

**2018-19 Exceptional Student Education
On-Site Monitoring Report**

**Hernando County School District
February 12-14, 2019**



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).

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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 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 Hernando 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 (LRE), time frame between evaluation and identification (Child Find) and incidents of restraint.

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:

- Deltona Elementary School
- Pine Grove Elementary School

- West Hernando Middle School
- Frank W. Springstead High School
- Hernando High 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 Hernando 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 increased each school year from 2015-16 to 2017-18. For 2016-17 and 2017-18, the district’s federal graduation rates were above the state targets.

	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18
Hernando	56.1%	68.2%	75.8%
State Target	58.3%	60.3%	62.3%

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, a special diploma, a certificate of completion, or a special certificate of completion, and who dropped out or died. Although the district’s federal dropout rate for students with disabilities decreased from 2016-17 to 2017-18, the district has not met the state target from 2015-16 to 2017-18.

	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18
Hernando	27.9%	28.0%	19.4%
State Target	13.4%	11.7%	10.0%

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 each school year from 2016-17 to 2018-19. For each of the three years, the district did not meet the state target.

	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19
Hernando	76.4%	77.8%	78.5%
State Target	82.0%	83.0%	85.0%

Time Frame Between Evaluation and Identification (Child Find)

The percentage of children who were evaluated within 60 days of the district receiving parental consent for an initial evaluation for each school year from 2015-16 to 2017-18 was below the state target of 100 percent. The percentage of evaluations completed within 60 days decreased from 96.3 percent during the 2015-16 school year to 93.5 percent during the 2016-17 school year. The most recent data for the 2017-18 school year shows an increase to 96.3 percent.

	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18
Hernando	96.3%	93.5%	96.3%
State Target	100%	100%	100%

Incidents of Restraint

According to the FDOE’s restraint and seclusion database, the number of incidents of restraint in the district increased from 55 incidents during the 2015-16 school year to 70 incidents during the 2016-17 school year. During the 2017-18 school year, the number of incidents of restraint increased to 153. In addition, the total percentage of students with disabilities restrained in the district for the 2017-18 school year was 1.66 percent, which is above the state average of 0.82 percent.

According to the district’s 2017-18 SP&P document, the district’s annual goal was to reduce the number of incidents of restraint by 5.0 percent. During the 2017-18 school year, the number of incidents of restraint increased from 70 to 153. The district did not meet this goal.

	2015-16 (August- July)	2016-17 (August- July)	2017-18 (August- July)	2018-19 (August- January)
Number of Incidents	55	70	153	25
Number of Students	28	30	52	20

The number of incidents of restraint for the 2017-18 school year more than doubled from the previous school year predominantly because two schools had long-term substitutes in the classroom instead of certified teachers, so there was limited support for students. For the 2018-19 school year, the district replaced these long-term substitutes with certified teachers at these two schools and are providing additional support to students with behavioral needs. Restraint data for August 1, 2018, through January 31, 2019, includes 25 incidents of restraint involving 20 students in the district. These data indicate that the district’s use of restraint has decreased.

Interviews Conducted

Administrator Focus Groups

Members of the SST conducted focus groups with administrators from Deltona Elementary School, Pine Grove Elementary School, West Hernando Middle School, Frank W. Springstead High School and Hernando High School regarding dropout rate, LRE, Child Find and incidents of restraint.

Themes that emerged from these focus groups included the following:

- There is an emphasis on building strong relationships with teachers, families and the community.
- Teachers go above and beyond to help students succeed but additional ESE staff are needed.
- More guidance is needed on providing a continuum of services that includes students on access points in the general education classroom.
- Having cluster sites for students with emotional and behavioral disabilities (EBD) is challenging for administrators, teacher and students; restraints occur more often in schools where there are EBD cluster sites.
- Positive Behavioral Interventions and Support programs support students who have behavioral needs.

Teacher Focus Groups

Members of the SST conducted focus groups with teachers from Deltona Elementary School, Pine Grove Elementary School, West Hernando Middle School, Frank W. Springstead High School and Hernando High School regarding dropout rate, LRE, Child Find and incidents of restraint.

Themes that emerged from these focus groups included the following:

- ESE and general education teachers are collaborating with one another.
- Some students have long-term substitutes because of a lack of qualified teachers.
- Data are used to make decisions and the district's early warning system (EWS) is helpful for tracking students' needs.
- There is an overall mindset among teachers that all students can graduate on time.
- Although there has been a decrease in the use of restraint, there are teachers and paraprofessionals who have not received Nonviolent Crisis Intervention® (CPI) training.
- Some teachers are unclear of the different types of inclusion models and scheduling methods.

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:

- ESE services have improved in the district.
- The District Advocacy Council is a positive effort and should include more members.

- The following areas of need were identified:
 - Increased and improved communication between schools and parents,
 - Behavior support training for teachers,
 - More support for students with disabilities in general education classrooms when there is not a second teacher,
 - Training and support for teachers related to students with autism spectrum disorder,
 - Consistency of ESE services from school to school, and
 - Increased support for students transitioning from elementary to middle school and middle to high school.

Student Focus Groups

Members of the SST conducted focus groups with students from West Hernando Middle School, Frank W. Springstead High School and Hernando High School. Students were asked to share their perspectives on topics such as graduation, dropping out and postsecondary activities.

Comments from these focus groups included the following:

- Most students feel supported by their teachers and have an adult they can speak with when needed.
- The majority of the students understand their IEP accommodations.
- Out-of-school suspension can be a reward for students who do not like to attend school.
- Students prefer engaging and “real-life” learning with specific instructions from teachers who know the content well.
- Teachers should know how to “teach all types of learners.”
- “Bad” behaviors can be learned when students are in the emotional and behavioral disabilities classroom.

Commendations

1. The district’s federal uniform graduation rate for students with disabilities increased from 68.2 percent in 2016-17 to 75.8 percent in 2017-18, which is above the state target of 62.3 percent.
2. The dropout rate for students with disabilities decreased from 28.0 percent in 2016-17 to 19.4 percent in 2017-18, which is a substantial improvement, although the district did not meet the state target of 10.0 percent.

2018-19 Next Steps

Graduation Rate	
Summary	The district’s federal graduation rate for students with disabilities increased from 56.1 percent during the 2015-16 school year to 68.2 percent during the 2016-17 school year. The 2017-18 graduation rate increased to 75.8 percent, which is above the state target of 62.3 percent.
Recommendations	The district should continue to collaborate with the staff of Project 10: Transition Education Network (Project 10) and use the district-implemented EWS to continue to increase the graduation rate.
Required Actions	None.

Dropout Rate	
Summary	The district’s federal dropout rate for students with disabilities increased from 27.9 percent during the 2015-16 school year to 28.0 percent during the 2016-17 school year. The 2017-18 dropout rate decreased to 19.4 percent, which is above the state target of 10.0 percent.
Recommendations	The district should expand the use of the EWS and continue to collaborate with Project 10 staff, specifically on the following actions: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review the Age 14-21 Dropout Report monthly and disseminate this report to high schools and then actively work to locate and retrieve dropouts. • Create EWS teams for all four cohorts with a focus on reducing the number of at-risk students within each cohort.
Required Actions	The district must collaborate with Project 10 staff to provide two trainings: the first training is for district and school-based personnel regarding increasing student engagement to decrease dropout rates and strategies on locating and re-engaging students who have dropped out. The second training is for appropriate personnel regarding a review of dropout codes and common coding errors. For each training, a report to include the date of the training; names, signatures and titles of training participants; copies of any content presented; and the name and title of the presenter must be provided to the district’s BEESS liaison via BEESSMonitoring@fldoe.org by November 15, 2019 .
Least Restrictive Environment	
Summary	The district’s percentage of students with disabilities being served in the regular class increased from 76.4 percent during the 2016-17 school year to 77.8 percent during the 2017-18 school year. The 2018-19 LRE rate increased to 78.5 percent, which is below the state target of 85.0 percent.
Recommendations	The district should review terminology and definitions used to describe scheduling methods in <i>Requirements for Different Scheduling Methods Used for Students with Disabilities</i> in the Course Code Directory and encourage district- and school-level personnel to adopt this terminology. The district should review the continuum of services available in the district and work with the Florida Inclusion Network (FIN) to provide more opportunities for students with disabilities to be fully included in general education classrooms, rather than be limited to “inclusion” classrooms.
Required Actions	The district must report on the professional development, Inclusive Scheduling and Building Inclusive Schools, provided to school and district leaders by FIN and the Florida Diagnostic and Learning Resources System (FDLRS) project staff by July 2019, as indicated in the district’s Best Practices for Inclusive Education plan. The report

	must include the results of the collaborative data analysis and what determination was made with regard to further support to increase inclusion. This report must be provided to the district's BEESS liaison by September 27, 2019 , via BEESSMonitoring@fldoe.org .
Time Frame Between Evaluation and Identification (Child Find)	
Summary	The percentage of evaluations completed within 60 days decreased from 96.28 percent during the 2015-16 school year to 93.46 percent during the 2016-17 school year. During the 2017-18 school year the percentage of evaluations completed within 60 days increased to 96.31 percent.
Recommendations	The district should review FDOE's Technical Assistance Paper, DPS: 2015-152, "Evaluation, Determination of Eligibility, Reevaluation and the Provision of Exceptional Student Education Services," which can be accessed at https://info.fldoe.org/docushare/dsweb/Get/Document-7505/dps-2015-152.pdf , to ensure an understanding of the 60-day requirement for completing an evaluation.
Required Actions	None.
Incidents of Restraint	
Summary	The number of restraints increased from 55 incidents involving 28 students during the 2015-16 school year to 70 incidents involving 30 students during the 2016-17 school year. The number of restraints during the 2017-18 school year increased to 153 incidents involving 52 students. In addition, restraint data for August 1, 2018, through January 31, 2019, includes 25 incidents of restraint involving 20 students in the district. These data indicate that the district's use of restraint has decreased.
Recommendations	The district should continue the following activities: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Collaborating with the Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports Project staff to implement a plan to reduce the need for restraint. • Providing restraint reporting training to all administrators and review policies and procedures. • Implementing de-escalation training which utilizes CPI as the foundation. • Implementing the Mental Health Plan and increase supports and resources as needed.
Required Actions	None.
Follow up to the ESE Monitoring Visit	
Summary	The Hernando County School District was selected for an on-site visit for the following focus areas related to students with disabilities: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Graduation • Dropout rate • LRE • Time frame between evaluation and identification (Child Find) • Incidents of restraint

<p>Required Actions</p>	<p>By January 30, 2020, 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 December 13, 2019.</p>
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Technical Assistance

1. **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, self-advocacy, 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.floridainclusionnetwork.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/Rtl) 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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