was sent a memo and had a training meeting during which the FCAT and accommodations were discussed. It was also reported that training concerning the use of testing accommodations was provided by PAEC. Successful workshops for parents, as well as faculty, were also reported for two schools.

Results from the school-based interviews indicated that the participation in and effectiveness of the training on the FCAT and implementation of accommodations was problematic. When building level personnel were asked about FCAT and/or accommodations training opportunities in which they had participated, many were unaware or unclear about the training (especially at Apalachicola High). Other teachers, from Brown Elementary school, stated that there was a training session, but they could not remember the details. At two of the schools, staff reported that they attended the training, but had difficulty implementing what they learned. Two teachers reported using the same strategies for both ESE and regular education students to participate in the FCAT.

In summary, while the district reported having offered and implemented ample training opportunities regarding FCAT and accommodations to all teachers at all schools, teachers generally did not have a clear recollection of having participated in training. In addition, of those who recalled the trainings, few could identify instances in which they had implemented the information taught.

Decision Making

Through interviews, school staff identified the following factors that are considered when deciding whether or not a student with a disability will participate in state and district-wide assessments:

- level of functioning
- mastery of Sunshine State Standards
- severity of the disability
- academic strengths and weaknesses
- cognitive ability
- need for intense intervention to succeed in daily life
- need for more accommodation or modification than others
- ability to sit
- test taking ability
- reading ability
- anxiety level and emotional needs
- physical needs and abilities
- type of diploma option (standard or special)
- parental input

It was reported through interviews with school staff that the decision about whether the student will participate in the FCAT and district-wide testing is made at the IEP meeting by the team. This was verified through the case studies done at school sites. In addition, 62% of the parents responding to the survey indicated that their child's participation in the FCAT was discussed at the IEP meeting.

It was also reported that curricular decisions were made by the IEP team at the time of the IEP meeting. One hundred percent of the 19 students who responded to the survey indicated having had input in the decision about which diploma they would work toward. In addition, most of the building level interviewees believed all or almost all of the ESE students involved in the general education curriculum participated in the FCAT. There was one statement to the contrary indicating that ESE students involved in vocational courses, physical education, science, and social studies are not taking the FCAT. However, this respondent did state that the decision as to whether students participate in the general curriculum is based upon behavior or cognitive level, and not on categorical label. This statement was verified in that many students identified as EH or SLD who do not participate in regular classes for the majority of the school day did take the FCAT.

In summary, it appears that decisions about participation in both the FCAT and the general education curriculum are made at IEP team meetings, and that students have appropriate access to both. There are no findings or concerns in this area.

Routine Assessments

Six of the nine case studies indicated that students are making progress. This information was gathered from the results of alternative assessments such as the Brigance, interviews with teachers, and reviews of student records. However, in one case, the student was actually

reported as losing ground academically. Behavioral and emotional problems appeared to be affecting the student, who was noted as not making academic progress. The classroom visits generally documented that the teachers are providing students with feedback on daily assignments and work. In the majority of cases, there was also evidence of the use of alternative forms of assessing classroom assignments and homework. In summary, routine assessments are being used to track student progress. Academic progress is primarily followed, and some teachers also reported tracking behavioral and emotional progress as well. There are no findings or concerns in this area.

Stakeholder Opinions Related to the Trigger

Through interviews and focus groups, the members of the monitoring team asked district and school staff for their opinions related to the reasons that Franklin County has a low rate of students with disabilities participating in the FCAT. District and school staff conveyed their opinions on the advantages and disadvantages of students with disabilities participating in and being exempt from taking the FCAT. School and district staff reported some benefits in taking the FCAT, including:

- FCAT provides a way to assess student performance
- FCAT prepares students for high school and the opportunity to pursue a standard diploma and possibly attend college
- FCAT participation provides students with experience in taking tests
- ESE students feel they are part of the group
- ESE students feel that their skills are valued

School and district staff also had opinions about the disadvantages of participation in the FCAT, which included:

- Students with disabilities taking the FCAT will experience frustration, pressure, tension, and lower self-esteem
- Labeling schools according to FCAT scores does not provide a comprehensive picture of the school
- Some students are seen as having limited cognitive abilities so that it may not be appropriate for them to take the FCAT
- The FCAT is viewed as a barrier to students with disabilities being awarded a standard diploma

District and school staff provided their opinions on the issues surrounding the participation of students with disabilities in state and district-wide assessments and their suggestions on how to address those issues. The personal perspectives are reported below.

- One teacher said it is good to include all students in the FCAT but, all students should be treated the same.
- Some teachers felt that there should be alternative testing approaches for measuring the performance of students with disabilities who are pursuing a standard diploma.
- Concern was expressed about the emphasis on test taking skills instead of providing an education for students.

- Concern was expressed about students who are struggling with the “basics” and now are confronted with a test that contains page after page of higher level computations.
- Concern was expressed about students taking the FCAT and feeling that they are failures and consequently giving up.
- Scheduling time for ESE students to prepare for and to take the test is a problem.
- The test results should be positive and focus on what a student gets right and not on a low score.
- Suggestions for changes in the testing included allowing off-level testing and allowing reading comprehension sections to be read aloud to a student. Some students may be able to comprehend and answer questions, but not decode the material. Testing off level could provide more information for students who do not read on grade level.
- One respondent was concerned about the length of the test for students with disabilities and suggested that a shorter version be developed.

In summary, the stakeholders in Franklin County had a wide variety of opinions and concerns regarding the participation of students with disabilities in the FCAT. One concern was that, overall, the staff in Franklin County had more negative than positive opinions about the value of FCAT participation for students with disabilities. Opinions from school and/or district staff that the FCAT scores of students with disabilities could negatively affect overall school scores, or affect teacher wages, could certainly affect decisions on student FCAT participation.

Student Record and District Form Reviews

Student Record Reviews

A total of sixteen student records, randomly selected from the population of students with disabilities and excluding those identified as speech only, were reviewed from four schools in Franklin County. The records were sent to the DOE for review by Bureau staff prior to the on-site visit.

Of the sixteen IEPs reviewed, all were current. Compliance with the requirements of federal and state laws in the areas of reevaluations and change of placement or services was noted on all IEPs reviewed. Specific items were predetermined by the DOE to be subject to federal funding adjustments or to requiring the reconvening of the IEP team, as noted in the Focused Monitoring Manual. None of the records reviewed during this portion of the record review process were found to require a funding adjustment, although nine records were found to require a reconvening of the IEP team in order to develop measurable annual goals.

There were several areas of non-compliance that appeared to be systemic in nature. In the area of measurable annual goals, 14 of the 16 records reviewed had at least one goal that was not measurable. Of those, nine lacked a majority of measurable goals. “Will express self effectively in print” does not clearly describe a specific activity or level of achievement the student should attain. Additionally, the use of PASSD expectations as goals, out of the context in which they were written, does not promote development of the goals to meet the needs of standard diploma students. IEP teams for students whose IEPs contained less than a majority of measurable goals will need to be reconvened in order to assure compliance. These students will be identified under separate cover.

In addition to the lack of measurable annual goals, objectives for 10 of the 16 IEPs were not measurable or did not correspond to the goal and/or needs identified in the present level of educational performance. Objectives should include specific tasks or activities that, when assessed, will indicate student progress toward the goal. The use of overly broad annual goals contributes to difficulty in developing appropriate short-term objectives or benchmarks.

In six of the records reviewed, the present level of educational performance, goals and objectives did not support the services indicated on the IEP. For some of these, the students were receiving all academic instruction from ESE teachers in self-contained settings, and had only one annual goal. Separate academic goals with accompanying objectives would provide a clearer picture of student needs. For other IEPs, the present level of performance and annual goals and objectives were not clear enough to determine if they supported the services indicated on the IEPs.

For six student records, the statement of how the student's disability affects their involvement in the general curriculum was not clearly described. The terms "mild," "moderate," and "high," do not clearly provide a description of the effect of the student's disability. This statement should be a narrative description that explains the specific impact that the student's disability has on his involvement in general education.

In the area of supports for school personnel, nine IEPs provided inaccurate information. Some of these records indicated activities such as "specialized materials," "reteach key skills daily," "increase practice," "research key skills," and "small group instruction". Activities such as the ones listed are accommodations for students, not supports for school personnel.

In addition, some of the records contained instances of noncompliance that were not of a systemic nature. These individual findings are as follows:

- the individual designated as interpreter of instructional implications was unclear
- the present level of educational performance did not accurately reflect information reported in student evaluation
- special education services not specific
- incorrect information provided in supplementary aids and services section
- lack of identification of alternate assessment when student was exempt from FCAT
- explanation of the extent to which the student will not participate with nondisabled peers conflicted with other information IEP
- lack of explanation of why state and district assessment is inappropriate for student
- initiation and duration dates of services listed "one year" without providing actual dates of services
- frequency of services and accommodations and modifications listed as "as needed" and did not provide specific information
- strengths of student not identified
- no evidence that the results of the most recent evaluation were considered
- no evidence that the results of state or district assessments were considered (four students)
- no evidence that the communication needs of the student were considered

- no evidence that the progress of the student was reported to parents as often as progress of non-disabled peers is reported (two students)
- incomplete reports of student progress (no dates, three students)
- no evidence that the student's preferences were taken into account in the development of the transition IEP
- for a Pre-K student, no description of how the disability affects the student's participation in appropriate activities

In summary, systemic findings were identified in the areas of measurable annual goals; short-term objectives or benchmarks; present levels of performance, goals and objectives which do not support the services on the IEP; the effect of the disability on involvement in the general curriculum; and, supports for school personnel. Individual findings for student records were noted in 17 areas, as noted above.

District Form Reviews

Forms representing the thirteen areas identified below were submitted to Bureau staff for a review to determine compliance with federal and state laws. A finding was noted on one of the forms and one notice. The district was notified of the specific findings via a separate letter dated June 7, 2002. An explanation of the specific findings may be found in appendix D.

- *Parent Notification of Individual Educational Plan (IEP) Meeting*
- *IEP Forms*
- *Notice and Consent for Initial Placement*
- *Informed Notice and Consent for Evaluation*
- *Informed Notice of Reevaluation*
- *Notification of Change of Placement*
- *Notification of Change of FAPE*
- *Informed Notice of Refusal*
- *Documentation of Staffing/Eligibility Determination*
- *Informed Notice of Dismissal**
- *Notice: Not Eligible for Exceptional Student Placement*
- *Summary of Procedural Safeguards*
- *Annual Notice of Confidentiality**

* indicates findings that require immediate attention

Summary

Based on the findings reported in this report, the district is expected to develop a system improvement plan in collaboration with Bureau staff. This plan should specify activities and strategies to address the identified findings in the following areas:

- Provision of Testing and Instructional Accommodations
- Access to the General Education Curriculum
- Preparation of Students to Take the FCAT
- Staff Knowledge and Training
- Decision Making Process
- Routine Assessments
- Stakeholder Opinions Related to the Trigger
- Student Records Review
- District Forms Review

Following is a summary of the findings in each of the identified areas that requires an improvement plan, as well as a format for completion of the system improvement plan.

Franklin County Focused Monitoring Visit 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.

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Category	Findings	ESE	All	System Improvement Strategy	Evidence of Change (Including target date)
Testing and Instructional Accommodations	1. There is a need for monitoring by the district to ensure that students receive FCAT accommodations as specified on their IEPs.	<u>X</u>		Staffing specialist will review the IEP with the teacher and counselor to ensure that students are receiving the accommodations on the IEP. Once the review is done, any discrepancies will be worked out by the specialist and teacher and communicated in writing to the ESE Director and school principal. This review will occur prior to FCAT testing in the spring. The specialist will document that any prior problems have been cleared up and shall document these in writing. The counselor shall sign off indicating the veracity of the written documentation. (ESE Department will prepare a report format listing student and accommodations to be provided based on the IEP, and a “sign-off” section for documentation that the accommodations have been provided.)	Conduct a random sample review of IEP’s to ensure that all accommodations are provided as indicated on the IEP. Review will include classroom observations and reviews of student work samples. Submit a report of review to the Bureau by June 2003 and June 2004.

Category	Findings	ESE	All	System Improvement Strategy	Evidence of Change (Including target date)
Access to the General Curriculum	2. Some students with disabilities do not have access to the general math curriculum to the extent indicated on their IEPs.	X		2. The ESE Director will appoint a task force to study the issues surrounding the availability of proper scheduling and regular sunshine state standards, and to provide math instruction, whether through parallel general courses and /or inclusion models for instruction in basic math in the general education environment. The task force shall be comprised of ESE teachers, students, regular teachers, a principal, assistant, a counselor, and a parent. Issues to be studied include but are not limited to (a) the extent to which ESE teachers teaching general courses are using it according to State guidelines (b) the extent to which ESE teachers are trained to provide content instruction in mathematics, (c) extent to which appropriate accommodations in classroom instruction and testing are carried out.	Conduct a random sample review of IEP's to ensure that the student's class schedule reflects appropriate class placement based on the individual needs of the students as indicated on the IEP. Ensure students are receiving appropriate curriculum and courses. Submit a report of the review to the Bureau by June 2003 and June 2004
Preparation of Students to Take the FCAT	No significant findings.				

Category	Findings	ESE	All	System Improvement Strategy	Evidence of Change (Including target date)
Staff Training and Knowledge	3. There is a need for effective teacher training in the implementation of testing accommodations.	X		Staff development activities will be planned, scheduled, trainers identified, resources identified, and requests made to appropriate agencies/personnel, including but not limited to PAEC, ISRD, and DOE. In-service will be provided, and follow-up observations will be made in the classrooms by selected staff. Teachers will be requested to specify on their in-service evaluation forms, how they intend to follow-up on use of knowledge in classroom application, and to make appropriate accommodations as required by the "No Child Left Behind Act."	Conduct a random sample review of IEP's to ensure identified compliance components are successfully addressed. Submit a report of the review to the Bureau by June 2003 and June 2004.
Decision Making	No significant findings.				
Routine Assessments	No significant findings.				
Opinions Related to the Trigger	No significant findings.				

Category	Findings	ESE	All	System Improvement Strategy	Evidence of Change (Including target date)
Records and Forms Reviews	<p>4. Five areas of noncompliance determined to be systemic in nature</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • measurable annual goals • short-term objectives or benchmarks • present levels of performance, goals and objectives which do not support the services on the IEP • the effect of the disability on involvement in the general curriculum • supports for school personnel 	X		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff development for writing quality IEPs was provided by PAEC at the beginning of the 2002-2003 school year for ESE teachers, therapists, and guidance counselors. • A staffing specialist position was approved by the School Board and a person employed. • The staffing specialist will review the targeted areas of non-compliance of IEP meetings and initiate changes as needed. • Franklin County will explore purchasing Synergistic frameworks A3 IEP program, which has compliance checks built in before IEPs are finalized. • The PAEC Admissions and Placement Manual will be revised in summer 2003 to strengthen policies and procedures for quality IEPs. • In summer 2003, the ESE Director and staffing specialist will monitor IEPs for compliance, with a specific and heavy focus on goals, objectives, benchmarks, relationships of all components to each other, supports for personnel, and effects of disability. Results of monitoring will be individually shared with ESE teachers, to discuss the findings. One-to-one assistance will be provided for the teachers whose IEPs do not meet quality standards. 	<p>Monitoring reports; 2002-2003 A&P Manual; in-service evaluation forms; staff calendars' travel records, and IEP Review checklists.</p> <p>Begin August 4, 2002, complete by September 2003.</p>

Category	Findings	ESE	All	System Improvement Strategy	Evidence of Change (Including target date)
Records and Forms Reviews (cont.)	5. Forms review findings that require immediate attention: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Eligibility Determination and Assignment Staffing Form</i> • <i>Annual Notice of Confidentiality</i> 	X		<p>The ESE #12 Staffing Form Shall be revised to add dismissal based on IEP review, as per DOE suggestion.</p> <p>The ESE #24, Annual Notice of Confidentiality shall be revised to specify that requests will be honored within thirty (30) days.</p>	<p>Copy of revised #12 form review, as per DOE suggestion. (see attached copy-already revised by August 2002.)</p> <p>Copy of revised #24 form (see attached copy-already revised by August 2002.)</p>

Appendix A- Survey Results

**Franklin County School District
 Focused Monitoring Report
 Parent Survey Results**

Responding to the need to increase the involvement of parents and families of students with disabilities in evaluating the educational services provided to their children, the Florida Department of Education, Bureau of Instructional Support and Community Services contracted with the University of Miami to develop and administer a parent survey in conjunction with the Bureau's district monitoring activities. In 1999, the parent survey was administered in 12 districts; in 2000, it was administered in 15 districts and two special schools; and, in 2001, it was administered in four districts.

In conjunction with the 2002 Franklin County monitoring activities, the parent survey was sent to parents of the 235 students with disabilities for whom complete addresses were provided by the district. A total of 29 parents (PK, n=3; K-5, n=16; 6-8, n=7; 9-12, n=3) representing 12% of the sample, returned the survey. Six surveys were returned as undeliverable, representing 2% of the sample.

Parents responded "yes" or "no" to each survey item, indicating that they either agreed or disagreed with the statement. The district response for each item was calculated as the percentage of respondents who agreed with the item.

	%
Accommodations	
• At my child's IEP meetings we have talked about whether my child should get accommodations (special testing conditions), for example, extra time.	63
• My child's teachers give students with disabilities extra time or different assignments, if needed.	89
Curriculum	
• My child's school provides students with disabilities updated books and materials.	64
• My child's school offers a variety of vocational courses, such as computers and business technology.	73
Student Preparation	
N/A	
Staff Training	
N/A	
Decision Process	
• At my child's IEP meetings we have talked about whether my child would take the FCAT (Florida Comprehensive Assessment Test).	62

Routine Assessment

N/A

General Supervision

- At my child's IEP meetings we have talked about whether my child would take the FCAT (Florida Comprehensive Assessment Test). 62
- At my child's IEP meetings we have talked about whether my child should get accommodations (special testing conditions), for example, extra time. 63
- At my child's IEP meetings we have talked about ways that my child could spend time with students in regular classes. 59

Other Items

- Overall, I am satisfied with the amount of time my child spends with regular education students. 75
- Overall, I am satisfied with the way special education teachers and regular education teachers work together. 72
- Overall, I am satisfied with the exceptional education services my child receives. 64
- Overall, I am satisfied with my child's academic progress. 67
- Overall, I am satisfied with the effect of exceptional student education on my child's self-esteem. 59
- Overall, I am satisfied with the level of knowledge and experience of school personnel. 63
- Overall, I am satisfied with the way I am treated by school personnel. 75
- Overall, I am satisfied with how quickly services are implemented following an IEP (Individualized Educational Plan) decision. 79
- My child is usually happy at school. 86
- My child spends most of the school day involved in productive activities. 76
- My child has friends at school. 93
- My child is learning skills that will be useful later on in life. 79
- My child is aiming for a standard diploma. 85
- At my child's IEP meetings we have talked about whether my child needed services beyond the regular school year. 54
- At my child's IEP meetings we have talked about which diploma my child may receive. 45
- At my child's IEP meetings we have talked about the requirements for different diplomas. 36
- My child's teachers set appropriate goals for my child. 71
- My child's teachers expect my child to succeed. 90
- My child's teachers give homework that meets my child's needs. 55
- My child's teachers call me or send me notes about my child. 81
- My child's teachers are available to speak with me. 86
- My child's school wants to hear my ideas. 67

	%
• My child's school encourages me to participate in my child's education.	74
• My child's school informs me about all of the services available to my child.	62
• My child's school addresses my child's individual needs.	74
• My child's school makes sure I understand my child's IEP.	64
• My child's school explains what I can do if I want to make changes to my child's IEP.	59
• My child's school sends me information written in a way I understand.	70
• My child's school sends me information about activities and workshops for parents.	54
• My child's school encourages acceptance of students with disabilities.	81
• My child's school involves students with disabilities in clubs, sports, or other activities.	56
• My child's school provides information to students about education and jobs after high school.	48
• My child's school does all it can to keep students from dropping out of school.	65
• My child's school offers students with disabilities the classes they need to graduate with a standard diploma.	68
• I have attended one or more meetings about my child during this school year.	88
• I participate in school activities with my child.	88
• I am a member of the PTA/PTO.	26
• I belong to an organization for parents of students with disabilities.	8
• I have used parent support services in my area.	19
• I am comfortable talking about my child with school staff.	79
• I attend School Advisory Committee meetings concerning school improvement.	43

**Franklin County School District
 Focused Monitoring Report
 Teacher Survey Results**

In order to obtain the perspective of teachers who provide services to students with disabilities, the Florida Department of Education, Bureau of Instructional Support and Community Services contracted with the University of Miami to develop and administer a teacher survey in conjunction with the Bureau’s focused monitoring activities. The survey was administered for the first time during the 2002 monitoring year.

Surveys were sent to all teachers at all schools in Franklin County. A total of 70 teachers from four schools responded. The results are compiled below. Percentages reported are based on the numbers of respondents replying that their school was “consistent” in the areas surveyed.

HIGH	%
(more than 75% of respondents reported consistency in these areas)	
• To keep students with disabilities from dropping out, my school develops IEPs according to student needs.	91
• To keep students with disabilities from dropping out, my school makes an effort to involve parents in their child's education.	90
• To provide students with disabilities access to the general curriculum, my school places students with disabilities into general education classes whenever possible.	87
• To help students with disabilities that take the FCAT, my school provides students with appropriate testing accommodations.	86
• To keep students with disabilities from dropping out, my school allows students to make up credits lost due to disability-related absences.	85
• To keep students with disabilities from dropping out, my school conducts ongoing assessments of individual students' performance.	82
• To keep students with disabilities from dropping out, my school ensures that classroom material is grade- and age-appropriate.	81
• To provide students with disabilities access to the general curriculum, my school modifies and adapts curriculum for students as needed.	79
• To help students with disabilities that take the FCAT, my school gives students in ESE classes updated textbooks.	77
• To provide students with disabilities access to the general curriculum, my school ensures that students with disabilities feel comfortable when taking classes with general education students.	76
• To help students with disabilities who take the FCAT my school provides teachers with FCAT test preparation materials.	76

Teacher Survey Results
MIDDLE %
(more than 25% but fewer than 75% of respondents
reported consistency in these areas)

- To provide students with disabilities access to the general curriculum, my school ensures that the general education curriculum is taught in ESE classes to the maximum extent possible. 74
- To keep students with disabilities from dropping out, my school ensures that classroom material is culturally appropriate. 74
- To provide students with disabilities access to the general curriculum, my school addresses each student's individual needs. 73
- To keep students with disabilities from dropping out, my school encourages participation of students with disabilities in extracurricular activities. 70
- To provide students with disabilities access to the general curriculum, my school encourages collaboration among ESE teachers, GE teachers and service providers. 68
- To help students with disabilities that take the FCAT, my school aligns curriculum for students with the standards that are tested on the FCAT. 67
- To keep students with disabilities from dropping out, my school provides positive behavioral supports. 65
- To ensure that as many students with disabilities as possible graduate with a standard diploma, my school encourages students to aim for a standard diploma when appropriate. 63
- To ensure that as many students with disabilities as possible graduate with a standard diploma, my school informs students through the IEP process of the different diploma options and their requirements. 61
- To provide students with disabilities access to the general curriculum, my school offers teachers professional development opportunities regarding curriculum and support for students with disabilities. 59
- To keep students with disabilities from dropping out, my school ensures that students are taught strategies to manage their behavior as needed. 59
- To provide students with disabilities access to the general curriculum, my school provides adequate support to GE teachers who teach students with disabilities. 54
- To keep students with disabilities from dropping out, my school provides social skills training to students as needed. 52
- To ensure that as many students with disabilities as possible graduate with a standard diploma, my school provide extra help to students whom need to retake the FCAT. 51
- To encourage students with disabilities to stay in school, my school implements an IEP transition plan for each student. 37
- To encourage students with disabilities to stay in school, my school provides students with information about options after graduation. 34
- To keep students with disabilities from dropping out, my school implements a dropout prevention program. 29

Teacher Survey Results

LOW

%

(fewer than 25% of the respondents reported consistency in these areas)

- To encourage students with disabilities to stay in school, my school coordinates on-the-job training with outside agencies. 19
- To encourage students with disabilities to stay in school, my school teaches transition skills for future employment and independent living. 17
- To encourage students with disabilities to stay in school, my school provides students with job training. 13

**Franklin County School District
 Focused Monitoring Report
 Student Survey Results**

In order to obtain the perspective of students with disabilities who receive services from public school districts, the Florida Department of Education, Bureau of Instructional Support and Community Services contracted with the University of Miami to develop and administer a student survey in conjunction with the Bureau’s focused monitoring activities. The survey was administered for the first time during the 2002 monitoring year.

We sent surveys for 52 students and received 19 surveys back from 1 school representing 37% of the sample. Surveys and administration scripts were sent to all schools in Franklin County with students in grades 9-12. Only one school submitted surveys for a return rate of 37% of the total sample of students with disabilities in grades 9-12. The percentage of students with a reply of “yes” to each survey question is given below.

EXTRA HIGH	% Yes
(100% of respondents replied with “yes”)	
• At my school: ESE teachers understand ESE students' needs.	100
• At my school: ESE teachers give students extra time or different assignments, if needed.	100
• At my school: ESE teachers give students extra help, if needed.	100
• At my school: ESE teachers believe that ESE students can learn.	100
• At my school, ESE students get the help they need to well in school.	100
• At my school, ESE students fit in at school.	100
• I had a say in the decision about which diploma I would get.	100
HIGH	% Yes
(more than 75% of respondents replied with “yes”)	
• At my school, ESE students are treated fairly by teachers and staff.	94
• At my school: ESE teachers teach students in ways that help them learn.	94
• At my school: ESE teachers provide ESE students with updated books and materials.	94
• At my school, ESE students are encouraged to stay in school.	94
• I agree with the type of diploma I am going to receive.	94
• I know what courses I have to take to get my diploma.	94
• I know the difference between a regular and a special diploma.	89
• I am taking the following ESE classes: English	88
• At my school: ESE teachers teach students things that will be useful later on in life.	88
• At my school: Regular education teachers believe that ESE students can learn.	88
• At my school, ESE students spend enough time with regular education students.	88
At my school: Regular education teachers teach ESE students in ways that help them learn.	83

Student Survey Results (continued)	% YES
• I will probably graduate with a regular diploma.	83
• I am taking the following ESE classes: Math	82
• At my school, ESE students can take vocational classes such as computers and business technology.	82
• I had a say in the decision about which classes I would take.	81
• At my school: Regular education teachers understand ESE students' needs.	78
• At my school: Regular education teachers give ESE students extra help if needed.	78
• At my school: Regular education teachers teach ESE students things that will be helpful later on in life.	78
• I am taking the following regular/mainstream classes: Electives (physical education, art, music)	76
• At my school, ESE students get work experience (on-the-job training) if they are interested.	76
• At my school, ESE students participate in clubs, sports, and other activities.	76

MIDDLE

(more than 25% but fewer than 75% of respondents replied with “yes”)

• I took the FCAT this year.	74
• At my school, ESE students get information about education after high school.	72
• In my English/reading classes, we work on the kinds of skills that are tested on the reading part of the FCAT.	72
• I was invited to attend my IEP meeting this year.	71
• I attended my IEP meeting this year.	69
• In my math classes, we work on the kinds of problems that are tested on the math part of the FCAT.	69
• I am taking the following regular/mainstream classes: Social Studies	65
• At my school: Regular education teachers give ESE students extra time or different assignments if needed.	61
• Teachers help ESE students prepare for the FCAT.	61
• I am taking the following regular/mainstream classes: Vocational (woodshop, computers)	56
• I am taking the following ESE classes: Social Studies	53
• I am taking the following ESE classes: Science	53
• I am taking the following regular/mainstream classes: Science	50
• I am taking the following regular/mainstream classes: English	47
• I received accommodations (special testing conditions) for the FCAT.	44
• I am taking the following regular/mainstream classes: Math	40
• I had a say in the decision about whether I need to take the FCAT or a different test.	38

LOW

(fewer than 25% of respondents replied with “yes”)

• I had a say in the decision about special testing conditions I might get for the FCAT or other tests.	24
• I am taking the following ESE classes: Electives (physical education, art, music)	13
• I am taking the following ESE classes: Vocational (woodshop, computers)	6

Appendix B- ESE Monitoring Team Members

**Franklin County
Focused Monitoring Visit
April 22-26, 2002**

ESE Monitoring Team Members

Department of Education Staff

Eileen L. Amy, Administrator, Program Administration and Evaluation
Gail Best, Program Specialist IV, Program Administration and Evaluation
Kelly Claude, Program Specialist IV, Program Administration and Evaluation
Lee Clark, Program Specialist IV, Program Administration and Evaluation

Contracted Staff

Adalis Anasagasti, Researcher, University of Miami
Maria Elena Arguelles, Researcher, University of Miami
Emily Joseph, Researcher, University of Miami
Christopher Sarno, Researcher, University of Miami

Appendix C- Glossary of Acronyms

Glossary of Acronyms

Bureau	Bureau of Instructional Support & Community Services
CCC	Computer Curriculum Corporation
DOE	Department of Education
EH	Emotionally Handicapped
EMH	Educable Mentally Handicapped
ESE	Exceptional Student Education
FAPE	Free Appropriate Public Education
FCAT	Florida Comprehensive Assessment Test
GE	General Education
IDEA	Individuals with Disabilities Education Act
IEP	Individual Educational Plan
PAEC	Panhandle Area Educational Consortium
Pre-K(PK)	Prekindergarten
SED	Severely Emotionally Disturbed
SLD	Specific Learning Disability

Appendix D- Forms Review

**Franklin County School District
Final Focused Monitoring Report
Forms Review**

This form review was completed as a component of the focused monitoring visit conducted on April 22-26, 2002. We have compared the following forms to the requirements of applicable State Board of Education Rules, the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), applicable sections of Title 34 of the Code of Federal Regulations, and the Monitoring Work Papers/Source Book for 2002. 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.

Parent Notification of Individual Educational Plan (IEP) Meeting

Form ESE #11 (Revised 8/01) *Meeting Participation Form*
Source Book/Work Paper - IEP
Title 34 of the Code of Federal Regulation Section 300.345

This form contains the components for compliance.

Individual Educational Plan (IEP) Meeting

Form #13 Rev. 8/01 *Exceptional Student Education Individual Educational Plan*
Source Book/Work Paper - IEP
Title 34 of the Code of Federal Regulation Section 300.347

This form contains the components for compliance.

Documentation of Notice and Consent for Initial Placement

Form ESE #12 (Revised 8/2001) *Eligibility Determination and Assignment Staffing Form*
Source Book/Work Paper - Program Areas
Title 34 of the Code of Federal Regulation Sections 300.503, 300.505 and 300.534

This form contains the components for compliance.

Informed Notice and Consent for Evaluation

Form ESE #9 (Revised 8/29) *Parental Notice/Consent for Evaluation*
Source Book/Work Paper - Evaluation
Title 34 of the Code of Federal Regulation Sections 300.503 and 300.505

This form contains the components for compliance.

Informed Notice of Reevaluation

Form ESE #19 (Revised 8/2001) *Parent Notice/Consent for Reevaluation*
Source Book/Work Paper - Reevaluation
Title 34 of the Code of Federal Regulation Sections 300.503 and 300.505

This form contains the components for compliance.

Notification of Change in Placement and Change in FAPE

Form ESE #13n *Informed Notice of Change in Placement and/or Free Appropriate Public Education.*
Source Book/Work Paper - IEP
Title 34 of the Code of Federal Regulation Section 300.503

This form contains the components for compliance.

Informed Notice of Refusal

Form ESE #13g (Revised 8/2001) *Notice of Refusal to Take a Specific Action*
Source Book/Work Paper - IEP
Title 34 of the Code of Federal Regulation Section 300.503

This form contains the components for compliance.

Documentation of Notice of Ineligibility

Form ESE #12 (Revised 8/2001) *Eligibility Determination and Assignment Staffing Form*
Source Book/Work Paper - Program Areas
Title 34 of the Code of Federal Regulation Sections 300.503, 300.505 and 300.534

This form contains the components for compliance.

Documentation of Notice of Dismissal

Form ESE #12 (Revised 8/2001) *Eligibility Determination and Assignment Staffing Form*
Source Book/Work Paper - Program Areas
Title 34 of the Code of Federal Regulation Sections 300.503, 300.505 and 300.534

The following must be addressed:

- The section of the form that identifies dismissal as a result of a staffing committee could only be used for students identified as gifted. Since the reevaluation process must be used for students with disabilities prior to dismissal, and this process is the obligation of the IEP team, a decision regarding dismissal must be the result of the IEP meeting.

Documentation of Staffing/Eligibility Determination

Form ESE #12 (Revised 8/2001) *Eligibility Determination and Assignment Staffing Form*

Source Book/Work Paper - Program Areas

Title 34 of the Code of Federal Regulations Sections 300.503, 300.505 and 300.534

This form contains the components for compliance.

The information submitted regarding confidentiality of student records stated that the district has 45 days to comply with a request from a parent or adult student to review educational records. Rule 6A-1.0955, F.A.C. sets higher standards and requires that compliance with a request for a review of records must be made within 30 days. This will need to be corrected.

It is noted that the district utilizes the procedural safeguards form produced by the Bureau.