**2019-20 Exceptional Student Education
On-Site Monitoring Report**

**Hillsborough County School District
February 5-7, 2020**

FLORIDA DEPARTMENT OF
EDUCATION
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Florida Department of Education
Bureau of Exceptional Education and Student Services
Table of Contents

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(d), 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 provide comprehensive coordinated early intervening services (CCEIS) to address factors contributing to the significant disproportionality.

Section 1003.573, F.S., Use of restraint and seclusion on students with disabilities (SWD), establishes documentation, reporting and monitoring requirements for districts regarding the use of restraint and seclusion on SWD. 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 SWD. 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.

The Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) was signed into law in December 2015, amending the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 and replacing No Child Left Behind provisions. States were required to submit a state plan describing their approach to ESSA compliance. Drafted with public input and submitted to the Governor for review, as required by ESSA, the Florida state plan for ESSA was approved by the U.S. Department of Education on September 26, 2018. The state's ESSA plan preserves the focus on increased student achievement and includes details on the added federal calculation to satisfy ESSA requirements, which includes accountability provisions for the inclusion of English Language Learner (ELL) proficiency as a separate accountability indicator; additional focus on the reporting of subgroups' performances; additional federal school improvement designations and support; and a revamped public report card of state, district and school data. The new Federal Percent of Points Index (Federal Index) is calculated overall and by subgroup to include all school grade components in conjunction with English Language Proficiency (ELP) progress.

The Federal Index is calculated for 10 subgroup categories, which include the seven major racial and ethnic groups, SWD, ELLs, and economically disadvantaged students for academic achievement and student growth in schools.

Schools were identified under ESSA for support based on their Federal Index score. The threshold of support is a score below 41 percent on their overall Federal Index or by subgroup. Annually, any school below 41 percent in the Federal Index for any subgroup is identified for Targeted Support and Improvement; annually, any school below 41 percent in the overall (school grade components and ELP progress) Federal Index will be designated as in need of Comprehensive Support and Improvement. Schools will be responsible for developing a School Improvement Plan for their identified ESSA subgroups. BEESS will support districts with schools with a grade of A, B, and C and all ESE center schools with a Federal Index below 41 percent with SWD. In addition, BEESS will provide support to alternative schools and Department of Juvenile Justice programs with a Federal Index below 41 percent.

In addition, ESSA limits the percentage of students that a State may assess with an alternate assessment based on alternate academic achievement standards (AA-AAAS) to no more than 1.0 percent of all assessed students in the grades assessed in a State for each subject. While there is a limit on the percentage of students statewide who may take the AA-AAAS, there is no such limit among LEAs. However, 34 CFR §§200.6(c)(3)(ii) and (iv) require that an LEA submit information justifying the need to assess more than 1.0 percent of its students in any subject with an AA-AAAS. The State must make that information publicly available, provided that such information does not reveal personally identifiable information about an individual student. The required justification information will be collected in Florida via the annual SP&P and the focus of Florida's training and technical assistance will continue to be on ensuring that individual educational plan (IEP) teams make appropriate, individualized and data-based decisions for each student.

ESE On-Site Monitoring Process

Background Information

The 2019-20 ESE On-Site Monitoring process focuses on those State Performance Plan indicators that contributed to the targeting of school districts for CCEIS and the following indicators that affect equity and access in the educational environment for SWD:
- Indicator 1 – Graduation: Percentage of youth with 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.
- CCEIS – Significant disproportionality in overrepresentation of a particular racial group within special education programs for identification of children in specific disability categories, the placement of children with disabilities in particular educational settings or the taking of disciplinary actions.
- Restraint – Rate of incidents of restraint, as reported in the FDOE database.
- Seclusion – Rate of incidents of seclusion, as reported in the FDOE database.
- ESSA – Accountability and one percent cap for participation in the Florida Standards Alternate Assessment.

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.

On July 31, 2019, the superintendent of the Hillsborough County School District was notified that BEESS would be conducting an on-site monitoring visit. After a review of the district's data, the following focus areas were identified as being in need of support: least restrictive environment (LRE), suspensions and expulsions with a significant discrepancy in a specific racial or ethnic group (discipline 4B), prekindergarten (PreK) proficiency in communication, timeframe between evaluation and identification (Child Find), CCEIS related to discipline, English language arts (ELA) scores for third grade SWD and math scores for middle-grades SWD.

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, teacher and school support focus groups, and some schools for paraprofessional, parent and student focus groups:

- Davis Elementary School
- Ippolito Elementary School
- McLane Middle School
- Sligh Middle School
- Wharton High School
- North Tampa Education, Prevention & Interventions Center (EPIC) 3 Center

2019-20 ESE On-Site Monitoring Focus Areas

The following data are related to the focus areas and activities for the 2019-20 ESE On-Site Monitoring for the Hillsborough County School District.

Discipline 4B

Discipline indicator 4B identifies the risk ratio of SWD being suspended or expelled for more than 10 days in a school year from a specific racial or ethnic group. A risk ratio of 2.0 indicates that SWD of a given race are twice as likely to be suspended or expelled for more than 10 days in a school year compared to their peers without disabilities. The district's risk ratio for 4B decreased from 5.89 during the 2016-17 school year to 5.67 during the 2017-18 school year, which means that SWD whose race is black were 5.67 times more likely to be suspended or expelled for more than 10 days in a school year than all students without disabilities. In 2018-19, the district's risk ratio for 4B decreased to 4.98, which was above the state risk ratio threshold. The district risk ratio was above the state risk ratio for each of the three years.

	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19
Hillsborough	5.89	5.67	4.98
State Risk Ratio Threshold	3.00	3.00	3.00

Educational Environment (Least Restrictive Environment)

To the maximum extent appropriate, SWD are to be educated with students without disabilities. These LRE data are calculated by dividing the number of SWD aged 6 through 21 served in the regular class for 80 percent or more of the day, by the total number of SWD 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 facilities. The district's percentage of SWD being served in the regular class increased from 72.6 percent during the 2017-18 school year to 73.8 percent during the 2018-19 school year. The 2019-20 LRE rate increased to 74.3 percent, which is below the state target of 85 percent. The district did not meet the state target for any of the three years.

	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20
Hillsborough	72.6%	73.8%	74.3%
State Target	83.0%	85.0%	85.0%

Prekindergarten Proficiency in Communication

Early literacy and communication are the building blocks for the development of effective reading skills. The percentage of PreK SWD functioning within age expectations in the communication domain decreased from 73.8 percent during the 2016-17 school year to 66.2 percent during the 2017-18 school year. The 2018-19 percentage increased to 67.5 percent, which is below the state target of 78.9 percent. The district did not meet the state target for the 2017-18 and 2018-19 school years.

	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19
Hillsborough	73.8%	66.2%	67.5%
State Target	73.4%	75.9%	78.9%

Timeframe 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 was below the state target of 100 percent in the 2016-17, 2017-18 and 2018-19 school years. The percentage of evaluations completed within 60 days decreased from 97.2 percent during 2016-17 school year to 94.8 percent during the 2017-18 school year. The 2018-19 percentage was also 94.8 percent, which is below the state target of 100 percent. The district did not meet the state target for any of the three years.

	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19
Hillsborough	97.2%	94.8%	94.8%
State Target	100%	100%	100%

Comprehensive Coordinated Early Intervening Services (CCEIS) – Discipline

Districts identified with significant disproportionality are required to set aside 15 percent of their IDEA funds to address the causes of the disproportionality. Districts are identified for significant disproportionality for discipline in the following areas: in-school suspension (ISS) less than or equal to 10 days, ISS more than 10 days, out-of-school suspension (OSS) less than or equal to 10 days, OSS more than 10 days and total disciplinary removals. Significant disproportionality is identified if the risk ratio for one of these areas was 3.0 or greater for three consecutive years and the district failed to make reasonable progress measured by a cumulative decrease between year one and year three in risk ratio of 0.02 or more.

Since the 2015-16 school year, the district's risk ratio for Black African American SWD who were removed for OSS 10 days or more exceeded the state risk ratio threshold of 3.0 or greater for three consecutive years. The district's risk ratio for 2015-16 was 3.74, 2016-17 was 3.87 and 2017-18 was 4.03. In addition, the district failed to make reasonable progress as measured by a cumulative decrease between the district's risk ratio for 2015-16 and the risk ratio for 2017-18 of 0.02 or more. The district's risk ratio from 2015-16 to 2017-18 increased 0.29 percentage points. Therefore, the district was identified as having significant disproportionality for OSS more than 10 days for Black African American SWD and was required to withhold 15 percent of their IDEA Part B funds to address the causes of disproportionality during the 2019-20 school year.

	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18
Hillsborough Risk Ratio	3.74	3.87	4.03
State Risk Ratio Threshold	3.00	3.00	3.00

English Language Arts Scores for Third Grade Students with Disabilities

After reviewing state assessment data trends for the Florida Standards Assessment (FSA), BEESS identified SWD in third grade ELA as an area in critical need of support. BEESS established a tiered criteria in order to provide needed supports for grades K-3 ELA in each district in order to increase the number of SWD scoring level three and above and close the gap between students with and without disabilities. Three-year historical data for ELA scores for students in third grade (from the 2016-17 to 2018-19 school years) showed that the achievement gap between SWD and students without disabilities had decreased by 2.5 percent. In addition, the rate for SWD scoring at level three and above had decreased by 0.5 percent from the 2016-17 to the 2018-19 school year.

FSA Scores of Level Three and Above in Third Grade ELA	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19
Hillsborough			
Students without Disabilities	60.5%	57.9%	57.5%
SWD	26.3%	25.3%	25.8%
Achievement Gap between Students with and without Disabilities	34.2 percentage points	32.6 percentage points	31.7 percentage points

Math Scores for Middle-Grades Students with Disabilities

After reviewing state assessment data trends for the FSA, BEESS identified SWD in middle-grades math as an area in critical need of support. BEESS established a tiered criteria in order to provide needed supports for middle-grades math in each district (grades 6-8) in order to increase the number of SWD scoring level three and above and close the gap between students with and without disabilities. Three-year historical data for middle-grades math scores (from the 2016-17 to 2018-19 school years) showed that the achievement gap between SWD and students without disabilities had decreased by 1.9 percent. In addition, the rate for SWD scoring at level three and above had increased by three percent from the 2016-17 to the 2018-19 school year.

FSA and End-of-Course Scores of Level Three and Above in Middle-Grades Math	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19
Hillsborough			
Students without Disabilities	61.5%	61.9%	62.7%
SWD	18.7%	19.3%	21.7%
Achievement Gap between Students with and without Disabilities	42.8 percentage points	42.6 percentage points	40.9 percentage points

Interviews Conducted

Administrator Focus Groups

Members of the SST conducted focus groups with administrators from Davis Elementary School, Ippolito Elementary School, McLane Middle School, Sligh Middle School, Wharton High School and North Tampa EPIC 3 Center, regarding LRE, discipline 4B, PreK proficiency in communication, timeframe between evaluation and identification (Child Find), CCEIS related to discipline, ELA scores for third-grade SWD and math scores for middle-grades SWD.

Themes that emerged from these focus groups included the following:
- Administrators reported positive relationships among administrators, leadership teams, teachers and students across the schools.
- Administrators shared that student support team systems are accessible to teachers.
- Administrators identified the following areas in need of support:
  o Cultural responsiveness
  o LRE
  o Universal design for learning (UDL)
  o Behavioral strategies across the tiers
  o Core instruction
- Administrators shared a concern regarding sustainability for restorative practices programs due to funding not being renewed.
- Administrators reported the following activities in regard to PreK SWD communication:
  o Instruction for communication skills is included in the elementary curriculum guide.
  o Transition packets are provided to PreK children who are transitioning to kindergarten.
  o Updates on PreK programs are included in monthly meetings for assistant principals.
- Some administrators expressed a need for career and technical education (CTE) and elective courses to be provided at the alternative school to increase student engagement.
- Most administrators feel teacher recruitment and retention are barriers to implementation of district initiatives and building capacity for the future.

Teacher Focus Groups

Members of the SST conducted focus groups with teachers from Davis Elementary School, Ippolito Elementary School, McLane Middle School, Sligh Middle School, Wharton High School and North Tampa EPIC 3 Center, regarding LRE, discipline 4B, PreK proficiency in communication, timeframe between evaluation and identification (Child Find), CCEIS related to discipline, ELA scores for third-grade SWD and math scores for middle-grades SWD.

Themes that emerged from these focus groups included the following
- Teachers shared most SWD spend time with their nondisabled peers, but they would like to see more inclusive opportunities available and more opportunities for collaborative teaching.
- Teachers reported positive relationships among administrators, leadership teams, teachers and students across the district.
- Teachers support the district's initiative to decrease suspensions for SWD using positive behavior interventions; however, some teachers reported they need more support in providing tier 2 and 3 behavioral strategies and more training in restorative practices.

- Teachers at the alternative school expressed the need for the addition of CTE and elective courses to increase student engagement.
- Most teachers identified the following areas in need of support:
    - Utilizing the problem-solving process
    - Implementing a multi-tiered system of supports (MTSS)
    - Training in UDL
    - Training in cultural responsiveness

Parent Focus Group

Members of the SST conducted a focus group with parents of SWD aged 14 years or older who were invited by the district.

Themes that emerged from the focus group included the following:
- Most parents shared overall positive experiences during IEP meetings with teachers and administrators at the elementary and high schools; however, some shared less positive experiences at the middle schools and a need for more inclusive opportunities.
- Parents expressed positive comments about inclusive practices at their child's school and participation in the Best Buddies program.
- Most parents are knowledgeable and appreciative of differentiated instructional strategies being provided for their children, but some expressed a need for parent training opportunities that are equitable throughout the district.
- Parents expressed concern regarding teacher shortages and turnover.
- Some parents reported inconsistent access to Vocational Rehabilitation services throughout the district.

Student Focus Groups

Members of the SST conducted focus groups with students from McLane Middle School, Sligh Middle School, Wharton High School and North Tampa EPIC 3 Center. Students were asked to share their perspectives on topics such as graduation, dropout and postsecondary activities.

Comments from these focus groups included the following:
- High school students are able to self-advocate for implementation of their IEPs.
- All students were able to identify a caring adult they trust at their school if they need to speak with someone.
- Students expressed positive feelings for their school, classmates and teachers.
- All students are knowledgeable about their accommodations listed on their IEP, but not all had participated in their IEP team meeting or knew about their IEP goals.
- Students expressed an understanding of the importance of having an education and some shared ideas regarding their future plans.

School Support Team Focus Groups

Members of the SST conducted focus groups with school support team staff who support SWD from Davis Elementary School, Ippolito Elementary School, McLane Middle School, Sligh Middle School, Wharton High School and North Tampa EPIC 3 Center.

Themes that emerged from these focus groups included the following:
- All staff reported schools have fully staffed, cohesive teams with processes and systems

in place to support teachers and students.
- Staff shared they have a dedicated time for problem solving, strong functional behavioral assessment (FBA) and behavioral intervention plan (BIP) teams and ongoing relationships with one another with common goals.
- All staff reported utilizing student data to make decisions to improve outcomes for SWD.

Commendations

1. The district's federal cohort graduation rate for SWD increased from 76.3 percent during the 2017-18 school year to 78.2 percent during the 2018-19 school year, which is above the state target of 70.0 percent.
2. The district's dropout rate for SWD decreased from 8.6 percent during the 2017-18 school year to 8.1 percent during the 2018-19 school year, which is below the state target of 9.5 percent.

2019-20 Next Steps

Discipline 4B	
Summary	The district's risk ratio for 4B decreased from 5.89 during the 2016-17 school year to 5.67 during the 2017-18 school year, which means that SWD whose race is black were 5.67 times more likely to be suspended or expelled for more than 10 days in a school year than all students without disabilities. In 2018-19, the district's risk ratio for 4B decreased to 4.98, which was above the state risk ratio threshold. The district risk ratio was above the state risk ratio for each of the three years.
Recommendations	The district should consider the following activities: • Continue to work with Positive Behavioral Interventions and Support (PBIS) project staff to monitor data, track progress of strategies being implemented and address barriers to progress. • Review Office of Special Education Programs 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.
Required Actions	The district must complete each of the following activities: • Collaborate with PBIS and Multiagency Network for Students with Emotional and Behavioral Disabilities (SEDNET) project staff to review the district's discipline data and the strategies being implemented to reduce discipline referrals and determine if the strategies are effective. • Collaborate with PBIS project staff to review school-level data and determine the schools in the district where discipline practices are

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most disproportionate for SWD.
- Collaborate with PBIS and SEDNET project staff to provide training to district and school staff on supports needed for students with behavioral needs who are being served in the general education setting.
- Compile and review discipline data for 4B quarterly and provide a copy of the data and a summary of the problem-solving activities that resulted from the review by the following dates:
  - **October 22, 2020**
  - **January 14, 2021**

The district must provide documentation of the completion of all the above-mentioned activities and verification for the trainings provided, that must include the following:

- Detailed narrative of the trainings.
- Dates of the trainings.
- Copies of any content presented.
- Names and titles of the presenters.
- Names, titles and signatures of the staff who participated in the trainings.
- Number of staff who participated in the trainings from schools designated as Targeted Support & Improvement and Comprehensive Support & Improvement schools under ESSA.

This documentation must be provided to the district's BEESS liaison via BEESSMonitoring@fldoe.org by **January 14, 2021.**

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Least Restrictive Environment

Summary	The district's percentage of SWD being served in the regular class increased from 72.6 percent during the 2017-18 school year to 73.8 percent during the 2018-19 school year. The 2019-20 LRE rate increased to 74.3 percent, which is below the state target of 85 percent. The district did not meet the state target for any of the three years.
Recommendations	The district should consider the following activities: • Continue to collaborate with project staff from the Florida Diagnostic and Learning Resource System (FDLRS) and the Florida Inclusion Network (FIN) for PD to support inclusive scheduling and implementation. • Ensure that general education and ESE teachers have time together for collaboratively developing or reviewing long-term instructional plans and delivery methods. • Review FDOE's Technical Assistance Paper, DPS: 2016-13, "Least Restrictive Environment Considerations Related to Individual Educational Plans," which can be accessed at https://info.fldoe.org/docushare/dsweb/Get/Document-7540/dps-201613.pdf.
Required Actions	The district's Plan for Inclusive Education dated June 18, 2019, included the following action steps to increase the inclusion rate of regular class placement time:

	• FDLRS-Human Resource Development (HRD) project staff will provide ongoing professional learning opportunities to district- and site-based staff related to the implementation of behavior supports in the classroom environments for elementary and secondary level. • Collaborate with FIN project staff to develop and offer training options related to Specially Designed Instruction (SDI) in the co-taught setting to enhance the delivery of quality SDI linked to academic, behavior and social skills lessons. • Collaborate with FIN project staff to engage school sites in inclusive scheduling practices. • Facilitate professional learning opportunities for ESE and general education teachers on implementing the access point curriculum within general education classrooms. • Increase school-level awareness of providing instruction for SWD enrolled in access courses who are in the general education setting and participate in walkthroughs at model sites. • Provide background, guidance and analysis of data to ESE teachers, specialists and school site administrators to incorporate or enhance the use of inclusive scheduling to improve service delivery for SWD. The district must provide documentation of the completion of the above-mentioned activities and verification of the trainings for district and school staff. The documentation must include the following: • Detailed narrative of the trainings. • Dates of the trainings. • Copies of any content presented. • Names and titles of the presenters. • Names, titles and signatures of the staff who participated in the trainings. • Number of staff who participated in the trainings from schools designated as Targeted Support & Improvement and Comprehensive Support & Improvement schools under ESSA. The documentation must be provided to the district's BEESS liaison via BEESSMonitoring@fldoe.org by **January 14, 2021**.
PreK Proficiency in Communication	
Summary	The percentage of PreK SWD functioning within age expectations in the communication domain decreased from 73.8 percent during the 2016-17 school year to 66.2 percent during the 2017-18 school year. The 2018-19 percentage increased to 67.5 percent, which is below the state target of 78.9 percent. The district did not meet the state target for the 2017-18 and 2018-19 school years.
Recommendations	The district should consider the following actions: • Review the current available curriculum in PreK ESE classes. • Ensure the curriculum includes rich language and early literacy skill development for all skill levels.

	• Utilize a progress monitoring system to drive instruction and identify whether targets are being met.
Required Actions	The district's Plan for Inclusive Education dated June 18, 2019, included the following action to increase proficiency in communication for PreK SWD: • FIN project staff will collaborate with district personnel to develop and offer training options related to SDI in the co-taught setting to enhance the delivery of quality SDI linked to academic, behavior and social skills lessons. The district must provide documentation of the completion of the above-mentioned action as well as verification of the trainings for district and school staff. The documentation must include the following: • Detailed narrative of the trainings. • Date of the trainings. • Copies of any content presented. • Name and title of the presenters. • Names, titles and signatures of the PreK teachers who participated in the trainings. • Number of PreK teachers who participated in the trainings from schools designated as Targeted Support & Improvement and Comprehensive Support & Improvement schools under ESSA. The documentation must be provided to the district's BEESS liaison via BEESSMonitoring@fldoe.org by **January 14, 2021**.
Timeframe Between Evaluation and Identification (Child Find)	
Summary	The percentage of evaluations completed within 60 days decreased from 97.2 percent during 2016-17 school year to 94.8 percent during the 2017-18 school year. The 2018-19 percentage was 94.8 percent, which is below the state target of 100 percent. The district did not meet the state target for any of the three years.
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	The district must problem solve to identify the root causes for initial evaluations not being completed within 60 days, identify action steps to address the identified root causes and develop written procedures to ensure that students are evaluated within 60 days. The district must provide a detailed narrative of the problem-solving process and the root causes and a copy of their written procedures to the district's BEESS liaison via BEESSMonitoring@fldoe.org by **January 14, 2021**.
CCEIS Discipline	
Summary	Since the 2015-16 school year, the district's risk ratio for Black and African American SWD who were removed for OSS 10 days or more exceeded the state risk ratio threshold of 3.0 or greater for three

	consecutive years. The district's risk ratio for 2015-16 was 3.74, 2016-17 was 3.87 and 2017-18 was 4.03. In addition, the district failed to make reasonable progress as measured by a cumulative decrease between the district's risk ratio for 2015-16 and the risk ratio for 2017-18 of 0.02 or more. The district's risk ratio from 2015-16 to 2017-18 increased 0.29 percentage points. Therefore, the district was identified as having significant disproportionality for OSS more than 10 days for Black and African American SWD and was required to withhold 15 percent of their IDEA Part B funds to address the causes of disproportionality during the 2019-20 school year.
Recommendations	The district should continue with continuous collaboration with PBIS, SEDNET and FDLRS to assist in the revision of the district MTSS problem-solving procedures and tier 2 and 3 behavioral interventions.

Required Actions	The district must provide documentation of the following activities identified in their 2019-20 CCEIS plan, based on the district's root cause analysis:
	
	• Collect data and conduct monthly data chats with school and area teams to monitor goals.
	• Establish a task force to review the district's policies and procedures regarding discipline.
	• ESE department staff members, district psychologists and board certified behavior analysts will conduct fidelity checks for current FBAs and positive BIPs.
	• ESE and district administration staff will review social emotional learning (SEL) curriculum and instruction.
	• PD will be provided to school sites to build the skills of staff in the following areas:
	    ○ Providing SEL instruction
	    ○ Being culturally responsive
	    ○ Practicing restorative practices
	    ○ Reviewing discipline procedures
	    ○ Engaging in problem solving
	
	Documentation on the completion of the above-mentioned actions and verification of the trainings provided must include the following:
	
	• Detailed narrative of the trainings.
	• Dates of the trainings.
	• Copies of any content presented.
	• Names and titles of the presenters.
	• Names, titles and signatures of the staff who participated in the trainings.
	• Number of staff who participated in the trainings from schools designated as Targeted Support & Improvement and Comprehensive Support & Improvement schools under ESSA.
	
	This documentation must be provided to the district's BEESS liaison via BEESSMonitoring@fldoe.org by **January 14, 2021.**

ELA Scores for Third Grade Students with Disabilities	
Summary	Three-year historical data for ELA scores for students in third grade (from the 2016-17 to 2018-19 school years) showed that the achievement gap between SWD and students without disabilities had decreased by 2.5 percent. In addition, the rate for SWD scoring at level three and above had decreased by 0.5 percent from the 2016-17 to the 2018-19 school year.
Recommendations	The district should consider the following activities: • Collaborate with project staff from the Problem Solving and Response to Intervention (PS/RtI) project to follow up on the established district strategic plan for third grade ELA and for guidance on the implementation of a MTSS to provide targeted support aligned with identified student needs. • Utilize the variety of online courses available on the BEESS Portal for PD Alternatives, which can be accessed at https://fl-pda.org, to build the capacity of educators to respond to the needs of students with disabilities (e.g., MTSS, UDL and integrating standards aligned instruction across tiers). • Collaborate with FDLRS or PS/RtI project staff to provide PD for UDL to school and district personnel. • Collaborate with PS/RtI regional coordinator and district MTSS team to review district and school data to identify best practices within the district.
Required Actions	The district's Plan for Inclusive Education dated June 18, 2019, included the following PD and technical assistance (TA) to increase proficiency of SWD in reading: • FIN project staff will facilitate ongoing professional learning opportunities for ESE and general education teachers in the following areas: ○ Collaborative teaching service delivery models ○ Technology-based planning ○ Improving communication to enhance academic and behavior supports within general education classrooms • FIN project staff will collaborate with district personnel to develop and offer training options related to SDI in the co-taught setting to enhance the delivery of quality SDI linked to academic, behavior, and social skills lessons. • Staff from the district and FIN project will facilitate ongoing professional learning opportunities to district staff related to the implementation of Peers as Partners in Learning programs at the elementary and secondary levels. The district must provide documentation of the completion of the above-mentioned activities and verification for the trainings provided must include the following: • Detailed narrative of the trainings. • Dates of the trainings.

	- Copies of any content presented. - Names and titles of the presenters. - Names, titles and signatures of the staff who participated in the trainings. - Number of staff who participated in the trainings from schools designated as Targeted Support & Improvement and Comprehensive Support & Improvement schools under ESSA. This documentation must be provided to the district's BEESS liaison via BEESSMonitoring@fldoe.org by **January 14, 2021.**

Math Scores for Middle-Grades Students with Disabilities

Summary	Three-year historical data for middle-grades math scores (from the 2016-17 to 2018-19 school years) showed that the achievement gap between SWD and students without disabilities had decreased by 1.9 percent. In addition, the rate for SWD scoring at level three and above had increased by 3.0 percent from the 2016-17 to the 2018-19 school year.
Recommendations	The district should consider the following activities: - Continue to work with the BEESS Best Practices for Standards-Based Instructional Support in Math team to increase achievement in math of SWD in grades 6-8. - Review middle grades math assessment data with the BEESS Math Team to identify trends and possible barriers and collaborate with the BEESS Math Team and discretionary projects to implement best practices in middle grades math instruction. - Collaborate with FDLRS or PS/RtI project staff to provide PD on UDL to school and district personnel.
Required Actions	Same required actions as ELA Scores for Third Grade Students with Disabilities.

Follow up to the ESE Monitoring Visit

Summary	The Hillsborough County School District was selected for an on-site visit for the following focus areas related to students with disabilities: - Discipline 4B - LRE - PreK proficiency in communication - Timeframe between evaluation and identification (Child Find) - CCEIS relating to discipline - ELA scores for third grade SWD - Math scores for middle-grades SWD
Required Actions	By **January 14, 2021,** 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. By **December 11, 2020**, the district will coordinate with BEESS via BEESSmonitoring@fldoe.org to schedule the date and time for the conference call.

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 SWD 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 SWD 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.floridainclusion network.com/. FIN collaborates with all districts and schools to provide customized services and supports to ensure that SWD 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/RtI – 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 SWD 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 SWD and their families is enhanced and that positive outcomes for SWD is achieved through increased student performance.

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