

Jackson County School Board Paper Reduction Suggestions

The Jackson County School Board believes that today's educational staff are having problems implementing a system of accountability that will ensure that our local schools and teachers monitor school-wide improvement and reach the goal of increasing student achievement. The increased paperwork and data collection requirements that resulted from these efforts have culminated in an undue burden on teachers and administrators. The Jackson County School Board's team concluded that it is imperative that action be taken to reduce the paperwork and data collection burdens that are placed on the district's teachers from the state, district, and school levels. The goal is to allow teachers to focus on students and their achievement, while allowing the system of accountability that is working in Florida to continue to progress.

The Jackson County School Board believes that its teachers need to be focused on teaching, not on administrative paperwork. The following recommendations are presented for consideration:

1. Reduce the required amount of documentation needed in the pre-referral process to determine ESE qualification. The classroom teacher still must supply anecdotal documentation for each referral. The process is time consuming and the information/number of forms required is excessive. It should be mentioned that the district has on-line IEP documentation available; however, the amount of time required to complete and submit the information is excessive.
2. Reduce the required amount of documentation needed in the referral process for ESOL students. School counselors must complete multiple forms whenever a student indicates that they speak another language other than English.
3. Reduce the required amount of documentation needed for documentation of remedial services provided to students who score at all the levels on state and district mandated assessments. Teachers feel pressured to have a paper-trail to use as proof that their students have mastered or not mastered standards that are being assessed.
4. Reduce the required amount of documentation needed to build a portfolio for new teachers into the district.
5. Reduce the required manuals/publications that must be prepared and sent home for each school year; ie the district publishes for each parent a paper copy of the District's Code of Student Conduct explaining the rules and the consequences for violation of these rules resulting in an enormous amount of paper required. Other manuals and documents that must go home at the beginning of the school term to document parental rights or school policies require numerous amounts of paper even though the district has the documents on its web server.

The Jackson County School Board understands that in today's accountability environment it is necessary to maintain good documentation.

To help combat the requirement of excessive paper storage, the district has implemented the following strategies:

1. the district scans all paper documents to an optical server for later retrieval. In addition, the district is looking into a cold-document storage option that allows for storage of data files to the optical server for later retrieval.
2. the district has gone to an on-line gradebook that allows teachers to input attendance and grades into an electronic gradebook. Paper documents can be printed only if required.
3. the district has actively pursued an on-line IEP that allows for direct input into a software program. The required district forms are imbedded within the software and teachers can enter the data directly without having to use a paper trail.
4. the district has actively pursued using a data base to keep information on student achievement, student assessment scores, and student achievement. The student data is kept on magnetic tape or on DVD software for later retrieval.
5. the district has redesigned all forms that require administrator and/or teacher input to be web based. Administrators and/or teachers can go on line to the district's site and complete the form on line and email the information to the respective department requesting the information.
6. the district has adopted a policy of communicating with district staff through the use of a district email server. Administrative memos, educational related communication, and peer-to-peer communication is handled by the district's email server.
7. the district has placed copies of manuals/policy booklets on its district web server for public access.
8. the district places news about activities occurring at school sites on either the district server or on school servers for parental/community access.

Hopefully, this will show Jackson County School Board's commitment to help reduce the amount of paper consumed. If additional information is needed, please call 850-482-1200 ext 211.

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