

FINAL REPORT: FOCUSED MONITORING  
EXCEPTIONAL STUDENT EDUCATION PROGRAMS

# INDIAN RIVER COUNTY

MARCH 21 - 25, 2005



FLORIDA DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION  
BUREAU OF EXCEPTIONAL EDUCATION AND STUDENT SERVICES

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

telephone: (850) 245-0477

FAX: (850) 245-0987

Suncom: 205-0477

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

website: <http://myfloridaeducation.com/commhome/>

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October 28, 2005

Mr. Thomas Maher, Superintendent  
Indian River County School District  
1990 25<sup>th</sup> Street  
Vero Beach, Florida 32960-3395

Dear Superintendent Maher:

We are pleased to provide you with the Final Report of Focused Monitoring of Exceptional Student Education Programs in Indian River County. This report was developed by integrating multiple sources of information including student record reviews; interviews with school and district staff; information from focus groups; and parent, teacher, and student survey data from our visit on March 21-25, 2005. The report includes a system improvement plan outlining the findings of the monitoring team. The final report will be placed on the Bureau of Exceptional Education and Student Services' website and may be viewed at [www.firn.edu/doe/commhome/mon-home.htm](http://www.firn.edu/doe/commhome/mon-home.htm).

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

Semi-annual updates of outcomes achieved and/or a summary of related activities, as identified in your district's plan, must be submitted for the next two years, unless otherwise noted on the plan. The first scheduled update will be due on November 30, 2005. A verification monitoring visit to your district will take place two years after your original monitoring visit.

**BAMBI J. LOCKMAN**  
*Chief*

*Bureau of Exceptional Education and Student Services*

Superintendent Maher  
October 28, 2005  
Page 2

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

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

Sincerely,



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

Enclosure

cc: Kathryn Wilson, School Board Chair  
Members of the School Board  
G. Russell Petersen, School Board Attorney  
School Principals  
Larry Harrah, ESE Director  
Eileen Amy  
Evy Friend  
Kim Komisar

**Indian River County School District  
Final Monitoring Report  
Focused Monitoring  
March 21-25, 2005**

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**Indian River County School District**  
**Final Monitoring Report**  
**Focused Monitoring**  
**March 21-25, 2005**

**Executive Summary**

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

During the week of March 21, 2005 the Florida Department of Education, Bureau of Exceptional Education and Student Services, conducted an on-site review of the exceptional student education (ESE) programs in Indian River County Public Schools. Mr. Larry Harrah, Exceptional Student Education Director, served as the coordinator and point of contact for the district during the monitoring visit. In its continuing effort to focus the monitoring process on student educational outcomes, the Bureau identified four key data indicators: percentage of students with disabilities participating in regular classes (i.e., spending at least 80% of the school day with their nondisabled peers); dropout rate for students with disabilities; percentage of students with disabilities exiting with a standard diploma; and percentage of students with disabilities participating in statewide assessments. Indian River County was selected for monitoring on the basis of the percent of students with disabilities participating in Florida Comprehensive Assessment Test (FCAT). The results of the monitoring process are reported under categories or related areas that are considered to impact or contribute to the key data indicator. In addition, information related to the following are addressed: Services provided to ESE students in Department of Juvenile Justice (DJJ) facilities and charter schools; counseling as a related service, including psychological counseling; speech and language services as related services; transition services; services for gifted students; review of student records, and, review of district forms.

## **Summary of Findings**

### **Decision-Making Process**

Decisions regarding a student's participation in statewide assessment are not always based on the criteria in Rule 6A-1.0943, FAC; instead, perceived anxiety level, parent wishes, and/or the projected ability of the student are the factors considered. The district will be required to target the FCAT exemption criteria established under State Board of Education rule in its existing IEP training and develop and implement a system of staff training and district self-monitoring to ensure compliance with this requirement. A concern was noted that the form provided by DOE to assist in assessment planning is not consistently used by IEP teams of middle and high schools students. It is recommended that the district utilize the assessment planning form developed by DOE in its training and in IEP team planning. The form is designed to assist IEP team participants in changing the way they think about the assessment process and to enable teams to use objective data rather than subjective opinions in the decision-making process.

### **Access to the General Curriculum**

There was insufficient evidence to support the placement at the Wabasso School of three students for whom instruction in the general Sunshine State Standards would be appropriate. The IEP teams for the three students will be required to reconvene to consider the supports and services needed to ensure placement in the least restrictive environment. A concern was noted that, despite efforts to ensure placement in the least restrictive environment, few staff reported the general education classroom, with required supports and services, as the primary placement considered; placement decisions during articulation from elementary to middle and middle to high schools are often based on previous placements. The district will be required to target access to the general curriculum and the supports and services available to support students with disabilities in general education classrooms in its on-going IEP training procedures, and develop and implement a system of self-assessment to ensure compliance with this requirement; the focus on training should include implications for future achievement and placement decisions during transition meetings for students who are advancing from elementary to middle school and from middle to high school.

### **Student Preparation**

There were no findings of noncompliance in this area. A concern was noted that none of the participants in the standard diploma focus group reported receiving accommodations on the FCAT; this may reflect no need for accommodations, receipt of accommodations routinely provided and not perceived as accommodations, or students not being provided needed accommodations. It is recommended that district staff conduct a review of policies and procedures related to testing accommodations at Vero Beach High School to ensure clarity and ongoing compliance with all requirements.

### **Parental Involvement**

There were no findings of noncompliance in this area. A concern was noted regarding the lack of documentation that the concerns of the parent were considered in IEPs developed when the parent did not attend the meeting (e.g., information gleaned through prior communication). The district is encouraged to target parent involvement in its IEP training and staff development

activities, and to develop and implement a system of self-assessment to ensure compliance with these requirements.

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

When asked their opinions regarding the relatively low rate of participation on the FCAT by students with disabilities, respondents reported that: historically, students on special diploma were exempted from the FCAT; IEP teams have only recently begun to implement the requirements of the exemption criteria under State Board of Education rule; in an attempt to keep students from dropping out, they were placed on option I special diploma and were exempted from the FCAT; teachers are protective of the ESE students, and may attempt to decrease students' frustration level, anxiety, and feelings of failure by exempting from the FCAT; and, a large number of parents have moved into the district to have their child participate in the autism program.

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

There were no findings of noncompliance in this area. A concern was noted at Indian River Academy that, although it appeared through the case study process that the needs of the twice exceptional student (a student with a disability that has also been identified as gifted) were being met, the student's giftedness was not directly addressed or acknowledged on the IEP. It is recommended that the district target the issue of twice exceptional students in its IEP training, to ensure that IEP teams consider all the needs of exceptional students, including needs that result from their giftedness, and that a teacher of the gifted be a participant on the IEP team for these students.

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

Counseling was not documented as a related service on the IEPs of six SED students as required under State Board of Education rule. The IEP teams of the identified students are required to reconvene to determine whether the students continue to meet eligibility under the SED program, and if so, to determine the counseling needed in order to benefit from special education. It is recommended that the district review its policies and procedures related to the provision of counseling as a related service to ensure that counseling is provided at no cost to the parents for students with disabilities who need it in order to receive FAPE.

### **Communication Needs of Students with Disabilities**

There were no findings of noncompliance in this area.

### **Transition Services**

There is evidence that continued attempts to foster family involvement with support agencies was required but not provided to some students. The district will be required to address the requirements related to agency involvement in transition planning, including methods to foster support from families who are resistant or uninvolved, and develop and implement a system of self-assessment to ensure compliance with these requirements.

### **Services to Gifted Students**

There were no findings of noncompliance in this area.

### **Review of Student Records**

There were systemic findings of noncompliance on 22 components of the individual educational plan (IEP) document or process for students with disabilities, and individual or non-systemic findings on 39 additional components. IEP teams of 12 students are required to reconvene to address measurable annual goals. Three records required an adjustment of federal funds due to lack of prior written notice of change of placement. Five of 13 (38%) matrix records reviewed were found to be inaccurately reported, and the district must submit an amendment of its data through the Automated Student Information System database for those students. There were systemic findings of noncompliance on five components of the educational plan (EP) document or process for gifted students, and individual or non-systemic findings on five additional components. The district will be required to target the areas noted above in its existing IEP training procedures, and to develop and implement a system of self-assessment to ensure compliance with required elements. It is recommended that the district utilize the student- and item-specific feedback on the record reviews provided to assist in the provision of targeted technical assistance on IEP/EP development.

### **Review of District Forms**

Revisions were required for 13 forms and recommended revisions were noted on nine. The district was notified of the specific findings via a separate letter dated March 11, 2005. A detailed explanation of the specific findings is included as appendix D.

### **System Improvement Plan**

In response to these findings, the district was required to develop a system improvement plan for submission to the Bureau. This plan included activities and strategies intended to address specific findings, as well as measurable evidence of change. Compliance and procedural issues regarding the IEP and direct services to students were 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 (CIP). The district was required to address several issues for an extended period of time, identifying benchmarks to reach acceptable changes. In developing the system improvement plan, every effort was made to link the system improvement activities resulting from this focused monitoring report to the district's continuous improvement monitoring plan. The format for the system improvement plan, including a listing of the critical issues identified by the Bureau as most significantly in need of improvement, is provided with this executive summary. Also included in this report is a list of recommendations and technical assistance available to the district.

## Indian River School District Focused Monitoring System Improvement Strategies

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

Category	Findings	ESE	All	System Improvement Strategies	Evidence of Change and Reporting Date
Decision-Making Process	<p>Decisions regarding a student’s participation in statewide assessment are not always based on the criteria in Rule 6A-1.0943, FAC; instead, perceived anxiety level, parent wishes, and/or the projected ability of the student are the factors considered.</p> <p>Recommendations are included in the respective section of this report and/or under <i>General Recommendations and Technical Assistance</i>.</p>	X		<p>The district is required to target the FCAT exemption criteria established under State Board of Education rule in its existing IEP training and develop and implement a system of staff training and district self-monitoring to ensure compliance with this requirement.</p> <p>Results of semi-annual self-assessments (reviews of randomly selected IEPs from across the district) will be used to inform targeted technical assistance.</p>	<p>District report of self-assessment reveals 100% compliance with Rule 6A-1.0943, FAC, regarding criteria for exemption from FCAT.</p> <p>May 2006 May 2007</p>

Category	Findings	ESE	All	System Improvement Strategies	Evidence of Change and Reporting Date
Access to the General Curriculum	<p>There was insufficient evidence to support the placement at the Wabasso School of three students for whom instruction in the general Sunshine State Standards would be appropriate.</p> <p>A concern was noted that, despite efforts to ensure placement in the least restrictive environment, few staff reported the general education classroom, with required supports and services, as the primary placement considered. Placement decisions during transition from elementary to middle and middle to high schools often are based on previous placements.</p>	X		<p>The IEP teams for the three students referenced above must reconvene to consider the supports and services needed to ensure placement in the least restrictive environment.</p> <p>The district is required to target access to the general curriculum and identification of supplementary supports and services available to support students with disabilities in general education classrooms in its on-going IEP training procedures. In addition, the district will develop and implement a system of self-assessment to ensure compliance with this requirement (including periodic record reviews); focus on transition meetings.</p>	<p>The results of the IEP team meetings for the three students will be submitted to the Bureau by September 30, 2005.</p> <p>District report of self-assessment indicates that students with disabilities are provided access to the most appropriate curriculum in the least restrictive environment (100% of records reviewed).</p> <p>May 2006 May 2007</p>
Student Preparation	<p>There were no findings of noncompliance in this area.</p> <p>Recommendations are included in the respective section of this report and/or under <i>General Recommendations and Technical Assistance</i>.</p>				

Category	Findings	ESE	All	System Improvement Strategies	Evidence of Change and Reporting Date
Parental Involvement	<p>There were no findings of noncompliance in this area.</p> <p>Recommendations are included in the respective section of this report and/or under <i>General Recommendations and Technical Assistance</i>.</p>				
Charter Schools	<p>There were no findings of noncompliance in this area.</p> <p>Recommendations are included in the respective section of this report and/or under <i>General Recommendations and Technical Assistance</i>.</p>				
Counseling as a Related Service	<p>Counseling was not documented as a related service on the IEPs of six SED students as required under State Board of Education rule.</p> <p>It is not clear that students who require counseling as a related service in order to benefit from special education are provided the service at no cost to the family.</p> <p>It is not evident (e.g., through conference notes) that IEP teams considered counseling as a related</p>	X		<p>The IEP teams of the identified students are required to reconvene to determine whether the students continue to meet eligibility under the SED program, and if so, to determine the counseling needed in order to benefit from special education.</p> <p>District and/or school review policies and procedures related to the provision of counseling as a related service to ensure that counseling is provided at no cost</p>	<p>The results of the IEP team meetings for the six students will be submitted to the Bureau by September 30, 2005.</p> <p>District report of self-assessment indicates that students with disabilities who need counseling as a related service are provided the service at no cost to the parent, and that it is</p>

<b>Category</b>	<b>Findings</b>	<b>ESE</b>	<b>All</b>	<b>System Improvement Strategies</b>	<b>Evidence of Change and Reporting Date</b>
Counseling as a Related Service (continued)	service for some students with significant social/emotional needs.			to the parents for students with disabilities who need it in order to benefit from special education.  District and/or school staff will conduct periodic self-assessment of records of EH students and students receiving counseling services to determine that this requirement is met.	documented on the IEP.  May 2006 May 2007
Communication	There were no findings of noncompliance in this area.				
Transition	For at least one student, there is evidence that continued attempts to foster family involvement with support agencies was required but not provided. This was noted as a possible concern for several additional students.	X		The district is required to address the requirements related to agency involvement in transition planning, including methods to foster support from families who are resistant or uninvolved, and develop and implement a system of self-assessment to ensure compliance with these requirements.	District report of self-assessment indicates compliance with all targeted elements for 100% of IEPs reviewed.  May 2006 May 2007
Gifted	There were no findings of noncompliance in this area.				
Review of Student Records	On IEPs, systemic findings of noncompliance were noted on 22 components.  Individual or non-systemic findings	X		Eighteen IEP teams must reconvene to address identified areas of noncompliance.  The noncompliant elements	Documentation of the reconvened IEPs and corrections to the matrix of services documents must be submitted to the

Category	Findings	ESE	All	System Improvement Strategies	Evidence of Change and Reporting Date
Review of Student Records (continued)	<p>were noted in 39 additional components of the IEPs.</p> <p>For 12 of the 28 IEPs more than 50% of the goals were not measurable.</p> <p>Three records did not include prior written notice of change of placement as required.</p> <p>Five of 13 matrix records reviewed were found to be inaccurately reported.</p> <p>On EPs, systemic findings of noncompliance were noted in five components.</p> <p>Individual or non-systemic findings were noted on five additional components of the EPs.</p> <p>Five matrix of services documents for students reported at the 254 or 255 level were reported inaccurately.</p>			<p>included under “Findings” will be targeted in the district’s IEP and EP training. Pre-and post- training surveys will be conducted to determine perceived effectiveness of the training.</p> <p>Using protocols developed by the Bureau, school and/or district staff will conduct compliance reviews of a random sample of 15 IEPs and 5 EPs developed by staff who participated in the training session</p> <p>Using protocols developed by the Bureau, district staff will conduct reviews of two IEPs per school for students reported through the FEFP at the 254 or 255 level of funding (first and last record from alphabetical list of 254/255 records). For students whose IEPs do not support the services on the matrix or for whom the services are not in evidence, the district will submit an amendment to the Automated Student Information System database for the open window of correction.</p>	<p>Bureau by September 30, 2005.</p> <p>District report of self-assessment reveals compliance with all targeted elements for 100% of IEPs and EPs reviewed.</p> <p>Results of the matrix review will be reported annually.</p> <p>May 2006 May 2007</p>

Category	Findings	ESE	All	System Improvement Strategies	Evidence of Change and Reporting Date
Review of District Forms	<p>The following forms require revisions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Parent Notification of Individual Education Plan (IEP) Meeting</i></li> <li>• <i>computerized IEP forms</i></li> <li>• <i>non-computerized IEP forms</i></li> <li>• <i>EP forms</i></li> <li>• <i>Notice and Consent for Initial Placement</i></li> <li>• <i>Informed Notice and Consent for Evaluation</i></li> <li>• <i>Informed Notice and Consent for Reevaluation</i></li> <li>• <i>Notification of Change of Placement</i></li> <li>• <i>Notification of Change of FAPE (Free Appropriate Public Education)</i></li> <li>• <i>Informed Notice of Refusal</i></li> <li>• <i>Documentation of Staffing/Eligibility Determination</i></li> <li>• <i>Informed Notice of Dismissal</i></li> <li>• <i>Notice: Not Eligible for Exceptional Student Placement</i></li> <li>• <i>Annual Notice of Confidentiality</i></li> <li>• <i>Services Plan</i></li> </ul> <p>Recommendations were indicated for nine forms.</p>	X			Revised forms must be submitted to the Bureau by November 30, 2005.

# Monitoring Process

## Authority

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

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

## Focused Monitoring

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

## **Key Data Indicators**

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

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

## **District Selection**

In making the decision to include Indian River School District in this year's focused monitoring visits, the Florida Comprehensive Assessment Test (FCAT) participation data from Survey 3 and the assessment files for the 2003-04 school year were reviewed. The participation rate was calculated in a manner consistent with the data reported in the local education agency (LEA) profile. The discrepancy between the district's participation rate and the state goal of 85% participation was determined for each grade level and subject area (4, 5, 8, and 10). Districts were rank-ordered on the sum of these discrepancies. Indian River School District's rate approached the lowest in the state. Participation rates for the district ranged from a low of 59% in reading and math in the 9<sup>th</sup> grade to a high of 84% in reading and 85% in math in the 3<sup>rd</sup> grade. The district's current 2005 LEA profile and the listing of districts rank ordered on data related to the key data indicator, which was used for district selection, are included as appendix A. The most current LEA profiles for all Florida school districts are available on the web at <http://www.firn.edu/doe/commhome/datapage.htm>.

## **Sources of Information**

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

The Bureau conducted the on-site focused monitoring visit from March 21-25, 2005. Five Bureau staff members, 2 peer monitors, and 1 contracted staff conducted site-visits to the following 7 schools:

- Indian River Academy (Charter)
- Sebastian Elementary School
- Sebastian River Middle School
- Sebastian River High School
- Thompson Elementary School
- Vero Beach High School
- Wabasso School

Peer monitors are exceptional student education personnel from other school districts who are trained to assist with the DOE's monitoring activities. A listing of Bureau staff, peer monitors, and contracted staff responsible for the monitoring activities conducted during this visit is included as appendix B.

### ***Interviews***

A total of 64 interviews, including 8 district-level staff, 21 school-level administrators or other student support staff (e.g., guidance counselors), 21 ESE teachers or other service providers, and 14 general education teachers were conducted.

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

In conjunction with the 2005 Indian River School District focused monitoring visit, two focus groups for students with disabilities were conducted at Vero Beach High School. Seven students participated in the focus group for students pursuing a standard diploma and 10 students participated in the focus group for students pursuing a special diploma.

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

The selection of students for case studies at each school site is based on criteria that have been identified as characteristic of students who may have the cognitive ability to participate in statewide assessments but who have not participated in the FCAT (e.g., specific learning disability (SLD); emotionally handicapped or severely emotionally disturbed (EH/SED); language impaired (LI)). As part of this process, the student's records are reviewed, teachers are interviewed regarding the implementation of the student's IEP, and the student's classroom may be observed. Seventeen in-depth case studies were conducted in Indian River School District.

### ***Classroom Visits***

Classroom visits are conducted in conjunction with individual student case studies as well as during general observations of classrooms that include exceptional students. In addition to implementation of a student's IEP, curriculum and instruction, classroom management and discipline, and classroom design and resources are observed during general classroom visits. Teachers of the classes visited are interviewed regarding practices related to students with disabilities. A total of 30 classrooms (17 ESE and 13 general education) were visited during the focused monitoring visit to Indian River School District.

### ***Off-Site Monitoring Activities***

Surveys are designed by the University of Miami research staff in order to provide maximum opportunity for input about the district's ESE services from parents of students with disabilities and students identified as gifted, ESE and general education teachers, and students with disabilities in grades 9-12. The survey that is sent to parents is printed in English, Spanish, and Haitian Creole, where applicable. It includes a cover letter and a postage paid reply envelope. Data from the surveys are incorporated into the body of this report. The results of the surveys are included as appendix C.

### ***Parent Surveys***

The parent survey was sent to parents of the 2,484 students with disabilities for whom complete addresses were provided by the district. A total of 393 parents (PK, n = 40; K-5, n = 161; 6-8, n = 89; 9 – 12, n = 103) representing 16% of the sample, returned the survey. Surveys were returned as undeliverable from 107 families, representing 4% of the sample. Parents represented the following students with disabilities: autistic, deaf or hard of hearing, developmentally delayed, educable mentally handicapped, emotionally handicapped, hospital/homebound, language impaired, orthopedically impaired, other health impaired, profoundly mentally

handicapped, severely emotionally disturbed, specific learning disabled, speech impaired, trainable mentally handicapped, traumatic brain injured, and visually impaired.

Surveys were sent to parents of the 1,093 students identified as gifted for whom complete addresses were provided by the district. A total of 307 parents (KG-5, n = 110; 6-8, n = 130; 9 - 12, n = 67), representing 28% of the sample, returned the survey. Surveys were returned as undeliverable from 16 families, representing 1% of the sample.

### ***Teacher Surveys***

Surveys developed for teachers and other service providers were mailed to each school, with a memo explaining the key data indicator and the monitoring process. All teachers and other service providers, both general education and ESE, were provided an opportunity to respond. A total of 407 teachers, representing approximately 40% of ESE and general education teachers in the district returned the survey. Data are from 24 (86%) of the district's 28 schools.

### ***Student Surveys***

A sufficient number of surveys were provided to allow all students with disabilities, grades 9-12, to respond. Instructions for administration of the survey by classroom teachers, including a written script, were provided for each class or group of students. Since participation in this survey is not appropriate for some students whose disabilities might impair their understanding of the survey, professional judgment is used to determine appropriate participants. Surveys from 344 students, representing approximately 29% of students with disabilities in grades 9-12 in the district, were returned. Data are from 2 (33%) of the district's 6 schools with students in grades 9-12.

### ***Reviews of Student Records and District Forms***

Prior to the on-site monitoring visit, Bureau staff conducts a compliance review of student records that are randomly selected from the population of exceptional students. In Indian River County, 28 IEPs for students with disabilities and 10 educational plans (EPs) for gifted students were reviewed for compliance. Nine of the IEPs represented transition IEPs. In addition, 13 matrix of services documents were reviewed during the on-site visit. An additional 104 records were reviewed on-site in conjunction with student case studies and to collect information related to additional compliance areas designated by the Bureau.

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

## **Reporting Process**

### ***Interim Reports***

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

and peer monitors. During the course of these activities, suggestions for interventions or strategies to be incorporated into the district's system improvement plan may be proposed. Within two weeks of the visit, Bureau administrative staff conduct a telephone conference with the ESE director to review major findings.

### ***Preliminary Report***

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

### ***Final Report***

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

Within 30 days of the district's receipt of the final report, the system improvement plan (SIP), including activities targeting specific findings, must be submitted to the Bureau for review. In developing this plan, every effort should be made to link the system improvement plan for focused monitoring to the district's continuous improvement plan. The plan must provide for findings to be addressed in a timely manner, with compliance and procedural issues regarding IEPs, EPs, and direct services to individual students to be resolved by the date designated by the Bureau that does not exceed 90 days. Other issues are 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 was encouraged to develop methods that correlate activities in order to utilize resources, staff, and time in an efficient manner in order to improve outcomes for students with disabilities. Upon approval of the system improvement plan, it was forwarded to the district and the plan was posted on the website noted above. Corrective actions are monitored through the submission of semiannual status reports of progress to be submitted to the Bureau on May 30<sup>th</sup> and November 30<sup>th</sup> of each year for the duration of the system improvement plan.



## **Reporting of Information**

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

- decision-making
- access to the general curriculum
- student preparation
- parental involvement
- stakeholder opinion related to the indicator

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

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

In addition, information related to services provided to ESE students in charter schools, services for gifted students, the results of reviews of student records, and the results of forms reviews also are reported.

To the extent possible, this report focuses on systemic issues rather than on isolated instances of noncompliance or need for improvement. In accordance with established Bureau monitoring procedures, a finding of a systemic violation will be made if evidence of such a violation is found in 25% or more of the pertinent data sources. Findings are presented in a preliminary report to the ESE director, and the district has the opportunity to clarify items of concern. In a collaborative effort between the district and Bureau staff, system improvement areas are identified. Findings are addressed through the development of strategies for improvement, and evidence of change will be identified as a joint effort between the district and the Bureau. Strategies that are identified as long-term approaches toward improving the district's issue related to the key data indicator are also addressed through the district's continuous improvement plan.

## **Results**

### **General Information**

This category provides demographic and background information specific to the district as well as information regarding the identification of students with disabilities who have been excluded from taking the general statewide assessment (FCAT). Based on the 2005 LEA profile, Indian River County School District has a total school population (PK-12) of 17,068 with 14% of

students being identified as students with disabilities (including 2% identified as eligible for the program for speech impaired only), and 6% identified as gifted. Indian River School District is considered a “medium/small” district and is one of 13 districts in this enrollment group. Indian River School District is comprised of 13 elementary schools, three middle schools, two high schools, one alternative school, one ESE center school, and five charter schools.

The percentage of students with disabilities in the Indian River School District who participated in the FCAT or an alternate assessment (AA), by grade level and subject, for the 2002-03 and 2003-04 school years is provided in the table below.

Grade/Subject	2002-03		2003-04***	
	FCAT*	AA**	FCAT	AA
3 <sup>rd</sup> /math	80%	16%	85%	13%
3 <sup>rd</sup> /reading	80%	16%	84%	13%
4 <sup>th</sup> /math	88%	11%	74%	23%
4 <sup>th</sup> /reading	87%	11%	74%	23%
5 <sup>th</sup> /math	84%	13%	84%	16%
5 <sup>th</sup> /reading	83%	13%	83%	16%
8 <sup>th</sup> /math	83%	13%	82%	15%
8 <sup>th</sup> /reading	83%	14%	81%	15%
9 <sup>th</sup> /math	56%	36%	59%	35%
9 <sup>th</sup> /reading	57%	36%	59%	35%
10 <sup>th</sup> /math	60%	27%	61%	39%
10 <sup>th</sup> /reading	60%	26%	62%	39%

Data Source: \* FCAT District Demographic Reports as of June, 2003.

\*\*Alternate Assessment data file as of July, 2003.

\*\*\*Evaluation and Reporting office files and Alternate Assessment data files as of August, 2004.

Based on the established criteria for exemption from the FCAT under Rule 6A-1.0943, Florida Administrative Code (FAC), *Statewide Assessment of Students with Disabilities*, students eligible for the SLD, EH, or SED programs, among others, would not be expected to take an alternate assessment. The number of students in each of these programs, the number taking alternate assessment, and the resulting alternate assessment rates for the 2003-04 school year for students with these programs reported as their primary exceptionality are as follows:

Exceptionality	Total*	# AA**	% AA
Specific Learning Disabled	978	131	13%
Emotionally Handicapped	101	16	16%
Severely Emotionally Disturbed	18	10	56%

Data source: \*Survey 9, December 1, 2003, grades 3- 10.

\*\* Alternate Assessment file as of August, 2004.

### Decision-Making Process

This category refers to the process by which the decision is made to exempt a student from the FCAT and, for students who are taking an alternate assessment, the reason the general

assessment is not appropriate, and the process through which an appropriate alternate assessment is selected for the student.

### ***Requirements***

Section 300.347(a)(5)(ii) of the Code of Federal Regulations requires that an IEP must include "...if the IEP team determines that a child will not participated in a particular state or district-wide assessment of student achievement (or part of an assessment), a statement of (A) Why that assessment is not appropriate for the child; and (B) How the child will be assessed."

Rule 6A-1.0943(1)(a), FAC, states "... Students may be excluded from statewide or district assessment programs if the following criteria are met: 1. The student's demonstrated cognitive ability prevents the student from completing required coursework and achieving the Sunshine State Standards...even with appropriate and allowable course modifications, and 2. The student requires extensive direct instruction to accomplish the application and transfer of skills and competencies needed for domestic, community living, leisure, and vocational activities."

Rule 6A-1.0943(1)(b), FAC, also requires that "Students who are excluded from statewide or district assessment will be assessed through an alternate assessment procedure identified by the IEP team. The alternate assessment procedure shall be recorded on the student's IEP."

### ***Data***

Of the 33 interview respondents who addressed the specific factors used to determine a student's participation in statewide assessment, 12 (36%) reported that the IEP team uses the state provided planning checklist to determine whether a student should participate in FCAT; 11 (33%) indicated that students with cognitive impairments and/or limited intellectual functioning were exempted from FCAT; 6 (18%) reported that the decision is based on the diploma the student is pursuing. Others mentioned the number of years below grade level the student was performing or the IEP team's perception of how well or poorly the student would perform on the test.

In general, the majority of staff at the elementary schools were aware of the established exemption requirements under Rule 6A-1.0943(1)(a), FAC., and referenced use of the planning checklist. Teachers at the elementary level reported reluctance to place students on alternate assessment, stating that, in essence, it destines the student to be instructed in a modified curriculum and then to pursue a special diploma. Staff at the two high schools visited reported that the decision as to whether the student will pursue a standard or special diploma is made in middle school and that students working toward a special diploma generally are not administered the FCAT. Staff at the middle school level indicated that the exemption criteria and the checklist have only recently begun to be utilized in the decision-making process, and that, in the past, IEP teams would agree with and/or accede to parents' requests that their children not take the FCAT, fearing that it would be too difficult or traumatic. Staff expressed concern regarding the amount of stress and frustration experienced by students in self-contained or separate class and students who read below grade level.

While the majority of school and district staff reported having received training or technical assistance information on the criteria for alternately assessing students with disabilities, a small

number reported that they had not. School staff indicated that the resource specialists assigned to the individual schools had provided the training and information.

### ***Findings***

- Finding(s) of Noncompliance
  - Decisions regarding a student’s participation in statewide assessment are not always based on the criteria in Rule 6A-1.0943, FAC; instead, perceived anxiety level, parent wishes, and/or the projected ability of the student are the factors considered.
- Area(s) of Concern
  - The form provided by DOE to assist in assessment planning is not consistently used by IEP teams of middle and high schools students.
- Corrective Action(s)
  - The district is required to target the FCAT exemption criteria established under State Board of Education rule in its existing IEP training and develop and implement a system of staff training and district self-monitoring to ensure compliance with this requirement.
- Recommended Action(s)
  - The district is encouraged to utilize the assessment planning form developed by DOE in its training and in IEP team planning. The form is designed to assist IEP team participants in changing the way they think about the assessment process and to enable teams to use objective data rather than subjective opinions in the decision-making process.
- Area(s) of Strength/Commendation
  - Staff across the district reported a strong commitment to include students with disabilities in the general statewide assessment, with information packets provided to assist IEP teams in explaining the exclusion criteria to families.

### **Access to the General Curriculum**

This category refers to the manner in which students with disabilities are provided access to the general curriculum as well as the resources provided to promote this access. Access refers to the types of settings and course content available to students with disabilities and may be a factor affecting the decision-making process regarding participation in statewide assessment.

### ***Requirements***

In accordance with 34 CFR §300.26(b)(3), “...specially-designed instruction means adapting, as appropriate to the needs of an eligible child, the content, methodology, or delivery of instruction (i) To address the unique needs of the child that result from the child’s disability; and (ii) to ensure access of the child to the general curriculum, so that he or she can meet the educational standards within the jurisdiction of the public agency that apply to all children.”

“General curriculum” is defined in *Appendix A to Part 300—Notice of Interpretation* to Title 34 (p. 12470) as the curriculum that is used with nondisabled children. In Florida, the curriculum used with nondisabled children is the general Sunshine State Standards (SSS).

In developing an IEP for a student with a disability, 34 CFR 300.347(a) requires that the IEP must include, "... a statement of the child's present levels of educational performance, including—(i) how the child's disability affects the child's involvement and progress in the general curriculum..." The IEP also must include "...a statement of measurable annual goals, including benchmarks or short-term objectives, related to—(i) meeting the child's needs that result from the child's disability to enable the child to be involved in and progress in the general curriculum..."

Regarding instructional and testing accommodations, 34 CFR 300.347 (a) requires that the IEP include "(3)...a statement of the special education and related services and supplementary aids and services to be provided to the child, or on behalf of the child, and a statement of the program modifications or supports for school personnel that will be provided for the child— (i) to advance appropriately toward attaining the annual goals; (ii) To be involved and progress in the general curriculum in accordance with paragraph (a)(1) of this section and to participate in extracurricular and other nonacademic activities; and (iii) to be educated and participate with other children with disabilities and nondisabled children in the activities described in this section;... and (5)(i) a statement of any individual modifications in the administration of State or district-wide assessments of student achievement that are needed in order for the child to participate in the assessment..."

Section 1008.22(3)(c)8., F.S., requires that district school boards provide instruction to prepare students to demonstrate proficiency in the skills and competencies necessary for successful grade-to-grade progression and high school graduation.

Section 1008.22(3)(c)6, F.S., requires that the district notify the parent of a student who is excluded from the general state-wide assessment of the implications of such nonparticipation. In addition, if accommodations or modifications are made to the student's instruction that would not be allowable on the state-wide assessment tests, the district must notify the parent of the implications of such accommodations or modifications. The parent must acknowledge in writing that he/she understands the implications of such accommodations or modifications, and provide signed consent for the student to receive them.

When determining the most appropriate setting or placement for a student to be provided access to the general curriculum, 34 CFR §300.550 requires that "Each public agency shall ensure (1) that to the maximum extent appropriate, children with disabilities, including children in public or private institutions or other care facilities, are educated with children who are nondisabled; and (2) That special classes, separate schooling or other removal of children with disabilities from the regular educational environment occurs only if the nature or severity of the disability is such that education in regular classes with the use of supplementary aids and services cannot be achieved satisfactorily."

### ***Data***

As a means for increasing the number of students with disabilities in general education curriculum, the district offers a continuum of placement options that includes full inclusion, resource or pullout services, and consultation. Co-teaching and support facilitation are available

in many schools. It was reported that the curriculum for students who are served at the separate class level (less than 40% of the school day with nondisabled peers) is modified, and follows the Sunshine State Standards for Special Diploma. These students are provided the opportunity to interact with nondisabled peers during electives, and extracurricular activities.

Factors reported to be used by IEP teams when determining the most appropriate placement for students with disabilities include:

- teacher judgment, based on the students previous success in the general education setting
- present level of educational performance and individual needs of the student, including the types of accommodations and/or modifications required
- results of assessments, including the psychological evaluation
- wishes of the parent

Teachers and administrators at the elementary schools visited reported that classroom assignments and special programs (e.g., alternative education classes) at the schools are determined annually, based on the needs of the individual students in each grade level that year. This is done in an effort to ensure that resources are allocated in the most efficient manner, resulting in students being placed in the least restrictive environment appropriate. At Sebastian and Thompson Elementary Schools staff reported that the co-teaching and support facilitation models have been very successful in increasing student achievement.

At the middle and high schools visited, teachers reported that students often continue in the placement they were in at the previous grade level (i.e., students served at the separate class level in elementary school are likely to be placed in ESE classes for most or all of their courses in middle school, and, subsequently, in a high school as well). At Sebastian River Middle School staff reported that students may be moved “in and out” of mainstreamed classes during the school year based on individual needs. The decision to move students are not always an IEP team decision, but often results from parent/teacher conferences.

One of the schools visited was the Wabasso School, the district’s center school for students with significant cognitive and physical disabilities. This school provides instruction in the Sunshine State Standards for Special Diploma, and does not offer courses leading to a standard diploma. During the course of conducting case studies at the school three students were identified for whom there was insufficient evidence that this was the least restrictive environment. These were students who did not exhibit significant cognitive disabilities and for whom instruction in the general Sunshine State Standards is appropriate. The district was provided identifying information regarding these three students in a letter dated June 25, 2005.

### ***Findings***

- Finding(s) of Noncompliance
  - There was insufficient evidence to support the placement at the Wabasso School of three students for whom instruction in the general Sunshine State Standards would be appropriate.

- Area(s) of Concern
  - Despite efforts to ensure placement in the least restrictive environment, few staff reported the general education classroom, with required supports and services, as the primary placement considered; placement decisions during transition from elementary to middle and middle to high schools often are based on previous placements.
  
- Corrective Action(s)
  - The IEP teams for the three students referenced above must reconvene to consider the supports and services needed to ensure placement in the least restrictive environment.
  - The district is required to target access to the general curriculum and identification of supplementary supports and services available to support students with disabilities in general education classrooms in its on-going IEP training procedures, and to develop and implement a system of self-assessment to ensure compliance with this requirement; focus on implications for future achievement and articulation meetings.
  
- Area(s) of Strength/Commendation
  - Staff across the district report extensive school- and district-level support for their efforts to include students with disabilities in general education classrooms to ensure that they are provided with instruction in grade level standards to the greatest extent possible.
  - The use of co-teaching and support facilitation models at Sebastian Elementary and Thompson Elementary Schools were reported by staff to be very effective in ensuring that students master the appropriate grade-level and course standards.

## **Student Preparation**

This category refers to the activities and materials available to assist students in preparing for meaningful participation in statewide assessments, whether the general statewide assessment (FCAT) or an alternate assessment. The lack of student preparation could negatively impact the rate of participation in the FCAT, as well as performance, in that IEP team decisions may be influenced by perceptions of how well students have been prepared or their expected level of performance.

### ***Requirements***

Section 1008.22(3)(c)8., F.S., requires that district school boards provide instruction to prepare students to demonstrate proficiency in the skills and competencies necessary for successful grade-to-grade progression and high school graduation.

### ***Data***

All staff interviewed reported that FCAT preparation is embedded in daily instruction in all general education and most ESE classes, and students with disabilities are prepared for the FCAT and afforded the same opportunities for remediation as their nondisabled peers. As part of a district-wide initiative, Indian River School District has begun using Clearview, a web based computer program that allows teachers to access and analyze individual students' FCAT test data.

The following remediation and support activities also are available (may vary by school):

- reading assistant specifically for 3<sup>rd</sup> graders
- Holistic Reading Program
- Read 180
- FCAT Math
- Excel Program
- FCAT Prep class
- after-school tutoring (transportation provided)
- Saturday tutoring sessions
- FCAT Explorer
- Daily FCAT practice (e.g., sample FCAT questions as part of daily class routine)
- FCAT practice books
- instruction in test-taking strategies and techniques, including how to manage test anxiety and how to prepare for testing
- remediation during the school day
- parent workshops

Seven of the 10 students (70%) who participated in the focus group for students pursuing a special diploma reported having taken the FCAT in the past and one reported taking it within the past year. Two of the seven standard diploma students reported that they had passed both parts of the FCAT and the remaining five indicated that they took the test within the past year. Students in the special diploma focus group reported having received extended time, testing in smaller groups and having sections of the test read to them. None of the students in the standard diploma focus group reported receiving accommodations during the test, although it is unclear if this represented a lack of accommodations or if the students were unaware of accommodations that they received. Students in the standard diploma group reported that FCAT Prep class was a part of their schedules. Students in the special diploma group reported using Read 180 and FCAT Math.

Students working on the Sunshine State Standards for Special Diploma at the traditional middle and high school campuses visited are instructed and assessed through the Life Centered Career Education (LCCE) program. Staff at the Wabasso School reported using the Performance Assessment System for Students with Disabilities (PASS-D) and student portfolios for alternate assessment.

### ***Findings***

- Finding(s) of Noncompliance
  - None noted.
- Area(s) of Concern
  - None of the participants in the standard diploma focus group reported receiving accommodations on the FCAT; this may reflect no need for accommodations, receipt of accommodations routinely provided and not perceived as accommodations, or students not being provided needed accommodations.

- Corrective Action(s)
  - None required.
- Recommended Action(s)
  - It is recommended that district staff conduct a review of policies and procedures related to testing accommodations at Vero Beach High School to ensure compliance with all requirements.
- Area(s) of Strength/Commendation
  - District-wide initiative with the Clearview program that provides teachers with the ability to assess and analyze students' strengths and areas of weakness on the FCAT, allowing them to better individualize instruction.

### **Parental Involvement**

This category refers to parental involvement in the decision-making process regarding participation in statewide assessment as well as the determination of appropriate instructional and testing accommodations.

#### ***Requirements***

When developing an IEP for a student with a disability, 34 CFR 300.345(a) requires that “Each public agency shall take steps to ensure that one or both of the parents...are present at each IEP meeting or are afforded the opportunity to participate...” In addition, 34 CFR 300.346(a)(1) requires that “... the IEP team shall consider— (i) the strengths of the child and the concerns of the parents for enhancing the education of their child...”

Section 1008.22(3)(c)(6), F.S., *Student Assessment Program for Public Schools*, states that “Participation in the testing program is mandatory for all students attending public school, including students served in [DJJ facilities].... If a student does not participate in the statewide assessment, the district must notify the student’s parent and provide the parent with information regarding the implications of such nonparticipation. If modifications are made in the student’s instruction to provide accommodations that would not be permitted on the statewide assessment test, the district must notify the student’s parent of the implications of such instructional modifications. A parent must provide signed consent for a student to receive instructional modifications that would not be permitted on the statewide assessments and must acknowledge in writing that he or she understands the implications of such accommodations.”

#### ***Data***

It was reported that parents participate in the decision-making process related to participation in statewide assessment as members of the IEP teams that make the decision. As noted previously in the *Decision-Making Process* section of the report, the district has only recently begun using the DOE assessment planning checklist; while this has helped parents and teachers better understand the criteria, some staff indicated that they have had parents strongly resist having their children take the FCAT, and the IEP teams at times acquiesce to the parents’ wishes, particularly for students pursuing a special diploma.

In reference to informing parents of accommodations not allowed on FCAT and obtaining consent to allow use of such accommodations, the district recently has changed its computerized IEP forms to include this component.

Of the 28 records reviewed prior to the on-site visit, parents attended 60% of the meetings at the elementary and high school levels and 62% of the meetings at the middle school level. In 11 of the 28 records (39%), parents did not attend the IEP meeting; one of the 11 gave permission to proceed and/or provided written input and the remaining 10 (36%) did not respond to the notice. There was no additional evidence of concerns of the parent being considered in those 10 IEPs (e.g., references to previous information shared during conferences, phone calls, or written correspondence).

Staff across the district reported that parents are provided the opportunity to change meetings times or dates, that copies of the IEP are sent home if the parent is unable to attend the meeting, and that revisions can be made if the parent disagrees with the IEP as developed. The district encourages teachers and staff to offer parents to participate in phone conferencing if they can not be in attendance at the IEP meeting. Of those who responded to the survey for parents of students with disabilities and students identified as gifted, 95% and 86% respectively, reported that they have attended an IEP or EP meeting for their child.

### ***Findings***

- Finding(s) of Noncompliance
  - None noted.
  
- Area(s) of Concern
  - For IEPs developed without the parent in attendance, there is no evidence that the concerns of the parent (e.g., information gleaned through prior communication) were considered.
  
- Corrective Action(s)
  - None noted.
  
- Recommended Action(s)
  - The district is encouraged to target parent involvement in its IEP training and staff development activities, and to develop and implement a system of self-assessment to ensure compliance with these requirements.
  
- Area(s) of Strength/Commendation
  - IEPs reviewed on-site consistently included documentation of efforts to facilitate parental participation, including phone conferences prior to or during the IEP meetings.
  - The district has implemented the requirements of Section 1008.22(3)(c)(6), F.S., regarding parental consent for the use of instructional accommodations not allowable on the FCAT and has incorporated it in their automated IEP form.

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

This section provides information related to the opinions of district staff as to why they believe the number of ESE students participating in statewide assessments is low. When asked their opinion on the likely contributors to the relatively low FCAT participation rate for students with disabilities in Indian River County, the following factors were cited:

- Historically, students on special diploma were exempted from the FCAT; IEP teams have only recently begun to implement the requirements of the exemption criteria under State Board of Education rule.
- In an attempt to keep students from dropping out, they were placed on option I special diploma and were exempted from the FCAT.
- Teachers who are protective of the ESE population, as a means of decreasing frustration level, anxiety, and feelings of failure, exempted students who were felt to be unable to be successful on the FCAT.
- A large number of families have moved into the district in order for their children to participate in the autism program.

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

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

### ***Requirements***

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

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

### ***Data***

At the time of the monitoring visit Indian River School District included five charter schools; one was visited by monitoring staff. Indian River Academy is a K-6 school that includes ten students with disabilities, one of whom also is gifted. The school provides an array of service delivery models, including full inclusion, pull-out resources for part of the day, and separate class placement. There is an ESE teacher at the school and itinerant services are provided by a speech and language pathologist and an occupational therapist. At the time of the visit, the school did not have a gifted endorsed teacher and the single gifted student was not receiving gifted services. Staff reported that the student’s parents chose to place him at the school hoping this placement would better address his current learning difficulties, knowing that he would not receive gifted services while he is at the Academy; however, this information was not documented on the student’s IEP or in conference notes from the IEP team meeting. Some ESE students are on modified curriculum and the IEP team determines the instructional modifications and/or accommodations needed. Staff reported not having had any students apply to the school

whose needs could not be met at their location. Staff reported extensive support from the district liaison, who provides support and assistance upon request.

### ***Findings***

- Finding(s) of Noncompliance
  - None noted.
  
- Area(s) of Concern
  - Although it appeared, through the case study process, that the needs of the twice exceptional student were being met, the student's giftedness is not directly addressed or acknowledged on the IEP.
  
- Recommended Action(s)
  - It is recommended that the district target the issue of twice exceptional students in its IEP training, to ensure that IEP teams consider all the needs of exceptional students, including needs that result from their giftedness, and that a teacher of the gifted be a participant on the IEP team for these students.
  
- Area(s) of Strength/Commendation
  - Enthusiastic, committed staff.
  - Strong support reported by school staff from the district's assigned liaison.

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

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

### ***Requirements***

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

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

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

Rule 6A-6.03016, Special Programs for Students Who Are Emotionally Handicapped, FAC, requires that students may be eligible as severely emotionally disturbed if they meet the requirements as emotionally handicapped and, in addition, "...require a program which... (d) provides extensive support services specifically designed for severely emotionally disturbed students. These services include but are not limited to: 1. individual or group counseling, 2. parent counseling or education, and 3. consultation from mental health, medical, or other professionals..."

### *Data*

Indian River County school district has a variety of personnel who provide counseling and support to students both on- and off-campus, including guidance counselors, behavioral specialists, a social behavioral specialist, an intervention specialist, school psychologists, a student support specialist, and ESE consultative teachers. In addition, counseling services are provided through private contracted services and outside agencies, including Suncoast, New Horizon, and the Department of Children and Families (DCF). Available counseling services include individual counseling, support groups, anger management classes, and coping, grief and divorce counseling.

District and school staff reported that counseling services are available to all students with disabilities who need it in order to benefit from special education; however, with the exception of students in the SED program, it is not clear that the district assumes full financial responsibility for such services. It was reported that students who are eligible for Medicaid or who are covered under private insurance often are referred to outside agencies for services. The district has a grant through Suncoast that provides counseling for students who qualify under specific requirements, and offers a sliding scale for parents who do not have insurance. A social worker from the Department of Health is available to provide services for those who do not meet the criteria to for the grant or who do not have insurance.

When asked whether counseling as a related service would be documented as such on the IEP if an IEP team determined it was needed, some staff reported that it would be, others said it would only be included on the IEP of a student in the SED program, and still others said it would not be documented. Staff reported that parents often do not want counseling documented on the IEP especially if the student is receiving anger management counseling.

The records of 13 students in the SED program, 35 students in the EH program, and 13 additional students determined to exhibit social/emotional difficulties were reviewed on-site. In seven of 13 SED records (54%), either counseling or psychiatric services was provided and was included on their IEP as a related service. Six (46%) SED students did not have counseling indicated on their IEP. For the 35 EH records reviewed, none had counseling listed on the IEP as a related service, although all students had some form of behavioral support and/or monitoring. There was evidence of social/emotional or behavioral concerns that might result in a need for counseling on nine of the additional 13 records reviewed; counseling was not included as a related service but each of the nine was reported to be receiving counseling services from an outside agency.

### ***Findings***

- Finding(s) of Noncompliance
  - Counseling was not documented as a related service on the IEPs of six SED students as required under State Board of Education rule.
  
- Area(s) of Concern
  - It is not clear that students who require counseling as a related service in order to benefit from special education are provided the service at no cost to the family.
  - It is not evident (e.g., through conference notes) that IEP teams considered counseling as a related service for some students with apparent social/emotional needs.
  
- Corrective Action(s)
  - The IEP teams of the identified students are required to reconvene to determine whether the students continue to meet eligibility under the SED program, and if so, to determine the counseling as a related service needed in order to benefit from special education.
  - Review policies and procedures related to the provision of counseling to ensure that counseling is provided at no cost to the parents for students with disabilities who need it in order to benefit from special education.
  
- Recommended Action(s)
  - Incorporate training on determining a student's need for educationally relevant counseling as a related service in the district's on-going IEP training.
  
- Areas of Strength/Commendation
  - District has numerous staff available and involved in providing social/emotional and behavioral support to students who need it.
  - A wide range of types of counseling is available from a variety of different sources and service providers.

### **Communication Needs of Students with Disabilities**

This section provides information related to the speech and language services provided to ESE students who are not eligible for programs for students who are speech or language impaired.

### ***Requirements***

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

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

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

### ***Data***

In addition to monitoring categories related to the 2005 focused visit, the Bureau conducted interviews related to the manner in which the communication needs of students not eligible for the programs for speech or language impaired are addressed. District and school-level staff reported that that the needs would either be addressed on the IEP as a related service, as specially designed instruction in the area of communication, or be incorporated into the specially designed instruction in academic or social areas. Depending on the way it is documented on the IEP, services may be provided by the speech/language pathologist (either directly or through consultation) or by the ESE or general education teacher. In the records reviewed, communication was addressed in the IEPs of students for whom such a need was evident. There were no findings of noncompliance in this area.

### ***Findings***

- Findings of Noncompliance
  - None noted.
  
- Corrective Actions
  - None required.

### **Transition Services**

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

### ***Requirements***

In accordance with 34 CFR 300.347 (b)(1), beginning at age 14, and updated annually, IEP teams are required to provide "...a statement of the transition service needs of the student under the applicable components of the student's IEP that focuses on the student's courses of study ..." and, at the age of 16, provide "...a statement of needed transition services for the student, including, if appropriate, a statement of the interagency responsibilities or any needed linkage" (34 CFR 300.347 (b)(2)).

### ***Data***

Staff reported that it often is difficult to obtain agency participation in the transition planning process for students 16 or older. District staff reported a history of limited participation by Vocational Rehabilitation (VR), as they are only available to attend meetings on Tuesdays and Thursdays, but reported that efforts have been made to improve this. The district hired a program

specialist dedicated solely work with transition issues. The transition specialist sends a list of the graduating seniors every month to VR; response to this system is reported to be good. The following agencies provide services to the district's students with disabilities:

- Vocational Rehabilitation (VR)
- Goodwill
- Association for Retarded Citizens (ARC)
- Department of Blind Services (DBS)
- Social Security (SS)
- Agency for Developmental Disabilities (DD)
- Occupational Services

Staff at Sebastian River High School (SRHS) reported utilizing various resources to provide transition support services to their students. In addition to having an effective working relationship with Goodwill, staff reported that the school has community-based partners who mentor students and they take ESE seniors to Indian River Community College (IRCC) to see the vocational programs available. Students who graduate with a special diploma are not allowed to register formally for programs at IRCC; however, they are able to enroll in classes. Students at SRHS can get assistance with obtaining letters of recommendation, completing applications, and resume writing from the career counselor. Staff at Vero Beach High School (VBHS) reported that outside agencies are invited to transition IEP meetings, with DBS and VR cited as examples. Wabbaso School sponsors an agency fair in the spring, during which agencies are invited to share with the students the services that are available.

Nine of 28 records submitted to the Bureau for review prior to the visit were transition IEPs. Transition was not noted as a purpose of the meeting for five of those (56%). Three of the transition IEPs were for students aged 16 or older; there were no agencies invited to participate for these students. Sixteen additional transition IEPs for students 16 years of age or older were reviewed on-site, including five for students 20 years old or older. Five of the 16 (31%) included documentation of an outside agency being invited to the meeting; representatives were in attendance at two of the meetings. One of the IEPs was for a 22 year old EMH student whose eligibility for services under the IDEA ended with the close of the 2004-05 school year. This student's record included evidence of a need for additional on-going support and vocational training or assistance. Staff reported that, since the family had consistently failed to follow-up with post-school planning and contact with agencies in the past, it was not felt that inviting an outside agency to the final IEP team meeting would be beneficial.

### ***Findings***

- Findings of Noncompliance
  - The district's obligation to attempt to meet a student's needs regarding agency participation continues until the student has exited the program, despite resistance or lack of cooperation from the family. For at least one student, there is evidence that continued attempts to foster family involvement with support agencies was required but not provided. This was noted as a possible concern for several additional students.

- Corrective Actions
  - The district is required to address the requirements related to agency involvement in transition planning, including methods to foster support from families who are resistant or uninvolved, and develop and implement a system of self-assessment to ensure compliance with these requirements.
  
- Areas of Strength/Commendation
  - Hiring of a transition specialist to assist in improving transitional services for ESE students.
  - Collaborative and creative efforts by staff at SRHS to ensure ESE students 16 years or older are adequately linked to services upon their graduation from high school.

### **Services to Gifted Students**

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

#### ***Requirements***

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

#### ***Data***

Indian River County provides gifted services in 18 of its 19 schools and serves approximately 1,000 students through the gifted program. Referrals for screenings can be made by parents, teachers, staff, and the student. Staff reported that the parent, teacher of the gifted, general education teacher, and resource specialist are present at the EP meeting. If the student is limited English proficient (LEP), an ESOL teacher (English for speakers of other languages) also attends the meeting. In elementary and middle school the EP must be reviewed at least every three years and in high school every four years.

The district utilizes three service delivery models, based on grade level. The elementary program is an enrichment model, in middle school it is content-based, and in high school students may enroll in a gifted elective course and receive consultative services. The enrichment program at the elementary level is based on a multidisciplinary approach that includes math, history, reading, and science. Students are either in a gifted class one day a week or for one and a half hours daily. In middle school, students are offered accelerated courses in reading, math, and science. At the high school level, in addition to the gifted elective class and consultative services, students can participate in gifted externships where they are mentored by someone in the community. Indian River School District has an approved Plan B for the identification of students from underrepresented groups.

Of the parents who responded to the survey, 86% reported that they have attended their child's EP meeting. Overall, 78% reported satisfaction with the gifted services their child receives.

Though parents feel that their child's home school treats them with respect (97%) and encourages them to participate in the student's education (85%), 76% feel that the home school wants to hear their ideas, 72% feel that the home school addresses their child's needs, 62% feel that their ideas are implemented, 62% reported being involved in developing the EP, and 61% reported that the school ensures that they understand their child's EP.

Indian River School District's self-selected indicator for its continuous improvement plan for gifted students is disproportionate representation. While the district has improved its identification of Hispanic students (13% of student population and 11% of gifted students) there has been limited change regarding African American students (16% of student population and 8% of gifted students).

### ***Findings***

- Findings of Noncompliance
  - None noted.
- Areas of Concern
  - None noted.
- Corrective Actions
  - None required.
- Areas of Strength/Commendation
  - Strong community involvement that allows gifted high school students to receive practical experiences in their area of interest.

### **Review of Student Records**

This section provides information related to the IEP and EP reviews conducted prior to and during the monitoring visit to Indian River County.

### ***Data***

A total of 28 student records of students with disabilities and 10 records of students identified as gifted, randomly selected from the population of ESE students, were reviewed. The records were from 19 schools in the district. Nine of the records represented transition IEPs for students aged 14 or older. Targeted or partial reviews of an additional 104 records were conducted on-site in conjunction with student case studies and to collect information related to additional compliance areas designated by the Bureau. In addition to IEP reviews, the Bureau conducted reviews of 13 matrix of services documents for students reported at the 254 or 255 funding level through the Florida Education Finance Program (FEFP). Any services claimed on the matrix must be documented on the IEP and must be in evidence in the classroom.

Student- and item-specific feedback on the record reviews was provided to district staff to assist in the provision of targeted technical assistance on IEP and EP development. Identifying information on individual students for whom corrective actions are required was provided to the district in a letter dated June 25, 2005.

To be determined systemic in nature, an item must be found noncompliant in at least 25% of the records reviewed. In Indian River County, at least 7 of the IEPs and 3 of the EPs must have been noncompliant on a given item to be considered a systemic finding.

### ***Findings***

- Findings of Noncompliance
  - On IEPs, systemic findings of noncompliance were in the areas of:
    - location of special education services/specially designed instruction not provided (28)
    - supports for school personnel not addressed (28)
    - supplementary aids and services not provided (26)
    - inadequate description of progress toward annual goals in the report of progress (25)
    - statement of how the student's progress towards annual goals will be measured not included (24)
    - frequency of accommodations and/or modifications not provided (20)
    - location of accommodations and/or modifications not provided (20)
    - initiation/duration dates of accommodations and/or modifications not provided (19)
    - lack of evidence that the IEP team considered the results of the initial evaluation or most recent evaluation of the student in the development of the IEP (18)
    - inadequate short term objectives or benchmarks (16)
    - annual goals not measurable (15)
    - lack of evidence that the IEP team considered the results of the student's performance on any state- or district-wide assessment in the development of the IEP (15)
    - frequency of special education services/specially designed instruction on the IEP not provided (14)
    - inadequate or lack of explanation of the extent, if any, to which the student will not participate with non-disabled students in the regular class (14)
    - interpreter of instructional implications of testing not identified at the IEP meeting (13)
    - lack of documentation that the IEP team considered the concerns of the parents for enhancing the education of their child in the development of the IEP (13)
    - inadequate present level of statement (11)
    - report of progress does not indicate the extent to which progress is sufficient to achieve the annual goal (11)
    - lack of documentation of calls, correspondence, or home visits to ensure parental participation (8)
    - inadequate statement of present level of educational performance, including how the student's disability effects his/her involvement and progress in the general curriculum (8)
    - lack of documentation that parent was provided a copy of the IEP (7)
    - transition not noted as a purpose of the meeting (5 of 9 transition IEPs)
  - For 12 of the 28 IEPs more than 50% of the goals were not measurable.
  - Three records did not include prior written notice of change of placement as required.
  - Five of 13 (38%) matrix records reviewed were found to be inaccurately reported.
  - On EPs, systemic findings of noncompliance were in the areas of:
    - interpreter of instructional implications of testing not identified (8)
    - lack of or inadequate present level of performance statement (6)

- lack of documentation that the parent was provided a copy of the EP (6)
  - lack of evidence that the EP team considered the strengths of the student and the needs beyond the general curriculum resulting from the student's giftedness (5)
  - anticipated location of services not provided (4)
  - Additional record-related findings and/or concerns are addressed under the *Access to the General Curriculum* and *Secondary Transition* sections of this report.
- Areas of Concern
    - Individual or non-systemic findings were noted in 39 additional components of the IEPs.
    - Individual or non-systemic findings were noted on five additional components of the EPs.
  - Corrective Actions
    - The district must provide an amendment to the data provided to the DOE through the Automated Student Information System database for surveys 2 and 3 for the 2004-05 school year for any matrix of services documents found to be in error.
    - The IEP teams for 12 students must reconvene to address the lack of measurable annual goals.
    - An adjustment of federal funds will be made by the DOE for three students.
    - The district will be required to target the areas noted above in its existing IEP training procedures, and to develop and implement a system of self-assessment to ensure compliance with required elements. This system must include the requirement that district and/or school staff periodically review at least 30 IEPs and five EPs to determine compliance with these requirements.
  - Recommended Actions
    - Utilize the student- and item-specific feedback on the record reviews provided to assist in the provision of targeted technical assistance on IEP development.

## Review of District Forms

This section provides information related to the review of district forms for ESE teacher services. Forms representing the thirteen areas identified below were submitted to Bureau staff for a review to determine compliance with federal and state laws. Revisions were required on forms representing 13 actions (see \* below), and recommended revisions were noted on forms representing nine actions (see + below). The district was notified of the specific findings via a separate letter dated March 11, 2005. A detailed explanation of the specific findings is included as appendix D.

- *Parent Notification of Individual Education Plan (IEP) Meeting*
- *IEP forms (Computerized)\*+*
- *IEP forms (Non-Computerized)\*+*
- *EP forms\**
- *Notice and Consent for Initial Placement\**
- *Informed Notice and Consent for Evaluation\*+*
- *Informed Notice and Consent for Reevaluation\*+*
- *Notification of Change of Placement\*+*
- *Notification of Change of FAPE (Free Appropriate Public Education)\*+*
- *Informed Notice of Refusal\*+*

- *Documentation of Staffing/Eligibility Determination\**
- *Informed Notice of Dismissal\*+*
- *Notice: Not Eligible for Exceptional Student Placement\*+*
- *Summary of Procedural Safeguards*
- *Annual Notice of Confidentiality\**
- *Services Plan \**

\*indicates findings that require immediate attention

+ indicates recommended changes

## **System Improvement Plan**

In response to these findings, the district is required to develop a system improvement plan for submission to the Bureau. This plan must include activities and strategies intended to address specific findings, as well as measurable evidence of change. In developing the system improvement plan, every effort should be made to link the system improvement activities resulting from this focused monitoring report to the district's continuous improvement plan. 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 presented in this report following the summary of findings.

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



## **General Recommendations and Technical Assistance**

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

### **Recommendations**

- Incorporate the utilization of the assessment planning form developed by DOE in the trainings and IEP team planning.
- Contact the Florida Inclusion Network (FIN) to provide training to all staff on additional strategies, supports and services that can be used in the general classroom to ensure student placement in the least restrictive environment is based on individual need and not previous placement.
- Provide a review of the policies and procedures related to testing and classroom accommodations in district-wide training.
- Contact the Student Support Services Project for information technical assistance on counseling as a related service.
- Contact appropriate Program Development staff at DOE for information on providing services to students who are twice exceptional.
- Provide training to staff, especially those at the Charter Schools, on the unique needs of students who are twice exceptional, including needs resulting from their giftedness and how to address these needs on their IEPs.

### **Technical Assistance**

#### **Florida Inclusion Network**

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

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

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

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

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

## **Bureau of Exceptional Education and Student Services**

In addition to the special projects described above, Bureau staff are available for assistance on a variety of topics. Following is a partial list of contacts:

### **ESE Program Administration and Quality Assurance—Monitoring** (850) 245-0476

Eileen Amy, Administrator  
[Eileen.Amy@fldoe.org](mailto:Eileen.Amy@fldoe.org)

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

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

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

Anitra Moreland, Program Specialist  
[Denise Taylor@fldoe.org](mailto:Denise.Taylor@fldoe.org)

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

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

Karen Denbroeder, Administrator  
[Karen.Denbroeder@fldoe.org](mailto:Karen.Denbroeder@fldoe.org)

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

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

### **Clearinghouse Information Center** [cicbiscs@FLDOE.org](mailto:cicbiscs@FLDOE.org) (850) 245-0477

### **ESE Program Development and Services** (850) 245-0478 Evy Friend, Administrator

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

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

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

### **Mentally Handicapped/Autism** Sheryl Brainard, Program Specialist [Sheryl.Brainard@fldoe.org](mailto:Sheryl.Brainard@fldoe.org)

### **Assistive Technology** Karen Morris, Program Specialist [Karen.Morris@fldoe.org](mailto:Karen.Morris@fldoe.org)

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

### **Speech/Language** Lezlie Cline, Program Director [Lezlie.Cline@fldoe.org](mailto:Lezlie.Cline@fldoe.org)

**Appendix A:**

**District Data**





FLORIDA DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION  
BUREAU OF EXCEPTIONAL EDUCATION AND STUDENT SERVICES

2005 LEA PROFILE

JOHN WINN, COMMISSIONER

DISTRICT:	<b>INDIAN RIVER</b>	PK-12 POPULATION:	<b>17,068</b>
ENROLLMENT GROUP:	<b>7,000 TO 20,000</b>	PERCENT DISABLED:	<b>14%</b>
		PERCENT GIFTED:	<b>6%</b>

**INTRODUCTION**

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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**LEA PROFILE 2005**

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

**DATA SOURCES**

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

**DISTRICTS IN INDIAN RIVER'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
Indian River	67%	59%	42%
Enrollment Group	52%	45%	47%
State	48%	45%	42%

### STANDARD DIPLOMA THROUGH GED EXIT OPTION:

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

	2001-02	2002-03	2003-04
Indian River	5%	3%	2%
Enrollment Group	3%	2%	2%
State	1%	1%	1%

### STANDARD DIPLOMA THROUGH FCAT WAIVER:

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

	2002-03	2003-04
Indian River	4%	21%
Enrollment Group	6%	11%
State	9%	14%

**DROPOUT RATE:**

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

	Students with Disabilities			Gifted Students			All Students		
	2001-02	2002-03	2003-04	2001-02	2002-03	2003-04	2001-02	2002-03	2003-04
Indian River Enrollment Group State	3%	5%	2%	<1%	<1%	<1%	2%	2%	1%
	5%	5%	5%	<1%	<1%	<1%	3%	3%	3%
	5%	4%	5%	<1%	<1%	<1%	3%	3%	3%

	EH/SED			SLD		
	2001-02	2002-03	2003-04	2001-02	2002-03	2003-04
Indian River Enrollment Group State	7%	8%	4%	2%	5%	2%
	7%	7%	6%	5%	5%	5%
	7%	7%	7%	5%	4%	5%

**POSTSCHOOL OUTCOME DATA:**

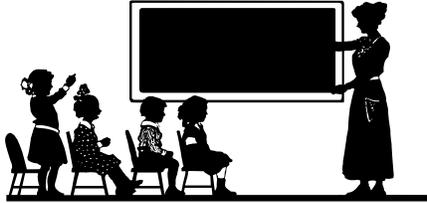
The Florida Education and Training Placement Information Program (FETPIP) is an interagency data collection system that obtains follow-up data on former students. The most recent FETPIP data available reports on students who exited Florida public schools during the **2002-03** school year. The table 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.
Indian River Enrollment Group State	48%	24%	38%	62%
	45%	17%	45%	70%
	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
Indian River Enrollment Group State	83%	37%	17%	90%	14%	10%
	84%	28%	16%	91%	10%	9%
	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
Indian River	50%	51%	53%	26%	27%	25%	21%	18%	21%
Enrollment Group	46%	50%	51%	28%	26%	25%	21%	20%	20%
State	48%	50%	55%	26%	24%	21%	22%	22%	20%

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

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

	Early Childhood Setting or Home			Part-Time Early Childhood/ Part-Time Early Childhood Special Education Setting			Early Childhood Special Education Setting		
	2002-03	2003-04	2004-05	2002-03	2003-04	2004-05	2002-03	2003-04	2004-05
Indian River	1%	2%	1%	57%	46%	45%	11%	32%	54%
Enrollment Group	5%	5%	4%	66%	66%	70%	23%	25%	21%
State	7%	7%	7%	57%	57%	56%	31%	31%	33%

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

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

	2002-03	2003-04	2004-05
Indian River	68%	60%	65%
Enrollment Group	60%	59%	56%
State	61%	62%	57%

**DISCIPLINE RATES:**

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

		2003-04							
		In-School Suspensions		Out-of-School Suspensions		Expulsions		Alternative Placement*	
		Students with Disabilities	Nondisabled Students						
Indian River		17%	12%	15%	7%	<1%	0%	<1%	<1%
Enrollment Group		15%	11%	14%	7%	<1%	<1%	<1%	<1%
State		14%	9%	15%	7%	<1%	<1%	<1%	<1%

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



### SECTION THREE: PREVALENCE

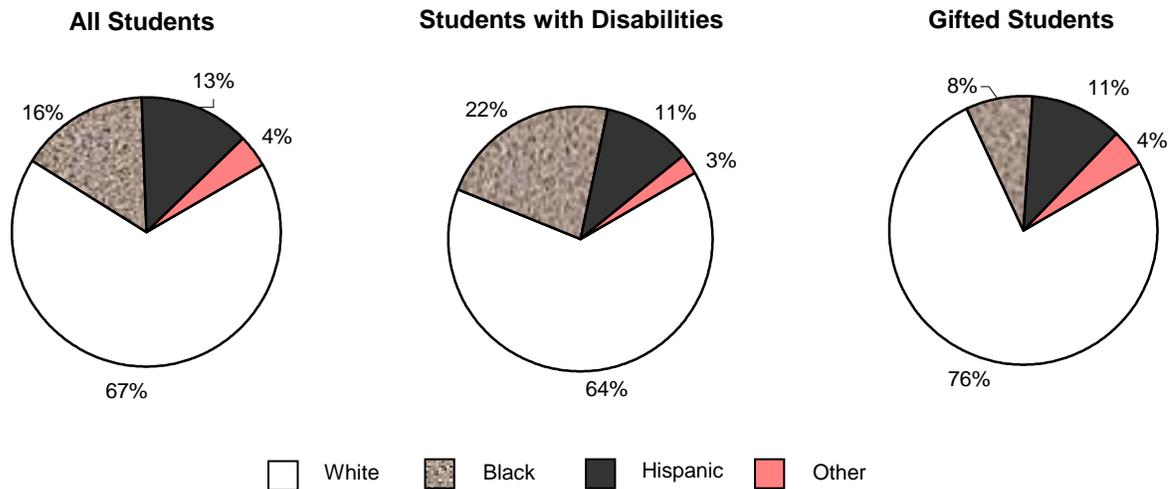
Prevalence refers to the proportion of the PK-12 population identified as exceptional at any given point in time. This section of the profile provides prevalence data by demographic characteristics.

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

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

	State			District		
	All Students	Students with Disabilities	Gifted Students	All Students	Students with Disabilities	Gifted Students
White	49%	50%	63%	67%	64%	76%
Black	24%	28%	10%	16%	22%	8%
Hispanic	23%	19%	20%	13%	11%	11%
Asian/Pacific Islander	2%	<1%	4%	1%	<1%	2%
Am Ind/Alaskan Native	<1%	<1%	<1%	<1%	<1%	<1%
Multiracial	3%	2%	3%	2%	2%	2%

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%	44%	26%
LEP	11%	3%	6%	<1%

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

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

	All Students		SLD		EH/SED		EMH	
	State	District	State	District	State	District	State	District
White	49%	67%	51%	66%	47%	66%	32%	39%
Black	24%	16%	24%	22%	39%	25%	51%	48%
Hispanic	23%	13%	22%	10%	12%	2%	14%	11%
Asian/Pacific Islander	2%	1%	<1%	<1%	<1%	0%	<1%	<1%
Am Ind/Alaskan Native	<1%	<1%	<1%	<1%	<1%	1%	<1%	0%
Multiracial	3%	2%	2%	1%	2%	6%	1%	2%

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



John Winn, Commissioner

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

**Districts Rank-Ordered on FCAT Participation for Students with Disabilities**

Based on data from Survey 3 and the FDOE assessment files (2003-04), the districts' participation rates in the general statewide assessment at identified grade levels and subject areas were compared to 85% and the sum of the discrepancies were used to rank order the districts.

District	Total Discrep.	Rank
Madison	-135.00	1
Hillsborough	-77.00	2
Indian River	-66.00	3
Pasco	-66.00	4
Orange	-61.00	5
Pinellas	-61.00	6
Lee	-60.00	7
Putnam	-60.00	8
Marion	-52.00	9
Duval	-48.00	10
Hernando	-46.00	11
Palm Beach	-45.00	12
St. Lucie	-45.00	13
Baker	-44.00	14
Collier	-44.00	15
Nassau	-44.00	16
Taylor	-43.00	17
Citrus	-41.00	18
Lafayette	-33.00	19
Monroe	-31.00	20
St. Johns	-30.00	21
Glades	-28.00	22
Brevard	-27.00	23
Broward	-27.00	24
Okaloosa	-27.00	25
Flagler	-25.00	26
Gadsden	-23.00	27
Highlands	-22.00	28
Escambia	-21.00	29
Wakulla	-21.00	30
Hamilton	-20.00	31
Martin	-19.00	32
Miami Dade	-18.00	33
Leon	-15.00	34

District	Total Discrep.	Rank
Osceola	-14.00	35
Columbia	-13.00	36
Gulf	-12.00	37
Jackson	-11.00	38
Volusia	-5.00	39
Clay	-2.00	40
Dixie	-1.00	41
Levy	-1.00	42
Alachua	0.00	43
Sarasota	0.00	44
Polk	1.00	45
Charlotte	4.00	46
Hendry	6.00	47
Jefferson	6.00	48
Manatee	6.00	49
DeSoto	10.00	50
Calhoun	12.00	51
Lake	14.00	52
Seminole	14.00	53
Okeechobee	18.00	54
Santa Rosa	18.00	55
Gilchrist	22.00	56
Hardee	23.00	57
Liberty	25.00	58
Sumter	26.00	59
Washington	28.00	60
Suwannee	31.00	61
Holmes	32.00	62
Walton	48.00	63
Franklin	50.00	64
Bradford	55.00	65
Union	75.00	66
Bay	-12.00	67
District Total	-31.00	

Note: Shaded districts have been monitored during the current or previous four years.



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



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

**ESE Monitoring Team Participants**

**Department of Education Staff**

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

Anitra Moreland, Program Specialist, Team Leader  
Kim Komisar, Program Director  
April Katine, Program Specialist  
Barbara McAnelly, Program Specialist  
Angela Nathaniel, Program Specialist

**Contracted Staff**

Iris Anderson

**Peer Reviewers and Contracted Staff**

Mary Camp, Sumter County School District  
Dwanette Dilworth, Marion County School District



**Appendix C:**

**Survey Results**



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

**Parent Survey Report: Students with Disabilities**

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

The parent survey was sent to parents of the 2,484 students with disabilities for whom complete addresses were provided by the district. A total of 393 parents (PK, n = 40; K-5, 161 = X; 6-8, n = 89; 9-12, n = 103), representing 16% of the sample, returned the survey. Surveys were returned from 107 families as undeliverable, representing 4% of the sample. Parents represented the following students with disabilities: autistic, deaf or hard of hearing, developmentally delayed, educable mentally handicapped, emotionally handicapped, hospital/homebound, language impaired, orthopedically impaired, other health impaired, traumatic brain injured, profoundly mentally handicapped, severely emotionally disturbed, specific learning disabled, speech impaired, trainable mentally handicapped, and visually impaired.

% **YES**

**Overall, I am satisfied with:**

- the way I am treated by school personnel. 85
- the amount of time my child spends with general education students. 83
- the exceptional education services my child receives. 78
- the way special education teachers and general education teachers work together. 78
- the level of knowledge and experience of school personnel. 77
- how quickly services are implemented following an IEP (Individual Educational Plan) decision. 77
- the effect of exceptional student education on my child's self-esteem. 76
- my child's academic progress. 73

**My child:**

- has friends at school. 87
- is learning skills that will be useful later in life. 82
- spends most of the school day involved in productive activities. 81
- is happy at school. 79
- receives all the special education and related services on his/her IEP. 77

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

- all of my child's needs. 87
- ways that my child could spend time with students in general education classes. 78
- whether my child should get accommodations (special testing conditions), for example, extra time. 77
- whether my child needed speech/language services. 71
- whether my child would take the FCAT (Florida Comprehensive Assessment Test). 69
- whether my child needed services beyond the regular school year. 68
- \* which diploma my child may receive. 68
- \* the transition services my child needs to achieve his/her goals. 62
- whether my child needed transportation. 61
- the specific skills my child needs to work on in preparation for the FCAT. 60
- whether my child needed physical and/or occupational therapy. 59
- \* my child's goals after high school. 58
- \* the requirements for different diplomas. 57
- whether my child needed psychological counseling services. 51

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

- expect my child to succeed. 89
- set appropriate goals for my child. 87
- are available to speak with me. 87
- encourage students to ask for help if they need it. 87
- give students with disabilities extra time or different assignments, if needed. 83
- individualized instruction for my child. 80
- call me or send me notes about my child. 76
- give homework that meets my child's needs. 74

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

- expect my child to succeed. 87
- are available to speak with me. 85
- set appropriate goals for my child. 80
- encourage students to ask for help if they need it. 79
- give students with disabilities extra time or different assignments, if needed. 72
- give homework that meets my child's needs. 71
- call me or send me notes about my child. 69
- individualized instruction for my child. 66

**My child's school:**

- encourages me to participate in my child's education. 85
- makes sure I understand my child's IEP and the services my child will receive. 85
- sends me information written in a way I understand. 83
- encourages acceptance of students with disabilities. 80

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

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

- wants to hear my ideas. 78
- offers students with disabilities the classes they need to graduate with a standard diploma. 76
- does all it can to keep students from dropping out of school. 74
- \* offers a variety of vocational courses, such as computers and business technology. 74
- addresses my child's individual needs. 73
- explains what I can do if I want to make changes to my child's IEP. 73
- handles discipline problems appropriately. 73
- involves students with disabilities in clubs, sports, or other activities. 71
- informs me about all of the services available to my child. 68
- provides students with disabilities updated books and materials. 68
- \* provides information to students about education and jobs after high school. 58
- sends me information about activities and workshops for parents. 55
- \* 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. 55

**Parent Participation**

- I have attended my child's IEP meetings. 95
- I meet with my child's teachers to discuss my child's needs and progress. 93
- I am comfortable talking about my child with school staff. 91
- My input is considered in the development of my child's IEP. 83
- I participate in school activities with my child. 79
- I attend meetings of the PTA/PTO. 45
- I have heard about the Florida Diagnostic and Learning Resources System ("FDLRS") and the services they provide to families of children with disabilities. 38
- I attend School Advisory Committee meetings concerning school improvement. 33
- I have used parent support services in my area. 31
- I attend meetings of organizations for parents of students with disabilities. 30

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

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

**Teacher Survey Report: Students with Disabilities**

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

A sufficient number of surveys were sent to each school in the district for all teachers and other service providers to participate. A total of 407 teacher surveys representing approximately 40% of ESE and general education teachers in the district were returned. Data are from 24 (%) of the district's 28 schools.

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

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

- places students with disabilities into general education classes whenever possible. 93
- ensures that students with disabilities feel comfortable when taking classes with general education students. 93
- modifies and adapts curriculum for students as needed. 91
- addresses each students' individual needs. 87
- ensures that the general education curriculum is taught in ESE classes to the maximum extent possible. 86
- gives ESE teachers access to adequate instructional materials, including technology. 84
- implements support facilitation and/or consultation by ESE teachers for students in general education classes. 79
- encourages collaboration among ESE teachers, GE teachers and service providers. 79
- provides adequate support for GE teachers who teach students with disabilities. 74
- offers teachers professional development opportunities regarding curriculum and support for students with disabilities. 72
- implements co-teaching for some or all classes. 64

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

- provides students with appropriate testing accommodations. 96
- provides ESE teachers with FCAT test preparation materials. 93
- aligns curriculum for students with the standards that are tested on the 90
- gives students in ESE classes updated textbooks. 87
- provides extra help or remediation before or after school. 83

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

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

- |   |     |
|---|-----|
| • conducts ongoing assessments of individual students' performance.   | n/a |
| • provides positive behavioral supports.  | n/a |
| • develops IEPs according to student needs.   | 96  |
| • allows students to make up credits lost due to disability-related   | 95  |
| • makes an effort to involve parents in their child's education.  | 95  |
| • ensures that classroom material is culturally appropriate.  | 91  |
| • ensures that classroom material is grade- and age- appropriate.   | 90  |
| • encourages participation of students with disabilities in extracurricular                                 | 88  |
| • tracks student attendance to identify students with attendance  | 87  |
| • ensures that students are taught strategies to manage their behavior as<br>needed.                        | 84  |
| • provides social skills training to students as needed.  | 80  |
| • provides adequate counseling services for students who need it.   | 74  |
| • uses a child study team to develop strategies for students identified as<br>having an attendance problem. | 71  |
| • implements dropout prevention activities.   | 68  |

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

**My school:**

- |  |    |
|--|----|
| • implements an IEP transition plan for each student.  | 93 |
| • provides extra help to students who need to retake the FCAT.   | 90 |
| • encourages students to aim for a standard diploma when appropriate.                                  | 87 |
| • informs students through the IEP process of the different diploma<br>options and their requirements. | 86 |
| • provides students with information about options after graduation.                                   | 82 |
| • teaches transition skills for future employment and independent living.                              | 67 |
| • coordinates on-the-job training with outside agencies.   | 66 |
| • provides students with job training.   | 65 |

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

**Student Survey Report: Students with Disabilities**

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

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

Surveys were received from 344 students, representing approximately 29% of the students with disabilities in grades 9-12 in the district. Data are from 2 (100%) of the district's 2 schools with students in grades 9-12.

	<b>% YES</b>
<b>I am taking the following ESE classes:</b>	
• Math	58
• English	55
• Learning Strategies or Unique Skills	50
• Vocational (woodshop, computers)	25
• Electives (physical education, art, music)	25
• Science	21
• Social Studies	20
<b>At my school:</b>	
• ESE teachers believe that ESE students can learn.	92
• ESE teachers encourage students to ask for help if they need it.	91
• ESE teachers understand ESE students' needs.	89
• ESE teachers teach students in ways that help them learn.	89
• ESE teachers give students extra help, if needed.	88
• ESE teachers teach students things that will be useful later on in life.	87
• ESE teachers give students extra time or different assignments, if needed.	83
• ESE teachers provide students with updated books and materials.	73
<b>I am taking the following general education/mainstream classes:</b>	
• Electives (physical education, art, music)	82
• Science	59

	<b>% YES</b>
<b>I am taking the following general education/mainstream classes: (continued)</b>	
• Vocational (woodshop, computers)	59
• Math	54
• English	52
• Social Studies	37
<b>At my school:</b>	
• general education teachers teach students things that will be useful later on in life.	91
• general education teachers encourage students to ask for help if they need it.	89
• general education teachers believe that ESE students can learn.	87
• general education teachers give students extra help, if needed.	78
• general education teachers provide students with updated books and materials.	77
• general education teachers teach ESE students in ways that help them learn.	74
• general education teachers understand ESE students' needs.	73
• general education teachers give students extra time or different assignments, if needed.	65
<b>At my school, ESE students:</b>	
• can take vocational classes such as computers and business technology.	92
• are encouraged to stay in school.	92
• get the help they need to do well in school.	91
• fit in at school.	84
• are treated fairly by teachers and staff.	82
• participate in clubs, sports, and other activities.	82
• spend enough time with general education students.	81
• get information about education after high school.	80
• get work experience (on-the-job training) if they are interested.	79
<b>Diploma Option</b>	
• I know what courses I have to take to get my diploma.	81
• I know the difference between a standard and a special diploma.	75
• I agree with the type of diploma I am going to receive.	75
• I will probably graduate with a standard diploma.	68
• I had a say in the decision about which diploma I would get.	61
<b>IEP</b>	
• I had a say in the decision about which classes I would take.	65
• I was invited to attend my IEP meeting this year.	52
• I had a say in the decision about special testing conditions I might get for the FCAT or other tests.	44
• I attended my IEP meeting this year.	35
• I had a say in the decision about whether I need to take the FCAT or a different test.	30

	<b>% YES</b>
<b>FCAT</b>	
• Teachers help ESE students prepare for the FCAT.	64
• In my English/reading classes, we work on the kinds of skills that are tested on the reading part of the FCAT.	61
• I took the FCAT this year.	52
• In my math classes, we work on the kinds of problems that are tested on the math part of the FCAT.	52
• I received accommodations (special testing conditions) for the FCAT.	50

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

**Parent Survey Report: Gifted Students**

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

The parent survey was sent to parents of the 1,093 students identified as gifted for whom complete addresses were provided by the district. A total of 307 parents (KG-5, n = 110; 6-8, n = 130; 9 - 12, n = 67), representing 28% of the sample, returned the survey. Sixteen surveys were returned as undeliverable, representing 1% of the sample.

	<b>%YES</b>
<b>Overall, I am satisfied with:</b>	
• my child's academic progress.	87
• gifted teachers' subject area knowledge.	86
• gifted teachers' expertise in teaching students identified as gifted.	86
• the effect of gifted services on my child's self-esteem.	85
• general education teachers' subject area knowledge.	84
• the gifted services my child receives.	78
• how quickly services were implemented following an initial request for evaluation.	72
• general education teachers' expertise in teaching students identified as gifted.	70
<b>In general education classes, my child:</b>	
• has friends at school.	97
• is learning skills that will be useful later on in life.	90
• is usually happy at school.	90
• has his/her social and emotional needs met at school.	87
• has creative outlets at school.	79
• is academically challenged at school.	62

	<b>%YES</b>
<b>In gifted classes, my child:</b>	
• has friends at school	99
• is usually happy at school.	94
• has his/her social and emotional needs met at school.	93
• is learning skills that will be useful later on in life.	91
• has creative outlets at school.	85
• is academically challenged at school.	84
<b>My child's general education teachers:</b>	
• expect appropriate behavior.	97
• are available to speak with me.	94
• provide coursework that includes representation of diverse ethnic, racial, and other groups.	87
• have access to adequate instructional materials, including technology.	85
• set appropriate goals for my child.	78
• give homework that meets my child's needs.	74
• relate coursework to students' future educational and professional pursuits.	70
• call me or send me notes about my child.	56
<b>My child's gifted teachers:</b>	
• expect appropriate behavior.	98
• are available to speak with me.	91
• set appropriate goals for my child.	86
• have access to adequate instructional materials, including technology.	84
• provide coursework that includes representation of diverse ethnic, racial, and other groups.	82
• give homework that meets my child's needs.	74
• relate coursework to students' future educational and professional pursuits.	73
• call me or send me notes about my child.	54
<b>My child's home school:</b>	
• treats me with respect.	97
• handles discipline problems appropriately.	87
• encourages me to participate in my child's education.	85
• sends me information written in a way I understand.	84
• wants to hear my ideas.	76
• provides students identified as gifted with appropriate books and materials.	75
• addresses my child's individual needs.	72
• implements my ideas.	62
• informs me about all of the services available to my child.	62
• involves me in developing my child's Educational Plan (EP or IEP).	62
• makes sure I understand my child's EP or IEP.	61
• sends me information about activities and workshops for parents.	54
• explains what I can do if I want to make changes to my child's EP or IEP.	48

	<b>%YES</b>
<b>My child's 2nd school:</b>	
• handles discipline problems appropriately.	92
• treats me with respect.	90
• sends me information written in a way I understand.	83
• wants to hear my ideas.	80
• provides students identified as gifted with appropriate books and materials.	77
• implements my ideas.	74
• encourages me to participate in my child's education.	74
• addresses my child's individual needs.	72
• makes sure I understand my child's EP or IEP.	69
• involves me in developing my child's Educational Plan (EP or IEP).	63
• informs me about all of the services available to my child.	59
• explains what I can do if I want to make changes to my child's EP or IEP.	57
• sends me information about activities and workshops for parents.	43
<b>Students identified as gifted:</b>	
• are provided with information about options for education after high school.	75
• have the option of taking a variety of vocational courses.	74
• are provided with career counseling.	58
• are provided with the opportunity to participate in externships or mentorships.	44
<b>Parent Participation</b>	
• I have attended one or more meetings about my child during this school year.	86
• I participate in school activities with my child.	85
• I am a member of the PTA/PTO.	63
• I attend School Advisory Committee meetings concerning school improvement.	26
• I have used parent support services in my area.	14



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



This forms review was completed as a component of the focused monitoring visit to be conducted the week of March 21, 2005. The following district forms were compared to the requirements of applicable State Board of Education rules, the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), and applicable sections of Part 300, Title 34 Code of Federal Regulations (34 CFR 300). The review includes required and recommended revisions based on programmatic or procedural issues and concerns. The results of the review are detailed below and list the applicable sources used for the review.

The following are forms submitted by the district:

**Individual Educational Plan (IEP) Meeting (non-computerized)**  
**Form** *Individual Education Plan Form 001-1990, 039-1998, 022-2000, 025-1992-ESE*  
**34 CFR 300.347**

**The following must be addressed:**

- A statement of supplementary aids and services to be provided to the student, or on behalf of the student must be included.
- A statement of supports for school personnel to be provided for the student must be included.
- An explanation of the extent, if any, to which the student will not participate with nondisabled students in the general education setting must be included for all students removed for any amount of time from nondisabled students, and not just those removed for 50% or more of the school day.
- A statement providing an understanding and consent of the parent for students receiving instructional accommodations not permitted on the statewide assessment and implications of such accommodations must be provided with the IEP or be a part of the IEP.
- Location codes for specially designed instruction do not accurately describe where the services will be provided.
- All services and accommodations must contain a location and frequency.
- A statement of the transition service needs of the student related to applicable components of the IEP that focuses on the course of study must be include for all student beginning at age 14.
- The statement “Upon leaving school, the student and family will be responsible for obtaining needed services,” must be removed as it is the IEP team’s responsibility to ensure services are provided.
- A statement of how the student’s progress toward annual goals will be measured must be included. Current statement measures objectives.
- While not required to be included as a part of the IEP, the following areas must have evidence of consideration by the IEP team;
  - Initial or most recent evaluation results
  - Behavior which impedes the learning of the student or others and positive behavioral intervention strategies and supports when appropriate
  - The language needs of a student with limited English proficiency
  - Instruction in Braille for the blind or visually impaired
  - Communication needs of the student, and in the case of deaf or hard-of-hearing the language and communication needs

- Results of recent state and district-wide assessments skills needed to be remediated in order to pass the Florida Comprehensive Assessment Test (FCAT).

**Recommendation:**

- Remove diploma options “Performance Based” and “Special Certificate of Completion” as these are not diploma options.

**Individual Educational Plan (IEP) Meeting (electronic version)**  
**Form Individual Education Plan Form Electronic Version**  
**34 CFR 300.347**

**The following must be addressed:**

- A statement of supplementary aids and services to be provided to the student, or on behalf of the student must be included.
- A statement of supports for school personnel to be provided for the student must be included.
- An explanation of the extent, if any, to which the student will not participate with nondisabled students in the general education setting must be included for all students removed for any amount of time from nondisabled students, and not just those removed for 50% or more of the school day.
- Accommodations required a beginning date, frequency, location and duration date.
- All services require a location.
- A statement of the transition service needs of the student related to applicable components of the IEP that focuses on the course of study must be include for all student beginning at age 14.
- The statement “Upon leaving school, the student and family will be responsible for obtaining needed services,” must be removed as it is the IEP team’s responsibility to ensure services are provided.
- A statement of how the student’s progress toward annual goals will be measured must be included. Current statement measures objectives.
- A statement regarding how parents will be informed at least as often as parents of nondisabled student are informed must be included.
- Documentation of claim for weighted transportation FTE or transportation plan must be included.
- While not required to be included as a part of the IEP, the following areas must have evidence of consideration by the IEP team;
  - Initial or most recent evaluation results
  - Behavior which impedes the learning of the student or others and positive behavioral intervention strategies and supports when appropriate
  - The language needs of a student with limited English proficiency
  - Instruction in Braille for the blind or visually impaired
  - Communication needs of the student, and in the case of deaf or hard-of-hearing the language and communication needs
  - Results of recent state and district-wide assessments skills needed to be remediated in order to pass the Florida Comprehensive Assessment Test (FCAT).

**Recommendation:**

- If “Performance Based” and “Special Certificate of Completion” are part of the selection of diploma options these need to be removed as they are not diploma options.

**Educational Plan**

*Form Gifted Program Educational Plan (EP) Form 052-1997-ESE*

**State Board of Education Rule 6A-6.03191**

**The following must be addressed:**

- A statement of the student’s interests, needs beyond the general curriculum, and results of student’s performance on state and district assessments and evaluation results must be included in the present level of performance.
- A statement of frequency and location must be included for specially designed instruction.
- While not required to be included as a part of the EP, the needs of the student resulting from giftedness must have evidence of consideration by the EP team.

**Parent Notification of Individual Educational Plan (IEP) Meeting**

*Form Parent Participation Form 010-92-ESE*

**34 CFR 300.345**

This form contains the components for compliance.

**Notice and Consent for Initial Placement**

*Form Informed Notice and Consent for Initial Placement Form ESE #12*

**34 CFR 300.503 and 300.505**

**The following must be addressed:**

- An explanation of why the district proposed or refused to take action must be included.
- A statement that the parents of a child with a disability have protections under the Procedural Safeguards of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) must be included.
- A statement of where a copy of the procedural safeguards may be obtained must be included.
- A statement of two sources for a parent to contact to obtain assistance in understanding the provisions of IDEA must be included.
- “Approved/Disapproved” by the ESE Director/Designee must be changed to “Reviewed”.

**Informed Notice and Consent for Evaluation**

*Form Parent Permission for Evaluation Form 006-92-ESE*

**34 CFR 300.503 and 300.505**

**The following must be addressed:**

- A statement of two sources for a parent to contact to obtain assistance in understanding the provisions of IDEA must be included.

**Recommendation:**

- It is recommended that the protections statement include “of the Individuals with Disabilities ACT (IDEA),” following “Procedural Safeguards”.

**Informed Notice and Consent for Reevaluation**

**Form** *Informed Notice/Consent for Additional Data Form 051-1992-ESE*

**34 CFR 300.503 and 300.505**

**The following must be addressed:**

- A statement of two sources for a parent to contact to obtain assistance in understanding the provisions of IDEA must be included.

**Recommendation:**

- It is recommended that the protections statement include “of the Individuals with Disabilities ACT (IDEA),” following “Procedural Safeguards”.

**Notice of Change in Placement Form**

**Form** *Informed Notice of Refusal to Take A Specific Action 043-96-ESE and Individual Education Plan Form*

**34 CFR 300.503 and 300.505**

**The following must be addressed:**

- An explanation of the action the district proposed or refused must be included.
- A description of the evaluation procedure, test, record or report the district used as a basis for the proposal or refusal must be included.
- A description of “other relevant factors” must be included.
- A statement of two sources for a parent to contact to obtain assistance in understanding the provisions of IDEA must be included.
- A statement of where a copy of the procedural safeguards may be obtained must be included.

**Recommendation:**

- It is recommended that the protections statement include “of the Individuals with Disabilities ACT (IDEA),” following “Procedural Safeguards”.

**Notice of Change in FAPE**

**Form** *Informed Notice of Refusal to Take A Specific Action 043-96-ESE*

**34 CFR 300.503 and 300.505**

**The following must be addressed:**

- A description of the action proposed by the district must be included, not just refused.
- An explanation of why the district proposed to take the action must be included, not just refused.
- A statement of two sources for a parent to contact to obtain assistance in understanding the provisions of IDEA must be included.

- A statement of where a copy of the procedural safeguards may be obtained must be included.

**Recommendation:**

- It is recommended that the protections statement include “of the Individuals with Disabilities ACT (IDEA),” following “Procedural Safeguards”.

**Informed Notice of Refusal**

**Form** *Notice of Refusal To Take A Specific Action Form 093-96-ESE*  
**34 CFR 300.503**

**The following must be addressed:**

- A description of the action proposed by the district must be included, not just refused.
- An explanation of why the district proposed to take the action must be included, not just refused.
- A statement of two sources for a parent to contact to obtain assistance in understanding the provisions of IDEA must be included.
- A statement of where a copy of the procedural safeguards may be obtained must be included.

**Recommendations:**

- It is recommended the options for consideration by the district be expanded as they only include evaluation and change of placement.
- It is recommended that the protections statement include “of the Individuals with Disabilities ACT (IDEA),” following “Procedural Safeguards”.

**Documentation of Staffing Form**

**Form** *Eligibility and Assignment Staffing Form 003-1992-ESE*  
**34 CFR 300.534 and 300.503**

**The following must be addressed:**

- “Approved/Disapproved” by the ESE Director/Designee must be changed to “Reviewed”.

**Notice of Dismissal**

**Form** *Eligibility and Assignment Staffing Form 003-1992-ESE*  
**34 CFR 300.503 and 300.505**

**The following must be addressed:**

- A description of the action proposed by the district must be included, not just refused.
- An explanation of why the district proposed to take the action must be included, not just refused.
- A statement that the parents of a child with a disability have protections under the Procedural Safeguards of the Individuals with Disabilities Education ACT (IDEA) must be included.
- A statement of where a copy of the procedural safeguards may be obtained must be included.

- A statement of two sources for a parent to contact to obtain assistance in understanding the provisions of IDEA must be included.
- Evidence a reevaluation was conducted prior to dismissal must be included.

**Recommendation:**

- A description of options considered and the reasons rejected is located in a section that indicates “To be completed following development of the IEP” this should be removed as for dismissal an IEP would not be completed indicating this section would be blank.

**Notice of Ineligibility**  
 Form *Eligibility and Assignment Staffing Form 003-1992-ESE*  
**34 CFR 300.503 and 300.505**

**The following must be addressed:**

- A description of the action proposed by the district must be included, not just refused.
- An explanation of why the district proposed to take the action must be included, not just refused.
- A statement that the parents of a child with a disability have protections under the Procedural Safeguards of the Individuals with Disabilities Education ACT (IDEA) must be included.
- A statement of where a copy of the procedural safeguards may be obtained must be included.
- A statement of two sources for a parent to contact to obtain assistance in understanding the provisions of IDEA must be included.

**Recommendation:**

- A description of options considered and the reasons rejected is located in a section that indicates “To be completed following development of the IEP” this should be removed as for ineligibility an IEP would not be completed indicating this section would be blank.

**Procedural Safeguards**  
 Form *Department of Education Procedural Safeguards Adaptation*  
**Section 1415, Title 20, USC and 34 CFR 300.503 – 529 and 300.560 - 577**

It is noted that the district utilizes procedural safeguards from the Bureau. It is recommended that as soon as the new procedural safeguards are available the district immediately begins to use them as the new procedural safeguards cover items not included in the older version.

**Confidentiality of Information**  
 Form *Procedural Safeguards*  
**Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act, Part 99 34 CFR 300.503**

**The following must be addressed:**

- The district must provide annual written notice to inform eligible student or the parent or guardian of their rights as defined in Section 1002.22(3), Florida Statutes (FS), and 34 CFR 99.7. The form must include the following content:

- A statement about the right to inspect and review the student's education records, including procedures to exercise this right.
- A statement about the right to seek amendment of the student's education records that the student believes to be inaccurate, misleading or otherwise in violation of the student's privacy rights, including the procedures to request an amendment.
- A statement about the right to consent to disclosure of personally identifiable information contained in the student's education records except to the extent that Family Educational Right to Privacy Act (FERPA) and state statute permits disclosure without consent.
- A statement about the right to file a complaint with the United States Department of Education concerning alleged failures by the district to comply with the requirements of FERPA.
- A statement indication if the education agency has a policy of disclosing education records to school officials determined to have a legitimate educational interest, the specification for determining who constitutes a school official and what constitutes legitimate educational interest is specified.

**Services Plan**

**Form** *Individual Education Plan Form 001-1990, 039-1998, 022-2000, 025-1992-ESE*

**34 CFR 300.455**

**The following must be addressed:**

- A separate services plan must be developed for private schools students. Use of an IEP is unacceptable as IEPs are for only for public schools students with disabilities.



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



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

**Glossary of Acronyms**

Bureau	Bureau of Exceptional Education and Student Services
CFR	Code of Federal Regulations
CIP	Continuous Improvement Plan
DJJ	Department of Juvenile Justice
DNE	Did Not Enter
DOE	Department of Education
EH	Emotionally Handicapped
EMH	Educable Mentally Handicapped
EP	Educational Plan (for gifted students)
ESE	Exceptional Student Education
F.S.	Florida Statutes
FAC	Florida Administrative Code
FAPE	Free Appropriate Public Education
FCAT	Florida Comprehensive Assessment Test
FDLRS	Florida Diagnostic and Learning Resource System
FERPA	The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act
FIN	Florida Inclusion Network
FTE	Full-time Equivalent
GE	General Education
GED	General Educational Development diploma
IDEA	Individuals with Disabilities Education Act
IEP	Individual Educational Plan (for students with disabilities)
KG	Kindergarten
LCCE	Life Centered Career Education
LEA	Local Educational Agency
LRE	Least Restrictive Environment
OCR	Office for Civil Rights
OSEP	Office of Special Education Programs (USDOE)
PTA	Parent Teacher Association
PTO	Parent Teacher Organization
SED	Severely Emotionally Disturbed
SIP	System Improvement Plan
SLD	Specific Learning Disability
SSS	Sunshine State Standards
UM	University of Miami
USC	United States Code