

**Report to  
Okaloosa County School Superintendent and School Board Members  
Findings of Paperwork and Data Collection Reduction Survey**



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This report is dedicated to the hard-working teachers and administrators in  
Okaloosa County Schools.

"Thanks for asking our opinions. We have a lot to say"  
Anonymous Teacher

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## **Introduction**

In accordance with Florida HB 7087, the purpose of this report is to provide the Okaloosa County School Superintendent, Okaloosa School Board Members, and the Florida State Board of Education with information on paperwork and data collection burdens and potential solutions.

Survey findings respectfully presented on behalf of Okaloosa County School District teachers and administrators.

## **Executive Summary**

Ninety-six percent (96%) of survey participants reported working 2-5 days a week beyond regularly scheduled hours doing paperwork. Eighty four percent (84%) spend 30 minutes to more than two hours a day doing paperwork. Eighty-one percent (81%) spend 1-5 days a week in meetings and conferences to develop or review IEPs, EPs, LEPs, AIP/PMPs, or to report student progress.

Forty-seven percent (47%) reported state mandated paperwork most time consuming, (29%) federally mandated paperwork.

Seventy-three percent (73%) of participants disagree additional paperwork created by increased data collection has improved student learning.

Sixty percent (60%) report increased paperwork and data collection has influenced their willingness to remain in the teaching profession.

Three top ranked solutions to help reduce the burden of paperwork were (1) hire full-time staff to assist with management of federal and state mandated paperwork (24%); (2) reorganize regularly scheduled hours to provide time needed to complete federal and state mandated paperwork (19%); and (3) authorize overtime pay (19%).

## **Methodology**

A web-based survey gathered information from Okaloosa County School District teachers and administrators. The survey, created using the AFT on-line survey creator, included 14 multiple choice and short answer questions.

Emailed to Okaloosa County School teachers and administrators, the on-line survey link was open for data collection between October 11 and October 25, 2006. Seven hundred four teachers and administrators participated in the AFT on-line survey.

## **Legislated Paperwork and Data Collection**

Federal and state accountability legislation like No Child Left Behind (2001) and Florida's A+ Plan for Education (2000) have increased not only the volume of test data collected, analyzed, and used to measure student's academic performance, but the amount of paperwork associated with improving academic performance and reporting progress. As a result, paperwork and data collection required of classroom teachers and school administrators has burgeoned. In the words of one survey participant, "Paperwork has just overwhelmed my day."

In addition to federal and state accountability legislation, reauthorization of IDEA (2004), significantly changed Individualized Education Programs (IEPs), including how progress toward annual academic achievement and functional performance goals are measured and reported.

## Findings

## Question 1

### 1. What paperwork do you find most time consuming?

- 29%** Reviewing data, preparing IEP, EP, LEP, Interim Review, ESE Progress Reports, Title I paperwork (Federally mandated)
- 47%** Reviewing data, preparing AIP/PMP paperwork, preparing data driven lesson plans in accordance with Sunshine State Standards (State mandated)
- 16%** Reviewing data, completing paperwork related to Gates MacGinitie/GRADE, SRI, OCSD Fluency Check, Slosson Math, FLKRS, GMADE, SAT 9, grading timed essays including Okaloosa Writes, entering weekly grades in Grade Book (District mandated)
- 1%** Reviewing data, completing paperwork related to Metropolitan Math, Read 180, New Century, STAR, BRI/QRI-3, DRA/DAR, Ekwall Shanker, TOWRE, CTOPP, SchoolNotes.com (School mandated)
- 6%** Other

**27%** of survey participants reported **the combination** of federal, state, district, and school mandated paperwork **in addition to** writing lesson plans and grading papers is “overwhelming”

Participant comments included:

- “It’s the combination of factors...that is so overwhelming!”
- “I have to choose just one?”
- “How can you pick one when many teachers do all?”
- “Unable to choose one”
- “Can’t choose one”
- “Why do we only get to choose one?”
- “Combination of all of the above”
- “All of the above”

## Question 2

2. How often do you work past your regularly scheduled hours doing paperwork?

53%	Daily
24%	3-4 times a week
19%	2-3 times a week
4%	Once a week
1%	Rarely

**Summary:** **96% of survey participants work 2-5 days a week past regularly scheduled hours doing paperwork**

Participant comments included:

"As of October 17, 2006...I have put in 302 hours of unpaid overtime. In 2006, it was 516 hours for the year, in 2005 it was 331 hours, and in 2004, it was 290 hours for the year. As you can see, my overtime is increasing radically every year. I cannot remain a special education teacher if I have to continue carrying this burden"

### Question 3

3. How much time do you spend beyond your regularly scheduled hours doing paperwork?

4% Less than 15 minutes a day

13% 15-30 minutes daily

32% 30 minutes to one hour daily

31% More than one hour daily

21% More than two hours daily

**Summary:** 84% of survey participants spend 30 minutes to more than two hours a day beyond regularly scheduled hours doing paperwork

#### Question 4

4. How often do you spend time beyond your regularly scheduled hours in meetings and conferences to develop or review IEPs, EPs, LEPs, AIP/PMPs, or to report progress?

8%	Daily
10%	3-4 times a week
26%	2-3 times a week
37%	Once a week
19%	Rarely

**Summary:** 81% of survey participants spend 1-5 days a week beyond regularly scheduled hours in meetings and conferences to develop or review IEPs, EPs, AIP/PMPs, or to report student progress

Participant comments included:

"In a month's time, I am in required meetings a total of 22 hours beyond my regularly assigned workday"

## Question 5

5. Additional paperwork created by increased data collection has improved student learning.

2%	Strongly agree
12%	Agree
40%	Disagree
33%	Strongly disagree
13%	Don't know

**Summary:** 73% of survey participants disagree additional paperwork created by increased data collection has improved student learning

## Question 6

6. Which of the following do you feel would most help reduce the burden of paperwork?

- 24%** Hire full-time staff to assist with management of federal and state mandated paperwork
- 8% Hire part-time staff to assist with management of federal and state mandated paperwork
- 19%** Authorize overtime pay to complete federal and state mandated paperwork
- 10% Hire substitutes to provide the time needed to complete federal and state mandated paperwork
- 19%** Reorganize regularly scheduled hours to provide the time needed to complete federal and state mandated paperwork
- 1% Provide additional training to complete federal and state mandated paperwork
- 6% Restructure current work assignments
- 7% Provide electronic programs with pre-populated data fields and dropdown menus to complete federal and state mandated paperwork
- 7% Other suggestions included:
  - Hiring full- or part-time personnel to assist with paperwork
  - Providing early release time or additional teacher workdays to complete paperwork
  - Electronically integrating overlapping paperwork
  - Eliminating or streamlining redundant paperwork

Participant comments included:

"I worry about the option "provide substitute."  
"Providing...a sub, is nice however, I have to spend time to write up plans for the sub"

## Question 7

7. Name one thing you feel would help reduce the burden of federally mandated paperwork (IEP, EP, LEP, Interim Reviews, ESE Progress Reports, Title I).

**18%** of survey participants suggested full- or part-time assistance would help reduce the burden of federally mandated paperwork

Suggestions for providing full-time assistance included

- Additional Staffing Specialists
- Additional Certified ESE teachers
- Paraprofessionals
- Clerical staff
- Data entry personnel

Suggestions for providing part-time assistance included

- Secretary for ESE teachers
- Additional ESE support staff
- Administrative assistants
- Guidance staff

## Question 8

8. Name one thing you feel would help reduce the burden of state mandated paperwork (AIP/PMP, lesson plans).

**9%** of survey participants suggested full- or part-time assistance would help reduce the burden of state mandated paperwork

Suggestions for providing full- or part-time assistance included:

- Hiring a "full-time paperwork person"
- Additional assistants
- Additional aides
- Guidance staff
- Secretaries

**9%** of survey participants suggested additional time would help reduce the burden of state mandated paperwork

Suggestions for providing additional time included:

- Early student release days
- More teacher workdays
- Additional duty-free planning time

## Question 9

9. Name one thing you feel would help reduce the burden of district-mandated paperwork.

**12%** of survey participants suggested full- or part-time assistance would help reduce the burden of district mandated paperwork

Suggestions for providing full- or part-time assistance included:

- Classroom assistants
- Aides
- Guidance department staff
- Secretaries

**12%** of survey participants suggested additional time would help reduce the burden of district mandated paperwork

Suggestions for providing additional time included:

- Early student release days
- More teacher workdays
- Additional duty-free planning time

## Question 10

10. Name one thing you feel would help reduce the burden of school mandated paperwork.

**12%** of survey participants suggested full- or part-time assistance would help reduce the burden of school mandated paperwork

Suggestions for providing full- or part-time assistance with school mandated paperwork included:

- Assistants
- Aides
- Guidance staff
- Secretaries (i.e. in secondary schools, one per grade level)
- Clerical staff

**12%** of survey participants suggested additional time would help reduce the burden of school mandated paperwork

Suggestions for providing additional time included:

- Early student release days (i.e. once a week; once a month)
- More teacher workdays
- Additional duty-free planning time

**Question 11**

11. Which category best describes you?

**70%** Classroom teacher/instructional personnel

**18%** Exceptional Student Education teacher

5% Reading teacher

1% School-based administrator

0% School district staff

2% Literacy coach

1% Media Specialist

1% Staffing specialist

2% Guidance counselor

0% LEP instructor

1% Other

**Question 12**

12. Where do you work?

**54%**      **Elementary school**

**22%**      **Middle school**

**21%**      **High school**

0%      District office

0%      Alternative program

1%      Blended school

1%      CHOICE school

1%      DJJ

0%      Support facility

### Question 13

13. Has increased paperwork and data collection influenced your willingness to remain in the teaching profession?

60% Yes

40% No

Participant comments included:

"To thoroughly and professionally prepare for my job, I must use large chunks of uncompensated time away from my family. I love my job and my students, but this does make me reconsider my plans to remain in the classroom"

"Increased paperwork influenced my decision not to go into administration"

"I am an ESE teacher, reading teacher, and writing teacher to regular students! The burden and responsibility is getting harder and harder to work with!"

"At one time, I enjoyed everyday and every minute of my job. Now, the paperwork included in what we do takes the fun out of what I do best, teach"

## Question 14

14. Did this survey address issues and concerns important to you?

90%

Yes

10%

No

### If no, explain

Participant comments included:

"Duties expected of teachers are not equitable. Some teachers must do so much more than others"

"Making ESE teachers be both reading teachers and ESE teachers at the secondary level is a huge problem!"

"LEP, Intensive Reading, and ESE teachers work almost double the amount of hours as [general education] teachers due to testing, documentation, conferencing... this is done without a penny. No overtime, no supplement, not a thing!"

"I have four preps, all the IEPs for 7<sup>th</sup> grade, PMPs for 29 students, plus sponsor two separate reading clubs"

"Many teachers...believe they are expected to give way too much of their personal time for school meetings (open house, family reading nights, PTO meetings, special holiday programs)"

"I have a family to take care of and...I intend to do it."

"I find it frustrating...to expect staff to work for free nights and weekends to do their job in a professional manner"

"Just because we use the computer does not mean that we have less work to do"

"E-mail and electronic PMP forms are paperwork, too"

"When paperwork becomes the focus of my day instead of teaching, I have to wonder what we are doing and why?"

## **Suggestions for Improvement**

## **Reducing the Burden of Federal, State, District, and School Mandated Paperwork**

Qualitative analysis of participant comments in Questions 7, 8, 9, and 10 were consistent with top ranked solutions identified in Question 6: (1) hire full- time staff to assist with management of federal and state mandated paperwork, and (2) reorganize regularly scheduled hours to provide the time needed to complete federal and state mandated paperwork (Table 1).

Following are survey participant's suggestions for reducing the burden of federal, state, district, and school mandated paperwork.

**Table 1**

***Reducing the Burden of Federal, State, District, and School Mandated Paperwork: Results of Qualitative Analysis***

<b>Question 1</b> What paperwork do you find most time consuming?	<b>Federally Mandated Paperwork</b>  <b>29%</b>	<b>State Mandated Paperwork</b>  <b>47%</b>	<b>District Mandated Paperwork</b>  <b>16%</b>	<b>School Mandated Paperwork</b>  <b>1%</b>
<b>Potential Solutions</b>	<b>Question 7</b>	<b>Question 8</b>	<b>Question 9</b>	<b>Question 10</b>
Name one thing you feel would help reduce the burden of paperwork.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>18%</b> Full-or part-time assistance</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>9%</b> Full-or part-time assistance</li> <li>• <b>9%</b> Provide additional time</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>12%</b> Full or part-time assistance</li> <li>• <b>12%</b> Provide additional time</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>12%</b> Full-or part-time assistance</li> <li>• <b>12%</b> Provide additional time</li> </ul>
<p>Qualitative analysis of participant suggestions in Questions 7, 8, 9, and 10 are consistent with top ranked solutions identified in Question 6.</p> <p><b>Question 6</b></p> <p><b>Which of the following do you feel would most help reduce the burden of paperwork?</b></p> <p><b>24%</b> Hire full-time staff to assist with management of federal and state mandated paperwork</p> <p><b>19%</b> Reorganize regularly scheduled hours to provide the time needed to complete federal and state mandated paperwork</p> <p><b>19%</b> Authorize overtime pay to complete federal and state mandated paperwork</p>				

## Reducing the Burden of Federally Mandated Paperwork

Twenty-nine percent (29%) of survey participants reported federally mandated paperwork was most time consuming.

**Question 7** asked survey participants to name one thing that would help reduce the burden of federally mandated paperwork (Reviewing data, preparing IEPs, EPs, LEPs, Interim Reviews, ESE Progress Reports, and Title I paperwork). Eighteen percent (18%) suggested hiring a full-time “paperwork guru,” that is, an expert “trained in [IDEA] compliance to do ALL paperwork.”

According to one participant, “the very best thing you could do would be to develop a position similar to one in Santa Rosa County. Their [staffing] specialists manage and write all IEPs.” Another suggested “Looking at what other states are doing...hiring a certified [ESE] teacher to write IEPs and oversee meetings. It would help if he/she had a secretary to schedule meetings. This would allow that person to assist teachers in meeting student needs, make sure paperwork is accurate, and ensure funding is accurate and reflective of the degree of services being provided.”

Suggestions for “a person designated to do nothing but [federally mandated] paperwork” included Staffing Specialists certified ESE teachers, paraprofessionals, and data entry personnel.

Other participants suggested breaking federally mandated paperwork into sub-tasks that do not require the attention of Staffing Specialists or certified ESE teachers. Suggestions included hiring an “ESE or guidance secretary to schedule IEP and Interim Review meetings and send out notices,” and clerical staff to copy and distribute hard copies of paperwork.

Still another suggestion was to “give ESE teachers a supplement just like coaches get for long after school hours.”

## Reducing the Burden of State Mandated Paperwork

Forty-seven (47%) of survey participants reported state-mandated paperwork was most time consuming.

**Question 8** asked survey participants to name one thing that would help reduce the burden of state-mandated paperwork (Reviewing data, preparing AIP/PMPs, preparing data driven lesson plans in accordance with Sunshine State Standards).

Nine percent (9%) of participants suggested hiring full- or part-time assistance to help review data and prepare AIP/PMP paperwork, 9% suggested providing additional time to complete state mandated paperwork.

The most frequent suggestions for providing additional time were (1) early student release days, (2) more teacher workdays, and (3) additional duty-free planning time.

In the words of one survey participant, "I cannot complete my job in 7.5 hours. We need to provide time during the work day for teachers to do paperwork."

One participant suggested, "Teach 4 days, and use Friday for paperwork."

Another noted, "At elementary schools we have student contact time that far exceeds the requirements...One year we wrote a waiver and had one early release day per month."

## **Reducing the Burden of District Mandated Paperwork**

Sixteen percent (16%) of survey participants reported district mandated paperwork was most time consuming.

**Question 9** asked survey participants to name one thing that would help reduce the burden of district-mandated paperwork (Reviewing data, completing paperwork related to Gates MacGinitie/GRADE, SRI, OCSD Fluency Check, Slosson Math, FLKRS, GMADE, SAT 9, and grading timed essays including Okaloosa Writes, entering weekly grades in Grade Book).

Twelve percent (12%) of participants suggested hiring full- or part-time assistance to help reduce the burden of district-mandated paperwork, 12% suggested providing additional time.

## **Reducing the Burden of School Mandated Paperwork**

One (1%) of survey participants reported school mandated paperwork was most time consuming.

**Question 10** asked survey participants to name one thing that would help reduce the burden of school-mandated paperwork (Reviewing data, completing paperwork related to Metropolitan Math, Read 180, New Century, STAR, BRI/QR-3, DRA/DAR, Ekwall Shanker, TOWRE, CTOPP, and SchoolNotes.com).

Suggestions for reducing school-mandated paperwork were the same as those for reducing district-mandated paperwork. Twelve percent (12%) of participants suggested hiring full- or part-time assistance to help reduce the burden of district-mandated paperwork, 12% suggested providing additional time.

## Conclusion

This study found almost all teachers and administrators spend time beyond regularly scheduled hours doing paperwork; 84% spend 30 minutes to more than 2 hours a day, 2-5 days a week. Eighty-one percent (81%) spend time beyond regularly scheduled hours in meetings and conferences to develop or review IEPs, EPs, LEPs, AIP/PMPs or report student progress.

To reduce the burden of federally mandated paperwork, participants suggested hiring full-time assistance like additional Staffing Specialists certified ESE teachers, paraprofessionals, and/or data entry personnel to review data, prepare IEP, EP, Interim Review, ESE Progress Reports, and Title I paperwork.

Participants suggested the burden of state, district, and school-mandated paperwork be reduced through systematic design into teachers and administrator's workday, workweek, month, and school calendar year. Participants' suggest additional time be provided through early student release days, additional teacher workdays, and/or additional duty-free planning time, or by hiring full- or part-time assistance.

Seventy-three percent (73%) do not agree additional paperwork and increased data collection has improved student learning.

Not surprisingly, the majority (60%) of participants report increased paperwork and data collection has influenced their willingness to remain in the teaching profession.

## **Appendixes**

Teachers and Administrators,

The Okaloosa County School District is asking for your input on reducing paperwork and data collection. A survey has been developed to help assess specific paperwork and data collection burdens and to identify potential solutions.

The survey will be open for data collection Wednesday, October 11 through Wednesday, October 25.

To access the survey, please copy and paste the entire URL into your web browser.

<http://leadernet.aft.org/surveymaker/take/survey.cfm?id=06a789ef-923d-d9fc-9b6e-3c8efd232e39>

Sincerely,  
Lynn Ketter, Ed.D.  
Teacher Representative  
OCSD Paperwork and Data Collection Reduction

Teachers and Administrators,

The Paperwork and Data Collection Reduction Survey closes today,  
Wednesday, October 25 at 8:00PM.

To access the survey, please copy and paste the URL into your web browser, or  
double click the hyperlink below.

<http://leadernet.aft.org/surveymaker/take/survey.cfm?id=06a789ef-923d-d9fc-9b6e-3c8efd232e39>

If you are unable to access the survey, please contact the Help Desk at 897.2966  
or email [OCSDHD@L-3.com](mailto:OCSDHD@L-3.com)

Sincerely,  
Lynn Ketter, Ed.D.  
Teacher Representative  
OCSD Paperwork and Data Collection Reduction

## Paperwork and Data Collection Reduction Survey

Please take a moment to complete this short survey. Information collected will help assess concerns regarding data collection and paperwork. Findings will be reported to the school board and the State Board of Education.

### 1. What paperwork do you find most time consuming? (Choose one)

- Reviewing data, preparing IEP, EP, LEP, Interim Review, ESE Progress Reports, Title I paperwork (Federally mandated)
- Reviewing data, preparing AIP/PMP paperwork, preparing data driven lesson plans in accordance with Sunshine State Standards (State mandated)
- Reviewing data, completing paperwork related to Gates MacGinitie/GRADE, SRI, OCSD Fluency Check, Slosson Math, FLKRS, GMADE, SAT 9, grading timed essays including Okaloosa Writes, entering weekly grades in Grade Book (District mandated)
- Reviewing data, completing paperwork related to Metropolitan Math, Read 180, New Century, STAR, BRI/QRI-3, DRA/DAR, Ekwall Shanker, TOWRE, CTOPP, SchoolNotes.com (School mandated)
- Other

### If other, explain

### 2. How often do you work past your regularly scheduled hours doing paperwork?

- Daily
- 3-4 times a week
- 2-3 times a week
- Once a week
- Rarely

### 3. How much time do you spend beyond your regularly scheduled hours doing paperwork?

- Less than 15 minutes a day
- 15-30 minutes daily
- 30 minutes to one hour daily
- More than one hour daily
- More than two hours daily

**4. How often do you spend time beyond your regularly scheduled hours in meetings and conferences to develop or review IEPs, EPs, LEPs, AIP/PMPs, or to report progress?**

- Daily
- 3-4 times a week
- 2-3 times a week
- Once a week
- Rarely

**5. Additional paperwork created by increased data collection has improved student learning.**

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree
- Don't know

**6. Which of the following do you feel would most help reduce the burden of paperwork? (Choose one)**

- Hire full-time staff to assist with management of federal and state mandated paperwork
- Hire part-time staff to assist with management of federal and state mandated paperwork
- Authorize overtime pay to complete federal and state mandated paperwork
- Hire substitutes to provide the time needed to complete federal and state mandated paperwork
- Reorganize regularly scheduled hours to provide the time needed to complete federal and state mandated paperwork
- Provide additional training to complete federal and state mandated paperwork
- Restructure current work assignments
- Provide electronic programs with pre-populated data fields and dropdown menus to complete federal and state mandated paperwork
- Other

**If other, explain**

**7. Name one thing you feel would help reduce the burden of federal mandated paperwork (IEP, EP, LEP, Interim Reviews, ESE Progress Reports, Title I).**

**8. Name one thing you feel would help reduce the burden of state mandated paperwork (AIP/PMP, lesson plans).**

**9. Name one thing you feel would help reduce the burden of district-mandated paperwork.**

**10. Name one thing you feel would help reduce the burden of school-mandated paperwork.**

**11. Which category best describes you?**

- Classroom teacher/instructional personnel
- Exceptional Student Education teacher
- Reading teacher
- School-based administrator
- School district staff
- Literacy coach
- Media Specialist
- Staffing specialist
- Guidance counselor
- LEP instructor
- Other

**12. Where do you work?**

- Elementary school
- Middle school
- High school
- District office
- Alternative program
- Blended school
- CHOICE school
- DJJ
- Support facility

**13. Has increased paperwork and data collection influenced your willingness to remain in the teaching profession?**

- Yes
- No

**14. Did this survey address issues and concerns important to you?**

- Yes
- No

**If no, explain**