

MEMORANDUM

TO: Volusia County School Board Members

FROM: Deborah W. Beavers
Teacher Representative

DATE: August 24, 2007

SUBJECT: FINDINGS AND POTENTIAL SOLUTIONS RELATING TO
PAPERWORK REDUCTION

At the August 8, 2006 school board meeting, I was honored to be approved as the teacher representative to speak on behalf of the district's teachers regarding paperwork and data collection reduction. One of my responsibilities is to report to the school board my findings and potential solutions regarding this paperwork and data collection reduction.

I have viewed a report from the district form committee. In the 2006-2007 school year, I collaborated as a member of the Superintendent's Select Committee on ESE Paperwork to explore additional solutions on paperwork reduction. These committees have made recommendations which have reduced the amount of paperwork by use of technology.

First, the district forms committee met to review all teacher forms currently in use. The committee made recommendations on both school forms and district forms. The recommendations have not been approved as of this date.

1. Recommendation for Deletion,

Twenty-six school forms and sixty-five district forms

2. Recommendation for a change or check to see if the form is still needed,

Sixteen school forms and forty-six district forms

3. Recommendation to convert school forms to a uniform district form,

Eleven school forms

4. Recommendations to "watch" the form for future elimination

Seventeen district forms

5. Recommendation to retain form "as is",

Four school forms and thirty-seven district forms

The Superintendent's Select Committee on ESE paperwork has been meeting since 2002-2003 school year. There were 77 recommendations presented the superintendent and the Volusia County School Board in June, 2003. This committee responded to four areas:

1. Redundant data elements and/or rules

2. Paperwork requirements from state, federal and/or local that could be completed by personnel other than the classroom teacher

Each middle and high school utilizes a teaching unit for an "IEP Facilitator." Instead of working with students, these teachers handle a majority of the paperwork for other teachers. As a result, the caseloads of other teachers increase.

3. Technology to simplify required ESE procedures

Volusia County Schools is working to develop an in-house seamless system to incorporate all aspects of student services and ESE monitoring. The design for this system includes everything from monitoring students not meeting expected progress in the general education classroom, delivery of services through a problem solving team or student success team, required assessments, and the IEP/EP process. Our intent is to have a uniform system of accountability that would eliminate duplication of data-entry and streamline current processes. Medicaid billing would also be extracted from this system eliminating the need for separate program accountability and paperwork.

Concerns continue to arise regarding the state IEP system. Preliminary views of this program indicate the need for teachers to type in a great deal of information that would not be systematic and would require separate data entries to attempt to duplicate system monitoring. Our current product use and future development are both geared toward eliminating keystrokes. Uniform dropdown and lookup data sources used whenever feasible allow for reduced paperwork effort, fewer errors and increased ability to track data electronically, monitor student progress, reduce duplication of effort and monitor program compliance.

4. Federal mandated paperwork that could be eliminated through IDEA reauthorization

IDEA reauthorization did cause additional paperwork. As one form was removed, ten new forms on accountability and data were added.

5. Additional recommendations by committee:

Put plan in place that allows for the fair distribution of instructional materials funding for ESE personnel;

Continue quarterly email requests from ESE teachers regarding burdensome paperwork and possible solutions;

Continue quarterly ESE/SS newsletter to increase consistent communication with district and school staff;

Provide web access to all *ESE Area Update* documents to increase consistent communication with district and school staff.

In the 2007-2008 school year, I will continue collaborating with both committees to explore additional solutions on paperwork reduction. Furthermore, I will be investigating efficient methods for communicating with district teachers to solicit input regarding possible paperwork and data collection burdens and potential solutions.

Cc Dr. Margaret Smith
Dr. Chris Colwell
Dr. Bill Fink
Mrs. Allene Dupont