2018-19 Exceptional Student Education On-Site Monitoring Report

Glades County School District January 8-10, 2019



This publication is produced through the Bureau of Exceptional Education and Student Services (BEESS), 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 BEESS Resource and Information Center (BRIC).

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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 1003.01(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 overidentified.

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 2018-19 ESE On-Site Monitoring process focuses on those State Performance Plan (SPP) 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 or 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 for 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 support to succeed in a general education environment.
- Restraint Rate of incidents of restraint, as reported in the FDOE database.
- Seclusion Rate of incidents of seclusion, as reported in the FDOE database.

The ESE On-Site 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). The SST consists of BEESS staff, peer monitors from other districts and discretionary project staff. The SST assists with facilitating focus groups at each school site that may consist of administrators, teachers, students and parents.
- 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 August 13, 2018, the superintendent of the Glades County School District was informed that BEESS would be conducting an on-site monitoring visit for the following focus areas: least restrictive environment (LRE), CEIS discipline and transition IEPs aligned with post-school outcomes.

School Selection

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

- Moore Haven Elementary School
- Moore Haven Middle-High School

- West Glades School (K-8)
- Pemayety Emahaky Charter School

2018-19 ESE On-Site Monitoring Focus Areas

The following data are related to the focus areas and activities for the 2018-19 ESE On-Site Monitoring for the Glades County School District.

Educational Environment (Least Restrictive Environment)

To the maximum extent appropriate, students with disabilities are to be educated with students without disabilities. 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 increased from 77.6 percent during the 2016-17 school year to 80.1 percent during the 2017-18 school year. The 2018-19 LRE rate increased to 87.2 percent, which is above the state target of 85.0 percent.

	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19
Glades	77.6%	80.1%	87.2%
State Target	82.0%	83.0%	85.0%

Coordinated Early Intervening Services – Discipline

Districts are required to set aside 15 percent of their IDEA funds for CEIS if incidents of removal through in-school suspension (ISS), out-of-school suspension (OSS), or expulsion for students with disabilities of any given race are at least 3.5 times more likely to occur when compared to students with disabilities of all other races combined. During the 2017-18 school year, the district's CEIS discipline data indicated that the removal of black students with disabilities through ISS, OSS or expulsion was 4.65 times more likely to occur when compared to students with disabilities of all other races. The district's 2018-19 CEIS discipline risk ratio increased to 6.29. The district is required to withhold funds for CEIS during the 2018-19 school year because the district's risk ratio was 6.29, which is above the state-identified threshold of 3.5.

Discipline Risk Ratio for Black Students with Disabilities

	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19
Risk Ratio	8.56*	6.39*	4.65*	6.29*

^{*}School year that district was required to withhold funds.

Transition Individual Educational Plans Aligned with Postsecondary Outcomes

Each year districts are required to complete web-based protocols on the BEESS General Supervision website. Correction of noncompliance and corrective action plans are reported by districts and tracked via the website. One of the required protocols is SPP 13 – Secondary Transition for Students with Disabilities (Age 16), which is comprised of 19 standards. Standard T16-16 includes all the requirements for a transition IEP to be compliant.

During the 2017-18 self-assessment process, 80 percent of the student records entered by the district had findings of noncompliance for standard T16-16.

	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18
Percentage of Noncompliance for Standard T16-16	0%	0%	80%

Interviews Conducted

Administrator Focus Groups

Members of the SST conducted focus groups with administrators from Moore Haven Elementary School, Moore Haven Middle-High School, West Glades School (K-8), and Pemayetv Emahakv Charter School regarding LRE, CEIS discipline and transition IEPs aligned with post-school outcomes.

Themes that emerged from these focus groups included the following:

- Truancy and absenteeism rates for students are concerns throughout the district and administrators are working to address these concerns.
- There is evidence of a multi-tiered system of support (MTSS) for academics; however, a consistent system to support an MTSS in behavior is needed.
- There is a continued need for parental support and increased communication with parents.
- Administrators are committed to providing professional development and continuous improvement with the intent to have all teachers demonstrating a growth mindset, especially new teachers.
- A lack of time, funding and availability of substitutes to support professional development for teachers are concerns.
- There are concerns regarding accessing and connecting to outside service agencies, including Vocational Rehabilitation (VR), as the closest office that supports their district is at least one hour away.
- There is a need for consistency regarding mental health providers because the district is on its third mental health provider in less than two years.
- Career and technical education, dual enrollment and local postsecondary options are limited for students.
- Inclusion is a priority and an increase in the percentage of students with disabilities being served in the regular class is anticipated.
- The district is working with the Florida Positive Behavioral Interventions and Support Project: MTSS (FLPBIS:MTSS) project staff to provide behavior supports in the general education classroom for students with behavioral needs.

Teacher Focus Groups

Members of the SST conducted focus groups with teachers from Moore Haven Elementary School, Moore Haven Middle-High School, West Glades School (K-8), and Pemayetv Emahakv Charter School regarding LRE, CEIS discipline and transition IEPs aligned with post-school outcomes.

Themes that emerged from these focus groups included the following:

- There is a continued need to improve efforts toward increasing family and student engagement.
- There is a lack of awareness of CEIS and the resources available to assist with social skills, such as a research-based prosocial skills training program.
- Support to remain current in professional development and the availability of substitutes to support their professional development is needed.
- A comprehensive system for mental health referrals is needed, along with provider consistency, to support students.
- There are supports for an MTSS for academics in the general education classroom, but a clearly defined MTSS for behavior is needed.

Parent Focus Group

Members of the SST conducted a focus group with parents of students with disabilities aged 14 years or older.

Themes that emerged from the focus group included the following:

- There is a need for support in the area of transition in order to support students in postschool outcomes (i.e., continuing education and employment after high school) and connect families and students to outside agencies and VR.
- There is a need for all staff (e.g., coaches) to be trained in disability awareness and how to support students.
- There is a need throughout the community for all parents and students to value education and post-school outcomes.
- There is a need for additional vocational and postsecondary options for students (i.e., need for transition support including information, postsecondary support, and agency information and connections, including VR).

Student Focus Groups

Members of the SST conducted focus groups with students from Moore Haven Middle-High School, West Glades School (K-8) and Pemayetv Emahakv Charter School. Students were asked to share their perspectives on topics such as graduation, dropout and postsecondary activities.

Comments from these focus groups included the following:

- Attendance and truancy are issues that may be related to bullying and a lack of engagement in the classroom.
- Students shared that some students may not see the value in earning an education.
- New behavior interventions, including allowing for self-directed time out, is appreciated.
- More career and vocational guidance and opportunities, including hearing from individuals from various careers share about their professions, are needed.
- Inclusive settings with peers without disabilities are preferred.
- Communication is good between home and school.

Commendations

- 1. The district's dropout rate decreased from 31.3 percent during the 2016-17 school year to 0 percent for the 2017-18 school year, which is above the state target of 10.0 percent.
- 2. The district's standard diploma rate increased from 68.8 percent for 2016-17 to 100 percent for the 2017-18 school year, which is above the state rate of 79.6 percent.

2018-19 Next Steps

Least Restrictive Environment		
Summary	The district's percentage of students with disabilities being served in the regular class increased from 77.6 percent during the 2016-17 school year to 80.1 percent during the 2017-18 school year. The 2018-19 LRE rate increased to 87.2 percent, which is above the state target of 85.0 percent.	
Recommendations	 The district should consider the following activities: Continue to collaborate with FLPBIS:MTSS and SEDNET project staff to provide positive behavioral supports in general education classes in order to decrease districtwide referrals for behavior. In addition, the district should review data and the effectiveness of the behavior interventions for students with disabilities in general education classes to ensure success with inclusion. Continue to collaborate with the district's management information system staff to ensure appropriate coding and state reporting of LRE-related data. Consider collaborating with FDLRS and FIN project staff to create professional development opportunities for instructional staff for implementing universal design for learning and differentiated instruction. 	
Required Actions	None.	
CEIS Discipline		
Summary	During the 2017-18 school year, the district's CEIS discipline data indicated that the removal of black students with disabilities through ISS, OSS or expulsion was 4.65 times more likely to occur when compared to students with disabilities of all other races. The district is required to withhold funds for CEIS during the 2018-19 school year because the district's risk ratio increased to 6.29, which is above the state-identified threshold of 3.5.	
Recommendations	The district should continue to build the discipline MTSS processes. The district should consider trauma-informed care training for staff not yet trained. The training should emphasize the ability for the teachers and staff to identify reasons for student behavior and recommend methods of support. Additionally, consideration should be given to the use of restorative practices.	

Required Actions	 Disaggregate discipline incident data in a form similar to that used in the CEIS Discipline calculation or the FLPBIS CEIS Equity Profile in order to target the schools where black students with disabilities are disproportionately receiving referrals resulting in ISS, OSS and expulsion when compared to students with disabilities of all other races. Data must be reviewed with appropriate district and school staff. This review must include how discipline referrals resulting in ISS, OSS and expulsion are distributed among all races of students with disabilities. Continue to provide training to staff on addressing behavioral needs of students. Provide training to increase awareness of mental health issues and increase the use of evidence-based culturally responsible practices within the schools through Project Florida Advancing Wellness and Resilience in Education.
	By May 17, 2019 , the district must provide an end-of-year detailed report for CEIS activities as required in the district's IDEA Part B application.
	By June 12, 2019 , the district must provide a detailed narrative describing each of the above-mentioned activities to the district's BEESS liaison via BEESSMonitoring@fldoe.org .
Transition IEPs Alig	ned with Postsecondary Outcomes
Summary	During the 2017-18 self-assessment process, 80 percent of the student records entered by the district had findings of noncompliance for standard T16-16.
Recommendations	The district should continue to work to fulfill its current corrective action plan, which will be reviewed by the Dispute Resolution and Monitoring staff in BEESS. Prior to the submission of student records for self assessment, the district should review the IEPs for compliance regarding transition goals and ensure that postsecondary outcomes are included. If noncompliance is found, the district should provide training to designated responsible staff. Possible trainings can include technical assistance offered through Project 10.
Required Actions	By May 24, 2019, the district must participate in training by Project 10 regarding transition IEPs. The districts' teachers and specialists for transition are required to attend this training. The district must submit documentation as verification of the training to include the date of the training; names, signatures and titles of training participants; the agenda and copies of any content presented; and the name and title of the presenter. This documentation must be provided to the district's BEESS liaison via BEESSMonitoring@fldoe.org by June 12, 2019.
Follow up to the ES	E Monitoring Visit
Summary	The Glades County School District was selected for an on-site visit for the following focus areas related to students with disabilities: • LRE

	CEIS discipline Transition IEPs aligned with post-school outcomes
Required Actions	By October 16, 2019, designated BEESS staff and members of the district problem-solving team will reconvene via a conference call to share how the district is addressing each of the above-mentioned focus areas and determine next steps. The district will coordinate with BEESS regarding the date and time of the conference call and provide documentation (e.g., recent data, professional development, problem-solving notes and action plans) via BEESSMonitoring@fldoe.org by September 11, 2019.

Technical Assistance

- Implementing a Multi-Tiered System of Support (MTSS) for Behavior: Recommended Practices for School and District Leaders (Florida Positive Behavioral Interventions and Support Project: MTSS [FLPBIS:MTSS]) may be accessed at https://www.pbis.org/common/cms/files/pbisresources/RTIB_Guide_101811_final.pdf. FLPBIS:MTSS 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 **Exceptional Student Education Policies and Procedures** document provides district- and school-based standards for documenting, reporting and monitoring the use of manual, physical, or mechanical restraint and seclusion developed by the 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 FDOE's technical assistance paper DPS: 2016-13, entitled, "Least Restrictive Environment Considerations Related to Individual Educational Plans," dated January 15, 2016, may be accessed at https://info.fldoe.org/docushare/dsweb/Get/Document-7540/dps-201613.pdf. This document provides guidance on the provision of services for students with disabilities in the LRE.
- 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 following resource documents 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. The Project 10: Transition Education Network may be accessed at http://project10.info. Project 10 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 postsecondary 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, Project 10 supports dropout prevention strategies for students with disabilities, school-based enterprise, service learning and early warning system.

- 6. The Florida Diagnostic and Learning Resource System (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 and access points, differentiated instruction, access to the general curriculum, Strategic Instruction Model™, behavior and discipline, Standing up for Me, selfadvocacy, responsive classroom, and district-specific supports. Professional development related to dropout include differentiated instruction, accommodations, Conversation, Help, Activity, Movement, Participation, and Success (known as 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.
- 7. The Florida Inclusion Network (FIN) may be accessed at http://www.floridainclusion network.com/. FIN collaborates with all districts and schools to provide customized services and supports to ensure that students with disabilities have the same educational, social and future opportunities as their peers. In partnership with districts and schools, FIN facilitates implementation of best practices for inclusive education through data-driven, student-focused problem solving across districts and schools. In addition, FIN facilitates implementation of professional development and provides technical assistance and resources to district and school personnel in order to increase knowledge and skills to build and sustain capacity.
- 8. The **Problem Solving and Response to Intervention Project (PS/RtI) Technology** may be accessed at http://www.floridarti.usf.edu/index.html. One function of this project is to provide 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.
- 9. The Multiagency Network for Students with Emotional/Behavioral Disabilities (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 college, career and life ready.
- 10. 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 focused 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, go to http://bit.ly/1TLoHLQ. Additional resources are available at https://www.tlc-mtss.com/resources.

- 11. The Center for Autism and Related Disabilities may be accessed at http://florida-card.org. The seven regional autism centers provide nonresidential resource and training services for persons of all ages and of all levels of intellectual functioning who have autism, a pervasive developmental disorder, an autistic-like disability, a dual sensory impairment, or a sensory impairment with other disabling conditions. Each center provides services within its geographical region of the state and service delivery is consistent for all centers and each center coordinates services within and between state and local agencies and school districts.
- 12. The **Technical Assistance and Training System (TATS)** may be accessed at https://tats.ucf.edu/. TATS is a statewide system of technical assistance and training that promotes high-quality programs, which lead to and support positive outcomes for prekindergarten children with disabilities and their families.
- 13. The State Personnel Development Grant (SPDG) project builds capacity to increase school completion rates of students with disabilities, through the provision of professional development to support and scale-up existing research-based practices, develop capacity for use of evidence-based dropout prevention strategies, and enlist parental support of these research based practices. These practices include Check & Connect (C&C) and the Strategic Instruction Model™ (SIM). C&C is a Tier 2 and Tier 3 intervention used with secondary school students who show warning signs of disengagement with school and who are at risk of dropping out. At the core of C&C is a trusting relationship between the student and a trained mentor who both advocates and challenges the student to keep education salient. SIM is a literacy program centered on promoting effective teaching and learning of critical content in schools. Focusing on the Learning Strategies Curriculum and Content Enhancement Routines, SIM strives to help teachers make decisions about what is of greatest importance, what can be taught to help students become more effective learners. and how to teach so that all students, including students with disabilities, increase their proficiency in the Florida standards. SPDG does not have a website; however, if you have questions, contact Margaret Sullivan, director of SPDG, at msullivan@fgcu.edu.
- 14. The **FLPBIS:MTSS** may be accessed at http://flpbs.fmhi.usf.edu. Significant behavior problems contribute to unsafe school environments and to reductions in student performance; therefore, FLPBIS:MTSS is committed to building the capacity of school districts so that they may better assist schools to develop effective discipline, social skills teaching and behavior support strategies for all students.
- 15. The Institute for Small and Rural Districts (ISRD) may be accessed at http://isrd.nefec.org/. ISRD provides a forum for school district staff to keep abreast of a wide array of topics impacting the delivery of services to students with disabilities and their families, such as curriculum and instructional practices; educational policies, procedures and practices; behavior support; and transition. ISRD's primary purpose is to provide staff development, training and technical support to a network of 35 small and rural school districts, lab schools, the Florida Virtual School and the Department of Corrections. Overall, ISRD's goal is to ensure that service to students with disabilities and their families is enhanced and that positive outcomes for students with disabilities is achieved through increased student performance.

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