FINAL REPORT OF FOCUSED MONITORING OF
EXCEPTIONAL STUDENT EDUCATION PROGRAMS IN

MADISON COUNTY

APRIL 8 - 12, 2002

FLORIDA DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
BUREAU OF INSTRUCTIONAL SUPPORT AND COMMUNITY SERVICES

FLORIDA DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

May 30, 2003

Mr. Bill Roberts, Superintendent
Madison County School District
312 NE Duval Street
Madison, Florida 32340

Dear Superintendent Roberts:

We are pleased to provide you with the Final Report of Focused Monitoring of Exceptional Student Education Programs in Madison County. The report from our visit on April 8-12, 2002, includes the system improvement plan proposed by your staff.

A report on the district's system improvement plan must be submitted to the Bureau, to include an update of outcomes achieved and/or a summary of related activities, by June 30 and December 30 of each school year for the next two years, unless otherwise noted on the improvement plan.

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

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

Sincerely,

Shan Goff, Chief
Bureau of Instructional Support and Community Services

Enclosure

cc: Kenneth Hall, School Board Chairman
Members of the School Board
Tommy Reeves, School Board Attorney
Ramona Guess, ESE Director
School Principals
Jim Warford, Chancellor

SHAN GOFF
Chief
Bureau of Instructional Support and Community Services

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April 8-12, 2002

Executive Summary

During the week of April 8-12, 2002, the Florida Department of Education, Bureau of Instructional Support and Community Services, conducted an on-site review of the exceptional student education programs in Madison County Public Schools. In its continuing efforts to focus the monitoring process on student educational outcomes, the Bureau has identified four key data indicators or "triggers." Madison County was selected for monitoring on the basis of its data on its percentage of students with disabilities participating in the Florida Comprehensive Assessment Test (FCAT). The results of the monitoring process are reported under eight categories or related areas that are considered to impart or contribute to the trigger.

Summaries of Findings

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

Testing and Instructional Accommodations

The instructional and administrative staff in Madison County has an understanding of the requirements for providing accommodations to students with disabilities. Accommodations in instruction appear to be individualized to the needs of the student. Overall, students with disabilities are given an appropriate opportunity to participate in the FCAT. Students who are not participating in the FCAT receive alternative assessments selected on an individual basis from a variety of sources. Based on record reviews and input from staff, all ESE students participating in the FCAT have available accommodations. These accommodations do appear to be generically given to ESE students rather than being provided based on the students' individual IEPs. There is need for the district to ensure that students do not receive unnecessary accommodations when participating in the FCAT, but receive only those accommodations that have been identified on the individual student's IEP.

Access to the General Education Curriculum

Madison County has developed a strong coordinated curriculum, which, with few exceptions, is available to students with disabilities in both regular and ESE classrooms, with individualized instruction in these classes. Computer programs are readily available and are used for routine assessment, instructional planning, and tracking student progress. Madison County staff is to be commended for their work in providing access to the general education curriculum.

Preparation of Students to Take the FCAT

Madison County provides a variety of instructional supports, training, strategies, and activities in preparing students to take the FCAT. These activities are available and provided to students with disabilities. In some instances, students with disabilities who will not be participating in the actual FCAT testing are also involved in the preparation activities. Teachers and parents are aware of the many FCAT preparation activities. There are no findings in this area.

Staff Knowledge and Training

Staff training and knowledge opportunities are available for staff in Madison County School District. There was evidence in all schools of the appropriate use of instruction and assessment. There were no findings in this area.

Decision Making

The decision as to whether an individual student with disabilities would participate in the FCAT, was made at an IEP team meeting. Many factors were considered in the decision making. While there were indications from interviews with school staff which indicated that parent preference was a strong factor in the IEP team decisions, a review of the case studies and classroom observations indicated that the decisions regarding participation in FCAT were appropriate for those students. The district may need to address the role of the parent in determining whether or not a individual student will take the FCAT, with its school staff.

Routine Assessments

There were no findings in this area. The district is appropriately providing routine assessments. The use of the results of assessments is generally tied in with sequential planning for instruction for students with disabilities.

Stakeholder Opinions Related to the Trigger

The stakeholders in Madison had a wide variety of opinions and concerns regarding the participation of students with disabilities in the FCAT. Of concern is the fact that not one of the stakeholders referred to the fact that participating in, and passing the FCAT was a critical factor in the ability of a student with disabilities to obtain a standard high school diploma. Another concern was that overall the staff in Madison County had more negative than positive opinions about the value of FCAT participation. Opinions from school and/or district staff that the FCAT scores of students with disabilities could negatively affect overall school scores, or affect teacher wages, could certainly affect decisions on student FCAT participation. Parents were reported to be concerned that their child may lose benefits if he/she passed the FCAT.

Record and Forms Reviews

Student Record Reviews

During the formal record reviews carried out as a part of the standard focused monitoring procedures, one of the IEPs reviewed was found to be out of compliance in an area requiring a fund adjustment. The record that did not indicate informed parental consent prior to re-evaluation. There were five systemic areas of non-compliance, including:

inadequate present level of performance; lack of measurable annual goals; lack of correspondence between goals and needs identified in the present level statements; inadequate short-term objectives; and lack of correlation between present level of performance, annual goals, and services on the IEP. For the 11 IEPs with the majority of annual goals not being measurable, the district will be required to reconvene these IEP meetings to develop measurable goals. A list of the names of these students will be provided to the district under separate cover. There were an additional 16 items of non-compliance that did not appear to be systemic in nature.

District Forms Review

During the forms review, findings were cited on the *Notification of Change of Placement (and FAPE),* and the *Informed Notice of Dismissal*.

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 indicators of change. In developing the system improvement plan, every effort should be made to link the system improvement activities resulting from this focused monitoring report to the district's continuous improvement monitoring plan. The format for the system improvement plan, including a listing of the critical issues identified by the Bureau as most significantly in need of improvement, is provided at the end of this report.

Monitoring Process

Authority

The Florida Department of Education, Bureau of Instructional Support and Community Services, in carrying out its roles of leadership, resource allocation, technical assistance, monitoring, and evaluation is required to: (1) examine and evaluate procedures, records, and programs of exceptional student education programs; (2) provide information and assistance to school districts; and (3) otherwise assist school districts in operating effectively and efficiently (Section 229.565, Florida Statutes). In accordance with the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), the Department is responsible for ensuring that the requirements of IDEA are carried out, and that each educational program for children with disabilities administered in the state, meets the educational requirements of the state (Section 300.600(a)(1) and (2) of Title 34, Code of Federal Regulations).

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

Method

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

- focused monitoring
- continuous improvement/self assessment monitoring
- random monitoring

During the 2000-2001 school year, the Bureau developed and piloted activities for focused monitoring in four districts, examining programs and services for students with disabilities and students identified as gifted. Based on staff and peer monitor feedback, along with further suggestions from the work group, the focused monitoring procedures were further developed and/or revised. It was also determined that the focused monitoring activities for 2002 will examine only programs and services for students with disabilities.

Focused Monitoring

The purpose of the focused monitoring process is to implement a methodology that targets the Bureau's monitoring intervention on key data indicators (triggers) that were identified as significant for educational outcomes for students. Through this process, the Bureau will use such data to inform the monitoring process, thereby, implementing a strategic approach to intervention and commitment of resources that will improve student outcomes.

Key Data Indicators

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

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

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

District Selection

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

On-Site Monitoring Activities

The on-site monitoring visit occurred during the week of April 8-12, 2002. The on-site activities were conducted by a team composed of five Department of Education (DOE) staff and four University of Miami research staff. On-site monitoring activities consisted of

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

Prior to the on-site visit, Bureau staff notified district staff of the selection of the following schools to be visited based on the data related to the participation of students with disabilities in the statewide assessment (FCAT): Greenville Elementary School, Pinetta Elementary School, Madison Central Middle School, and Madison High School. The on-site selections of students for the case studies at each school were students who would reasonably be expected to participate in FCAT testing but did not. Schools were asked to provide a listing of students who were

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

Off-Site Monitoring Activities

Surveys were designed by the University of Miami research staff in order to provide maximum opportunity for input about the district's ESE services from parents of students with disabilities, ESE and regular education teachers, and students with disabilities in grades 9-12. Results of the surveys will be discussed in the body of this report. Data from each of the surveys are included as Appendix A.

Parent Surveys

Surveys were mailed to 569 parents of students with disabilities, with 72 of the parents responding. The survey that was sent to parents was printed in both English and Spanish and included a cover letter and postage paid reply envelope.

Teacher Surveys

Surveys for all 203 teachers were mailed to each school with a memo explaining the trigger and the monitoring process. One hundred sixty-six teachers from six schools responded to the teacher survey.

Student Surveys

For students with disabilities across the district in grades 9-12, a teacher conducted the student survey following a written script. Ninety-five students from three schools completed the survey. Since participation in this survey was not appropriate for some students whose disabilities might impair their understanding of the survey, professional judgement was used to determine appropriate participants.

Reviews of Student Records and District Forms

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

Reporting Process

Exit Conference

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

Preliminary Report

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

- parent, teacher, and student surveys
- reviews of student records
- reviews of forms
- parent, teacher, and student focus groups
- case studies, including corresponding parent phone calls
- classroom visits
- interviews with district and school staff

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

Final Report

In completing the system improvement section of the report, every effort should be made to link the system improvement activities for focused monitoring to the district's continuous improvement monitoring plan. In collaboration with Bureau staff, the district is encouraged to develop methods that correlate activities in order to utilize resources, staff, and time in an efficient manner in order to improve outcomes for students with disabilities.

Within 30 days of the district's receipt of the preliminary report, a separate appendix that contains the district's system improvement section, including strategies and activities targeting specific findings, must be submitted to the Bureau for review. Within 30 days of the Bureau's review, a final report including the system improvement strategies will be released.

Background

Demographic Information

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

Madison County School District has a total school population (PK-12) of 3,439 with 872 (25%) students being identified as students with disabilities and 103 (3%) as gifted. Madison County is considered a "small" district and is one of 25 districts in this enrollment group. Of the total Madison school population, 41% are white; 57% are black; and 1% are Hispanic. Of the students with disabilities, 33% are white; 66% are black; and 1% are Hispanic. Sixty-seven percent of the district's population is receiving free/reduced lunch.

Madison County School District is comprised of three elementary schools, one primary school, one middle school, one high school, one juvenile detention center, one alternative school, and two academies.

According to the 2000-01 data, Madison County School District has among the lowest participation of students with disabilities in the FCAT. The participation rate for 10th graders in Madison County is 41% compared to the state at 63%. An examination of the participation rate when Madison County School District is compared to other districts in its enrollment group and the state shows a participation rate that

- decreased as student grade level increased for both the reading and math sections of the FCAT
- was lower than its enrollment group and state rates
- declined in grades 8 and 10 in reading and math from year 1998-99 to present.

According to the data, 38% of students with disabilities graduated with a standard diploma in 2000-01 while in 1998-99 and 1999-00 the rates were 70% and 52%, respectively, indicating a steady and significant drop. Although the graduation with a standard diploma rate dropped, the dropout rate for students with disabilities decreased slightly between 1999-00 and 2000-01 from 4% to 3%.

Madison reports that 37% of their students with disabilities (ages 6-21) spend 80% or more of their school week with their non-disabled peers. This rate is lower than both the state and enrollment group rates (48% and 46%, respectively).

The data also indicate higher in-school suspension rates for students with disabilities than their non-disabled peers for the 2000-01 school year. The in-school suspension rate for Madison (19%) is higher than the state rate (13%) and that of districts of similar student enrollment (16%).

Reporting of Information

Sources of Information

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

- compliance review of 24 student records
- review of district forms
- surveys returned by 72 parents
- surveys returned by 166 teachers
- surveys completed by 95 students
- one focus group interview with four parents representing five students with disabilities
- one focus group interview with 21 exceptional and regular education teachers and paraprofessionals representing pre-kindergarten through twelfth grade
- two student focus groups (group one consisting of seven students pursuing a standard diploma and group two consisting of nine students pursuing a special diploma)
- twenty-three individual district and building level staff interviews
- eight case studies, including one corresponding parent phone call
- twelve classroom visits at four schools visited

The data generated through the surveys, focus group interviews, individual interviews, case studies, and classroom visits are summarized beginning on page 12, while the results from the review of student records and district forms are presented beginning on page 19 of the report. This report provides conclusions with regard to the participation in the FCAT trigger and specifically addresses related areas that may contribute to or impact the trigger. These areas are

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

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

Surveys, Focus Groups, Individual Interviews, Case Studies, and Classroom Visits

Testing and Instructional Accommodations

The interviews with district and school staff indicated that testing and instructional accommodations are identified for students at IEP meetings and are based on individual needs. More than half of the parents responding to the survey reported that the decision as to whether or not their child would take the FCAT was discussed at the IEP meeting along with accommodations. Extended time in taking tests and completing assignments, flexible settings and schedules, oral presentation of written directions or parts of a test, auditory devices, and administration of tests individually or in small groups are accommodations that are considered and implemented for students with disabilities.

The teachers participating in the focus group interviews and responding to the survey provided verification that ESE students receive FCAT accommodations including flexible scheduling, alternative test settings, extended time, reading aloud, and signing interpreters. All teachers in the focus group interview agreed that, "all of the accommodations possibly available are provided here in Madison." Students participating in the focus group interview reported receiving extended time and alternative settings as testing accommodations.

Classroom visits verified that instructional and testing accommodations are implemented for ESE students, with few exceptions. In those few cases, there were no opportunities to observe the implementation of accommodations. It should be noted that the teachers were observed using instructional material appropriate for the skill and age level of the students, providing clear directions for assignments, allowing enough time to complete assignments, and using both small and large group instructional strategies.

The teachers responding to the survey reported that FCAT test preparation materials are available, and over half of the teachers reported that their schools align specialized curriculum with the standards tested on the FCAT. Teachers, through individual interviews, reported as having participated in training on providing accommodations.

It was reported that students receiving instruction in regular education classrooms take the FCAT, while students with disabilities who are placed in full-time ESE classrooms do not routinely take the FCAT. It was reported that for those students who do not take the FCAT, an alternate assessment was administered. Assessments provided for students with disabilities included Brigance, Science Research Associates (SRA) for reading, math and language arts, Alternative Assessment Protocols, and Computer Curriculum Corporation (CCC) assessments such as Life Centered Career Education Assessments.

In summary, the instructional and administrative staff in Madison County has an understanding of the requirements for providing accommodations to students with disabilities. Accommodations in instruction appear to be individualized to the needs of the student. Overall, students with disabilities are given an appropriate opportunity to participant in the FCAT. Students who are not participating in the FCAT receive alternate assessments selected on an individual basis from a variety of sources. Based on record reviews and input from staff, all ESE students participating in the FCAT have available accommodations. It was reported by teachers at most schools that the ESE

students were often tested altogether, and they received all of the testing accommodations not just the ones prescribed by the students' individual IEPs.

Access to the General Education Curriculum

Data indicate the percentage of students with disabilities graduating with a standard diploma (38%) is lower than the state (42%) and the enrollment group (51%) and has decreased significantly from 1998-99 (70%). Madison reports a low regular class placement rate (37% compared to the state at 48%). The separate class placement of EMH students has increased significantly since 1999-00 (37% to 61%).

Case studies were completed for students who were selected because they were students who would reasonably be expected to participate in FCAT testing but did not. Reviewing the case study information, it was determined that most of the students who did not take the FCAT were students who had been appropriately placed in an alternative curriculum, and were receiving alternate assessments. It did appear that one of the case study elementary students was not given the FCAT due to his disability category (EMH), and another student was excluded due to parent request.

Interviews with district staff indicated that students with disabilities in full time ESE classes do have access to the general curriculum because the ESE curriculum is aligned with the Sunshine State Standards (SSS). It was also reported that the district is using the SRA reading program for both ESE and regular education students, allowing an easy transfer from the ESE classroom to the regular classroom. The district also has its own well-developed curriculum.

The classroom visits at Greenville Elementary, Pinetta Elementary, Madison Central Middle, and Madison High Schools indicated that

- instructional strategies are individualized
- skills are taught and assessed in the context of real life activities and daily routine
- students participate in individual, small group and large group instruction
- students use age-appropriate curriculum and activities
- each student spends most of his/her time engaged in active learning activities, instructional prompts and assistance used are individualized and based on skill and student performance
- students are exposed to culturally relevant curricula
- students have appropriate access to general education curriculum and teachers provide students with accommodations indicated on the IEP
- schedules reflect a variety of instructional formats for each learner including independent work, small group, one-to-one instruction, socialization, and free time
- computer programs are readily accessible and are used for instruction, assessment, individual remediation, and tracking progress

The teachers who participated in the focus groups stated that ESE students have sufficient access to the general curriculum. Textbooks and other classroom materials were said to be adequate for ESE students.

All the parents in the focus group, with one exception, agreed that the schools encouraged their children with disabilities to participate in regular education classes and have access to the general education curriculum. One parent shared that she believed her child was being taught what all the students were being taught, while another indicated that she felt her child should take more regular education classes.

The students who participated in the focus groups expressed an interest in having more regular education classes. With the exception of English and math, it was noted that students in the standard diploma group participated primarily in regular education academic classes. Students felt that both their regular education and special education classes were about right in terms of difficulty level and that they received enough support from their teachers. Some of the students reported that the schools encouraged them to stay in school by adjusting the grading scale. Students reported being involved with their non-disabled peers in extra-curricular activities outside of class including track and field, football, baseball, ROTC, and agricultural organizations.

In summary, Madison County has developed a strong coordinated curriculum, which, with few exceptions, is available to students with disabilities in both regular and ESE classrooms, with individualized instruction in these classes. Computer programs are readily available and are used for routine assessment, instructional planning, and tracking student progress.

Preparation of Students to Take the FCAT

The results of the on-site monitoring process provided information about the students who participate in the FCAT. The case studies indicated that students with disabilities placed in full time ESE classes routinely do not take the FCAT while students who are taking regular education classes take the test. In addition, students who participated in the special diploma focused interview reported that they did not take the FCAT while those in the standard diploma group did. However, it was the conclusion of the monitoring team that the district's determination of which students should or should not participate in the FCAT are based on the individual needs of the students and the decisions were appropriate for those students reviewed through case studies and classroom visits.

Through the teacher focus group process, it was reported that the decision about student participation in the FCAT is determined before they enter high school. Some teachers felt that the decision as to whether or not students participate in the FCAT should be reassessed at the high school level.

According to the district and school staff, all students including those with disabilities planning to take the FCAT have access to test preparation activities and materials. Staff at Madison Central Middle and Madison High Schools reported that students with disabilities are involved in the test preparation along with their non-disabled peers. They participate in FCAT tutoring on Saturdays and after school, learn test-taking strategies, rotate through mini-tutorial stations manned by general education teachers that target specific types of FCAT items ("FCAT Blitzes"), and participate in intensive reading and math instruction based on their FCAT test scores. Several schools indicated that all

students, including those on special diploma participated in the FCAT preparation activities. Students, however, recommended more FCAT preparation classes.

Overall, teachers who participated in the focus groups felt that schools were doing enough to prepare students for the FCAT. Teachers cited several after school and weekend programs available to help prepare students for the FCAT. On the other hand, several teachers felt that their schools had not provided adequate FCAT preparation materials. One teacher reported that the quantity and quality of FCAT preparation varied by teacher.

Parents stated that they were given information about how to help their children prepare for the FCAT. According to parents, the schools also offered parent training and specific homework assignments geared toward training students to take the FCAT.

It was reported that the Madison County School District conducts an analysis of the performance of ESE students on the FCAT. In addition, the curriculum coordinator at Madison High School reported the use of FCAT data in the development of the School Improvement Plan and the use of data to provide information to teachers about the areas in which students need additional assistance. The other schools did not report a school specific analysis of FCAT scores.

School staff commented that the SRA reading program used with ESE and regular education students enables students to be grouped by ability.

The participants in the teacher focus groups cited several factors as contributing to low district and statewide assessment (FCAT) participation rates for students with disabilities including

- lack of parental involvement
- low student achievement levels
- lack of student motivation
- student frustration
- loss of disability benefits
- low expectations for students with disabilities

In summary, Madison County provides a variety of instructional supports, training, strategies, and activities in preparing students to take the FCAT. These activities are available and provided to students with disabilities. The district conducts an analysis of the FCAT data to assist teachers in preparing for students to take the test. In some instances, students with disabilities who will not be participating in the actual FCAT testing are also involved in the preparation activities. Teachers and parents are aware of the many FCAT preparation activities.

Staff Knowledge and Training

It was reported that in-service training focusing on the provision of accommodations and modifications on assessments and instructional activities was provided to teachers. District and school staff reported attending training related to the FCAT and that the Florida Diagnostic and Learning Resources System (FDLRS) provided training on

alternate assessments, specifically the Brigance. Teachers reported having received training in strategies for diverse learners and use of accommodations.

The teachers participating in the focus groups expressed their opinions that regular education teachers may have a need for more training and collaboration in order to develop skills to work with students with disabilities.

In contrast to some of the reports from the teacher focus group, the monitoring team found that in the case study reviews and classroom observations both regular and special education teachers were providing appropriate individual accommodations for students with disabilities in regular and ESE classrooms.

In summary, staff training and knowledge opportunities are available for staff in Madison County School District. There was evidence in all schools of the appropriate use of instruction and assessment. The district will need to continue to address and support further collaboration between regular education and special education teachers.

Decision Making

District and school staff identified the following factors that are considered when deciding whether or not a student with a disability will participate in the state and district-wide assessment including

- type of diploma option (special or standard diploma)
- preference of the parent
- preference of the student
- student's identified disability
- classroom performance
- grades
- ability level
- reading level
- accommodations needed
- post school plans

It was reported through individual district and school staff interviews and the teacher and parent focus groups that the decision to participate or not participate in the state and district-wide assessments is made at the IEP meeting by the team. Parent preference was cited at every level as a factor in the IEP teams' decisions. It was also reported that, for the most part, ESE students in elementary school are encouraged to take the FCAT because high school diploma tracks have yet to be determined.

When district and school staff were questioned about whether students with disabilities who are removed from the regular education classroom for the majority of the school day take the FCAT, they responded that there were instances of that happening. However, some individuals who were interviewed reported that students with disabilities who are in regular education classes routinely take the FCAT while students with disabilities who are in full time ESE classrooms do not take the FCAT. It was also reported at Greenville Elementary School that all students identified as SLD take the FCAT while none of the

students identified as EMH take the FCAT. Student frustration was given as one reason the full time EMH students were not included at Greenville.

When district and school staff were questioned about whether the students with disabilities who are accessing the general education curriculum are taking the FCAT, there were conflicting responses. There were several teachers who indicated that students with disabilities only have access to the general education curriculum when they are taking regular education classes. Others were more familiar with the concept of students with disabilities having access to the general education curriculum even if they are placed in a full time ESE setting.

The case study process indicated that the decision about whether or not a student with a disability will take the FCAT is based on having access to the general education curriculum. It was reported that the decision about curriculum is based on the performance level of the student.

In summary, the decision as to whether an individual student with disabilities would participate in the FCAT was made at an IEP team meeting. While many factors were reported to be considered in the decision making, there was some uncertainty about students having access to the general education curriculum. While there were interviews with school staff which indicated that parent preference was a strong factor in the IEP team decisions, a review of the case studies and classroom observations indicated that the decisions regarding participation in FCAT were appropriate for those students.

Routine Assessments

Results of the case studies indicated that students with disabilities are making progress as exemplified through the review of report cards, interviews with teachers, and results of alternate assessments. Classroom visits indicated that teachers are providing students with feedback on daily assignments and using alternative forms of assessing in-class assignments, homework, and tests. Results of assessments are included in the teacher planning for instruction.

In summary, there were no findings in this area. The district is appropriately providing routine assessments. The use of the results of assessments is generally tied in with sequential planning for instruction for students with disabilities.

Stakeholder Opinions Related to the Trigger

Through interviews and focus groups, the members of the monitoring team asked district and school staff, parents, and students for their opinions related to the reasons that Madison County has a low rate of students with disabilities participating in the FCAT.

School staff reported some benefits in taking the FCAT.

- FCAT is a way of measuring student progress
- Practice in taking the FCAT will transfer to other test taking activities
- ESE students are not singled out and are included with their nondisabled peers.

Staff had opinions about the disadvantages of participation in the FCAT.

- Students with disabilities taking the FCAT will experience frustrations and lower self-esteem
- Scores of students with disabilities will reflect negatively on the overall school scores
- FCAT scores will be linked to merit pay for teachers and since scores of students with disabilities are generally lower than those of their non-disabled peers, it will impact on wages
- Focus is on the outcome of passing the FCAT, rather than meeting student needs

In the teacher focus groups, it was reported that parents were often viewed as discouraging their children from either participating in or performing well on the FCAT because of the perception that they would no longer be eligible for child disability benefits through the Social Security Administration.

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

- The district may yield to the parent's preference in determining a student's participation in the FCAT
- Teacher expectations may influence whether or not students with disabilities will participate in the FCAT
- FCAT is perceived as important, but it is not the only source of information about student progress. Curriculum and routine assessments provide better measures for students
- Students with disabilities need access to the general education curriculum even if they are receiving instruction in a full time ESE setting. The FCAT is based on the general education curriculum. Therefore, students will not perform well on the FCAT if they are not learning the content
- High absentee rate affected the participation rate of students with disabilities. It was reported that some students did not take the FCAT since they were out in the community working in a work study program. Night and Saturday testing could be made available for those students
- An assessment that is more job-related or addressing functional skills could be developed along with a vocational diploma option
- Participation in the FCAT is not an issue at the elementary level. It becomes more of an issue for older students
- There is a lack of job opportunities in Madison County that may contribute to the decisions about diploma options and course of study
- Parents may be afraid that if the child passes the FCAT, the child may lose social security benefits.

In summary, the stakeholders in Madison had a wide variety of opinions and concerns regarding the participation of students with disabilities in the FCAT. Of concern is the fact that not one of the stakeholders referred to the fact that participating in, and passing

the FCAT was a critical factor in the ability of a student with disabilities to obtain a standard high school diploma. Another concern was that overall the staff in Madison County had more negative than positive opinions about the value of FCAT participation. Opinions from school and/or district staff that the FCAT scores of students with disabilities could negatively affect overall school scores, or affect teacher wages, could certainly affect decisions on student FCAT participation. Parents were reported to be concerned that their child may lose benefits if he/she passed the FCAT.

Student Record and District Form Reviews

Student Record Reviews

A total of 24 student records, randomly selected from the population of students with disabilities and excluding those identified as speech only, were reviewed from five schools in Madison County. The records were sent to the DOE for review by district staff prior to the on-site visit.

Specific compliance items were predetermined by the DOE to be subject to federal funding adjustments as noted in the Focused Monitoring Manual. One of the 24 IEPs reviewed was found to be out-of-compliance in the areas requiring a fund adjustment. The record did not indicate informed parental consent prior to formal evaluation.

There were five areas of non-compliance that appeared to be systemic in nature. These areas were: an inadequate present level of performance statement; a lack of measurable annual goals; a lack of correspondence between the annual goals and short-term objectives or benchmarks and needs identified on the present level of performance statement; unclear short-term objectives that are unrelated to annual goals and difficult to measure; and, present level of performance and annual goals and short-term objectives or benchmarks that do not support the services identified on the IEP.

In the area of present level of performance statements, six IEPs failed to provide adequate statements. Inadequate entries included using only test scores, statements that the student was below grade level, that the student made too many errors, or statements of general progress made by the student. Sixteen of the IEPs lacked measurable goals, including 11 IEPs with the majority of goals not measurable, which will require reconvening IEP meetings to correct. Part of this problem had to do with the practice of combining multiple domains (e.g. curriculum and behavior) into a single goal. Nine IEPs had a lack of correspondence between the annual goals and short-term objectives or benchmarks and the needs identified by the present level of performance statements. An example would be a student who had only academic goals, while the present level of performance statement was strictly behavioral.

Six IEPs had unclear short-term objectives that were difficult to measure and were unrelated to the annual goal. Part of this problem was again due to those IEPs having only one generic annual goal for all subjects. There were six IEPs for which the present level, and goals and objectives, did not support the services identified on the IEP.
Some of the records contained instances of noncompliance that were not of a systemic nature. These individual findings were in the following areas:

- The description of the purpose of meeting did not include transition services.

- There was no identification of which individual served in the capacity of interpreter of instructional implication of testing.
- Other participants at the IEP and transition meeting (i.e., agency representation, student, and regular education teacher) were not invited and did not participate.
- There was no documentation that the regular education teacher participated in the meeting.
- There was not a clear statement indicating how the student's disability affects the student's involvement and progress in the general curriculum.
- The program accommodations and/or modifications were not clearly identified as such.
- There was no specification of what individual accommodations or modifications in the administration of state or district-wide assessments would be used, although it was indicated that these were needed.
- There was a lack of initiation/duration dates for accommodations and/or modifications.
- The frequency of accommodations and/or modifications was not given.
- The location of accommodations and/or modifications was not specific.
- There was a lack of documentation indicating that the reporting of progress was provided as often as progress was reported to non-disabled population
- The description of the extent to which the student's progress is sufficient to enable the student to achieve the goal by the end of the year was not adequate.
- The statement of the strengths of the student was given as a need for improvement.
- The IEP stated that the concern of the parents for enhancing the education of their child was unknown.
- A transition IEP did not contain a course of study statement, beginning at age 14.
- No indication was given that the IEP team and other qualified professionals reviewed existing information for a reevaluation meeting.

District Forms Review

Forms were submitted to Bureau staff to determine compliance with federal and state laws. Findings were noted on two of the forms. The district was notified of the specific findings via a separate letter dated June 7, 2002. An explanation of the specific findings may be found in appendix D.

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

*indicates findings that require immediate attention

Summary

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

- Testing and Instructional Accommodations
- Access to the General Education Curriculum
- Preparation of Students to Take the FCAT
- Staff Knowledge and Training
- Decision Making
- Routine Assessments
- Stakeholder opinions Related to the Trigger
- Student Record Reviews
- District Form Reviews

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

Madison County School District
Focused Monitoring
System Improvement Plan

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

Category	Findings	ESE	All	System Improvement Strategy	Evidence of Change (Including target date)
Testing and Instructional Accommodations	1. There is a need for the district to ensure that students do not receive unnecessary accommodations when participating on the FCAT, but rather receive only what is indicated by each student's IEP.	X		• Inservice on ensuring that ESE students receive only the FCAT accommodations indicated on each student's IEP will be provided to ESE teachers and school guidance counselors. • A listing of FCAT accommodations for ESE students will be compiled for school guidance counselors and ESE teachers.	Report of district self-assessment of 20 randomly sampled ESE students reveals that all students received accommodations during FCAT administration as described on their IEPs. June, 2003 June, 2004

Category	Findings	ESE	All	System Improvement Strategy	Evidence of Change (Including target date)
Access to the General Education Curriculum	There were no significant findings in this area.				
Preparation of Students to Take the FCAT	There were no significant findings in this area.				
Staff Knowledge and Training	There were no significant findings in this area.				
Decision-Making Process	There were no significant findings in this area.				
Stakeholder Opinions	2. The district needs to provide staff development and parent information strategies to allay the fears of teachers and parents who see participation in the FCAT testing as a threat, and to emphasize the importance of the participation of students with disabilities in the FCAT assessment in order to obtain a regular high school diploma.		X	• Inservice for regular education and ESE teachers and parent training activities to provide information on FCAT participation (not to be seen as a threat) will be provided by the district ESE staff. • After-school tutoring for FCAT skills is being provided for district students which is also a help to allay FCAT fears. • PASSport to Success (Parents Assuring Student Success) training will be provided prior to the FCAT by the parent	The percentage of students with disabilities who participate in FCAT testing (grades 4, 5, 8, 10) will increase by three percent annually, as calculated annually by DOE and published in the LEA Profile. June, 2003 June, 2004

Category	Findings	ESE	All	System Improvement Strategy	Evidence of Change (Including target date)
Stakeholder Opinions (cont.)	2. Continued from above.			specialist. The importance of FCAT participation will be emphasized during the PASS training. • The booklet," Diploma Decisions for Students with Disabilities", will be given to parents at the IEP meetings for students with disabilities in grades 7-12 and to parents of students in lower grades who express concerns over FCAT participation. • The district ESE staff will also provide follow-up meetings for regular education and ESE teachers on the importance of the participation of students with disabilities in the FCAT assessment in order to obtain a regular high school diploma.	
Records and Forms Reviews	3. Five areas of non-compliance were found to be systemic in nature: • inadequate present level of performance	X		• Inservice on the five areas of non-compliance was provided by Kim Komisar, DOE Program Specialist, on August 1, 2002 to the district ESE teachers.	Report of district self-assessment of 10 randomly selected IEPs reveals 90% meet DOE compliance standards. June, 2003 June, 2004

Category	Findings	ESE	All	System Improvement Strategy	Evidence of Change (Including target date)
Records and Forms Reviews (cont.)	3. Continued from above. • lack of measurable annual goals • lack of correspondence between goals and needs identified in the present level of performance • inadequate short term objectives • lack of correlation between present level of performance, annual goals, and services on the IEP.			• Follow-up training on the five areas of non-compliance will be conducted by district ESE staff for the ESE teachers. • A section for how the student's progress and participation in the general curriculum is effected by the student's disability has been added to the IEP present level of performance IEP.	
	4. One IEP was found to require a fund adjustment, due to inadequate procedures regarding informed parental consent prior to formal evaluation.	X		• District procedures for soliciting parental informed consent for re-evaluation have been revised to include two documented attempts to obtain written consent from the parent prior to reevaluation. • Informed notice regarding re-evaluation form was updated with a bold statement for parents to indicate decision, sign, and return the form to the ESE department.	A copy of the revised Informed Notice Regarding Re-evaluation form was submitted and approved. January, 2003 District self-assessment of 10 randomly selected reevaluations reveals all procedures are followed. June, 2003 June, 2004

Category	Findings	ESE	All	System Improvement Strategy	Evidence of Change (Including target date)
Records and Forms Reviews (cont.)	4. Continued from above.			A space to document the second attempt to obtain consent was also added. • A systematic review by the ESE records secretary for 100% compliance of procedures for obtaining parental informed consent for re-evaluation was implemented in November, 2002.	
	5. Eleven IEPs were found that required reconvening the IEP meetings.	X		• IEP meetings for the development of measurable annual goals for the eleven IEPs were held during November, 2002.	Documentation provided to DOE indicated that required IEP team meetings were convened and IEPs were developed. December, 2002
	6. There were two forms reviewed that required immediate revisions: • Notifications of Change of Placement • Informed notice of dismissal	X		• Notification of Change of Placement and Informed Notice of Dismissal forms have been revised to comply with required components	Copies of the forms were submitted and approved. January, 2003

Appendix A-Survey Responses

Madison County School District
Focused Monitory Report
Parent Survey Results

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

In conjunction with the 2002 Madison County monitoring activities, the parent survey was sent to the parents of the 569 students with disabilities for whom complete addresses were provided by the district. A total of 72 parents (PK, n=2; K-5, n=21; 6-8, n=33; 9-12, n=16) representing 13% of the sample returned the survey. Forty-six surveys were returned representing 8% of the sample.

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

	% Yes
Accommodations	
• At my child's IEP meetings we have talked about whether my child should get accommodations (special testing conditions, for example, extra time)	63
• My child's teachers give students with disabilities extra time or different assignments, if needed	72
Curriculum	
• Overall, I am satisfied with the amount of time my child spends with regular education students	83
• Overall, I am satisfied with the way special education teachers and regular teachers work together.	81
• At my child's IEP meetings we have talked about ways that my child could spend time with students in regular education	66
• My child's school provides students with disabilities updated books and materials	78
• My child's school offers a variety of vocational courses, such as computers and business technology	79
Student Preparation	
• N/A	

	% Yes
Staff Training	
• N/A	
Decision Process	
• At my child's IEP meetings we have talked about whether my child would take the FCAT (Florida Comprehensive Assessment Test)	66
Routine Assessment	
• N/A	
General Supervision	
• At my child's IEP meetings we have talked about whether my would take the FCAT (Florida Comprehensive Assessment Test)	66
• At my child's IEP meetings we have talked about whether my child should get accommodations (special testing conditions, for example, extra time)	63
Other Items	
• Overall, I am satisfied with the exceptional education services my child receives	82
• Overall, I am satisfied with my child's academic progress	75
• Overall, I am satisfied with the effect of exceptional student education on my child's self-esteem	71
Overall, I am satisfied with the level of knowledge and experience of school personnel	80
• Overall, I am satisfied with the way I am treated by school personnel	82
• Overall, I am satisfied with how quickly services are implemented following an IEP (Individualized Educational Plan) decision	81
• My child is usually happy at school	77
• My child spends most of the school day involved in productive activities	65
• My child has friends at school	93
• My child is learning skills that will be useful later on in life	77
• My child is aiming for a standard diploma	74
• At my child's IEP meetings we have talked about whether my child needed services beyond the regular school year	59
• At my child's IEP meetings we have talked about which diploma my child may receive	69
• At my child's IEP meetings we have talked about the requirement for different diplomas	60
• My child's teachers set appropriate goals for my child	82
• My child's teachers expect my child to succeed	91
• My child's teachers give homework that meets my child's needs	77

	% Yes
• My child's teachers call me or send me notes about my child	82
• My child's teachers are available to speak with me.	94
• My child's school wants to hear my ideas	81
• My child's school encourages me to participate in my child's education	87
• My child's school informs me about all of the services available to my child	76
• My child's school addresses my child's individual needs	79
• My child's school makes sure I understand my child's IEP	86
• My child's school explains what I can do if I want to make changes to my child's IEP	80
• My child's school sends me information written in a way I understand	88
• My child's school sends me information about activities and workshops for parents	75
• My child's school encourages acceptance of students with disabilities	88
• My child's school involves students with disabilities in clubs, sports, or other activities	78
• My child's school provides information to students about education and jobs after high school	63
• My child's school does all it can to keep students from dropping out of school	75
• My child's school offers students with disabilities the classes they need to graduate with a standard diploma	75
• I have attended one or more meetings about my child during this school year	85
• I participate in school activities with my child	69
• I am a member of the PTA/PTO	23
• I belong to an organization for parents of students with disabilities	27
• I have used parent support services in my area	32
• I am comfortable talking about my child with school staff	93
• I attend School Advisory Committee meetings concerning school improvement	45

Madison County School District
Focused Monitoring Report
Teacher Survey Results

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

Surveys were sent to all teachers at all schools in Madison County. Of the 203 surveys that were sent out, 166 were returned from six schools, representing 82% of the sample. Percentages reported below are based on the numbers of respondents who replied that their school was "consistent" in the areas surveyed.

HIGH

(More than 75% of the respondents reported consistency in these areas)	%
• To keep students with disabilities from dropping out, my school develops IEPs according to student needs.	84
• To keep students with disabilities from dropping out, my school makes an effort to involve parents in their child's education.	79
• To help students with disabilities who take the FCAT, my school provides students with appropriate testing accommodations.	77

MIDDLE

(More than 25% but fewer than 75% of the respondents reported consistency in these areas.)	%
• To keep students with disabilities from dropping out, my school allows students to make up credits lost due to disability-related absences.	72
• To help students with disabilities who take the FCAT, my school provides teachers with FCAT test preparation materials.	72
• To keep students with disabilities from dropping out, my school conducts ongoing assessments of individual students' performance.	69
• To encourage students with disabilities to stay in school, my school implements an IEP transition plan for each student.	66
• To keep students with disabilities from dropping out, my school provides positive behavioral supports.	66

	%
• To provide students with disabilities access to the general curriculum, my school modifies and adapts curriculum for students as needed.	64
• To provide students with disabilities access to the general curriculum, my school addresses each student's individual needs.	64
• To provide students with disabilities access to the general curriculum, my school ensures that students with disabilities feel comfortable when taking classes with general education students.	64
• To help students with disabilities who take the FCAT, my school aligns curriculum for students with the standards that are tested on the FCAT.	63
• To provide students with disabilities access to the general curriculum, my school places students with disabilities into general education classes whenever possible.	61
• To keep students with disabilities from dropping out, my school ensures that classroom material is grade- and age-appropriate.	60
• To help students with disabilities who take the FCAT, my school gives students in ESE classes updated textbooks.	59
• To provide students with disabilities access to the general curriculum, my school encourages collaboration among ESE teachers, GE teachers and service providers.	59
• To keep students with disabilities from dropping out, my school encourages participation of students with disabilities in extracurricular activities.	58
• To ensure that as many students with disabilities as possible graduate with a standard diploma, my school informs students through the IEP process of the different diploma options and their requirements.	56
• To provide students with disabilities access to the general curriculum, my school ensures that the general education curriculum is taught in ESE classes to the maximum extent possible.	55
• To keep students with disabilities from dropping out, my school ensures that classroom material is culturally appropriate.	54
• To ensure that as many students with disabilities as possible graduate with a standard diploma, my school encourages students to aim for a standard diploma when appropriate.	51
• To ensure that as many students with disabilities as possible graduate with a standard diploma, my school provides extra help to students who need to retake the FCAT.	48
• To provide students with disabilities access to the general curriculum, my school offers teachers professional development opportunities regarding curriculum and support for students with disabilities.	46

	%
• To keep students with disabilities from dropping out, my school implements a dropout prevention program.	46
• To keep students with disabilities from dropping out, my school ensures that students are taught strategies to manage their behavior as needed.	45
• To keep students with disabilities from dropping out, my school provides social skills training to students as needed.	44
• To encourage students with disabilities to stay in school, my school provides students with information about options after graduation.	41
• To provide students with disabilities access to the general curriculum, my school provides adequate support to GE teachers who teach students with disabilities.	38
• To encourage students with disabilities to stay in school, my school provides students with job training.	34
• To encourage students with disabilities to stay in school, my school teaches transition skills for future employment and independent living.	34
• To encourage students with disabilities to stay in school, my school coordinates on-the-job training with outside agencies.	33

Madison County School District
Focused Monitoring Report
Student Survey Results

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

Surveys and administrative scripts were sent to all schools in Madison County with students in grades 9-12. Surveys were sent out for 156 students. A total of 95 surveys were returned from three schools representing 61% of the sample. The percentage of students who replied "yes" is reported below.

HIGH

(More than 75% of the Respondents replied with "yes.")	**%**
• At my school, ESE students: Are encouraged to stay in school.	94
• At my school ESE teachers give students extra help, if needed.	88
• I know the difference between a regular and a special diploma.	87
• At my school, ESE students: Get the help they need to well in school.	87
• At my school ESE teachers believe that ESE students can learn.	85
• I know what courses I have to take to get my diploma.	85
• At my school: Regular education teachers believe that ESE students can learn.	84
• At my school ESE teachers teach students things that will be useful later on in life.	84
• At my school ESE teachers teach students in ways that help them learn.	83
• At my school, ESE students: Can take vocational classes such as computers and business technology.	82
• I agree with the type of diploma I am going to receive.	81
• At my school, ESE students: Spend enough time with regular education students.	80
• At my school, ESE students: Fit in at school.	80

	%
• At my school, ESE students: Participate in clubs, sports, and other activities.	80
• At my school ESE teachers understand ESE students' needs.	78
• At my school, ESE students: Get work experience (on-the-job training) if they are interested.	77
• I was invited to attend my IEP meeting this year.	76

MIDDLE

(More than 25% but fewer than 75% of the respondents replied with "yes.")	**%**
• At my school, ESE students: Get information about education after high school.	75
• At my school ESE teachers give students extra time or different assignments, if needed.	75
• At my school: Regular education teachers give ESE students extra help if needed.	72
• At my school: Regular education teachers teach ESE students things that will be useful later on in life.	72
• At my school, ESE students: Are treated fairly by teachers and staff.	70
• I attended my IEP meeting this year.	69
• At my school: Regular education teachers teach ESE students in ways that help them learn.	66
• I had a say in the decision about which classes I would take.	61
• At my school: Regular education teachers understand ESE students' needs.	60
• I had a say in the decision about which diploma I could get.	60
• I will probably graduate with a regular diploma.	60
• I am taking the following regular/mainstream classes: Electives (physical education, art, music)	59
• At my school: Regular education teachers give ESE students extra time or different assignments if needed.	58
• Teachers help ESE students prepare for the FCAT.	54
• At my school ESE teachers provide ESE students with updated books and materials.	53
• I am taking the following ESE classes: Social Studies	52
• I took the FCAT this year.	49
• I am taking the following ESE classes: Electives (physical education, art, music)	49
• I am taking the following ESE classes: Math	46

	%
• In my math classes, we work on the kinds of problems that are tested on the math part of the FCAT.	43
• In my English/reading classes, we work on the kinds of skills that are tested on the reading part of the FCAT.	42
• I am taking the following regular/mainstream classes: Science	41
• I had a say in the decision about special testing conditions I might get for the FCAT or other tests.	40
• I am taking the following ESE classes: English	40
• I am taking the following regular/mainstream classes: Social Studies	40
• I am taking the following regular/mainstream classes: Vocational (woodshop, computers)	37
• I am taking the following regular/mainstream classes: Math	37
• I am taking the following regular/mainstream classes: English	37
• I had a say in the decision about whether I need to take the FCAT or a different test.	35
• I received accommodations (special testing conditions) for the FCAT.	32
• I am taking the following ESE classes: Science	31
• I am taking the following ESE classes: Vocational (woodshop, computers)	31

Appendix B- ESE Monitoring Team Members

Madison County School District
Focused Monitoring Report
ESE Monitoring Team Members
April 8-12, 2002

Department of Education Staff

Cathy Bishop, Program Supervisor, Program Administration and Evaluation
Iris Anderson, Program Specialist IV, Program Administration and Evaluation
Lee Clark, Program Specialist IV, Program Administration and Evaluation
Kelly Claude, Program Specialist IV, Program Administration and Evaluation
Kim Komisar, Program Specialist IV, Program Administration and Evaluation

Contracted Staff

Adalis Anasagasti, Researcher, University of Miami
Maria Elena Arguelles, Researcher, University of Miami
Batya Elbaum, Project Director, University of Miami
Emily Jospeh, Researcher, University of Miami
Christopher Sarno, Researcher, University of Miami

Appendix C- Glossary of Acronyms

Glossary of Acronyms

Bureau	Bureau of Instructional Support & Community Services
CCC	Computer Curriculum Corporation
DOE	Department of Education
EH	Emotionally Handicapped
EMH	Educable Mentally Handicapped
ESE	Exceptional Student Education
FAPE	Free Appropriate Public Education
FCAT	Florida Comprehensive Assessment Test
FDLRS	Florida Diagnostic and Learning Resources System
IDEA	Individuals with Disabilities Education Act
IEP	Individual Educational Plan
Pre-K (PK)	Prekindergarten
ROTC	Reserve Officers Training Corps
SED	Severely Emotionally Disturbed
SLD	Specific Learning Disability
SRA	Science Research Associates
SSS	Sunshine State Standards

Appendix D- Forms Review

Madison County School District
Focused Monitoring Report
Forms Review

This form review was completed as a component of the focused monitoring visit conducted on April 8-11, 2002. We have compared the following forms to the requirements of applicable State Board of Education Rules, the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), applicable sections of Title 34 of the Code of Federal Regulations, and the Monitoring Work Papers/Source Book for 2002. The review includes recommended revisions based on programmatic or procedural issues and concerns. The results of the review are detailed below and list the applicable sources used for the review.

Parent Notification of Individual Educational Plan (IEP) Meeting

Form ESE-07 (Rev. 08/01) *Notice of IEP Meeting*
Source Book/Work Paper - IEP
Title 34 of the Code of Federal Regulation Section 300.345

This form contains the components for compliance.

Notice and Consent for Initial Placement

Form ESE-08A (Rev 9/00) *Informed Notice of Eligibility and Consent for Educational Placement (Prior Notice)*
Source Book/Work Paper - Program Areas
Title 34 of the Code of Federal Regulation ections 300.503 and 300.505

This form contains the components for compliance, however, at the next preprinting of this form, the wording "reviewed and approved" needs to be revised to eliminate the phrase "*and approved*." This change conforms to the requirement identified in the most recent Special Programs and Procedures document.

Informed Notice and Consent for Evaluation

Form ESE-02 (Rev 08/01) *Informed Notice and Consent for Evaluation*
Source Book/Work Paper – Evaluation
Title 34 of the Code of Federal Regulation Sections 300.503 and 300.505

This form contains the components for compliance.

Informed Notice of Reevaluation

Form ESE 11 (Rev. 3/00) *Informed Notice Regarding Re-Evaluation*
Source Book/Work Paper - Reevaluation
Title 34 of the Code of Federal Regulation Sections 300.503 and 300.505

This form contains the components for compliance; however, at the next preprinting of this form, the following recommendations are proposed:

- In the section that describes options considered, clarify option three by stating, "Three year reevaluation *testing* is not necessary at this time."

- Revise the sentences above the parent's signature to read "If reevaluation *testing* is determined…" and, "I understand that reevaluation *testing*…."

Notification of Change in Placement (and identification, FAPE)

Form ESE 10 (Rev. 10/01 *Informed Notice of Change of Identification, Educational Placement, and/or Free Appropriate Public Education (FAPE)*
Source Book/Work Paper - IEP
Title 34 of the Code of Federal Regulation Section 300.503

The following must be addressed:

- The form fails to identify other options considered and the reason those options were rejected and other relevant factors when using the form for change of identification or change in FAPE. The form must be revised to include this additional information.

Informed Notice of Refusal

Form ESE-14 *Informed Notice of Refusal to Take a Specific Action*
Source Book/Work Paper - IEP
Title 34 of the Code of Federal Regulation Section 300.503

This form contains the components for compliance.

The following comments are made regarding this form:

- The district may wish to consider a future revision to the form to address the circumstance when the district is refusing a parent request that is unrelated to evaluation and/or placement.

Notice: Not Eligible for Exceptional Student Placement

Form ESE-12 (Rev. 08/01) *Informed Notice of Ineligibility*
Source Book/Work Paper - Ineligible
Title 34 of the Code of Federal Regulation Section 300.503

This form contains the components for compliance.

The following comments are made in regard to this form.

When providing this notice, a copy of the Staffing Committee Process Documentation form (ESE-08) must also be given to the parent in order to meet all of the components for compliance.

Notice: Informed Notice of Dismissal

Form ESE-13 (Rev. 9/00) *Informed Notice of Dismissal*
Source Book/Work Paper - Dismissal
Title 34 of the Code of Federal Regulation Section 300.503

The following must be addressed:

- At the next preprinting of this form, the wording "reviewed and approved" needs to be revised to eliminate the phrase "*and approved*." This change conforms to the requirement identified in the most recent Special Programs and Procedures document.

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

Documentation of Staffing/Eligibility Determination

Form ESE-08 (Rev. 10/01) *Staffing Committee Process Documentation*
Source Book/Work Paper - Staffing, IEP
Title 34 of the Code of Federal Regulation Section 300.534

This form contains the components for compliance.

Individual Educational Plan (IEP) Meeting

Form ESE-09B *Individual Educational Plan*
Source Book/Work Paper - IEP
Title 34 of the Code of Federal Regulation Section 300.347

This form contains the components for compliance.

The following comments are made regarding this form:

- It is assumed that when the IEP team determines that a student with disabilities requires extended school year (ESY), the ESY services are included in the IEP under the appropriate sections.
- Although the IEP form is not required to have a section in which to record the results of recent state and district-wide assessments, there must be documentation somewhere in the student's record that the IEP team did consider these results.

The district utilizes the procedural safeguards form produced by the Bureau. The information regarding confidentiality of student records was also reviewed. These documents contain the components for compliance.