

DESOTO COUNTY

Focused Monitoring

Exceptional Student Education Programs

August 28-29, 2006

Florida Department of Education
Bureau of Exceptional Education and Student Services
ESE Program Administration and Quality Assurance

FLORIDA DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION



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April 12, 2007

Mr. Adrian H. Cline, Superintendent
DeSoto County School District
P.O. Drawer 2000
Arcadia, Florida 34265-2000

Dear Superintendent Cline:

We are pleased to provide you with the Final Report of Focused Monitoring of Exceptional Student Education Programs in DeSoto County. This report was developed by integrating multiple sources of information, including: student record reviews; interviews with school and district staff; information from focus groups; and parent survey data from our visit on August 28-29, 2006. The final report will be placed on the Bureau of Exceptional Education and Student Services' website and may be viewed at www.firn.edu/doe/commhome/mon-home.htm.

The report includes a system improvement plan outlining the findings of the monitoring team. Bureau staff have worked with Dr. Roosevelt Johnson, ESE Director, and his staff to develop a system improvement plan that includes strategies and activities to address the areas of concern and noncompliance identified in the report. We anticipate that some of the action steps that will be implemented will be long term in duration, and will require time to assess the measure of effectiveness. The system improvement plan has been approved and is included as a part of this final report.

The first scheduled update on the system improvement plan will be due on August 31, 2007. The Department of Education must ensure timely corrections on noncompliance within one year of reporting to the district. The successful completion of improvement plan activities and the submission of the annual report no later than March 7, 2008, will be required. A verification monitoring visit to your district may take place after review of the annual report.

BAMBI J. LOCKMAN
Chief

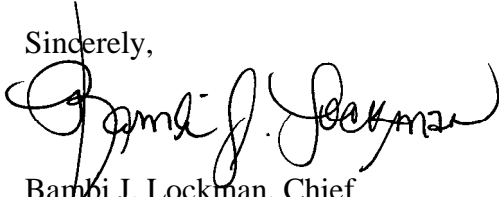
Bureau of Exceptional Education and Student Services

Superintendent Cline
April 12, 2007
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If my staff can be of any assistance as you implement the system improvement plan, please contact Eileen L. Amy, ESE Program Administration and Quality Assurance Administrator. Ms. Amy may be reached at 850/245-0476, or via electronic mail at Eileen.Amy@fldoe.org.

Thank you for your continuing commitment to improve services for exceptional education students in DeSoto County.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Bambi J. Lockman". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name being the most prominent.

Bambi J. Lockman, Chief
Bureau of Exceptional Education and Student Services

Enclosure

cc: Ronny Allen, School Board Chairman
Members of the School Board
Eugene Waldron, Jr., School Board Attorney
School Principals
Dr. Roosevelt Johnson, ESE Director
Eileen L. Amy
Ginny Chance

DESOTO COUNTY

Focused Monitoring

Exceptional Student Education Programs

August 28-29, 2006

Florida Department of Education
Bureau of Exceptional Education and Student Services
ESE Program Administration and Quality Assurance

**DeSoto County Final Monitoring Report
 Focused Monitoring
 August 28-29, 2006**

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DeSoto County Monitoring Report

Focused Monitoring

August 28-29, 2006

Monitoring Process

Authority

The Florida Department of Education, Bureau of Exceptional Education and Student Services, 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 laws and rules (Sections 1001.03(8) and 1008.32, Florida Statutes (F.S.)). In fulfilling this requirement, the Bureau conducts monitoring activities of the exceptional student education (ESE) programs provided by district school boards, in accordance with Sections 1001.42 and 1003.57, F.S. Through these monitoring activities, the Bureau examines and evaluates procedures, records, and ESE programs; provides information and assistance to school districts; and otherwise assists school districts in operating effectively and efficiently. One purpose of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act of 2004 (IDEA 2004) is to assess and ensure the effectiveness of efforts to educate children with disabilities (Section 300.1(d) of Title 34, Code of Federal Regulations (CFR), and districts are required to make a good faith effort to assist children with disabilities to achieve their stated goals and objectives in the least restrictive environment (34 CFR §300.350(a)(2) and §300.556). In accordance with the IDEA 2004, the Department is responsible for ensuring that the requirements of the IDEA are carried out and that each educational program for children with disabilities administered in the state meets the educational requirements of the state (34 CFR §300.600(a)(1) and (2)). Federal Regulations for IDEA 2004 were made public on August 14, 2006, and implementation required on October 13, 2006.

The monitoring system reflects the Department's commitment to provide assistance, service, and accountability to school districts, and is designed to emphasize improved educational outcomes for students while continuing to conduct those activities necessary to ensure compliance with applicable federal laws and regulations and state statutes and rules. In addition, these activities serve to ensure implementation of corrective actions, such as those required subsequent to monitoring by the U.S. Department of Education (USDOE), Office of Special Education Programs, (OSEP) and by the Office for Civil Rights (OCR), as well as other quality assurance activities of the Department.

State Performance Plan and Monitoring

In accordance with 34 CFR 300.600(a)(1), not later than one (1) year after the date of enactment of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act of 2004, each state must have in place a performance plan that evaluates the state's efforts to implement the requirements and purposes of Part B and describe how the state will improve such implementation. The purpose of the monitoring process is to implement a methodology that targets the Bureau's monitoring intervention on key data indicators identified as significant for educational outcomes for

students. Through this process, the Bureau uses data to inform the monitoring process, thereby implementing a strategic approach to intervention and commitment of resources that will improve student outcomes. A detailed description of the Bureau's monitoring processes is provided in *Focused Monitoring and Verification Monitoring: Work Papers and Source Book for Exceptional Student Education Programs (2006-07)*. The protocols used by Bureau staff when conducting procedural compliance reviews are available in *Compliance Manual: Work Papers and Source Book for Exceptional Student Education Programs (2006-07)*. These documents are available on the Bureau's website at www.firn.edu/doe/commhome/mon-home.htm.

Indicator Selection

In its continuing effort to focus the monitoring process on student educational outcomes, there are three (3) specific monitoring priority areas which are identified in the IDEA 2004 at section 616(a)(3). The first priority is the provision of a free appropriate public education (FAPE) in the least restrictive environment (LRE) which includes standard diploma rate, dropout rate, participation and performance on statewide assessments, suspension and expulsion, LRE for both ages 6-21 and ages 3-5, PK outcomes, and parent satisfaction. The second priority is general supervision by the state which includes child find, transition (Part C to Part B), secondary transition, and postsecondary outcomes. The third priority is disproportionate representation of racial and ethnic groups in special education and related services including all disabilities in general and specific disability categories. The IDEA 2004 can be viewed on the web at <http://www.ed.gov/policy/speced/guid/idea/idea2004.html>.

Data on all State Performance Plan (SPP) indicators used to determine the focus of this on-site visit was based on a review of data from the 2006 local educational agency (LEA) Profile that was submitted electronically to the Department of Education (DOE) Information Database for Surveys 2, 3, 5, 9, and from the assessment files for each school year. This data is compiled into an annual data profile for each district. The 2006 LEA Profiles for all Florida school districts are available on the web at <http://www.firn.edu/doe/commhome/datapage.htm>.

Background Information and Demographics

During the week of August 28, 2006, the Florida Department of Education, Bureau of Exceptional Education and Student Services, conducted an on-site review of the exceptional student education (ESE) programs in DeSoto County Public Schools. Roosevelt Johnson, Exceptional Student Education Director, and Brenda Johnson, ESE Coordinator served as communication liaisons and points of contact for the district during the monitoring visit. DeSoto County was monitored on the following indicators: standard diploma rate, performance on statewide assessments, dropout rate, suspension and expulsion, and transition. In addition, data on the under representation of students identified as gifted was also reviewed.

Based on the 2006 LEA profile, DeSoto County School District has a total school population (PK-12) of 5,019: 18% of students being identified as students with disabilities; 18% of Exceptional Education Students identified as speech impaired only; and 2% of Exceptional Education Students identified as gifted. DeSoto County is considered a "small size" district and

is comprised of four elementary schools, (K-5), two middle schools 6-8, one high school 9-12, and one alternative school. The district also has three DJJ centers.

DeSoto County is a diverse community, with 59% of students on free or reduced lunch and 13% of students identified as limited English proficient. Of the students with disabilities who exited from the district during the 2004-05 school year, 51% met all requirements for a standard diploma, 15% met the requirements through a waiver of a passing score on the Florida Comprehensive Assessment Test (FCAT), and 14% graduated through the GED exit option (i.e., under-credited students who have passed the FCAT and who pass the GED examination). The district has a dropout rate of 6% as indicated on the LEA Profile. Two percent of the population of students with disabilities had received out-of-school suspensions totaling ten or more days.

Monitoring Activities

The Bureau conducted the on-site focused monitoring visit from August 28-29, 2006. Five Bureau staff members and one peer monitor conducted site-visits to the following four schools, including one Department of Juvenile Justice (DJJ) facility:

- DeSoto High School
- DeSoto Middle School
- West Elementary School
- Joshua Creek Center (DJJ)

Peer monitors are exceptional student education personnel from school districts and are trained to assist with the DOE’s monitoring activities. A listing of Bureau staff and peer monitors for the DeSoto County visit is included as appendix A of this report.

The monitoring process includes interviews with administrators, teachers, and other service delivery providers, focus group interviews with students, case studies, classroom observations, record reviews, and surveys of parents. A summary of the monitoring activities conducted in DeSoto County is included in the table below.

Activity	Source	Number
Interviews	District staff	2
	School staff	
	▪ School administrators/non-instructional support	6
	▪ ESE teachers—disabilities	10
	▪ ESE teachers—gifted	0
	▪ General education teachers	<u>5</u>
	Total	23
Focus Groups	DeSoto HS—grades 9-12	
	▪ Students pursuing special diploma	8
	▪ Students pursuing standard diploma	<u>8</u>
	Total	16

Activity	Source	Number
Case studies	Individual student case studies	2
Classroom Visits	ESE and general education classrooms	6
Record Reviews	IEPs	
	▪ Full desk-review	0
	▪ Targeted on-site review	37
	▪ Matrix of services documents	4
	EPs	
	▪ Full desk-review	0
	▪ Targeted on-site review	1
	Total	42
Surveys	Parents—students with disabilities	
	▪ Number sent	892
	▪ Number returned (%)	72 (8%)
	▪ School facilitates parent involvement	19 (26%)

The results of the surveys are included as appendix B.

Reporting of Information

Findings based on data generated through record reviews, focus group interviews, individual interviews, case studies, classroom visits, parent surveys, and the review of district forms are summarized in the reporting table that follows. This report provides conclusions with regard to the indicators and specifically addresses related areas that may contribute to or impact the indicators.

In addition, information related to services provided to ESE students in Department of Juvenile Justice (DJJ) facilities is reported.

To the extent possible, this report focuses on systemic issues rather than on isolated instances of noncompliance or need for improvement. In accordance with established Bureau monitoring procedures, a finding of a systemic violation will be made if evidence of such a violation is found in 25% or more of the pertinent data sources.

During the course of conducting the focused monitoring activities, including daily debriefings with the monitoring team and district staff, it is often the case that suggestions and/or recommendations related to interventions or strategies are proposed, and promising practices are noted. Listings of these recommendations and promising practices, as well as specific discretionary projects and DOE contacts available to provide technical assistance in the development and implementation of a system improvement plan, are included following the reporting table.

In response to specific student related findings, the district is required to correct the items as noted in the corrective action plan. This plan identifies the specific area(s) of a student's IEP for which an IEP Team meeting must be held to correct the finding and/or specifies an action the district must perform to correct data.

In response to the findings included in the reporting table, the district was required to develop a system improvement plan. This plan was developed in consultation with the Bureau, and includes activities and strategies intended to address specific findings, as well as measurable evidence of change.

**DeSoto County School District
Focused Monitoring**

Reporting Table

Standard/Citation	Findings	Supporting Evidence	Concerns
Indicator: Curriculum/Instruction (Standard Diploma)			
Related Factor: General			
§300.26(a)(3)	<p>Specially designed instruction is adapting the content, methodology, and delivery of instruction to the unique needs of the student to ensure access to the general curriculum to meet the educational standards of all students.</p> <p>No findings of non-compliance.</p>		<p>6 of 8 special diploma students reported ESE classes are easy and do not challenge the students.</p> <p>8 of 8 standard diploma students reported that ESE classes are easy and teachers lack expectations for them to work hard.</p>
Related Factor: IEP Requirements/Implementation			
<p>Sec. 614(d)(1)(A)(i)(IV) §300.347(a)(3) 6A-6.03028(7)(c)</p>	<p>IEP must include specially designed instruction to assist the student in progressing in appropriate activities and meeting annual goals</p>	<p>6 of 37 IEPs reviewed did not contain specially designed instruction to assist the student in progressing in appropriate activities and meeting annual goals.</p>	
Indicator: Dropout Rate			
Related Factor: General			
<p>§300.137 (b) Sec. 612 (a)(15)(A)(iii) S. 1003.26(1) 6A-6.0521(2)(c)</p>	<p>No findings of non-compliance.</p>		

Standard/Citation	Findings	Supporting Evidence	Concerns
Indicator: Participation in Statewide Assessment			
Related Factor: Alternate Assessment			
6A-1.0943(1)(a)(1) Sec. 614(d)(1)(A)(i)(VI)(bb) §300.347(a)(5)(ii) 6A-1.0943(1)(a)	FCAT exemption must be based on State Board of Education (SBE) rule. No findings of non-compliance.		2 of 10 ESE teachers interviewed were unable to identify criteria used to exempt a student with disabilities from statewide assessment (SWA). 1 administrator and 2 ESE teachers interviewed reported students enrolled in 7800 courses are always exempt from the statewide testing. 1 administrator and 2 ESE teachers interviewed reported they are unaware how the alternate assessment is selected.
6A-6.03028(7)(e)	Parents must be informed of and understand the implications of non-participation in Statewide Assessment/FCAT No findings of non-compliance.		2 of 10 ESE teachers interviewed reported they are unaware of how parents would be informed of the implications of non-participation in the Statewide Assessment.
Indicator: Performance on Statewide Assessment			
Related Factor: FCAT Waiver/Other Options			
SP&P Part II G.2.m.	Parents must be informed of the requirements for obtaining a waiver of the requirement to obtain a passing score on FCAT to obtain a standard diploma. No findings of non-compliance.		3 of 10 ESE teachers interviewed reported students must participate in the FCAT numerous times before being told about the FCAT Waiver for graduation.

Standard/Citation	Findings	Supporting Evidence	Concerns
			<p>7 of 8 special diploma students reported not knowing what the FCAT Waiver was or the requirements needed to obtain one.</p> <p>6 of 8 standard diploma students reported not knowing what the FCAT Waiver was or the requirements needed to obtain one.</p>
Indicator: Behavior/ Discipline			
Related Factor: IEP Requirements/Implementation			
<p>Sec. 614(d)(3)(C) §300.346(d)(1)-(2) 6A-6.03028(4)(b)(1)-(2)</p>	<p>General education teacher must participate in the development of the IEP, including determining: appropriate positive behavioral interventions and strategies; supplementary aids and services; program modifications; supports for personnel.</p> <p><i>No finding of non-compliance</i></p>		<p>8 of 16 school staff interviewed reported the most widely used behavioral interventions were removal of the student from the classroom and use of a paraprofessional to work with the student.</p> <p>8 of 16 school staff interviewed reported additional training on behavioral accommodations, strategies and interventions would assist teachers with instruction.</p> <p>5 of 8 special diploma students reported that suspensions are common for minor infractions of the Student Code of Conduct (e.g., chewing gum).</p>

Standard/Citation	Findings	Supporting Evidence	Concerns
			<p>8 of 16 school staff interviewed reported that the Student Code of Conduct is the district/school-wide discipline program.</p> <p>7 of 16 school staff interviewed reported there is no district/school-wide discipline plan which includes positive behavioral supports or reinforcement.</p> <p>13 of 16 school staff interviewed were unable to identify how social/behavioral progress is measured.</p>
Related Factor: Functional Behavioral Assessment (FBA)/Positive Behavior Intervention Plan (PBIP)			
§300.520(c)(1) 6A-6.03312(4)(d)(3)	For subsequent removals that do not constitute a change in placement, the IEP team members must review the PBIP and its implementation to determine if modifications are required.	6 of 10 ESE teachers interviewed reported PBIPs are not reviewed and changed with significant interventions to readdress behaviors.	2 of 5 general education teachers interviewed reported PBIPs are not routinely reviewed following incidents of discipline.
Related Factor: Interim Alternative Education Setting (IAES)			
Sec. 615(k)(1)(G) §300.520(a)(2) 6A-6.03312(6)(b)	Placement in IAES is not to exceed 45 days.	5 of 10 ESE teachers interviewed reported IAES placements often lasted more than 45 days.	2 of 10 ESE teachers reported that parents often request for students to be placed at the alternative school.

Standard/Citation	Findings	Supporting Evidence	Concerns
Indicator: Disproportionate Representation—Gifted			
Related Factor: Assessments			
614(b)(3)(A)(i) §300.532(a)(1)(i) 6A-6.0331(4)(e)	No findings of non-compliance.		
Related Factor: Eligibility			
6A-6.03019 (2)(b)	No findings of non-compliance.		
Indicator: Secondary Transition			
Related Factor: IEP Notice			
6A-6.03028(3)(b)(1) Sec. 614(d)(1)(B)(vii) 6A-6.0331(3)(b)(2) 6A-6.0331(3)(b)(2) 6A-6.0331(3)(b)(2)	No findings of non-compliance.		
Related Factor: IEP Meeting			
6A-6.03028(4)(i) 6A-6.03028(4)(g)	No findings of non-compliance.		
Related Factor: IEP Contents			
Sec. 614(d)(1)(A)(i)(VIII)(bb) §300.347(b)(2) 6A-6.03028(7)(j),FAC	Must include a statement of needed transition services, including interagency responsibilities or any linkages if appropriate. No findings of non-compliance.		Only interagency linkage identified in IEPs was Division of Vocational Rehabilitation.
Related Factor: Transfer of Rights			
614(d)(1)(A)(i)(VIII)(cc) §300.347(c) 6A-6.03028(7)(k)	Must provide a notice that rights will transfer to the student at least one year ahead (age 16) of student reaching age 18. No findings of non-compliance.		2 of 4 special diploma students who were 17 years old reported no recollection of a transfer of rights discussion at their IEP meeting.

Standard/Citation	Findings	Supporting Evidence	Concerns
Related Factor: Summary of Performance			
614 (c)(5)(B)(i) 614 (c)(5)(B)(i)	Summary of academic achievement and functional performance is required when student is exiting due to standard diploma or due to past age of eligibility. No findings of non-compliance.		5 of 7 ESE teachers (at transition level) interviewed were unable to indicate how a summary of performance would be completed for an exiting student.
Department of Juvenile Justice			
General			
§300.551(a) 6A-6.03411(3)(a)3	Continuum of alternative placements must be available from the district to meet the needs of all its students.	4 of 4 staff interviewed reported only mainstream classes are available. 6 of 6 IEPs reviewed revealed students were in general education classroom settings; however were enrolled in 7900 course codes.	
IEP Requirements/Implementation			
Sec. 614(d)(2)(A) §300.342(b)(1)(ii) 6A-6.03028(11)	IEP must be implemented.	6 of 6 IEPs reviewed revealed specially designed instruction/ special education services in a variety of academic areas, while no student was receiving direct instruction/specially designed instruction from an ESE teacher.	
Matrix of Services			
1011.62 (1)(c), F.S.	No findings of non-compliance.		
Student Record Reviews			
34 CFR §300.340-300.350 Rule 6A-6.03028, FAC	Zero findings of noncompliance resulted in funding adjustments.	37 TP/IEPs were reviewed, in part or in whole.	

Standard/Citation	Findings	Supporting Evidence	Concerns
	37 TP/IEP teams must reconvene to address identified findings. No findings of non-compliance.	A detailed description of the findings related to student records can be found in appendix B.	
Review of District Forms			
34 CFR §300. 34 CFR §300. Rule 6A-6.03028, FAC	14 forms require the district to make corrections.	16 forms were reviewed. A detailed description of the forms reviews was provided to the district in a letter dated October 4, 2006.	

System Improvement Plan

In response to these findings, the district is required to develop a system improvement plan for submission to the Bureau. This plan must include activities and strategies intended to address specific findings, as well as measurable evidence of change. In developing the system improvement plan, every effort should be made to link the system improvement activities resulting from this focused monitoring report to the district's targeted technical assistance needs identified through the State Performance Plan Indicator Teams. The promising practices, recommendations, and technical assistance resources included below should be considered when developing strategies and/or interventions targeting the critical issues identified by the Bureau as most significantly in need of improvement.

Promising Practices, Recommendations and Technical Assistance

Promising Practices

During the visit promising practices were noted by district and school staff and by Bureau and peer monitors. Some of the reported promising practices were school specific, some were grade specific, and others were the results of district-wide initiatives. The District is encouraged to continue to promote an atmosphere where teachers and staff can share these practices. Some of the reported promising practices are listed below.

- Use of Home/School Liaisons to inform non-English speaking communities of giftedness and parental request for gifted referral for testing.
- Specific recruitment of certified teachers for special programs.
- Use of inclusion practices at all grade levels.
- Utilization of community college vocational programs to supplement programs not available at the high school.

Recommendations

Recommendations have been proposed for the district to consider when developing the system improvement plan and determining strategies that are most likely to effect change. The list is not all-inclusive, and is intended only as a starting point for discussion among the parties responsible for the development of the system improvement plan (SIP).

- Consider implementation of a district-wide positive behavioral support system for consistency in dealing with behavioral difficulties.
- Consider development of alternatives to suspension for middle and high schools.
- Implement procedures to ensure DJJ facilities in DeSoto County adhere to state and federal regulations regarding ESE services.
- Provide parent and teacher training modules to address options and decision-making for diploma selection. Include strategies for increasing district, school, and parent expectations for academic achievement for students with disabilities.
- Provide training modules to address the appropriate dissemination of information regarding and use of the FCAT Waiver.

Technical Assistance

Bureau of Exceptional Education and Student Services

In addition to the special projects described above, Bureau staff are available for assistance on a variety of topics. Following is a partial list of contacts:

ESE Program Administration and Quality Assurance—Monitoring

(850) 245-0476

Eileen Amy, Administrator

Eileen.Amy@fldoe.org

Ginny Chance, Program Director

Ginny.Chance@fldoe.org

Clearinghouse Information Center

cicbiscs@FLDOE.org

(850) 245-0477

Kathy Dejoie, Program Director

Kathy.Dejoie@fldoe.org

Special Programs Information, Clearinghouse, and Evaluation

(850) 245-0475

Karen Denbroeder, Administrator

Karen.Denbroeder@fldoe.org

ESE Program Development and Services

(850) 245-0478

Cathy Bishop, Program Director

Cathy.Bishop@fldoe.org

**DeSoto County School District
 Focused Monitoring
 System Improvement Strategies**

The district is required to provide system improvement strategies to address identified findings of noncompliance, which may include an explanation of specific activities the district has committed to implementing, or it may consist of a broader statement describing planned strategies. For each issue, the plan also must define the measurable evidence of whether or not the desired outcome has been achieved. Target dates that extend for more than one year should include benchmarks in order to track interim progress. In addition to findings of noncompliance, the report includes areas of concern that the district is encouraged to address, either through this system improvement plan or through other avenues. Resources, suggestions and/or recommended actions are provided following this plan format.

Findings of Noncompliance	Improvement Strategies/Interventions	Outcome Measures and Timeline
Indicator: Curriculum/Instruction (Standard Diploma)		
Related Factor: General		
No findings of noncompliance. <i>Areas of concern are noted in the body of the report.</i>	<i>The district is encouraged to include strategies to address concerns noted in the body of this report.</i>	
Related Factor: IEP Requirements/Implementation		
IEP must include specially designed instruction to assist the student in progressing in appropriate activities and meeting annual goals	Training and/or technical assistance regarding inclusion of specially designed instruction to assist students in progressing in appropriate activities and meeting annual goals will be incorporated into the general staff development activities for ESE staff. District and/or school staff will conduct a reviews of a sampling of IEPs (≥ 10 records) at each school to ensure specially designed instruction has been included that will allow for student to progress in appropriate activities and meet annual goals as defined on the IEP.	District report of self-assessment reveals compliance with targeted elements for 100% of IEPs reviewed. August 2007

Findings of Noncompliance	Improvement Strategies/Interventions	Outcome Measures and Timeline
	Following an analysis of the record review results, district staff will determine if additional training is required to target or meet compliance.	
Indicator: Participation in Statewide Assessment		
Related Factor: General and Alternate Assessment		
FCAT exemption must be based on State Board of Education (SBE) rule.		
Indicator: Performance on Statewide Assessment		
Related Factor: FCAT Waiver/Other Options		
Parents must be informed of the requirements for obtaining a waiver of the requirement to obtain a passing score on the FCAT to obtain a standard diploma.	<p>The district will review the process of informing parents and students of the requirements for obtaining a waiver of the requirement to obtain a passing score on the FCAT to obtain a standard diploma. Based on that review, a procedure will be developed and implemented to ensure that parents and students are informed.</p> <p><i>The district is encouraged to include strategies to address concerns noted in the body of this report.</i></p>	<p>District to provide copy of the procedure of the process for informing parents and student of the requirements for obtaining a waiver of the requirements to obtain a passing score on the FCAT to obtain a standard diploma.</p> <p>August 2007</p>
Indicator: Behavior/ Discipline		
Related Factor: IEP Requirements/Implementation		
General education teacher must participate in the development of the IEP, including determining: appropriate positive behavioral interventions and strategies; supplementary aids and services; program modifications; supports for personnel.	<p>Training and/or technical assistance regarding participation of general education teachers in the development of the IEP will be incorporated into the general staff development activities for ESE, general education, and administrative staff.</p> <p>District and/or school staff will conduct quarterly reviews of a sampling of IEPs (≥ 10</p>	<p>District report of self-assessment reveals compliance with targeted elements for 100% of IEPs reviewed.</p> <p>August 2007</p>

Findings of Noncompliance	Improvement Strategies/Interventions	Outcome Measures and Timeline
	<p>records) of students who have been assigned >10 days of out-of-school suspension ensure that manifestation determinations and functional behavior assessments are conducted and behavior intervention plans are developed and implemented.</p> <p>Following an analysis of the record review results, district staff will determine if additional training is required or targeted meet compliance.</p>	
Related Factor: Functional Behavioral Assessment (FBA)/Positive Behavior Intervention Plan (PBIP)		
<p>For subsequent removals that do not constitute a change in placement, the IEP team members must review the PBIP and its implementation to determine if modifications are required.</p>	<p>Training and/or technical assistance regarding functional behavior assessments and implementation of positive behavior intervention plans will be incorporated into the general staff development activities for ESE, general education, and administrative staff.</p> <p>District and/or school staff will conduct quarterly reviews of a sampling of IEPs (≥ 10 records) of students who have been assigned >10 days of out-of-school suspension ensure that manifestation determinations and functional behavior assessments are conducted and behavior intervention plans are developed and implemented.</p> <p>Following an analysis of the record review results, district staff will determine if additional training is required or targeted meet compliance.</p>	<p>District report of self-assessment reveals compliance with targeted elements for 100% of IEPs reviewed.</p> <p>August 2007</p>

Findings of Noncompliance	Improvement Strategies/Interventions	Outcome Measures and Timeline
Related Factor: Interim Alternative Education Setting (IAES)		
Placement in IAES is not to exceed 45 days.	Training and/or technical assistance regarding IAES placements and requirements will be incorporated into the general staff development activities for ESE staff and administrators. District and/or school staff will conduct reviews of a sampling of IEPs (≥ 10 records) of students placed in IAES to ensure that the requirement not too exceed 45 days is addressed.	District report of self-assessment reveals compliance with targeted elements for 100% of IEPs reviewed. August 2007
Indicator: Disproportionate Representation—Gifted		
Related Factor: Assessments and Eligibility		
No findings of non-compliance.		
Indicator: Secondary Transition		
Related Factor: IEP Contents		
Must include a statement of needed transition services, including interagency responsibilities or any linkages if appropriate.	Training and/or technical assistance regarding transition planning procedures (e.g., inviting transition agencies to participate in transition IEP team meetings whenever they may be expected to provide or pay for transition services; requirements of transfer of rights notification) will be incorporated into the general staff development activities for ESE staff. District and/or school staff will conduct quarterly reviews of a sampling of IEPs (≥ 10 records) of students ages 16 or older to ensure that all transition requirements are addressed. Following an analysis of the record review results, district staff will determine if additional training is required or targeted meet compliance.	District report of self-assessment reveals compliance with targeted elements for 100% of IEPs reviewed. August 2007

Findings of Noncompliance	Improvement Strategies/Interventions	Outcome Measures and Timeline
Related Factor: Transfer of Rights		
Must provide a notice that rights will transfer to the student at least one year ahead (age 16) of student reaching age 18.	Improvement strategies/interventions identified immediately above.	Outcomes measures and timelines identified immediately above.
Related Factor: Summary of Performance		
Summary of academic achievement and functional performance is required when student is exiting due to standard diploma or due to past age of eligibility.	<p>Training and/or technical assistance regarding summary of academic achievement and functional performance will be incorporated into the general staff development activities for ESE staff.</p> <p>District and/or school staff will conduct reviews of a sampling of IEPs (≥ 10 records) of students exiting due to standard diploma or due to past age of eligibility to ensure that all summary of performance requirements are addressed.</p>	<p>District report of self-assessment reveals compliance with targeted elements for 100% of IEPs reviewed.</p> <p>August 2007</p>
Department of Juvenile Justice		
General		
Continuum of alternative placements must be available from the district to meet the needs of all its students.	<p>Training and/or technical assistance regarding continuum of alternative placements will be incorporated into the specific staff development activities for DJJ staff.</p> <p>District will conduct a survey following training and/or technical assistance to determine increased knowledge of the continuum of alternative placements available.</p>	<p>District report of training and completion of survey identifying increase in staff knowledge.</p> <p>August 2007</p>
IEP Requirements/Implementation		
<p>IEP must be implemented.</p> <p><i>Areas of concern are noted in the body</i></p>	The district will review the process at the DJJ facility for placement, provision of services and development and implementation of IEPs, with	District report of self-assessment reveals compliance with targeted elements for 100% of IEPs reviewed.

Findings of Noncompliance	Improvement Strategies/Interventions	Outcome Measures and Timeline
<i>of the report.</i>	<p>specific emphasis given to course code enrollment and certification of teachers providing instruction. Based on that review, a procedure will be developed and implemented to ensure that students are enrolled appropriately and an IEP developed and implemented.</p> <p>Facility and/or district staff will conduct compliance reviews of a random sample of records for students at least once every quarter, to ensure appropriate enrollment and service provision.</p> <p><i>The district is encouraged to include strategies to address concerns noted in the body of this report.</i></p>	August 2007
Matrix of Services		
No findings of non-compliance		
Record Reviews		
37 TP/IEP teams must reconvene to address identified findings.	<p>The IEP teams for the identified students will reconvene to address identified findings. The identified noncompliant elements will be targeted in the district's IEP training. Pre-and post- training surveys will be conducted to determine perceived effectiveness of the training.</p> <p>Using protocols developed by the Bureau, school and/or district staff will conduct semi-annual compliance reviews of a random sample of 10 IEPs developed by staff who participated in the training session.</p>	<p>Documentation submitted and accepted by the Bureau within prescribed timeline. District report of self-assessment reveals compliance with targeted elements for 100% of IEPs reviewed.</p> <p>August 2007</p>

Findings of Noncompliance	Improvement Strategies/Interventions	Outcome Measures and Timeline
Forms Review		
14 forms require the district to make corrections.	The district will revise forms as required and submit them to the Bureau for review.	August 2007 and/or adoption of the Statewide IEP Program whichever occurs first.

Appendix A:
ESE Monitoring Team Members

**Florida Department of Education
Bureau of Exceptional Education and Student Services
2006-07 Focused Monitoring
DeSoto County School District**

ESE Monitoring Team Members

Department of Education Staff

Bambi J. Lockman, Chief, Bureau of Exceptional Education and Student Services
Eileen L. Amy, Administrator, ESE Program Administration and Quality Assurance
Ginny Chance, Program Director, ESE Program Administration and Quality Assurance

Barbara McAnelly, Program Specialist, Team Leader
Laura Harrison, Program Specialist
Marilyn Hibbard, Program Specialist
Angela Nathaniel, Program Specialist
Annette Oliver, Program Specialist

Peer Reviewers and Contracted Staff

Angelyn Vaughan, Okaloosa County School District

Appendix B:
Survey Results

**Florida Department of Education
Bureau of Exceptional Education and Student Services
2006-07 Focused Monitoring
DeSoto County School District**

Parent Survey Report: Students with Disabilities

FDOE has elected to use the 25-item scale from the National Center for Special Education Accountability Monitoring (NCSEAM) survey that addresses family involvement. Each family selected to be included in the annual sample received a mailed survey printed on an optical scan form accompanied by a cover letter explaining the importance of the survey and guaranteeing the confidentiality of the parent's responses. The packet also included a pre-addressed, postage-prepaid envelope for return of the survey. The survey was provided in three languages: English, Spanish, and Haitian-Creole.

Data from the surveys was scanned into an electronic database and sent to Dr. William Fisher, NCSEAM's measurement consultant, who analyzed the data and produced reports at both the state and LEA levels.

The parent survey was sent to parents of 892 students (PK-12) with disabilities in DeSoto County School District for whom complete addresses were provided by the district. A total of 72 parents, representing 8% of the sample, returned the survey. When applying the standard of measure indicating their perception of schools' facilitation of parental involvement, 26% of parents of children ages 3-21 reported their perceived level of satisfaction at or above the standard.

Appendix C:
Student Record Reviews

**Florida Department of Education
Bureau of Exceptional Education and Student Services
2006-07 Focused Monitoring
DeSoto County School District**

Student Record Reviews

A total of 37 student records of students with disabilities and one record of a student identified as gifted, randomly selected from the population of ESE students at schools visited, were partially reviewed. The records were from four schools in the district. Twenty of the records represented transition IEPs for students aged 14 or older. In addition to IEP reviews, the Bureau conducted reviews of four matrix of services documents for students reported at the 254 or 255 funding level through the Florida Education Finance Program (FEFP). Any services claimed on the matrix must be documented on the IEP and must be in evidence in the classroom.

To be determined systemic in nature, an item must be found noncompliant in at least 25% of the records reviewed. In DeSoto County, at least 10 of the IEPs must have been noncompliant on a given item to be considered a systemic finding. For 25 of the 37 IEPs more than 50% of the goals were not measurable, and IEP teams must be reconvened to address this finding. The district was notified of the specific students requiring reconvened IEP meetings in a letter dated November 17, 2006.

Systemic findings were made in the following areas:

- Lack of measurable goals (25)

Individual or non systemic findings were noted in six additional areas.

- Lack of short term objectives or benchmarks containing criteria or time frame (6)
- Lack of special education service or specially designed instruction to assist the student in progressing in appropriate activities and meeting annual goals (6)
- Lack of placement decision appropriately identified by IEP team (6)
- Lack of LRE placement form reflecting placement based on IEP team decision (6)
- Lack of identification of the frequency of related service sufficient to determine the amount of services/resources dedicated (5)
- Lack of matrix of service document completed for student in DJJ facility (1)

Appendix D:
Glossary of Acronyms

**Florida Department of Education
Bureau of Exceptional Education and Student Services
2006-07 Focused Monitoring
DeSoto County School District**

Glossary of Acronyms

AE	Alternative Education
ALJ	Administrative Law Judge
BIP	Behavior Intervention Plan
Bureau	Bureau of Exceptional Education and Student Services
CFR	Code of Federal Regulations
DJJ	Department of Juvenile Justice
DOAH	Division of Administrative Hearings
DOE	Department of Education
DVR	Division of Vocational Rehabilitation
EP	Educational Plan (Gifted)
ESE	Exceptional Student Education
F.S.	Florida Statutes
FAC	Florida Administrative Code
FAPE	Free Appropriate Public Education
FBA	Functional Behavioral Assessment
FCAT	Florida Comprehensive Assessment Test
FERPA	Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act
GE	General Education
GED	General Educational Development diploma
IDEA 2004	Individuals with Disabilities Education Act of 2004
IEE	Independent Educational Evaluation
IEP	Individual Educational Plan (for students with disabilities)
IFSP	Individual Family Support Plan
LEA	Local Educational Agency
NCSEAM	National Center for Special Education Accountability Monitoring
OCR	Office for Civil Rights
OSEP	Office of Special Education Programs (USDOE)
PBS	Florida's Positive Behavioral Support Project
Pre-K	Pre-kindergarten
SBE	State Board of Education
SEA	State Educational Agency
SEDNET	Multiagency Network for Students with Severe Emotional Disturbance
SIP	System Improvement Plan
SP	Services Plan
SPP	State Performance Plan
SP&P	Special Programs & Procedures for the Provision of Specially Designed Instruction
USC	United States Code