

FINAL REPORT OF FOCUSED MONITORING OF
EXCEPTIONAL STUDENT EDUCATION PROGRAMS IN

LEE COUNTY

MAY 21 - 25, 2001



FLORIDA DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
BUREAU OF INSTRUCTIONAL SUPPORT AND COMMUNITY SERVICES



FLORIDA DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

CHARLIE CRIST
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BUREAU OF INSTRUCTIONAL SUPPORT
AND COMMUNITY SERVICES

June 17, 2002

Dr. John W. Sanders, Superintendent
Lee County Public Schools
2055 Central Avenue
Fort Myers, FL 33901-3988

Dear Superintendent Sanders:

We are pleased to provide you with the final copy of your monitoring report from our visit on May 21-25, 2001. This report reflects revisions made after the preliminary report, based upon written correspondence from and telephone conversations with your staff.

Please note the following:

- Any forms the district develops to respond to findings of noncompliance must be submitted to the Bureau for review within 30 days of development.
- Quarterly summaries of the district's activities related to the implementation of the system improvement measures, as stated in this report, beginning September 1, 2002 and extending until the end of the 2002-03 school year unless otherwise noted, must be submitted to the Bureau.
- The district's progress related to system improvement measures via the continuous improvement monitoring process will be reviewed.

Copies of this report are also being sent to the chairperson of the Lee County School Board and the principals of the schools visited.

If my staff can be of any assistance as you continue to implement the system improvement measures, please contact me or Eileen Amy, Program Administration and Evaluation Administrator at 850-488-1570 or via electronic mail at goffs@mail.doe.state.fl.us or amye@mail.doe.state.fl.us.

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

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Shan Goff".

Shan Goff, Chief
Bureau of Instructional Support and Community Services

Enclosure

cc: Katherine Boren
Terry Andrews
Mike Bursztyn
Charles F. Bell
Sylvia Gibson
Betty Cox

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INTRODUCTION

The Florida Department of Education, through the Bureau of Instructional Support and Community Services, in carrying out its role of leadership, resource allocation, technical assistance, monitoring, and evaluation is required to: examine and evaluate procedures, records, and programs in each school district of the state to determine compliance with state law and State Board of Education Rules; provide information and assistance to the superintendents and other district personnel in correcting deficiencies; and otherwise assist the districts in operating effectively and efficiently (Section 229.565, Florida Statutes, and Rule 6A-1.0453, Florida Administrative Code). Additionally, the Florida Department of Education, as the State Educational Agency, is required to supervise school district implementation of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) and its implementing regulations in Part 300 of Title 34 of the Code of Federal Regulations.

METHOD

With guidance from a work group charged with the responsibility of recommending revisions to the Bureau's monitoring system, substantial revisions were initiated during the 2000-2001 school year. Three types of monitoring processes have been established as part of a comprehensive system of monitoring and oversight including: Focused Monitoring; Continuous Improvement/Self Assessment Monitoring; and Random Monitoring. Focused monitoring is the first type to be piloted by the Bureau and is the foundation for the activities and outcomes described in this report.

The revised monitoring system reflects the Department's commitment to providing assistance and service 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 and state laws, rules, and regulations. In addition, the monitoring system serves to ensure implementation of corrective actions such as those required subsequent to monitoring by the U.S. Department of Education, Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP) and other quality assurance activities of the Department.

Focused Monitoring

The purpose of the focused monitoring process is to implement a methodology that targets the Bureau's monitoring intervention on key data indicators ("triggers") that are identified as having significance in terms of educational outcomes for students. Through this process the Bureau uses such data to inform the monitoring process, thereby implementing a strategic approach to subsequent intervention and commitment of resources.

The monitoring restructuring work group recommended four "triggers" or data elements to examine for the 2000-2001 pilot year and for the next several years.

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Those data elements included: percentage of students with disabilities participating in regular education classes (i.e., spending at least 80% of the school day with their non-disabled peers); dropout rate for students with disabilities; percentage of students with disabilities exiting with a standard diploma; and participation of students with disabilities in statewide assessments. The Bureau analyzed data related to these triggers and districts were selected to be monitored based on the results. Each district selected for monitoring was examined based on one selected trigger and eight topical areas. These topical areas are used to organize this report and are discussed in further detail on page 3.

Lee County School District was selected as one of four pilot sites to be monitored based on the results of a review of data submitted electronically to the Department of Education Information Database for surveys 2, 3, 5, and 9 and from the assessment files. The trigger identified for Lee County School District as a result of this review was the dropout rate for students with disabilities. In addition to the data related to the trigger, the following information for the school years 1997-98 through 1999-00 was also examined in preparation for the monitoring visit: participation rate and student performance on state assessments; retention rate; separate class placements for students identified as educable mentally handicapped; discipline rates; and prevalence data.

A profile containing data indicators that describe measures of educational benefit, the status of the Lee County School District with respect to placement of students with disabilities in the least restrictive environment, and student membership in programs for students with disabilities and those identified as gifted was developed and is included as Appendix A. The information is presented for Lee County School District, districts of comparable enrollment size, and the state. Where appropriate and available, comparative data for non-disabled students are included. The intent of the profile is to provide a tool that will help target areas that hold potential for the greatest improvement, thereby improving outcomes for exceptional students in the district.

Parent Survey

In order to provide maximum opportunity for input from parents, on April 27, 2001, a survey was mailed to the parents of 9,667 students with disabilities and 4,285 gifted students currently enrolled in Lee County's programs. The survey has been used for the past two years in 26 school districts as part of the ongoing monitoring of Exceptional Student Education (ESE) programs. The survey was designed for the Bureau by the University of Miami research staff to capture parent perceptions on a number of factors. Responses were received from 1508 parents of students with disabilities (128 pre-k; 767 grades k-5; 419 grades 6-8; and 194 grades 9-12) and 1,215 gifted students (692 grades k-5; 520 grades 6-8; and 3 grades 9-12). Results of the survey will be discussed, as appropriate, in the body of this report. Data from the survey responses are included as Appendix B.

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On-Site Monitoring Activities

The on-site visit in Lee County was conducted during the week of May 21, 2001. Persons conducting the on-site activities included: four Department of Education (DOE) staff accompanied by three consultants, two of whom are assisting the Department in restructuring monitoring; four peer monitors; and, two consultants with two observers from the University of Miami (see Appendix C). Peer monitors are ESE personnel from other districts who have been trained to assist with the DOE's monitoring of school districts. Each of the persons who served as peer monitors during this review previously participated in a minimum of two other monitoring visits during previous years.

On-site monitoring activities consisted of: student record reviews; interviews with school and district staff; parent focus group interview; student focus group interviews; and student case studies. These activities were used to inform the following topical areas, which are defined as:

Dropout Rate (Trigger)

- Students with disabilities will stay in school and graduate.

General Supervision (34 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) 300.600)

- Effective general supervision is ensured through the district's development and utilization of mechanisms and activities, in a coordinated system, that results in all eligible exceptional education students having an opportunity to receive a free appropriate public education in the least restrictive environment.

Parent Participation (34 CFR 300.345)

- Provision of a free appropriate public education to children and youth with disabilities is facilitated through parent involvement in special education services.

Least Restrictive Environment (34 CFR Sections 300.130 and 300.550 – 300.556)

- Children with disabilities are educated and participate in activities and services with their nondisabled peers.

Gifted Services

- Students identified as gifted receive exceptional student education services and are afforded rights under state law.

Child Find (34 CFR 300.125 and 300.530)

- Children with disabilities are identified and their needs are determined based on information from an appropriate evaluation.

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Part C to Part B Transition (34 CFR 300.132)

- Transition planning results in needed supports and services, available and provided, as appropriate, to a child and the child's family when the child exits the Part C program.

Secondary Transition (34 CFR 300.29 and 300.347(b)(1)(2))

- The transition services needs of students with disabilities, beginning at 16 and younger when appropriate, are considered by the individual educational plan (IEP) team through an outcome-oriented process which promotes movement from school to post-school activities. Beginning at 14, a course of study statement is included in the IEP development process.

Access to General Curriculum (34 CFR 300.138(a) and 300.347 (a)(3))

- Students with disabilities are provided access to the general curriculum with modifications, accommodations, supplementary aids and supports in order to make satisfactory progress.

System Improvement

Following the provision of the preliminary report, the district was charged with the responsibility of designing system improvement measures. The system improvement measures address each of the topical areas. Action steps will be identified by the district with corresponding target completion dates and measures that will be used to assess the effectiveness of the action steps.

Sample

DOE provided a list of 75 randomly selected students with disabilities and requested that district personnel secure the records of the first 30 students on the list who were still enrolled in the district. This group of student names was identified as the "core sample." In addition, a "supplemental sample" of additional student records was identified. DOE provided a list of 15 random student names for the supplemental sample in each of the following categories: students who were identified as gifted; children served in the prekindergarten program for children with disabilities; students determined eligible for low incidence programs; African-American students who were identified as EMH (Educable Mentally Handicapped); and, students who were enrolled in a center school for students with disabilities. District personnel secured the records for the first five active names in each of those supplemental categories.

DEMOGRAPHIC INFORMATION

As reported for the 1999-00 school year, Lee County School District has a total school population (PK-12) of 56,104 with 9,010 (16%) being identified as students with disabilities and 4,235 (8%) as gifted. Lee County is considered a "large" district and is one of seven districts in this enrollment group. Of the total Lee school population: 67% are white; 16% are black; and 14% are Hispanic. Of the students with disabilities: 60% are white; 26% are black; and 13% are

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Hispanic. Racial/ethnic data for students with a primary exceptionality of specific learning disabled (SLD), emotionally handicapped (EH), severely emotionally disturbed (SED), and educable mentally handicapped (EMH) are presented in Appendix A.

Lee County School District is comprised of 66 schools of which three are alternative high schools and four are designated as ESE schools. There are three Department of Juvenile Justice facilities in Lee County.

DATA PROFILE

Lee County was selected for monitoring based on the results of the review of the data that indicated a high percentage of students with disabilities dropping out of school. Appendix A provides data related to the dropout rate of students grades 9-12 for whom a dropout withdrawal reason was reported. According to the 1999-00 data, 7% of Lee County's students with disabilities were reported as dropping out of school as compared to 5% for districts of similar enrollment group and 6% as the State's average. Data indicate an increase in the dropout rate for all students including students with disabilities from 1998. Appendix A provides more detailed information.

RECENT MONITORING ACTIVITIES AND RESULTS

Lee County conducted a self-assessment of ESE programs during the 1997-98 school years. The district reported findings in two areas: (1) the least restrictive environment (LRE) form lacked sections for the documentation of previous educational placements and identification of modifications that were either considered or attempted; and, (2) two student records were missing either the social history or a second observation as part of the pre-referral process.

Lee County was monitored by the Department of Education, Office of Multicultural Student Language Education in 1998. Two of the findings related to students with disabilities are reported below.

- There was no evidence of consideration of native language in the eligibility determinations during and after referral for ESE programs.
- Communication to parents regarding placement in ESE was only in English.

The most recent audit by the Auditor General was conducted in 1998 for the year ending in June 1997. Funding adjustments included, but were not limited, to the following: incorrect reporting of students; incorrect reporting of range of time for reporting; and, failure to appoint teachers in accordance with out-of-field requirements.

Quality Assurance Reviews of the Juvenile Justice Enhancement Program were conducted in 1998, 1999, and 2000 at the Southwest Florida Detention Center, Southwest Florida Marine Institute, and Price Halfway House. In 2000, the

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Southwest Florida Detention Center had all satisfactory or above ratings; Southwest Florida Marine Institute was out of compliance in the area of transition; and, Price Halfway House had four partial compliance ratings in the areas of educational file maintenance, assessment, academic plan, and implementation of the school improvement plan.

HISTORY OF COMPLAINT RESOLUTION

Since 1990, there have been 27 requests for due process hearings filed in Lee County of which five went to a formal hearing. The issues involved private school placement, IEP and free appropriate public education (FAPE) considerations, and change of placement. The district prevailed at three of the hearings while the parents prevailed at one hearing. One hearing resulted in a "Stipulated Order."

Fourteen complaints have been filed since 1990 for which 13 Orders have required corrective actions. Six complaints resulting in corrective actions were filed in the last two years. The issues involved extended school year services, independent evaluations, appropriate district response (including provision of an "Informed Notice of Refusal", if needed) when parent requests were made, development of appropriate IEP goals and objectives, providing instruction relative to the described goals and objectives, evaluating students in a timely manner; development and implementation of a behavior plan, parent training, provision of therapies, and assistive technology evaluations.

ORGANIZATION OF THE REPORT

This report is organized by the topical areas identified on page three of the report. For each of the areas, this report will provide information regarding background information, strengths identified in the district, concerns, findings of noncompliance, and plans for system improvement. This information is derived from on-site monitoring activities (student record reviews, interviews with school and district staff, a parent focus group interview, student focus group interviews, and case studies) and the parent survey. Included in Appendix D is a glossary of acronyms used in this report.

This report focuses, to the extent possible, on systemic issues rather than on isolated instances of noncompliance. Systemic issues are those areas of noncompliance and concern that occur at a sufficient enough frequency that the review team could reasonably infer a systemic problem.

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FINDINGS

Focus group interviews for students preparing for a special diploma and students preparing for a standard diploma were held separately. A total of 18 students participated in the special diploma focus group interview (seven students from the twelfth grade at the Edison Center at Fort Myers High School and eleven students at North Fort Myers High School of whom four were in the ninth grade, four in the tenth grade, and three in the eleventh grade). Eighteen students preparing for a standard diploma participated in two separate focus group interviews (nine students from the eleventh grade at Fort Myers High School and nine students at North Fort Myers High School of whom eight were in tenth grade and one who was in eleventh grade). Twelfth grade students at Fort Myers High School were not available to participate in the focus groups due to graduation activities.

Fifteen family members representing 18 students with disabilities participated in a parent focus group interview. The students that were represented ranged in grade levels from prekindergarten to high school graduate, and were identified by their parents as students with learning disabilities, speech impairments, emotional disabilities, Down's syndrome, and autism.

The following types of school and district level staff members were interviewed and the results of those interviews are incorporated into this report:

- District director
- District staffing specialists
- Child study representatives
- Regular education teachers
- Special education teachers
- Gifted service providers
- Curriculum specialist
- Prekindergarten specialist
- School psychologists

The following school sites were visited in order to interview school staff and conduct the case studies: Royal Palm Center School; Tropic Isles Elementary School; Franklin Park Magnet School; Bonita Springs Middle School; Fort Myers High School; and, North Fort Myers High School.

Dropout Rate

Background Information

District and school staff interviews provided an overview of the district in terms of the selection theme, dropout rate of students with disabilities. Interviews focused on the manner in which promotion and retention decisions were determined and

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disciplinary actions were implemented. Staff provided their own perspectives on the reasons for the district's dropout rate.

According to the district director, the determination for promotion and retention was made on a case-by-case basis through the examination of IEPs, Florida Comprehensive Assessment Test (FCAT) scores, course credits and other performance indicators. A school board policy on promotion and retention was reported to be in place.

Alternatives to out-of-school suspension including before and after school detention; night detention; Saturday school; in school time-out, and, in-school suspension with continued implementation of the IEP services were identified as being used at various school sites.

The "Ten Credit Pass Program" was implemented at Fort Myers High School where students earned extra credits in order to graduate. This program was open to ESE and regular education students. Regular education students were generally placed in this setting if they were significantly below grade level.

Efforts were made by schools in the district to disseminate information to parents about opportunities for non-college bound students.

Through the student focus group interview process, additional information about students with disabilities dropping out of school was obtained. Students in the special diploma groups at both schools knew students who had dropped out of school. One student stated, "All kids, not just ESE students are dropping out because of bad grades and not having all their credits." Several students suggested that schoolwork might be too difficult for some students. Students felt that they could talk to their teachers, who encouraged them to stay in school if they were considering dropping out. Some students stated that they valued their education and they planned to complete their high school education. "Dropping out'... that isn't in my vocabulary!" said one student.

Students in the standard diploma groups at both schools also knew students who dropped out of school and identified laziness, boredom, various personal situations, missing too many days, not having enough credits, drugs, lack of interest, and not liking classes or school as reasons. Students expressed concern about the types of jobs that would be available to them without a diploma.

Several students reported that at one point they dropped out of high school, but later returned to complete their education. One student recalled a scenario where he felt as though he had worked very hard in a particular class, but received a lower grade than he had expected. The student discussed this situation with his guidance counselor, but to no avail. At the time, the student felt very frustrated

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and made a decision to stop attending school, but later realized “it wasn’t worth it” and returned to get his high school diploma.

One standard diploma student reported that he was thinking about dropping out because he found it very difficult to pay attention in his classes since he worked late hours.

Students in the special diploma group at one school suggested a way for schools to help keep students from dropping out.

Strengths

Interviews with district staff revealed the following strengths in the area of dropout rate.

- Certified letters were sent to all exceptional education students in the district who dropped out of school. The letter encouraged them to re-enroll or contact an agency identified in the letter.
- Although Estero High School had a high dropout rate of students with disabilities, it was noted that the consulting teacher made personal efforts to re-enroll students once they dropped out of school.

Concerns

Interviews with staff concerning issues related to dropout rate yielded these concerns.

- It was noted during a specific interview with a staffing specialist that the dropout data did not provide a clear picture of the district’s status due to block scheduling and the attendance policy. If students missed ten or more days of school, they failed. Therefore, those students ended up dropping out of school, but enrolling again for the next semester. An ESE teacher also reported that if a student was retained it is often due to the high absentee rate.
- Staff interviewed at Estero High School identified the following reasons for the high drop-out rate for all students: the allure of numerous job opportunities during the tourist season; a bilingual population being at a high risk; individual circumstances related to the lack of family finances; and a block scheduling policy which establishes that students automatically fail a course if they have ten absences. While an appeal process is in place for some circumstances of excessive absences, few students access this process. Staff reported that the high dropout rate was not just an ESE issue at the school.

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- The principal interviewed at the Royal Palm School indicated that appropriate vocational training opportunities are not available for students at an early enough age.

Findings of Noncompliance

None

System Improvement: Dropout Rate

Action Steps	Contact Person	Target Completion Date	Measurable Results Indicating Effective Correction
1. Data collection/analysis, survey design/administration, senior focus groups, brainstorming, and tracking of high school students as detailed in the 2001-02 Continuous Improvement Monitoring Plan submitted 9/29/01.	Mike Bursztyn, Jackie Turner, Susan Morris	May 2002	Documents indicating data collected as defined in Continuous Improvement Plan
2. Implement/expand student programs including Life Centered Career Education (LCCE) curriculum; self-determination; transition planning; talent assessment program for high schools; expansion of middle school vocational training options – career portfolios, career inventories, Dare to Dream (transition planning); ESE center school emphasis on vocational training and options; elementary intensive reading program; Quality Design for Instruction (QDI)/inclusion at all levels; charter school options for actual/potential dropouts; Truancy Intervention Program (TIP) for elementary students.	Mike Bursztyn, Jackie Turner, Susan Morris, Student Services Coordinator – Mattie Young	May 2002 Annually through the Continuous Improvement Monitoring Process	Lists of schools/classes/# of students involved in program implementation or expansion. Graduation/dropout trend data for schools involved in implementation of these programs reflects improvement.
3. Increase awareness of dropout issue via ESE Department Head meetings, identify barriers to keeping students in school, i.e., attendance and grading policies	Mike Bursztyn, Jackie Turner, Susan Morris	Annually through the Continuous Improvement Monitoring Process	Documentation of changes made to reduce/eliminate barriers to keeping students in school. Graduation/dropout trend data reflects improvement.

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System Improvement: Dropout Rate

Action Steps	Contact Person	Target Completion Date	Measurable Results Indicating Effective Correction
4. Increase dropout retrieval activities and options for students who graduated with a special diploma, or dropped out while working on a special diploma.	Jackie Turner Barbara Williams Christine Wright	May 2002 through May 2003	List of students who were brought back into the system to access educational and vocational options, including completion and attrition rates for these students.

General Supervision

Background Information

Interviews with district and school staff provided background information related to general supervision.

Guidance on compliance issues is provided by the district office to the consulting teachers who are responsible for the implementation of procedures at the school level.

Training was conducted by the district and was available to all ESE teachers, regular education teachers, paraprofessionals, substitute teachers, and teachers of the gifted. Zone (regional) meetings were held to provide school staff with the most current information. The district office notified individual principals of any major procedural changes through electronic mail or fax.

In the area of curriculum, all teachers were trained on the Sunshine State Standards and grade level expectancies. Inservice training on the general education curriculum were conducted for ESE teachers by the school curriculum specialist.

The coordinator for psychological services reported implementing new ways to measure student progress. The district currently uses the Brigance and the Performance Assessment System for Students with Disabilities (PASSD) as alternate assessments. Decisions about alternate assessments were reported as being made by the team on a case-by-case basis.

Monitoring practices that utilize a database that tracks dates of IEPs and evaluations were reported to be in place. Child study team records were maintained on the mainframe.

The district compiled data to assess its timeliness in conducting evaluations (by school and by staff member).

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Supplemental academic instruction (SAI) funds were spent at the school level with schools writing their own plans based on the needs of their students. School plans addressed extended school day activities; intensive reading instruction; tutoring for any students; and, extended school year services for ESE students.

Title I dollars were primarily used for class size reduction. Some schools funded the provision of computers for take-home programs.

The district reported being informed by the jail or detention center when students with disabilities were incarcerated. Services were provided to students who were incarcerated. It was reported that one teacher for both ESE and regular education students provided instruction. A consulting teacher was assigned to the jail/detention center to provide assistance. Itinerant therapy services are provided.

Extended school year (ESY) services were considered for students with disabilities by reviewing how far below grade level individual students were functioning, what might be considered as a substantial loss of skills, and credit retrieval.

Franklin Park Elementary School had a behavior/curriculum specialist at the center for students with emotional handicaps who was responsible for ensuring that behavioral intervention plans were implemented.

The leadership for school psychological services was new and is gaining experience in the district. There was a 25% vacancy rate of psychologists that should be eliminated through the hiring of five new personnel for the next school year. The district compiled data concerning inequities in salaries between Lee and neighboring counties that could be contributing to the persistent occurrence of vacancies of school psychologists.

Royal Palm Exceptional School Center used the services of a mental health counselor paid for through a contract with the Ruth Cooper Mental Health Center. This counselor was on-site full-time and provided individual and group therapy along with crisis stabilization. A psychiatrist consulted at the center twice a month. Staff facilitated referrals to other community-based agencies including Camelot and Lutheran Social Services for additional services and family support.

Strengths

Interviews with district and school staff yielded strengths in the area of general supervision.

- Forty teachers were trained in the “Glasser's Quality Schools” model to address ongoing student behavior issues at Tropic Isles Elementary School.

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- Franklin Park Elementary School planned to implement the “Stetson” inclusion model during the next school year.
- The district’s ESE office conducted summer institutes for staff and parents and received very positive reviews from participants.
- A database was developed that will track the progress of students receiving alternate assessments.

Concerns

Interviews with district and school staff yielded the following concerns related to the area of general supervision.

- There was not a clear understanding of extended school year services as differentiated from summer school.
- The district director reported a concern about the lack of consistency with reporting student progress on the implementation of IEPs. This lack of consistency was also observed in the record review process for the visit.
- The district director reported that the process of decision making used by IEP teams to determine a student's participation in the FCAT assessment was inconsistent.
- The focus of monitoring by the district was primarily related to procedural issues such as reevaluation dates and IEP meeting dates. Examination of the implementation of IEPs and classroom level accountability was not included in the process.
- Regular education teachers at Estero High School reported that they were infrequently in attendance at IEP team meetings. Other methods such as reports and emails were used to provide the teacher’s input at the IEP meeting.

Through the record review process and case studies, these concerns related to general supervision were noted.

- The list of persons attending the IEP meeting did not specifically distinguish between special and regular education teachers in that only “teachers” were identified and marked on the notice.
- The IEP form did not provide two signature lines (one for regular education teacher and one for special education teacher) that would help distinguish between the two types of participants.

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- The statement referring to the requirement that parents had the right to bring someone with special knowledge and expertise about their child to the meeting could be expressed more clearly.
- Program accommodations and modifications identified on the IEPs appeared to be related to only general education classes.
- There was inconsistent use of the most recently developed IEP forms.
- There was no evidence of LRE forms being completed for students removed from the regular classroom for more than 50% of the day. The LRE components were reported to be distributed throughout the IEP form and were not easily recognizable.
- There was some discrepancy between a matrix rating of 254 and what was reported and/or observed for one student. In this case, the social/emotional section of the IEP indicated that a structured behavior management plan was to be infused throughout the school day. The staff members who were interviewed, however, indicated that no behavior intervention plan existed.

Results of the parent focus group interviews also yielded some concerns related to general supervision.

- Several parents participating in the focus group interview felt that IEP meetings generally did not result in the desired services being placed on the IEPs and attributed this, in part, to school principals and other school administrators not wanting to help them get services for their children. As a parent described, "The IEP is still not what I want for my child." Another parent stated, "Last IEP a year ago ... was an 8-hour, 2-day agonizing affair. I didn't have backing from [school] administration." It should be noted that this parent's child was moved to a different school and the parent reported subsequent positive experiences at the two IEP meetings that were held during the past school year.
- Some parents expressed concern over not being informed by the district regarding their rights and responsibilities.
- Some parents also expressed concerns regarding the evaluation and placement processes, including the use of independent evaluations.
- Several parents indicated concern over the manner in which their children's schools dealt with discipline problems. A few parents felt that their children's schools had handled behavior problems inappropriately by sending the children home.

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Findings of Noncompliance

A review of the student records and case studies yielded non-compliance items related to general supervision. None of these items listed below are isolated cases but rather represent multiple instances. An example or explanation is provided for each compliance item, when appropriate.

- Some notices of the IEP meetings failed to identify all the purposes of the meeting.
Explanation: Notices failed to identify transition services as being a purpose of the IEP meeting. Other notices did not identify the consideration of reevaluation needs and possible change of placement as purposes of the IEP meeting.
- Some notices of the IEP meetings did not include a complete listing of the persons who would attend the meeting.
Example: There was evidence on the review of IEPs that individuals who attended the IEP meeting were not identified on the notices. For example, a speech and language therapist attended the IEP meeting. However, that type of practitioner was not identified on the notice.
- Clear documentation of the staff member who served as the interpreter of instructional implications of testing was not evident on IEPs.
- Some IEPs did not include a statement indicating how the student's disability affects the student's involvement and progress in the general curriculum.
Explanation: Some statements focused on student need rather than the impact of the student's disability on participation in the curriculum
- Some IEPs did not include measurable annual goals.
Examples:
"Prepare for Florida Writes and FCAT."
"Will use the reading process effectively."
- Some IEPs did not include required short-term objectives or benchmarks.
Explanation:
In some cases, there was only one short-term objective associated with an annual goal.
- In the case of some students whose behavior impedes his or her learning or that of others, there was no evidence that the IEP team considered strategies and supports to address the behavior. Behavior goals in these instances were not developed, nor was there documented discussion of students' behavioral needs.

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- On some IEPs, there was no evidence that related services were addressed.
Explanation:
The related services section on the IEP form was left blank. On one IEP, the related service was identified not by service, but by the service provider's name.
- On some IEPs there was no evidence that the need for supplementary aids and services and/or supports for school personnel were addressed.
Explanation:
These sections on the IEP forms were left blank.
- Some IEPs did not provide an explanation of the extent, if any, to which the students will not participate with non-disabled students in the regular class.
- The IEP form (form 9/00r) incorrectly identifies the section addressing the explanation of the extent that the student will not participate with nondisabled students as only pertaining to students removed for more than 50% of the school day.
- The IEP form incorrectly identifies the regular class placement percentage as 70% rather than 80%.
- For some IEPs there was no evidence that, if the IEP team determined that the student would not participate in a particular state or district-wide assessment, a statement explaining the reason was provided.
Explanation:
If the IEP team determines that a student will receive an alternate assessment, a rationale or reason needed to be provided.
- Student progress reports did not describe the extent to which that progress is sufficient to enable the student to achieve the goal by the end of the year.
- Some annual goals and short-term objectives or benchmarks did not address the needs identified on the present level of educational performance statement.
Example:
Present level of education performance statements indicated areas of weakness with no goals identified that addressed those areas. For one student, the present level of educational performance statement indicated below grade level performance in math (8th grade student with a 4th grade math level). However, the content of the IEP did not address this nor did it address organization skills which was another area of need identified in the present level statement.

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- For some IEPs there was insufficient evidence that the IEP team considered the results of the initial evaluation, most recent evaluation, or the results of the student's performance on the state assessment.
Explanation:
Results of the evaluations were not documented on the IEP form. In some cases, the date of the most recent evaluation was provided.
- For some IEPs there was insufficient evidence that the IEP team considered the extended school year needs of the student.
- For some IEPs there was no evidence that, when a change in placement or significant change in service occurred, parents received informed prior written notice of a change of placement/FAPE.
Examples:
Prior notice was not provided when a student who was no longer receiving speech services.
For another student, the staffing report showed a change in eligibility with no evidence of prior written notice provided to the parent.
- For some IEPs, there was no evidence that students were invited to transition IEP meetings, beginning at age 14.
- For some IEPs, there was no evidence that students' preferences were taken into account in the development of the transition IEP.
Explanation:
For students who did not attend their transition meeting, there was no documentation that their preferences were considered.

The following non-compliance items were identified on specific student records requiring fund adjustments.

- Two IEPs reviewed were not current. For one record, the most current IEP was dated 5/1/00, and the date of the scheduled review was 5/21/01. For a second record, the most recent IEP was dated 4/11/00.
- A review of a third student record revealed multiple findings for a student who was initially placed in an exceptional education program within the past twelve months including lack of evidence that an eligibility staffing occurred and insufficient evidence that the child met eligibility criteria.

As part of the monitoring process, ESE forms used by the district were reviewed for compliance to state and federal law. Several forms were identified as non-compliant, and must be revised to include the necessary components. More detailed information regarding specific revisions to be made to the forms has been provided to the district under separate cover.

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System Improvement General Supervision

Action Steps	Contact Person	Target Completion Date	Measurable Results Indicating Effective Correction
1. Provide "Training the Trainers" IEP workshops for ESE Consultative Teachers (CTs).	Jackie Turner Susan Morris Mike Bursztyn	May 2002 2002-2003	Documentation of training provided. Documentation of training from CTs to school-based teachers. Random IEP self-assessment report reveals effective implementation of training in identified areas
2. Provide Alternate Assessment workshops to ESE staffing and instructional staff.	Jackie Turner	January 2002 2002-2003	Documentation of participants. Random IEP reviews of students evaluated using alternate assessments at targeted school sites indicate that an explanation is included for why a student takes an alternate assessment.
3. Revise/create forms to align with DOE noted noncompliance issues.	Jackie Turner Susan Morris Mike Bursztyn	February 2002 Summer 2002	Forms revised/created and in use in the district. Forms sent to DOE for compliance review.
4. Needs assessment is conducted at selected school sites to determine specific technical assistance needs. Provide regularly scheduled workshops and technical assistance to CTs, ESE Department Heads, to address issues of quality IEP writing, Facilitated IEPs, FCAT scores interpretation, transition.	Jackie Turner Susan Morris Jackie Turner	On going 01-02, 02-03 school years.	Schedule of workshops and technical assistance topics will be established. Documentation of meetings/workshops conducted on an every 4-6 week basis. Random IEP self-assessment report reveals effective implementation of training in identified areas

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System Improvement General Supervision

Action Steps	Contact Person	Target Completion Date	Measurable Results Indicating Effective Correction
5. Create and implement districtwide method of communicating up-to-date ESE compliance data to schools.	Mike Bursztyn District MIS Staff	February 2002	Improved compliance as a result of weekly downloads to schools during the weeks prior to Oct and Feb FTE.
6. Design and implement model of centralized ESE data entry for the district.	Mike Bursztyn	August 2002	Random data verification at selected school sites reflects improved compliance and FTE reports.
7. Revision of the Functional Behavioral Assessment (FBA) and Behavior Improvement Plan (BIP) process and format.	Elaine Ford	January 2003	Creation of process that is “user friendly”, and applicable to general education students [Child Study Team Academic Improvement Plan (AIP)/BIP children] as well as ESE. Verification of improved process through qualitative responses from users.

Parent Participation

Background Information

In preparation for transition planning meetings, surveys are sent to parents that would provide information that correlates to the section on the first page of the IEP entitled, “student desires and parent concerns.”

Coordinators conduct zone meetings where information on IDEA requirements related to parent participation and parents rights is presented.

The Choice Office is available to work with parents if a change in school location is recommended as a result of an IEP team meeting.

Parents can apply through the School Board for membership on the district’s ESE Advisory Council. The Board was reported as making efforts to diversify the representation of parents by exceptionality of the child and zone. Parents were encouraged to serve on the local school advisory boards and the district plans to implement focus group interviews that would allow parents opportunities to

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provide input. The district established a variety of task forces and parents of exceptional education students are encouraged to participate.

Strengths

Strengths in the area of parent participation were noted as a result of interviews with district and school staff.

- The district is in the process of establishing "Parent Link" which is a phone network where parents can access information on students' grades and test scores.
- Tropic Isles Elementary School reported that a parent involvement specialist was hired to help increase contact with parents. This individual will also assist parents with transportation to and from school meetings.
- Parents were included in the summer institutes conducted by the district on ESE issues.
- At Tropic Isles Elementary School, parent notices for IEP meetings were sent out 25 days in advance so that parents would have ample time to arrange their personal and work schedules.
- It was noted that there were telephones in every classroom at Ft. Myers High School to facilitate communication between school staff and parents.

The case studies yielded several strengths related to parent participation.

- Teachers contacted parents by phone, conducted home visits, provided quarterly progress reports, sent home behavioral and academic point sheets, and conducted parent conferences.
- A variety of tools to communicate student progress to parents were used including student led conferences, portfolios of student work, and behavior charting.

Concerns

Through the student record review process, staff interviews, and case studies, concerns related to parent participation were noted.

- The responsibility to reschedule IEP meetings that were not at a convenient time and place for parents was placed on parents rather than on the district.

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- Interviews with staff indicated that parent participation was a concern for many schools. Staff did not appear to have adequate training to encourage and solicit parent input and participation in the evaluation process.
- Parents participating in the focus group interview expressed concern over the lack of information available from the district regarding their rights and responsibilities. One parent described having to research information about her child's disability on her own.

Parents provided the following recommendations for improvement:

- Provide training for parents, teachers, bus drivers, and aides on specific disabilities;
- Encourage more communication between parents and school administrators, teachers, and resource staff;
- Provide more information about ESE services and rights of parents and teachers;
- Encourage principals and teachers to be more welcoming and supportive of ESE students;
- Encourage principals to be more receptive to parent and teacher recommendations with regard to services provided for ESE students;
- Establish accountability measures to provide assurances at district and state levels;
- Base staffing on service needs documented on the IEPs;
- Write objective and measurable goals on the IEPs;
- Reduce class sizes so that ESE students can receive more individualized instruction; and
- Provide more funding for ESE programs and services.

Findings of Noncompliance

A review of the student records yielded non-compliance items related to parent participation. None of these items listed below are isolated cases but rather represent multiple instances. An example or explanation is provided for each compliance item, when appropriate.

- For some IEPs there was insufficient evidence that the IEP team considered the concerns of the parents for enhancing the education of their child.
Explanation:
For those parents who did not attend their child's IEP meeting, there was no evidence that their concerns were solicited.

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System Improvement: Parent Participation

Action Steps	Contact Person	Target Completion Date	Measurable Results Indicating Effective Correction
1. Update and disseminate "Parent Partnerships Link" booklet.	Donna D'Jerf Mike Bursztyn	January 2002	Printing and dissemination of publication.
2. Revision of Parent Notification Letter	Jackie Turner Susan Morris Mike Bursztyn	February 2002	Form revised and submitted to DOE for compliance review..
3. Include parents in invitations to participate in ESE staff training for IEPs, Facilitated IEP Model, behavioral techniques and strategies.	Jackie Turner Susan Morris Mike Bursztyn Elaine Ford Donna D'Jerf	On-going 01-02 to include summer 02	Documentation of parent invitation to enroll in ESE workshops/training and documentation of actual parent participation. through feedback solicited from parent participants via a training evaluation instrument.
4. Utilize IDEA funded "Parent Liaison" position to provide direct support to parents, to include provision of IEP training.	Donna D'Jerf Mike Bursztyn	May 2002	Documentation of training, participants, and participant feedback.
5. Include parents of ESE students on specific task forces, seek input from ESE parents (ESE Advisory) regarding targeted issues.	Susan Morris	On going 01-02	Documentation of parent input and participation

Least Restrictive Environment

Background Information

Interviews with district and school staff provided background information related to general supervision.

The district director reported that IEP teams considered regular classroom placement for students with disabilities before any other options.

Sixteen schools implemented the Stetson inclusion model. Ten additional schools are expected to implement the model during 2001-2002 school year.

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Consultative teachers provided support to teachers and students at each school.

Principals were generally supportive of efforts to include students with disabilities in regular education classrooms.

Steering committee meetings that included board members, the district director, inclusion teachers, principals, and curriculum specialists were held regularly to examine issues related to providing supports for students and teachers in the regular education setting.

The behavior specialists worked from the district office to provide preventative measures toward reducing discipline problems, either on a school-wide basis or with individual students. The specialists performed functional behavior assessments (FBA), assisted in the development of behavioral intervention plans, provided supports and suggested instructional and behavioral strategies to teachers, and conducted home visits.

Several students from the Royal Palm Exceptional Center have participated in sports at their "home" school.

Principals reported that students with disabilities were encouraged to participate in all school-wide activities.

The district paid for the transportation of students from center schools to non-centers schools so that they may participate in activities with their non-disabled peers.

In some cases, students with disabilities who are receiving instruction in full-time ESE classes were integrated into non-academic classes with their non-disabled peers.

Most students participating in the focus group interviews did not express specific concerns about placement or about their interactions with regular education students. The students indicated that they felt as though they were treated the same as regular education students.

A few ESE students who participated in the focus group interviews stated they were involved with regular education students in extra-curricular activities in and outside of school. Most of the activities, however, were not organized by the schools. Students were involved in basketball, modeling, drama/theater, football with the school team, and Tae Kwon Do. Although most students felt that their school offered enough opportunities to participate in extra-curricular activities, some students stated that they did not get involved because they either had too much homework, no transportation, or were uninterested in clubs offered at school.

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Strengths

District and school staff interviews yielded strengths related to least restrictive environment.

- Ten additional schools will be participating in the Stetson inclusion project next year. This is a pilot program being implemented in the district.
- Consulting teachers were trainers of Quality Designs for Instruction (an inclusion model).
- Students with hearing impairments were included in every activity with their non-disabled peers at Allen Park Elementary School.

Concerns

Interviews with district and school staff yielded concerns related to least restrictive environment.

- All the students with emotional handicaps at Franklin Park Elementary School received their academics, art, and music in the same class indicating that none of the students were integrated with their non-disabled peers even though they had access to general education non-academic classes.
- School psychologists were not aware of instructional strategies that could support a student with disabilities in regular classrooms with supplemental aides and services.
- Several parents participating in the focus group interview expressed concern about placement issues. Specifically, parents indicated that their children were not participating in classes with regular education students to the greatest extent possible. Some parents believed that their children were not being placed with regular education students because teachers were either not trained to work with the students, or simply did not want to work with ESE students.

Case studies yielded one concern about least restrictive environment.

- One student spent no time with non-disabled peers even though the student had a well-developed vocabulary and was capable of participating in regular education class discussions. The student had lunch in the same room as his non-disabled peers, but remained seated with his own classmates.

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Findings of Noncompliance

Case studies yielded the following finding of noncompliance.

- One student spent all day in a self-contained ESE classroom. The IEP, however, indicated a resource room placement. There was no evidence that the student received services in the resource room.

System Improvement: LRE

Action Steps	Contact Person	Target Completion Date	Measurable Results Indicating Effective Correction
1. Continue to expand and implement QDI / inclusion models. Include general education teachers in training, e.g., differentiated curriculum	Connie Galek Susan Morris	On going beginning in 2001-2002	List of schools implementing QDI models, documentation of inservice and technical support provided by ESE Department.
2. Address noncompliance issue and concerns via IEP and QDI training for CTs, Department Heads and teachers.	Connie Galek Jackie Turner Susan Morris Mike Bursztyn	May 2003	Evidence of training offered and random IEP self-assessment report reveals effective implementation of training in identified areas.
3. Conduct random monitoring at school level by comparing IEP to actual observation of placement/schedule.	Jackie Turner Susan Morris Mike Bursztyn	May 2002	Documentation of "paper" compared to "actual" services provided.
4. ESE Department will participate in the Sterling Quality Organizational Performance Excellence district initiative.	Donna Manning Jackie Turner Susan Morris Mike Bursztyn	May 2002	Documentation of participants, workshops attended, and application.
5. Reorganization to functionally and physically combine Psychological Services Department with ESE Department	Debbie Sowa Jackie Turner Susan Morris Mike Bursztyn	February 2002	Organizational chart reflecting change, physical move of Psychological Services to the ESE Department

Gifted Services

Background Information

The district director does not oversee the gifted program. The district has another staff position designated as responsible for this program.

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The referral process for the gifted program was described. Prior to screening, parents were requested to give written consent. Kindergarten screening consisted of a review of students who exceeded standards on the Woodcock Johnson. FCAT scores for 3rd through 5th graders and Gates reading scores were reviewed for all other students.

Students were assessed by a team for consideration for the gifted program.

Courses were offered by Edison Community College and Florida Gulf Coast University. Estero High School did not offer gifted classes, but advanced placement and honors classes were offered.

The principal from Franklin Park Elementary School reported having 40 gifted students participating in the curriculum for gifted two days a week. The principal from Bonita Springs Middle School reported having 4 full-time teachers of the gifted.

Tropic Isles Elementary School had a full-time gifted program.

District-wide, ongoing staff development opportunities related to gifted education were provided.

Gifted teachers were identified as liaisons to communicate with and support general education teachers in serving gifted students.

Strengths

District and school staff interviews yielded the identification of strengths related to the gifted program.

- Options were available for gifted students including full and part-time gifted classes and accelerated classes.
- Psychologists reported staying current with assessment technology. Pre-referral procedures were developed primarily by school psychologists.
- College credit courses were available through programs offered on and off school campus.

Concerns

District and staff interviews yielded the following concerns about the program for gifted students.

- The Educational Plan (EP) did not clearly specify the services gifted students were to receive. Concerns related to the form were noted: standards and objectives were unrelated to student's present levels of performance;

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evaluation procedures, criteria, and schedule were vague and unrelated to the objectives; and objectives, evaluation procedures, criteria, and service delivery model were preprinted on the EP form.

- Concerns related to the development of the EP were noted. Students' present levels of performance statements were not specific. For all records reviewed, student needs were the same (e.g., academic enrichment). On one EP, no objectives were identified. On some EPs, no evaluation procedures, criteria, and schedules were identified. On several EPs, the student's eligibility for full-time services was noted, but the service delivery model was resource room (preprinted) supported by the number of hours of services (2-6 per week).
- Partial scores in tests of intellectual functioning were routinely used in the identification process, without justification on an individual basis.
- Exit EPs were developed for all 8th graders.
- Staff interviews indicated a limited awareness of the needs of students with limited English proficiency who might also be gifted.
- The district currently has several vacant positions for school psychologists that may impact on the identification of students who are gifted.

A review of student records and the student case study yielded the following areas of noncompliance.

- The notice did not list the persons attending the meeting.
Explanation: The notice listed only the guidance counselor. The student's teacher is a required participant. However, the notice did not list the teacher. Additional persons signed the EP and they were also not listed on the notice to the parent (e.g., LEA representative, administrator, and psychologist).
- The appropriate EP team members (as identified in the district's SP & P) were not present at the EP meeting.
Explanation: There was no teacher signature on the EP.
- EPs did not include student outcomes.
Explanation: Standards and objectives are preprinted and unrelated to the student's present levels of performance. For example, the present level of performance identified the area of advanced vocabulary. Only an objective related to numeric problem solving was identified.

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- EPs did not include adequate present levels of performance or strengths and weaknesses.
Explanation: Present level of performance statements were present, but vague. No supporting information was provided in the form of test results or classroom performance.
- EPs did not include evaluation criteria.
Example: "All objectives will be completed at the 80% mastery level" does not provide a basis on which to determine progress.
- EPs did not include evaluation procedures.
Explanation: Possible evaluation procedures were listed on the EPs. However, the procedures were not specified by objective.
- EPs did not include evaluation schedules.
Explanation: No evaluation schedule was indicated.
- For an initial placement, the EP was not developed prior to placement in a special program and within 30 days following the determination of eligibility or within the time frame specified in the SP&P.
- Determination of eligibility did not appear to be consistent. For example, the student selected for the case study was determined ineligible two times following two referrals. However, the student was noted to be receiving full-time gifted services. Two other students in the same grade level at the same school were determined eligible based on the use of partial scores without substantive justification.

System Improvement: Gifted

Action Steps	Contact Person	Target Completion Date	Measurable Results Indicating Effective Correction
1. EP revision committee will be established.	Cathy Cochran	January 2002	Creation of revised EP
2. Reference partial scores in the psychological report and on the MDT form.	Cathy Cochran	On going beginning 01-02	Staffing report will provide appropriate documentation for use of partial scores. Random compliance reviews by gifted coordinator reveals compliance in documentation of use of partial scores.

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System Improvement: Gifted

Action Steps	Contact Person	Target Completion Date	Measurable Results Indicating Effective Correction
3. Technical support will be provided to Gifted teachers, Gifted Assessment Team members regarding LEP/Gifted, correct paperwork (for example, parent invite), EP team composition.	Cathy Cochran	On-going 01-02	Evidence of tech support and training provided, written tech support documentation (GAT Manual, SP & P). Random EP self-assessment report reveals effective implementation of training in identified areas.
4. Alternative service delivery models to be implemented for students entering high school.	Cathy Cochran	On-going beginning August 2002	Service delivery options available for gifted 9 th graders.
5. Continue to aggressively recruit and fill school psychologist vacancies.	Debbie Sowa	May 2002	Vacant psychologist positions filled.

Child Find

Background Information

Lee County Schools has a structured pre-referral process that systematically gathers data about the student's functioning useful to determining whether or not there may be a suspected disability. Evaluations were administered by personnel assigned to school sites.

Interview responses revealed fully functioning Child Study Teams. Appropriate interventions and activities were conducted prior to referrals for formal evaluations. The evaluation process appeared to be lengthy for some students.

Formal child study team meetings required attempting at least two academic improvement plans for periods of at least six weeks each, prior to a possible referral for formal assessment. The academic improvement plan form documented intervention processes related to academic concerns.

School staff reported that parents were routinely included in the child study team process.

The child study team at Fort Myers High School focused on Section 504 students or students needing other types of accommodations. Data about child study team outcomes were kept on individual students. However, the data were not maintained on a database since the number of students requiring child study team services was small.

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Students at Tropic Isles Elementary School were automatically referred to the child study team if they attained minimally low scores on certain standardized evaluations. They were also referred if the teacher noted behavior problems. A database was maintained for the students who were referred to the child study team process. Accommodations were in place for a twelve-week period with the child study team meeting to review success after six weeks and twelve weeks. The success of the implementation of the accommodations were judged based on results of testing and other data kept by the teacher. The referral packet was completed and a school psychologist assigned to conduct the testing. A staffing was held and eligibility was determined.

At Franklin Park Elementary School, the child study team members suggested instructional and behavioral strategies for implementation in the classroom, conducted home visits, had a nurse assist with medical information, and provided any additional resources. Teachers kept track of the implementation of the Academic Improvement Plans and were responsible for reporting back to the team. Information on the status and/or success of the interventions was maintained at the school.

Staff, parents, and students could make a referral to the child study team at Estero High School. Strategies suggested by the team were implemented and reviewed after a six-week implementation phase. Formal evaluations were conducted by the psychologist based on the results of the implementation of the strategies. Academic improvement plans were developed.

Tropic Isles Elementary School implemented academic improvement plans that were monitored by the child study team. Based on the results of the implementation of the plans, the team determined the need for formal evaluations. The success of accommodations and strategies implemented were based on data collected by the teacher.

The process that was followed for students recommended for evaluation by the child study team included an evaluation by a psychologist, review of the evaluation results by the consultative teacher, scheduling IEP team meeting after notifying the IEP team members including the parents, and the staffing where eligibility was determined.

Strengths

None were noted.

Concerns

The following concerns were noted in the area of child find as a result of district and school staff interviews.

- The interview with the school psychologist indicated an acknowledgment of disproportionate identification of ethnic minorities for some specific

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exceptionalities, but no systematic plan was in place to evaluate the circumstances of the disproportion or address the issue through staff development or programmatic changes

- Although the Superintendent addressed the over-identification of minorities in the leadership bulletin, no training for staff has been provided.
- The psychologist did not participate in the child identification process until after testing was recommended.
- School psychologists did not systematically involve families in the evaluation process.
- School psychologists did not routinely conduct or participate in functional behavioral assessments. School psychologists often did not recommend or provide related services (counseling and behavioral support) to students with disabilities, when needed.
- School psychologists were not routinely involved in IEP meetings where the reevaluation of students was considered. This was reported to often result in inappropriate requests for extensive reevaluation testing.
- At Tropic Isles Elementary School, almost all ESE students were identified as specific learning disabled.

Findings of Noncompliance

None were noted.

System Improvement: Child find

Action Steps	Contact Person	Target Completion Date	Measurable Results Indicating Effective Correction
1. Implement procedure – psychologist will be directly involved in determining three year re-evaluation need/type.	Debbie Sowa	On going 01-02, 02-03	Psychologist provides input regarding re-evaluation and definition of same (formal, informal, combination). School level trend data on the number and type of requests for reevaluation testing.

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System Improvement: Child find

Action Steps	Contact Person	Target Completion Date	Measurable Results Indicating Effective Correction
2. Increase psychologist role in proactive activities of AIP/BIP, and in role of providing FBA's for ESE students.	Debbie Sowa	On going 01-02, 02-03	Increased time spent on interventions for AIP/BIP general education students, and providing FBA components. Decrease in numbers of ESE referrals, behavioral referrals, suspensions, alternative placements, and/or expulsions.
3. Collect individual school data indicating use of informal and formal re-evaluations.	Debbie Sowa Jackie Turner Susan Morris Mike Bursztyn	May 2002	Data collected for each school. Patterns and trend lines determined.
4. Reorganize department to consolidate ESE and Psychological Services.	Debbie Sowa	On going 01-02	Organizational restructuring.

Transition from Part C to Part B Programs

Background Information

The local education agency (LEA) has written procedures, agreements, and contracts that support the transition of students from Part C to Part B.

Strengths

Interviews with district staff revealed that procedures have been implemented that provide for needed services in a timely fashion.

Concerns

None were noted.

Findings of Noncompliance

None were noted.

System Improvement

None needed.

Secondary Transition

Background Information

There is an established procedure for inviting agency participation in transition meetings. The transition specialist implemented follow-up procedures when

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agencies did not attend meetings and often called the agencies in advance as a reminder. Agencies attended meetings on a limited basis mainly due to lack of staff and their availability.

Students working toward a special diploma who participated in the focus group interviews reported having various future plans that included: joining the military; attending a vocational technical center to gain skills in computers, culinary arts, or child care; becoming a cook at a local hospital; and working as a carpenter. Several students stated that they presently had jobs at local restaurants, one student worked as a carpenter, and one student volunteered at the Salvation Army. One student, who worked at a fast food restaurant earned an employee of the year award after working there for three years.

Students in the standard diploma group reported wanting to go to college or attend a vocational technical center. Several students were currently employed in after-school jobs. Several students from both special and standard diploma groups felt that they got home too late and as a result, had trouble getting up in the morning and staying awake during classes.

Students in the special diploma groups were participating in vocational education courses such as wood shop, landscaping, and cooking. Several had taken courses at a vocational technical center including small engine work and landscaping. Students were familiar with the age and credit requirements for the on-the-job training (OJT) program.

Several students in the special diploma groups participated in the OJT program. The students were paid and received credit for working at local restaurants and at a local elementary school. Several students participated in a summer school program where they were assigned to jobs at local hospitals. Their job tasks included cooking, providing childcare, cleaning, and working in shipping and receiving. The job training program offered at one of the schools provided students transportation to and from work.

Students in the special diploma groups also stated that their schools provided them information about further job training and opportunities for them to tour local vocational technical centers. Furthermore, students at one of the schools had taken the Test of Adult Basic Education (TABE), an adult skills test necessary for admission and placement at local vocational technical centers, with accommodations. One student was already admitted to a vocational technical center.

In both the special and standard diploma groups, most students obtained their current jobs by themselves, while others got jobs through their schools. In the standard diploma group, students reported that they could get a job or find information on vocational technical programs by either talking to the guidance counselors or through the career placement programs at their schools. Students

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reviewed lists of potential employers with contact information at school. The schools helped students in both special and standard diploma groups create career portfolios that included job applications, list of references, and other pertinent information.

Students in one of the standard diploma groups were also familiar with general credit requirements for the OJT program. Several students participated in the program, but most felt that the on-the-job training they were receiving was not related to the goals they set for themselves after high school.

Most students in the special diploma groups recalled having attended a transition planning meeting. The students reported that they were able to pick their own classes without the help of their parents during IEP meetings. Several students in the standard diploma groups also recalled having attended a transition planning meeting. Students recalled having received paperwork with the graduation requirements. Some students recalled that it was difficult to talk about goals during transition meetings: "...it's hard because you don't know if your goals will change."

Strengths

Interviews with district and school staff yielded strengths related to transition.

- At Estero High School, pre-conferences were held with the ESE students before their transition meetings in order to explain the process and prepare them for what would occur. Staff reported implementing this approach due to the high absentee rate among students on the day of their transition meeting.
- At Bonita Springs Middle School, both ESE and regular education students could participate in a vocational program at another school site. Transportation was provided through the district. Bonita Springs was noted for having a strong related arts program (orchestra, band, art, television production, speech, and drama) involving students with disabilities through which life skills were developed and nurtured.
- Surveys were sent to parents prior to transition meetings to solicit input.

Concerns

None were noted.

Findings of Noncompliance

Based on student record reviews, the following findings were identified in the area of secondary transition.

- There was lack of agency invitation and/or participation at transition meetings.

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- Students at age 14 were not consistently invited to transition meetings.

System Improvement: Secondary Transition

Action Steps	Contact Person	Target Completion Date	Measurable Results Indicating Effective Correction
1. Provide district representation on Project Transition Interagency Council.	Jackie Turner	On going 01-02	Increased level of invitations and participation of outside agencies. Agency invitation format revised.
2. Provide Transition IEP training to CTs and ESE teachers, including Department Heads, with emphasis on requirements for students 14 and above.	Jackie Turner	May 2002	Documentation of training provided and list of participants. Random IEP self-assessment report reveals effective implementation of training in identified areas.
3. Data collection addressing the key indicator of “dropout rate” as indicated in the district’s 01-02 Continuous Improvement Monitoring Plan	Mike Burszty Jackie Turner Susan Morris	May 2002	See Plan.

Access to the General Curriculum

Background Information

Interviews with district and school staff and case studies provided information about the extent to which students with disabilities have access to the general curriculum.

- Students with disabilities were reported as having access to all initiatives implemented throughout the district.
- Curriculum was aligned to the Sunshine State Standards.
- School improvement plans addressed the needs of students with disabilities.
- Teachers received training on using new strategies to encourage diverse learners.
- District level training was conducted: effective instructional strategies; differentiated curriculum; directed instruction; and, Tools for Learning.
- The district director reported that students with disabilities had access to the general education curriculum even when placed in the most restrictive environments.

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- The IEP teams decided whether or not students would be involved in the general education or ESE curriculum.
- Testing accommodations were made by ESE and regular education teachers.
- Teachers were observed implementing the accommodations identified on IEPs.
- Discussion about diploma options occurred at IEP meetings. Parents and students were shown examples of FCAT materials to help in the decision making process.
- A website was available for teachers to access information about curriculum guides.
- FCAT preparation was offered to students with disabilities.
- Regular education and ESE teachers received the same training on curriculum.
- IEP teams made decisions about participation of students with disabilities in statewide assessments. It was reported that all students pursuing a standard diploma take the FCAT.
- The regular education teachers interviewed reported providing information to the IEP teams either through their participation on the team at the meetings or in writing prior to the meetings. General education teachers were routinely invited to all IEP meetings and had their classes covered, when they attended.
- Teachers reported feeling comfortable and willing to modify general education curriculum for ESE students.
- Students with disabilities participated in state and district-wide assessments. The determination was made by the IEP team after reviewing student records and progress. The types of accommodations selected were dependent on the needs of the students.
- At Estero High School, a general education course was taught in an ESE classroom indicating an understanding of access to the general curriculum.

Students in the special diploma focus group at one school were mostly in ESE classes, but reported participating in regular education courses such as drama, music, and physical education.

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Students participating in the standard diploma focus group interview at one school stated that they attended a few regular education classes in business technology, though most were ESE classes. These students felt that they covered the same topics and used the same books in most of their ESE classes as those in regular education classes. The only difference reported between the two types of classes was that teachers of ESE classes gave students more time to complete assignments. Students stated that teachers in their regular education classes provided the following adaptations: study guides; clues for finding correct answers; and, helping students individually during class.

Standard diploma students at one school, and students in both standard and special diploma focus groups at the other school participated in the FCAT and understood that they were required to pass the test in order to get a standard diploma. Students were also aware that this would be the last year for students to pass the HSCT rather than the FCAT in order to graduate with a standard diploma. No students in the special diploma focus group at Fort Myers High School participated in the FCAT or in the HSCT.

Students in both diploma focus groups at North Fort Myers High School stated that they received accommodations of extended time and alternative settings in the administration of the FCAT. Standard diploma students at Fort Myers High School reported they had received accommodations of extended time and alternative settings during the administration of the HSCT, but reported receiving no accommodations during the FCAT. As a result, some students stated that they took the FCAT seriously, while others completed the test as quickly as possible in order to get out of the testing room promptly.

Students who participated in the FCAT expressed concern over the difficulty of the test. Most students felt that they were not prepared for the FCAT and many reported that the items on the test were unfamiliar to them. One student, however, who was taking a geometry class rated the geometry problems as easy to medium and felt that even though he was not doing well in his geometry class, he had learned the skills needed to complete the geometry problems on the FCAT.

With the exception of the one student, the standard diploma focus group students at North Fort Myers High School were taking basic algebra classes and would probably not be taking geometry during their high school education since it is not a required course. Students stated that they did not know how they were going to pass the FCAT without being exposed to geometry. Although tutoring is available before and after school and teachers try to cover the FCAT material in class, students felt that the tutoring and teachers' efforts did not help because the FCAT material covered was completely different from what they were learning in their Algebra I class. Students suggested that FCAT materials be introduced in the ninth grade.

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Students in the standard diploma focus group at North Fort Myers High School felt that even though the reading materials were unfamiliar, they were able to figure out those items. However, a few of the students recently received their scores for the FCAT and none had passed the math or the reading sections even though they thought the reading section was "easy." One student described his scores as "close, but close doesn't count" and declared that he wanted a "recount."

Students in the standard diploma group at Fort Myers High School felt that the test was very long and that they were not able to prepare for the FCAT in the same manner that the regular and IB/Honors education students could. Students reported that because they worked until late hours, they could not take the time to study for the FCAT like other students.

In one case study, the teacher targeted appropriate social and behavioral skills to be addressed in the regular classroom. Opportunities to practice the skills were observed. In another case, it was evident that the student had access to the general curriculum by reviewing the coursework and schedule of classes. The student received additional reading instruction in the resource room for one period a day to help maintain her in the general education curriculum. In a third case, the student took the FCAT with accommodations. It was noted that the student performed well on the test due to receiving help in preparing for the test. The student participated in an after-school remedial program on taking the FCAT that was offered to all students.

Strengths

District and school staff interviews and the parent focus group revealed the following strengths regarding students with disabilities having access to the general classroom.

- The district cited the benefit of having consulting teachers at the schools to provide support and training for regular and ESE teachers.
- At Tropic Isles, students led conferences where they selected their own work from their portfolios and presented it to their parents.
- Most parents stated that accommodations, such as extended time, were provided during the FCAT.

Concerns

Interviews with district and school staff and case studies yielded the following concerns about students with disabilities having access to the general curriculum.

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- At Tropic Isles Elementary School, students who received services in general education were exposed to the Sunshine State Standards while those in self-contained classes were not.
- District staff indicated that it is difficult to find time for ESE and regular education teachers to meet to discuss the specific needs of students. ESE teachers were welcome to attend grade level meetings, but were often involved in their own department meetings.
- It was reported that special diploma students did not take the FCAT or even a portion of the FCAT. All special diploma students took an alternate assessment.
- Concerns were expressed by staff that young students with disabilities were exempted from taking the FCAT.
- Several students in the special diploma focus group stated that they were told which diploma they would be pursuing rather than being asked if they wanted to go for a regular or special diploma. Most students expressed that they wished they had been asked: "I wished they would have asked me. It would have been better even if it took longer. It's easier to get a job with a regular diploma." One student said that it did not matter which diploma she was getting as long as she graduated because she knew several students who weren't graduating at all.
- Some students in one of the special diploma focus groups did not want a special diploma and reported that they were going for the regular diploma because they wanted to get better jobs. "You can't get the job you want with a special diploma." [Note: Although the school had identified these students as those who would pursue the special diploma option, students were not aware that this was the case.]
- While some parents who participated in the focus group interview felt that their children's curriculum needs were being met, others were concerned about access to the general curriculum without the proper support mechanisms available. Parents expressed several concerns about instructional adaptations and accommodations their children were receiving.
- Parents also shared concerns about the inconsistencies in accommodations provided from one teacher to the next as well as from elementary to middle and high school grade levels.

Findings of Noncompliance

None were noted.

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System Improvement: Access to the General Curriculum

Action Steps	Contact Person	Target Completion Date	Measurable Results Indicating Effective Correction
1. Expand implementation of QDI/inclusion models.	Connie Galek Susan Morris	On going beginning in 01-02	List of schools implementing inclusion models, list of schools trained and receiving technical assistance for the ESE Department. Qualitative data will be gathered from participants. Baseline number of students by school who receive instruction 80% or more of the day with nondisabled peers.
2. Provide ESE Department administrative support for accessing general curriculum.	Susan Morris	On going beginning in 01-02	Assigned ESE Coordinator with responsibilities to include general education curriculum access, FCAT participation, intensive reading and inclusion models. Graduation trend data reflects increase in number of students with disabilities graduating with a standard diploma.

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SUMMARY

The purpose of the focused monitoring implemented in Lee County School District was to examine educational benefits and desired outcomes for students with disabilities and gifted students. As described earlier in this report, the process was designed to provide a mechanism that would subsequently result in improved educational benefits and outcomes. The DOE and its work group identified key data indicators that describe measures of educational benefit. These indicators are the focus of the monitoring activities. The challenge for the Department was to customize a monitoring process that would not only continue to address areas of non-compliance, but would provide information about the performance of and outcomes for exceptional education students.

Following release of the preliminary report, the district was required to develop system improvement measures for each topical area of the report. The Bureau will monitor the implementation of these system improvement measures over time and provide technical support as needed and requested by the district.

It is expected that the results and findings from this monitoring will help the district address the extent to which desired outcomes for exceptional education students are considered and provide a framework for planning for the future.

APPENDIX A – LEA PROFILE



Florida Department of Education
Division of Public Schools and Community Education
Bureau of Instructional Support and Community Services
LEA Profile

District: Lee	PK-12 Population: 56,104
School Year: 1999-00	Percent Disabled: 16%
	Percent Gifted: 8%

Introduction

This profile contains a series of data indicators that describe measures of educational benefit, educational environment and prevalence for exceptional students. The data are presented for the district, districts of comparable size (enrollment group), and the state. Where appropriate and available, comparative data for general education students are included.

Data presented as indicators of educational benefit

- Florida Comprehensive Assessment Test (FCAT) Participation and Performance
- Standard diploma rate
- Dropout rate
- Retention rate

Data presented as indicators of educational environment

- Regular class placement
- Separate class placement
- Discipline rates

Data presented as indicators of prevalence

- Student membership by race/ethnicity
- Gifted membership by free/reduced lunch and Limited English Proficiency (LEP) status
- Student membership in selected exceptionalities by race/ethnicity

Four of the indicators included in the profile, Florida Comprehensive Assessment Test (FCAT) participation, graduation rate, dropout rate, and regular class placement, are also used in the selection of districts for focused monitoring. Indicators describing the prevalence and special class placement of students identified as educable mentally handicapped (EMH) are included to correspond with provisions of the Department's resolution agreement with the Office for Civil Rights. In districts where the data reveal a significant disproportionality of minority students in EMH programs or a high percentage of EMH students served in special classes, the district may be required to conduct a school level analysis of prevalence data for EMH students.

The LEA profile is intended to provide districts with a tool for use in planning for systemic improvement. Districts are asked to thoroughly review the data and select indicators that hold potential for the greatest program improvement. Once indicators have been selected, districts will develop a plan to conduct a local in-depth analysis that will be submitted with the district's entitlement grant application.

Data Sources

The data contained in this profile were obtained from data submitted electronically by districts through the Department of Education Information Database in surveys 2, 9, 3 and 5 and from the assessment files. Data are included from school years **1997-98** through **1999-00**.

Educational Benefit

Educational benefit refers to the extent to which children benefit from their educational experience. Progression through and completion of school are dimensions of educational benefits as are post-school outcomes and indications of consumer satisfaction. This section of the profile provides data on indicators of student performance and school completion.

Participation Rate in Statewide Assessments

The number of students with disabilities taking the Florida Comprehensive Assessment Test (FCAT) divided by the number enrolled during survey 3 (February) of the same year. (Note: Only students with valid scores are included in the calculation of participation rates). The resulting percentages are reported for the three-year period from **1997-98** through **1999-2000**.

Grade 4 Participation FCAT - Reading		
1997-98	1998-99	1999-00
83%	80%	83%
68%	76%	84%
74%	76%	82%

Lee
Enrollment Group
State

Grade 5 Participation FCAT - Math		
1997-98	1998-99	1999-00
85%	85%	80%
75%	80%	84%
77%	79%	84%

Grade 8 Participation FCAT - Reading		
1997-98	1998-99	1999-00
79%	70%	66%
65%	67%	71%
69%	70%	76%

Lee
Enrollment Group
State

Grade 8 Participation FCAT - Math		
1997-98	1998-99	1999-00
75%	73%	67%
64%	68%	72%
69%	70%	76%

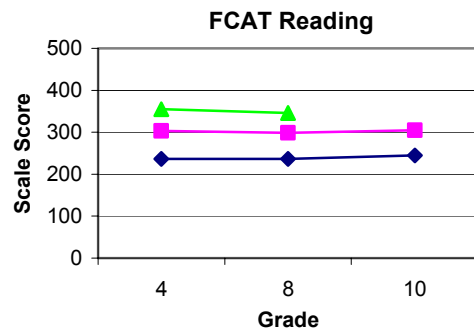
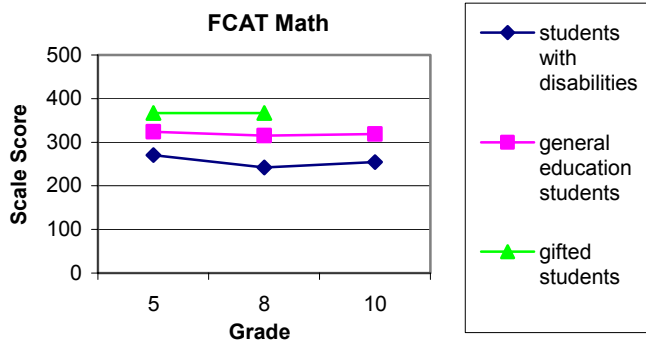
Grade 10 Participation FCAT - Reading		
1997-98	1998-99	1999-00
60%	48%	54%
49%	68%	55%
50%	66%	60%

Lee
Enrollment Group
State

Grade 10 Participation FCAT - Math		
1997-98	1998-99	1999-00
60%	50%	55%
53%	52%	55%
51%	51%	59%

Performance on Statewide Assessments

The following chart and table display the district's average scale score of all students with a valid score taking the FCAT in **1999-2000**. The averages are reported for students with disabilities, general education students, and gifted students. (Note: Tenth grade performance of gifted students may not be included due to small numbers.)



FCAT Math		
Average Scale Score		
Grade	Grade	Grade
5	8	10
271	242	254
324	315	319
367	367	

students with disabilities
 general education students
 gifted students

FCAT Reading		
Average Scale Score		
Grade	Grade	Grade
4	8	10
237	236	245
303	299	304
355	346	

The percent of students with disabilities at each achievement level on the **1999-2000** FCAT. For the calculation of school grades, high performing FCAT criteria are met when 50 percent or more students (included in the school grade) score at level 3 or above.

Grade 4 Achievement Level				
FCAT - Reading				
1	2	3	4	5
66%	16%	13%	4%	<1%
63%	15%	16%	6%	<1%
65%	13%	15%	6%	<1%

Lee
 Enrollment Group
 State

Grade 5 Achievement Level				
FCAT - Math				
1	2	3	4	5
55%	28%	11%	5%	<1%
56%	26%	12%	5%	<1%
58%	25%	11%	5%	<1%

Grade 8 Achievement Level				
FCAT - Reading				
1	2	3	4	5
70%	27%	2%	<1%	0%
70%	26%	3%	<1%	<1%
72%	24%	3%	<1%	<1%

Lee
 Enrollment Group
 State

Grade 8 Achievement Level				
FCAT - Math				
1	2	3	4	5
65%	22%	10%	3%	<1%
66%	19%	12%	2%	<1%
69%	16%	11%	2%	<1%

Grade 10 Achievement Level				
FCAT - Reading				
1	2	3	4	5
85%	14%	<1%	<1%	0%
77%	19%	<1%	3%	0%
76%	19%	<1%	3%	0%

Lee
 Enrollment Group
 State

Grade 10 Achievement Level				
FCAT - Math				
1	2	3	4	5
68%	18%	12%	<1%	<1%
63%	22%	11%	4%	<1%
65%	19%	11%	4%	<1%

Standard Diploma Graduation Rate for Students with Disabilities

The number of students with disabilities graduating with a standard diploma (withdrawal code W06) divided by the total number of students with disabilities who completed their education (withdrawal codes W06-10, W27). The resulting percentages are reported for the three-year period from **1997-98** through **1999-2000**.

	1997-98	1998-99	1999-00
Lee	51%	55%	45%
Enrollment Group	56%	71%	52%
State	59%	66%	56%

Retention Rate

The number of students retained divided by the survey 2 (October) enrollment. The results are reported for students with disabilities and all PK-12 students for **1999-2000**.

		1999-00	
		Students with Disabilities	All Students
Lee		<1%	5.5%
Enrollment Group		<1%	6.1%
State		<1%	6.8%

Dropout Rate

The number of students grades 9-12 for whom a dropout withdrawal reason (DNE, W05, W11, W13-W23) was reported, divided by the total enrollment of grade 9-12 students and students who did not enter school as expected (DNEs). Total enrollment is the count of all students who attended school at any time during the school year. The resulting percentages are reported for students with disabilities, gifted students, and all PK-12 students for the years **1998-99** through **1999-2000**.

		1998-99			1999-00		
		Students with Disabilities	All Students	Gifted Students	Students with Disabilities	All Students	Gifted Students
Lee		6%	5%	2%	7%	6%	0%
Enrollment Group		5%	not avail.	<1%	5%	4%	<1%
State		7%	5%	1%	6%	5%	<1%

Educational Environment

Educational environment refers to the extent to which students with disabilities receive special education and related services in classes or schools with their nondisabled peers. This section of the profile provides data on indicators of educational placement.

Regular Class Placement of Students with Disabilities

The number of students with disabilities ages 6-21 who spend 80 percent or more of their school week in regular classes divided by the total number of students with disabilities reported in survey 9 (December). The resulting percentages are reported for the three years from **1997-98** through **1999-2000**.

	1997-98	1998-99	1999-00 *	
	Age 3-21	Age 3-21	Age 3-5	Age 6-21
	Lee	44%	42%	14%
Enrollment Group	59%	51%	6%	47%
State	53%	51%	7%	49%

* 1999-00 percentages are separated due to change in placement categories for 3-5.

Separate Class Placement of EMH Students

The number of students ages 6-21 identified as educable mentally handicapped who spend less than 40 percent of their day with nondisabled peers divided by the total number of EMH students reported in survey 9 (December). The resulting percentages are reported for **1999-2000**.

	1999-00
Lee	77%
Enrollment Group	60%
State	61%

Discipline Rates

The number of students who served in-school or out-of-school suspension, were expelled, or moved to alternative placement at any time during the school year divided by the survey 2 (October) enrollment. The resulting percentages are reported for students with disabilities and nondisabled students for **1999-2000**.

		1999-2000							
		In-School Suspensions		Out-of-School Suspensions		Expulsions		Alternative Placement *	
		Students with Disabilities	Nondisabled Students	Students with Disabilities	Nondisabled Students	Students with Disabilities	Nondisabled Students	Students with Disabilities	Nondisabled Students
Lee		14%	11%	12%	7%	<1%	<1%	3%	2%
Enrollment Group		15%	10%	16%	8%	<1%	<1%	<1%	<1%
State		14%	9%	15%	7%	<1%	<1%	<1%	<1%

* Student went through expulsion process but was offered alternative placement.

Prevalence

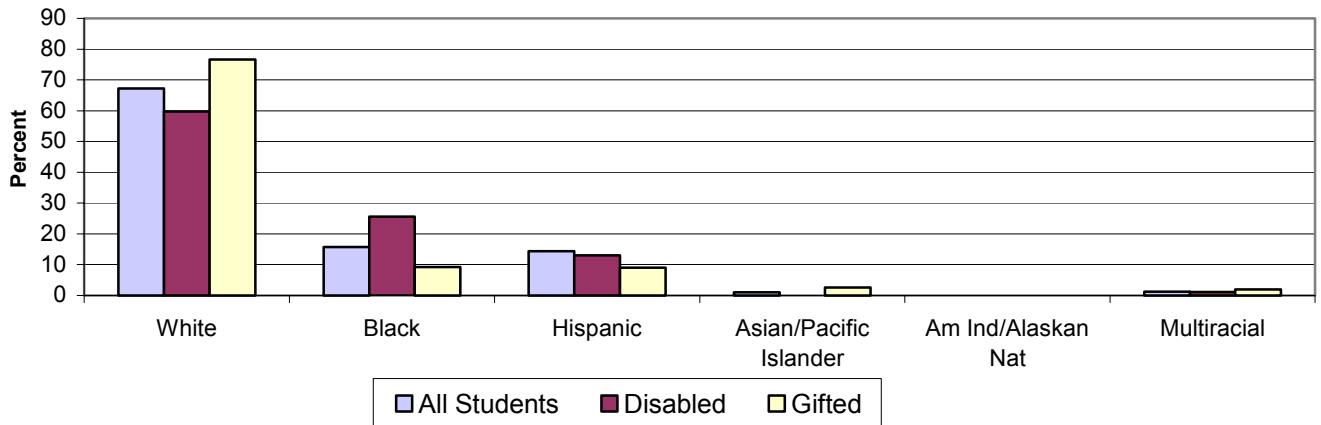
Prevalence refers to the proportion of the PK-12 population identified as exceptional at any given point in time. This section of the profile provides prevalence data by demographic characteristics.

Student Membership by Racial/Ethnic Category

The three columns on the left show the statewide racial/ethnic distribution for all PK-12 students, all students with disabilities, and all gifted students as reported in October 1999. White students make up 54 percent of both the total population and the disabled population and 68 percent of the gifted population. Statewide, there is a larger percentage of black students in the disabled population than in the total PK-12 population (29 percent vs. 25 percent) and a smaller percentage of black students in the gifted population (10 percent vs. 25 percent). Similar data for the district are reported in the three right hand columns and displayed in the graphs.

	State			District		
	All Students	Students with Disabilities	Gifted Students	All Students	Students with Disabilities	Gifted Students
White	54%	54%	68%	67%	60%	77%
Black	25%	29%	10%	16%	26%	9%
Hispanic	18%	14%	16%	14%	13%	9%
Asian/Pacific Islander	2%	<1%	4%	1%	<1%	3%
Am Ind/Alaskan Nat	<1%	<1%	<1%	<1%	<1%	<1%
Multiracial	1%	<1%	1%	1%	1%	2%

District Student Membership by Racial/Ethnic Category



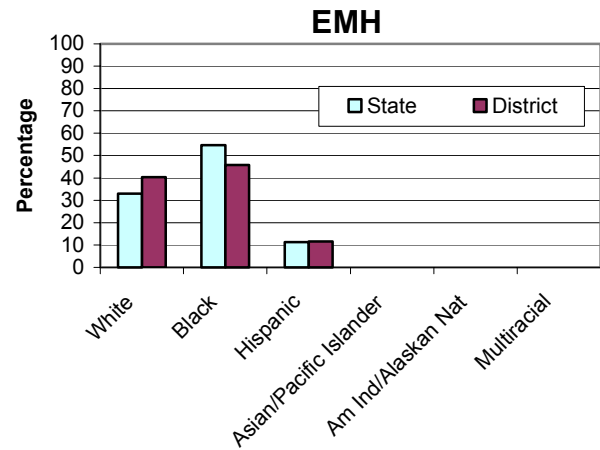
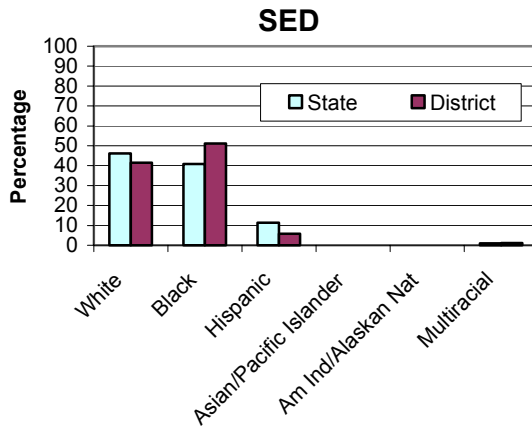
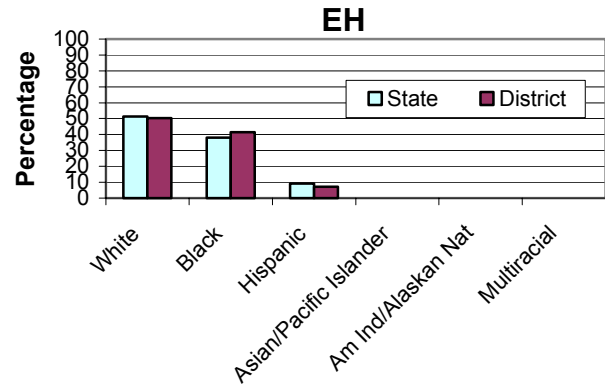
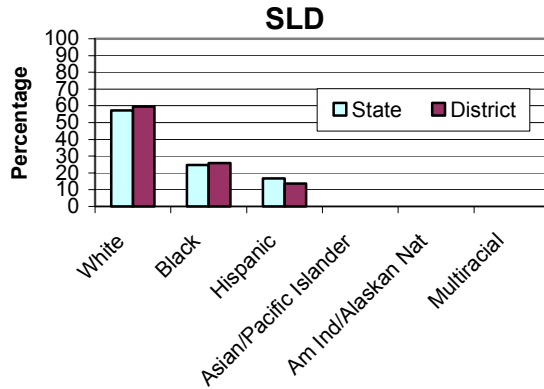
Free/Reduced Lunch and LEP

The percent of all students and all students who are gifted in the district and the State on free/reduced lunch. The percent of all students and all students who are gifted in the district and the state who are identified as Limited English Proficient (LEP). These percentages are based on data reported in Survey 2 (October 1999).

	State		District	
	All Students	Gifted Students	All Students	Gifted Students
Free / Reduced Lunch	43%	19%	42%	28%
LEP	10%	2%	11%	2%

Selected Exceptionalities by Racial/Ethnic Category

Racial/ethnic data for students with a primary exceptionality of specific learning disabled (SLD), emotionally handicapped (EH), severely emotionally disturbed (SED), and educable mentally handicapped (EMH) programs are presented below as reported in December 1999. Statewide, 57 percent of students identified as specific learning disabled are white, 25 percent are black, 17 percent are Hispanic, and less than one percent are reported in each of the other racial/ethnic categories. Data in the "Total" row show the percent of the total disabled population identified as SLD, EH, SED, and EMH for the state and district. Statewide, 45 percent of the students with disabilities are identified as specific learning disabled.



	SLD		EH		SED		EMH	
	State	District	State	District	State	District	State	District
White	57%	59%	51%	50%	46%	42%	33%	40%
Black	25%	26%	38%	41%	41%	51%	55%	46%
Hispanic	17%	14%	9%	7%	11%	6%	11%	11%
Asian/Pacific Islander	<1%	<1%	<1%	0%	<1%	0%	<1%	<1%
Am Ind/Alaskan Nat	<1%	<1%	<1%	0%	<1%	<1%	<1%	<1%
Multiracial	<1%	<1%	<1%	<1%	1%	1%	<1%	<1%
Total	45%	51%	8%	9%	2%	2%	8%	5%

APPENDIX B – PARENT SURVEY RESPONSES

Lee Parent Survey Report Students with Disabilities

The Parent Survey was sent to parents of the 9,667 students with disabilities for whom complete addresses were provided by the district. A total of 1,508 parents, representing 16% of the sample, returned the survey.

Item(s) for which the district response was high (≥ 75 percentile) compared to other FL districts

- I am satisfied with my child's academic progress.
- Homework assignments seem to meet my child's needs.
- Teachers set appropriate goals for my child.
- Teachers expect my child to succeed.
- My child's special teacher(s) and regular teacher(s) work together.

Item(s) for which the district response was low (≤ 25 percentile) compared to other FL districts

- The school makes sure I understand the IEP or EP (Educational Plan) process.
- I have attended one or more meetings about my child this school year.
- I participate in school activities with my child.
- I am a member of the PTA/PTO.
- I attend School Advisory Committee meetings concerning school improvement.
- My child spends enough time with regular education students.

* Items for which response was above the 95th percentile (extremely positive) compared to other FL districts.

~ Items for which response was below the 5th percentile (extremely negative) compared to other FL districts.

Lee Parent Survey Report Students Identified as Gifted

The Parent Survey was sent to parents of the 4285 students identified as gifted for whom complete addresses were provided by the district. A total of 1215 parents, representing 28% of the sample, returned the survey.

Item(s) for which the district response was very high (≥ 95 percentile) compared to other FL districts

- None

Item(s) for which the district response was very low (≤ 5 percentile) compared to other FL districts

- None

APPENDIX C – MONITORING TEAM MEMBERS

**Listing of ESE Monitoring Team Members
Lee County School District**

Department of Education Staff:

Cathy Bishop, Program Supervisor, Program Administration and Evaluation
Kelly Claude, Program Specialist IV, Program Administration and Evaluation
Lee Clark, Program Specialist IV, Program Administration and Evaluation
Lezlie Cline, Program Specialist IV, Program Development and Services
Michael Muldoon, Program Specialist IV, Program Development and Services
Iris Palazeski, Program Specialist IV, Program Development and Services

Peer Reviewers:

Pat Lawson, Lake County Schools
Angela Spornraft, Hardee County Schools
Bruce Ball, Miami-Dade County Schools
Lida Yocum, Broward County Schools

Contracted Staff:

Alan Coulter, Consultant
Denise Stewart, Consultant
Christy Riffles, Consultant
Hope Nieman, Consultant
Batya Elbaum, University of Miami
Allison Esenkova, University of Miami

Other Team Members:

Hugh Reid, Director, Michigan Exceptional Education

APPENDIX D – GLOSSARY OF ACRONYMS

Glossary of Acronyms

Bureau	Bureau of Instructional Support & Community Services
CFR	Code of Federal Regulations
DOE	Department of Education
EH	Emotionally Handicapped
EMH	Educable Mentally Handicapped
EP	Education Plan
ESE	Exceptional Student Education
ESOL	English for Speakers of Other Languages
ESY	Extended School Year
FAPE	Free Appropriate Public Education
FBA	Functional Behavioral Analysis
FCAT	Florida Comprehensive Assessment Test
GPA	Grade Point Average
HSCT	High School Competency Test
IDEA	Individuals with Disabilities Education Act
IEP	Individual Educational Plan
LEA	Local Education Agency
LRE	Least Restrictive Environment
OJT	On the Job Training
OSEP	Office of Special Education Programs
Part B	Federal regulations governing ESE programs under IDEA for ages 3-21
Part C	Early Intervention Program, as regulated in IDEA, for ages birth to 3
PASSD	Performance Assessment System for Students with Disabilities
PK	Pre-Kindergarten
QDI	Quality Designs for Instruction
SAI	Supplemental Academic Instruction
SED	Severely Emotionally Disturbed
SLD	Specific Learning Disability
SP&P	Special Programs and Procedures
TABE	Test of Adult Basic Education