

**2016-17 Exceptional Student Education
On-Site Monitoring Report**

**Alachua County School District
January 18-20, 2017**



This publication is produced through the Bureau of Exceptional Education and Student Services (BEES), Division of K-12 Public Schools, Florida Department of Education (FDOE), and is available online at <http://www.fldoe.org/ese/mon-home.asp>. For information on available resources, contact the BEES Resource and Information Center (BRIC).

BRIC website: <http://www.fldoe.org/ese/clerhome.asp>

Bureau website: <http://www.fldoe.org/ese/>

Email: BRIC@fldoe.org

Telephone: 850-245-0475

Fax: 850-245-0987



**2016-17 Exceptional Student Education
On-Site Monitoring Report**

Alachua County School District

January 18-20, 2017

Table of Contents

Authority.....	1
Exceptional Student Education (ESE) On-Site Monitoring Process	1
Background Information.....	1
School Selection.....	2
On-Site Activities.....	3
On-Site Visit Team	3
Data Collection	3
2016-17 ESE On-Site Monitoring Results	4
Graduation Rate	4
Dropout Rate	4
Educational Environment (Least Restrictive Environment)	5
Discipline – 4B.....	5
Interviews Conducted.....	5
Administrator Focus Groups	5
Teacher Focus Groups	6
Parent Focus Group	6
Student Focus Groups.....	7
School Walk-Through Debriefings	7
2016-17 Next Steps	8
Technical Assistance	11
State Support Team for Alachua County School District	14

Authority

The Florida Department of Education (FDOE), Bureau of Exceptional Education and Student Services (BEESS), 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 exceptional student education (ESE) laws (sections 1001.03(3), 1003.571 and 1008.32, Florida Statutes [F.S.]) and rules. One purpose of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) is to assess and ensure the effectiveness of efforts to educate children with disabilities (s. 300.1(d) of Title 34, Code of Federal Regulations [CFR]). BEESS is responsible for ensuring that the requirements of IDEA and the educational requirements of the state are implemented (34 CFR §300.149(a)(1) and (2)).

In fulfilling this requirement, BEESS monitors ESE programs provided by district school boards in accordance with ss. 1001.42, 1003.57 and 1003.573, F.S. Through these monitoring activities, BEESS examines records and ESE services, evaluates procedures, provides information and assistance to school districts, and otherwise assists school districts in operating effectively and efficiently. The monitoring system is designed to facilitate improved educational outcomes for students while ensuring compliance with applicable federal laws and regulations and state statutes and rules.

Under 34 CFR §300.646(b)(2), if a state identifies significant disproportionality based on race or ethnicity in a local educational agency (LEA) with respect to the identification of children as children with disabilities, the identification of children in specific disability categories, the placement of children with disabilities in particular educational settings or the taking of disciplinary actions, the LEA must use the maximum amount (15 percent) of funds allowable for comprehensive coordinated early intervening services (CEIS) for children in the LEA who are not currently identified as needing special education or related services, but who need additional academic or behavioral supports in order to succeed in a general education environment. These children should include particularly, but not exclusively, children in those groups that were significantly over-identified.

Section 1003.573, F.S., Use of restraint and seclusion on students with disabilities, establishes documentation, reporting and monitoring requirements for districts regarding the use of restraint and seclusion on students with disabilities. It also requires districts to have policies and procedures in place that govern parent notification, incident reporting, data collection and monitoring the use of restraint or seclusion for students with disabilities. As required, the FDOE has established district- and school-based standards for documenting, reporting and monitoring the use of restraint and seclusion. These standards are included in each district's Exceptional Student Education Policies and Procedures (SP&P) document.

ESE On-Site Monitoring Process

Background Information

The 2016-17 ESE On-Site Monitoring process focuses on those State Performance Plan indicators that contributed to the targeting of school districts for CEIS and the following indicators that affect equity and access in the educational environment for students with disabilities:

- Indicator 1 – Graduation: Percentage of youth with individual educational plans (IEPs) graduating from high school with a regular diploma.

- Indicator 2 – Dropout: Percentage of youth with IEPs dropping out of high school.
- Indicator 4 – Rates of suspension and expulsion:
 - A. Percentage of districts that have a significant discrepancy in the rates of suspensions and expulsions of more than 10 days in a school year for children with IEPs.
 - B. Percentage of districts that have (a) a significant discrepancy, by race or ethnicity, in the rates of suspensions and expulsions of more than 10 days for children with IEPs; and (b) policies, procedures or practices that contribute to the significant discrepancy and do not comply with requirements relating to the development and implementation of IEPs, the use of positive behavioral interventions and support, and procedural safeguards.
- Indicator 5 – Educational environments:
Percentage of children with IEPs aged 6 through 21:
 - A. In the regular class 80 percent or more of the day;
 - B. In the regular class less than 40 percent of the day; and
 - C. In separate schools, residential facilities or homebound/hospital placements.
- Indicator 10 – Disproportionality, specific disability categories: Percentage of districts with disproportionate representation of racial and ethnic groups in specific disability categories that is the result of inappropriate identification.
- CEIS – Services provided to students in kindergarten through Grade 12 (with a particular emphasis on students in kindergarten through Grade 3) who are not currently identified as needing special education or related services, but who need additional academic and behavioral supports to succeed in a general education environment.
- Restraint – Rate of incidents of restraint, as reported on the FDOE website.
- Seclusion – Rate of incidents of seclusion, as reported on the FDOE website.

The ESE Monitoring process includes four phases:

- Phase 1 is composed of planning activities that occur in advance of the initial on-site visit to the school district.
- Phase 2 is the initial on-site visit to the selected school district by the state support team (SST).
- Phase 3 is follow-up activities, which are conducted by a designated follow-up team, as determined by the SST, and identification of the ongoing data that will be collected.
- Phase 4 is evaluation of the effectiveness of how the district is addressing each of the focus areas, and should include participation of the action-planning and problem-solving process team.

In a letter dated September 19, 2016, the superintendent of the Alachua County School District was informed that BEESS would be conducting an on-site monitoring visit for the following focus areas: graduation rate, dropout rate, least restrictive environment, suspension and expulsion rates with a significant discrepancy by race or ethnicity, disproportionate representation in specific disability programs, and transition IEPs aligned with postsecondary outcomes. Prior to the on-site visit, it was determined that schools would not be visited for disproportionate representation in specific disability programs and transition IEPs aligned with postsecondary outcomes, as recent data reflected positive changes since the prior school year; however, it was determined that the district should continue to monitor these areas.

School Selections

Upon review of the school district's data, it was determined that the monitoring process would involve the following schools for school administrator, teacher, parent and student focus groups

and school walk-through debriefings:

- Hidden Oak Elementary School
- Lincoln Middle School
- Gainesville High School
- MYcroSchool Gainesville Charter High School

In addition, to the schools selected for on-site visits, a school administrator focus group was conducted at the district office with administrators from the following schools:

- Littlewood Elementary School
- Westwood Middle School
- F. W. Buchholz High School

On-Site Activities

On-Site Visit Team

The following SST members planned or conducted the monitoring visit:

FDOE, BEESS

- Monica Verra-Tirado, State Director for Special Education, Bureau Chief
- David Wheeler, School Psychologist, Student Support Services, Lead
- Bethany Mathers, Program Analyst, Portal to Exceptional Education Resources
- Jerry Brown, Program Specialist, Dispute and Resolution Management

Peer Monitor

- Melissa Musselwhite, ESE Director, Pasco County School District

FDOE, BEESS Discretionary Projects

- Carly Detlefsen, Regional Transition Representative, Project 10: Transition Education Network
- Ann Selland, Regional Coordinator, Problem-Solving: Response to Implementation (PS:Rtl)
- Paige Mace, Project Manager, The Multiagency Network for Students with Emotional/Behavioral Disabilities (SEDNET)
- Ashely MacSuga-Gage, Technical Assistant Specialist, Florida Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports (PBIS)
- Stephanie Martinez, Technical Assistant Specialist, PBIS
- Erika Boyd, Facilitator, Florida Inclusion Network (FIN)
- Greg Gillman, Project Coordinator, State Personnel Development Grants (SPDG)
- James Husted, Project Manager, Florida Diagnostic and Learning Resources System Associate Center (FDLRS)

Data Collection

On-site monitoring activities included the following:

- Review of recent data
- Welcome session with district, school administrators and staff – 19 participants
- Administrator focus groups – 36 participants
- Teacher focus groups – 36 participants

- Parent focus group – eight participants
- Student focus groups – 32 participants
- School walk-through debriefings – 13 classrooms
- Action-planning and problem-solving process – 32 participants

The district completed the initial Best Practices for Inclusive Education (BPIE) assessment with FIN facilitators on April 29, 2016, and the BPIE was updated on February 27, 2017, and included the following goal:

- Alachua County will increase their least restrictive environment (LRE) from 63.2 to 70 percent by the end of the 2018-19 school year.

2016-17 ESE On-Site Monitoring Results

The following data are related to the focus areas and activities for the 2016-17 ESE On-Site Monitoring for the Alachua County School District.

Graduation Rate

The federal uniform high school graduation rate for students with disabilities is calculated by taking the number of first-time ninth graders from four years ago, plus the number of incoming transfer students on the same schedule to graduate, minus the number of students from this population who transferred out or left to enroll in a private school or home education, divided by the number of standard diplomas from the same group. The district's federal graduation rate for students with disabilities for the 2014-15 school year was 52.2 percent, which is below the state target of 56.3 percent. The 2015-16 graduation rate increased to 53.1 percent, which is below the state target of 58.3 percent.

	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16
Alachua	50.0%	52.2%	53.1%
State Target	54.3%	56.3%	58.3%

Dropout Rate

The federal dropout rate for students with disabilities is calculated by taking the number of students who exited special education as a result of dropping out, divided by the number of students who graduated with a regular high school diploma, special diploma, certificate of completion, special certificate of completion, dropped out or died. The district's federal dropout rate for students with disabilities for the 2014-15 school year was 26.4 percent, which is above the state target of 15.1 percent. The 2015-16 dropout rate decreased to 16.6 percent, which is above the state target of 13.4 percent.

	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16
Alachua	21.3%	26.4%	16.6%
State Target	16.8%	15.1%	13.4%

Educational Environment (Least Restrictive Environment)

To the maximum extent appropriate, students with disabilities are to be educated with nondisabled students. These LRE data are calculated by dividing the number of students with disabilities aged 6 through 21 served in the regular class for 80 percent or more of the day, by the total number of students with disabilities aged 6 through 21 reported in October (survey 2). These data do not include parentally placed private school students or students served in Florida county jails, Florida Department of Juvenile Justice facilities or Florida Department of Corrections. The district’s percentage of students with disabilities being served in the regular class for the 2015-16 school year was 63.2 percent, which is below the state target of 79 percent. The district’s LRE rate for the 2016-17 school year decreased to 60.7 percent, which is below the state target of 82 percent.

	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17
Alachua	62.8%	63.2%	60.7%
State Target	77.0%	79.0%	82.0%

Discipline – 4B

Discipline risk ratios for students with disabilities are calculated by first dividing the number of students with disabilities from a specific racial or ethnic group who received out-of-school suspensions (OSSs) or expulsions totaling more than 10 days, by the total-year enrollment of students with disabilities from the same racial or ethnic group. Second, the number of all nondisabled students who received OSSs or expulsions totaling more than 10 days is divided by the total number of nondisabled students. The risk ratio is calculated by dividing the result of the first step by the result of the second step. A risk ratio of 1.0 indicates that students with disabilities of a given race are no more likely to be suspended or expelled than all nondisabled students. The district’s risk ratio for 4B for the 2014-15 school year was 3.07. The district’s risk ratio for 4B for the 2015-16 school year increased to 5.13, which means that students with disabilities whose race is black were 5.13 times more likely to be suspended or expelled than all nondisabled students. Florida has set the risk ratio threshold at 3.0; therefore, rates above 3.0 are considered significantly disproportionate.

	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16
Alachua	4.81	3.07	5.13
State Risk Ratio	2.92	2.72	2.45

Interviews Conducted

Administrator Focus Groups

Members of the SST conducted focus groups with administrators from Hidden Oaks Elementary School, Lincoln Middle School, Gainesville High School and MYcroSchool Gainesville Charter High School regarding graduation rate, dropout rate, LRE and discipline 4B. Administrators from Littlewood Elementary School, Westwood Middle School and F. W Buchholz High School participated in a focus group for 4B discipline at the district office; however, these schools were not visited.

Themes that emerged from the administrator focus groups included the following:

- At most schools, there is strong focus on building relationships with students and families.
- The district provides multiple layers of support and professional development opportunities (e.g., trauma-informed care training for selected staff at all schools).
- There is strong district- and school-based leadership support for inclusion.
- Many school-based leaders are already moving toward increased inclusion through the multi-tiered system of supports (MTSS) and professional development supporting inclusion.
- The district conducted a needs assessment for inclusion and has introduced inclusion-friendly initiatives, such as literacy-based centers and co-teaching models.
- There is a need for additional professional development for teachers to use data to support student achievement.
- Some of the identified challenges to inclusion of students with disabilities are limited service delivery models and insufficient allocation of resources to support inclusion.

Teacher Focus Groups

Members of the SST conducted focus groups with teachers from Hidden Oaks Elementary School, Lincoln Middle School, Gainesville High School and MYcroSchool Gainesville Charter High School regarding graduation rate, dropout rate, LRE and Discipline 4B.

Themes that emerged from the teacher focus groups included the following:

- Teachers feel positive about their relationships with other staff and supported by administration.
- Teachers are dedicated to working with and supporting all students.
- There is strong support for increasing inclusive practices if given appropriate resources and training.
- General education teachers need additional training and resources to improve their abilities to provide accommodations for struggling students and students with disabilities, including research-based curriculum and accessible instructional materials.
- More timely data are needed so that students experiencing difficulties are identified early and provided effective interventions; ideally, this should begin in the elementary grades, so that students are prepared for the academic rigors of middle school and high school.
- There is a need for more vocational and career-training opportunities for students (e.g., on-the-job-training) and staff to assist students with postsecondary transition.
- Poverty is an issue impacting academics and behavior; long-term impacts, including the school-to-prison pipeline, need to be addressed.
- Establishing relationships with students is an important strategy for engaging students academically and addressing counterproductive behavioral concerns.

Parent Focus Group

Members of the SST conducted a focus group with parents of students with disabilities aged 14 years or older from the district regarding postsecondary transition.

Themes that emerged from the parent focus group included the following:

- There are many great teachers who make individual connections and provide strong transition support for their students.
- There is a desire for more supports for struggling students and students with disabilities (e.g., tutoring).

- There are concerns that general education teachers are often unaware that a student has an IEP and what accommodations and supports they need to provide.
- There is a need for more transition programs and support, including information about agencies that assist with transition. There is a sense of “being on their own” when it comes to transition.
- There is a need for activities that bring parents of students with disabilities together so that they can connect with other parents.
- Parents appreciate the opportunity to voice concerns during the focus group and suggested a “Meet and Greet” with the ESE director to share parent concerns.

Student Focus Groups

Members of the SST conducted focus groups with students from Lincoln Middle School, Gainesville High School and MYcroSchool Gainesville Charter High School. Students were asked to share their perspectives on topics such as graduation, dropout, discipline 4B and post-school activities.

Comments from the student focus groups included the following:

- At most schools, students feel that teachers, staff and administrators support students regardless of race, class or background.
- Some students expressed the importance of family and staff support for their success, and most have a staff person they can go to if they need support at school.
- At one school, the students recognize the efforts to support graduation and the importance of earning a high school diploma.
- At one school, more information and resources on post-high school options are needed.
- Many students reported not being invited to or participating in their IEP meetings.
- At one school, students who were at risk of dropping out indicated that they were not properly informed about course requirements during their first two years of high school.

School Walk-Through Debriefings

School walk-through debriefings were conducted at Hidden Oak Elementary School, Lincoln Middle School, Gainesville High School and MYcroSchool Gainesville Charter High School regarding student engagement, school climate, and evidence of academic and behavioral expectations.

Observations from the school walk-through debriefings included the following:

- At most schools, there were data walls celebrating student success and student work products.
- Instruction was based on standards and included explicit instruction and independent practice.
- Students were engaged during small- and whole-group instruction and on task during independent seat work.
- Use of computers and assistive technology was evident in the elementary school setting; however, access to technology resources was limited in some middle school ESE classrooms.
- Student behavioral expectations were clearly visible throughout the schools.

2016-17 Next Steps

Graduation Rate	
Summary	The graduation rate of students with disabilities increased from 52.2 percent in the 2014-15 school year to 53.1 percent in the 2015-16 school year, which is below the state target of 58.3 percent.
Recommendations	<p>It is recommended that the district do the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue to monitor and track data and continue to implement improvement activities shared during the 2016-17 on-site visit, especially collaboration with Project 10 staff on the benefits of the early warning system (EWS) and how this may be implemented throughout high schools in the district. • Provide professional development and coaching for teachers on how to use data from the new data system to support student achievement. • Specify how the MTSS will improve academic proficiency for students in Grades 3-10 whose academic performance is below grade level.
Required Action	<p>The district must provide documentation of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Projection of graduation rates for the 2016-17 school year for each of the high schools (including charter schools). • Strategies that were implemented to assist off-track students during the 2016-17 school year. • Plan to monitor students for “on track” graduation for 2017-18 school year. • Collaboration with staff of PS:Rtl and PBIS in providing professional development and coaching for high school teachers on how to use data to improve student achievement. <p>The district must provide a detailed narrative describing each of the above-mentioned actions to the district’s BEESS liaison via BEESSMonitoring@fldoe.org by June 9, 2017.</p> <p>In addition, the district must provide documentation regarding how the MTSS will support students whose academic performance is below grade level to the district’s BEESS liaison via BEESSMonitoring@fldoe.org by August 17, 2017.</p>
Dropout Rate	
Summary	The district’s dropout rate decreased from 26.4 percent in the 2014-15 school year to 16.6 percent in the 2015-16 school year, which is above the state target of 13.4 percent.
Recommendations	The district should continue to monitor and track dropout data in collaboration with Project 10 staff and implement strategies to decrease the district’s dropout rate.
Required Actions	None

Educational Environment (Least Restrictive Environment)	
Summary	The district's percentage of students with disabilities being served in the regular class for the 2015-16 school year was 63.2 percent, which is below the state target of 79 percent. The district's LRE rate for the 2016-17 school year decreased to 60.7 percent, which is below the state target of 82 percent.
Recommendations	<p>Based on comments from the interviews with school administrators and district staff, it is recommended that the district address staff beliefs about inclusion and explore the resource allocation and scheduling needed to support successful inclusion.</p> <p>The district reported plans to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Complete a Needs Assessment at each school to determine inclusion readiness. • Conduct an inclusion planning session with principals.
Required Actions	<p>The district must conduct a detailed analysis of the district's 2016-17 school-level LRE data and identify specific schools in need of professional development for support in LRE. The district must collaborate with staff of FIN and FDLRS to provide professional development that includes scheduling, inclusive practices and differentiated instruction to the targeted school administrators and designated district staff. The following must be provided to the BEESS liaison via BEESSMonitoring@fldoe.org by November 1, 2017:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A list of the identified targeted schools. • The dates of the professional development provided. • A copy of agenda for each training provided. • Sign-in sheets that include the name and title of each attendee.
Discipline 4B	
Summary	For the 2014-15 school year, the district's 4B risk ratio was 3.07. In the 2015-16 school year, the district's 4B risk ratio increased to 5.13, which is above the risk ratio threshold of 3.0 set by the state.
Recommendations	<p>The district should consider the following activities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review the Office of Special Education Programs' (OSEP) guidance on preventing racial discrimination in special education with school principals and ESE staff, which can be accessed at https://www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ocr/letters/colleague-201612-racedisc-special-education.pdf. • Utilize the IDEA Success Gaps Toolkit, which can be accessed at https://toolkits.ideadata.org, to address issues of equity, inclusion and opportunity. • Integrate restorative practices into discipline policies and procedures. • Explore possibility of funding for re-introducing Check & Connect into targeted schools.
Required Actions	The district must continue to participate in the Disproportionality Workgroup facilitated by the PBIS staff. The district must provide documentation based on the following activities to the BEESS liaison

	<p>via BEESSMonitoring@fldoe.org by August 17 2017, and November 15, 2017.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Copy of the district's quarterly 4B discipline data for quarter four of the 2016-17 school year and quarter one of the 2017-18 school year. • A list of the schools selected to participate in the Disproportionality Workgroup. • Copy of the required written assignments from each school selected to participant in the Disproportionality Workgroup.
Phase 4 of the ESE Monitoring Process	
<p>Summary</p>	<p>The Alachua County School District was selected for an on-site visit for the following focus areas related to students with disabilities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Graduation rate • Dropout rate • LRE • Discipline 4B • Disproportionate representation in specific disability programs • Transition individual educational plans aligned with postsecondary outcomes
<p>Required Actions</p>	<p>By September 25, 2017, designated BEESS staff and members of the district problem-solving team will reconvene via a conference call to share how they are addressing each of the above-mentioned focus areas and determine next steps. The district will coordinate with BEESS staff regarding the date and time of the conference call and provide documentation (e.g., recent data, professional development, problem-solving notes and action plans) to BEESS by September 18, 2017.</p>

Technical Assistance

1. **Implementing a Multi-Tiered System of Support (MTSS) for Behavior: Recommended Practices for School and District Leaders** (Florida's PBIS Project) may be accessed at http://flpbs.fmhi.usf.edu/pdfs/RTIB%20Guide%20101811_final.pdf and provides an overview of the critical components of an MTSS for behavior. These critical components describe systems changes that are necessary for a results-driven ESE system.
2. The district's **SP&P** document provides district- and school-based standards for documenting, reporting and monitoring the use of manual, physical, or mechanical restraint and seclusion developed by FDOE. The school district's document for the 2015-16 through 2017-18 school years may be accessed at <http://beess.fcim.org/sppDistrictDocSearch.aspx>.
3. The technical assistance paper entitled, "**Guidelines for the Use, Documentation, Reporting, and Monitoring of Restraint and Seclusion with Students with Disabilities,**" dated October 14, 2011, may be accessed at <https://info.fldoe.org/docushare/dsweb/Get/Document-6212/dps-2011-165.pdf>. This document provides guidance regarding the use, documenting, reporting, and monitoring of restraint and seclusion with students with disabilities in school districts, including (a) when restraint or seclusion might be used, (b) considerations when selecting a training program for restraint, (c) what should be documented, (d) parent notification and reporting, and (e) monitoring use. It also contains information about s. 1003.573, F.S., Use of restraint and seclusion on students with disabilities.
4. The United States Department of Education, in collaboration with the United States Department of Justice, released **School Discipline Guidance** in January 2014, Volume 4, Issue 1 of the **Office of Special Education Programs Monthly Update**. This package will assist states, districts and schools in developing practices and strategies to enhance school climate, and ensure those policies and practices comply with federal law. The resource documents listed below are included in the package, and are available at <http://www.ed.gov/school-discipline>.
 - **Dear Colleague** guidance letter on civil rights and discipline;
 - **Guiding Principles** document, which draws from emerging research and best practices;
 - **Directory of Federal School Climate and Discipline Resources**, which indexes federal technical assistance and other resources; and
 - **Compendium of School Discipline Laws and Regulations**, which catalogs state laws and regulations related to school discipline.
5. **IDEA Success Gaps Toolkit** may be accessed at <https://toolkits.ideadata.org>. The Success Gaps materials were developed to assist a school or district to conduct a root cause analysis and make a plan for reducing success gaps. Districts can use the tools to take a closer look at their educational system to prevent "success gaps" and ensure equitable education for all students. A state can use the materials with a district to identify success gaps and their causes within the LEA. Some states will use the materials as part of their work with districts that are underperforming academically, have school climate challenges or have identified disproportionality.

6. **Dear Colleague Letter: Preventing Racial Discrimination in Special Education** may be accessed at <https://www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ocr/letters/colleague-201612-racedisc-special-education.pdf>. The Office for Civil Rights at the U.S. Department of Education issued the Dear Colleague Letter on Preventing Racial Discrimination in Special Education on December 12, 2016, to help ensure that all students, regardless of race, color, or national origin, have equitable access to high-quality general and special education instruction.
7. **Dear Colleague Letter: Supporting Behavior of Students with Disabilities** may be accessed at <https://www2.ed.gov/policy/gen/guid/school-discipline/files/dcl-on-pbis-in-ieps--08-01-2016.pdf>. On August 1, 2016, OSEP provided guidance for schools to clarify their responsibility under the *Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA)* to provide children with disabilities appropriate behavioral interventions and supports that are necessary to ensure they have meaningful access to their education. Failure to make behavioral supports available throughout a continuum of placements, including in a regular education setting, could result in an inappropriately restrictive placement and constitute a denial of placement in the LRE.
8. **The Project 10: Transition Education Network** (<http://project10.info>) assists Florida school districts and relevant stakeholders in building capacity to provide secondary transition services to students with disabilities in order to improve their academic success and post-school outcomes. Project 10 serves as the primary conduit between BEESS and school-district personnel in addressing law and policy, effective practices, and research-based interventions in the area of transition services for youth with disabilities. The project also supports transition initiatives developed through the BEESS Strategic Plan. Examples of assistance provided related to graduation rates include using school-level data for graduation success, technical assistance to improve data collection, analysis, and data-driven decision making, in order to develop a color-coded student graduation tracking system that can be coordinated with existing initiatives or systems. Regarding dropout, the project supports dropout prevention strategies for students with disabilities, school-based enterprise, service learning, and EWS.
9. **FDLRS Associate Centers Support** may be accessed at <http://www.fdlrs.org>. The 19 FDLRS associate centers provide an array of instructional and technical support services to school districts statewide. The four central functions of each FDLRS center are Child Find, parent services, human resource development, and professional learning and technology. The centers collaborate with districts, agency and support personnel, communities, families, and educational personnel providing support services for educators, school administrators, parents, and students with disabilities. Examples of professional development related to graduation rates include Florida standards/access points, differentiated instruction, access to the general curriculum, Strategic Instruction Model, behavior/discipline, Standing up for Me, self-advocacy, responsive classroom, and district specific supports. Professional development related to dropout include differentiated instruction, accommodations, CHAMPs, Tough Kids, discipline in the secondary classroom, support for parent involvement, Professional Development Alternatives for Positive Behavior Support module, universal design for learning, small-group planning and problem solving, disability awareness, and district specific supports.
10. **PS:Rtl Technology** may be accessed at <http://www.floridarti.usf.edu/index.html>. One function of this project provides support to regional technology coordinators and technology

specialists to effectively implement accessible instructional materials, assistive technologies, learning technologies, and universal design for learning principles within all tiers of instruction. This project also manages, coordinates and supports the regional assistive technology loan libraries.

11. **SEDNET** may be accessed at <http://www.sednetfl.info/>. The 19 regional SEDNET centers assist Florida school districts and relevant stakeholders in building capacity to provide the necessary mental health and academic supports to students with or at risk of emotional and behavioral disabilities to prepare students to achieve academic success; graduate high school; and become career, college and life ready.
12. The **PS/Rtl – Technology and Learning Connections (TLC)** may be accessed at <http://www.tlc-mtss.com>. TLC provides guidelines and resources to support the implementation of universal design for learning. A quarterly newsletter that focuses on technology integration to support the local development of highly effective classrooms for all students may also be accessed. TLC's Winter 2016-17 newsletter focuses on math instruction, resources and tools to eliminate barriers and increase achievement for all students and can be viewed at <http://conta.cc/2kjsuGt>. To sign-up to receive this quarterly newsletter, please visit <http://bit.ly/1TL0HLQ>. Additional resources are available at <http://www.tlc-mtss.com/resources.html>.

State Support Team for Alachua County School District

Bureau of Exceptional Education and Student Services

325 West Gaines Street
Suite 614, Turlington Building
Tallahassee, Florida 32399
850-245-0475
<http://www.fldoe.org/ese>

Monica Verra-Tirado
Bureau Chief
BEESS
monica.verra-tirado@fldoe.org

David Wheeler
School Psychologist
Student Support Services
david.wheeler@fldoe.org

Bethany Mathers
Program Analyst
Portal to Exceptional Education Resources
bethany.mathers@fldoe.org

Jerry Brown
Program Specialist
Dispute and Resolution Management

Peer Monitor

Melissa Musselwhite
ESE Director
Pasco County School District

BEESS Discretionary Projects

Carly Detlefsen
Regional Transition Representative
Project 10: Transition Education Network
cdetlefsen@usfsp.edu

Ann Selland
Regional Coordinator
PS:Rtl
aselland@usf.edu

Paige Mace
Project Manager
SEDNET
paige.mace@levy.k12.fl.us

Ashley MacSuga-Gage
Technical Assistant Specialist
PBIS
asmq@coe.ufl.edu

Stephanie Martinez
Technical Assistant Specialist
PBIS
smartinez@fmhi.usf.edu

Erika Boyd
Facilitator
FIN
eboyd@contactfin.com

Greg Gillman
Program Coordinator
SPDG
ggillman@mail.usf.edu

James Husted
Project Manager
FDLRS
james.husted@marion.k12.fl.us



Pam Stewart, Commissioner
313230G