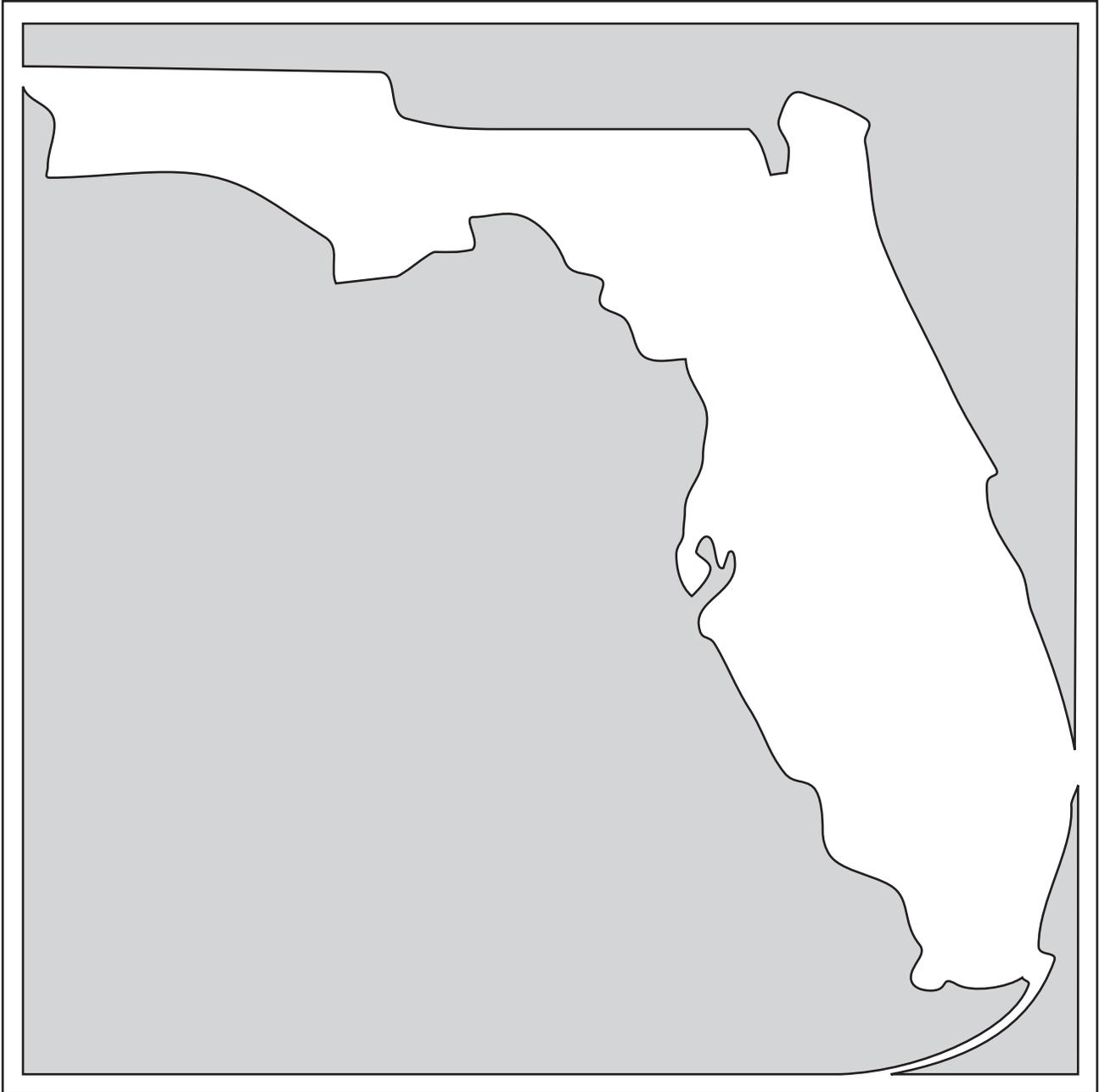


FINAL REPORT:
CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT/SELF ASSESSMENT PLAN
VERIFICATION MONITORING
EXCEPTIONAL STUDENT EDUCATION PROGRAMS

LEON COUNTY

NOVEMBER 7 - 10, 2005



FLORIDA DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
BUREAU OF EXCEPTIONAL EDUCATION AND STUDENT SERVICES

This is one of many publications available through the Bureau of Exceptional Education and Student Services, Florida Department of Education, designed to assist school districts, state agencies which support educational programs, and parents in the provision of special programs. For additional information on this publication, or for a list of available publications, contact the Clearinghouse Information Center, Bureau of Exceptional Education and Student Services, Florida Department of Education, Room 628, Turlington Bldg., Tallahassee, Florida 32399-0400.

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January 30, 2006

Mr. William J. Montford, Superintendent
Leon County School District
2757 W. Pensacola Street
Tallahassee, Florida 32304

Dear Superintendent Montford:

We are pleased to provide you with the final report of continuous improvement monitoring of Exceptional Student Education Programs in Leon County that was conducted on November 7-10, 2005. This report was developed by integrating multiple sources, including information from the district presentation, interviews with school and district staff, student record reviews, and surveys of parents of exceptional students in the district. The report includes a table outlining the findings of the monitoring team. The final report will be placed on the Bureau of Exceptional Education and Student Services' website and may be viewed at www.firn.edu/doe/commhome/mon-home.htm.

The district is directed to develop new continuous improvement plans for students with disabilities and gifted students. Designated Bureau staff will work with Mr. Ward Spisso, ESE Director, and his staff to develop the required continuous improvement measures, including strategies and activities to address the areas of concern and noncompliance identified in the report. By February 28, 2006, the district is required to submit the completed continuous improvement plans for review by our office. We anticipate that some of the action steps that will be implemented will be long term in duration, and will require time to assess the measures of effectiveness. An update of outcomes achieved and/or a summary of related activities, as identified in your district's plans, must be submitted by November 30 and May 30 of each school year.

BAMBI J. LOCKMAN
Chief

Bureau of Exceptional Education and Student Services

Superintendent Montford
January 30, 2006
Page 2

If my staff can be of any assistance as you develop and implement your new continuous improvement plans, please contact Eileen L. Amy, ESE Program Administration and Quality Assurance Administrator. Mrs. Amy may be reached at 850/245-0476, or via electronic mail at Eileen.Amy@fldoe.org.

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

Sincerely,



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

Enclosure

- cc: Sheila Costigan, School Board Chair
Members of the School Board
Jeffry Wahlen, School Board Attorney
School Principals
Ward Spisso, ESE Director
Eileen Amy
Evy Friend
Kim Komisar

**Leon County Final Monitoring Report
Continuous Improvement Monitoring
November 7 - 10, 2005**

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Leon County Final Monitoring Report Continuous Improvement Monitoring November 7 – 10, 2005

Monitoring Process

Authority

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

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

Continuous Improvement Monitoring

In its continuing effort to focus the monitoring process on student educational outcomes, the Bureau has identified key data indicators for students with disabilities and students identified as gifted, and all districts in the state have developed continuous improvement plans (CIPs) to address indicators for each of these populations. The purpose of the continuous improvement monitoring visits conducted by the Bureau is two-fold. The primary purpose is to afford an opportunity for school districts to provide validation of the activities they have undertaken through their continuous improvement plans for students with disabilities and students identified

as gifted. In addition, these monitoring visits provide an opportunity for the Bureau to review districts' compliance with specific state and federal requirements. Compliance components of continuous improvement monitoring visits include reviews of: services provided to exceptional education students enrolled in charter schools or Department of Juvenile Justice (DJJ) facilities; the implementation of specific programs and/or related services; and, records, forms, and special categories procedures. A detailed description of the Bureau's monitoring processes is provided in *Focused Monitoring, Continuous Improvement/Self Assessment Plan Verification, Focused Monitoring Verification: Work Papers and Source Book for Exceptional Student Education Programs (2005)*. The protocols used by Bureau staff when conducting procedural compliance reviews are available in *Compliance Manual: Work Papers and Source Book for Exceptional Student Education Programs (2005)*. These documents will be made available on the Bureau's website at www.firn.edu/doe/commhome/mon-home.htm.

During the week of November 7, 2005 the Florida Department of Education, Bureau of Exceptional Education and Student Services, conducted an on-site review of the exceptional student education (ESE) programs in Leon County Public Schools. Ward Spisso, Exceptional Student Education Director, served as the coordinator and point of contact for the district during the monitoring visit.

Demographics

This section provides information related to demographic and background information specific to the district. The Bureau compiles an annual profile of key data indicators for each district in the state (LEA profile). The LEA profile is intended to provide districts with a tool for use in planning for systemic improvement. The 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. The 2005 LEA profiles for all Florida school districts are available on the web at <http://www.firn.edu/doe/commhome/datapage.htm>. Specific key data indicators reported in the LEA profile are used in the continuous improvement monitoring process. Leon County School District's 2005 LEA profile is included in this report in appendix A.

Based on its 2005 LEA profile, Leon County School District has a total school population (preK-12) of 31,878 with 19% of students being identified as students with disabilities, 2% identified as speech impaired only, and 6% identified as gifted. Leon County is considered a "medium size" district and is one of ten districts with that designation. Leon County School District is comprised of 24 elementary schools, (preK-5), seven middle schools (6-8), six high schools (9-12), and two alternative schools. The district also has five Department of Juvenile Justice (DJJ) facilities and two charter schools.

Thirty-seven percent of the students in Leon County are eligible for free or reduced lunch, compared to 46% for the state, and 2% of students are identified as limited English proficient, compared to 11% for the state. The district's student membership in selected high incidence disabilities, by race and/or ethnicity, is provided in table 1 below. Data are from survey 2, October 2004.

Table 1: Membership by Race/Ethnicity

Race/Ethnicity	All Students	SLD	EH/SED	EMH	Gifted
White	52%	60%	39%	17%	82%
Black	40%	34%	58%	81%	8%
Hispanic	3%	2%	1%	<1%	2%
Asian/PI	2%	<1%	<1%	<1%	6%
Am Ind/ Alaskan	<1%	<1%	0%	0%	<1%
Multiracial	2%	2%	1%	<1%	2%

Separate class placement rate for EMH students (based on survey 2, October 2004) is provided below in table 2.

Table 2: Separate Class Placement Rate of EMH Students

	2000-01	2001-02	2002-03	2003-04	2004-05
Leon	55%	77%	77%	78%	74%
Enrollment Group	61%	61%	62%	64%	62%
State	61%	62%	61%	62%	57%

District Selection

In making the decision to include Leon County School District in this year's continuous improvement monitoring visits, the district was one of four selected at random that had not participated in a monitoring visit by the Bureau for the current year or previous three years. Leon County School District's indicator for students with disabilities is to address the disproportionate representation of minority students in the program for students who are educable mentally handicapped (EMH). The district's self-selected indicator for students identified as gifted is to increase performance on statewide assessments by increasing active participation in the gifted program.

Monitoring Activities

The Bureau conducted the on-site focused monitoring visit from November 7 - 10, 2005. Five Bureau staff members and four peer monitors conducted site-visits to the following seven schools, including one charter school:

- Caroline Brevard Elementary School
- Pineview Elementary School
- John G. Riley Elementary School
- Roberts Elementary School
- Belle Vue Middle School
- James Rickards High School
- School of Arts and Sciences (charter school)

Peer monitors are exceptional student education personnel from other school districts who are trained to assist with the DOE’s monitoring activities. A listing of Bureau staff and peer monitors who conducted the monitoring activities for this visit is included as appendix B. A summary of the monitoring activities conducted in Leon County is included in the table below.

Activity	Source	Number
Interviews	School staff	
	▪ School administrators/non-instructional support	13
	▪ ESE teachers—disabilities	22
	▪ ESE teachers—gifted	3
	▪ General education teachers	<u>7</u>
	Total	45
Focus Groups	James Rickards High School 9-12	
	▪ Students pursuing special diploma	7
	▪ Students pursuing standard diploma	<u>11</u>
	Total	18
Case studies	Individual student case studies	17
Classroom Visits	ESE and general education classrooms	39
Surveys	Parents—Students with Disabilities	
	▪ Number sent	5,729
	▪ Number returned	618
	Parents—Gifted	
	▪ Number sent	1,827
▪ Number returned	496	
Record Reviews	IEPs	
	▪ Full desk-review	32
	▪ Targeted on-site review	
	▪ EMH Eligibility	29
	▪ EMH Placement	51
	▪ EH/SED	35
	▪ Alternate Assessment	1
	▪ Communication	7
	▪ Matrix of services documents	9
	EPs	
	▪ Full desk-review	10
	▪ Targeted on-site review	24
		<u> </u>
	Total	198

Activity	Source	Number
	Special Categories	
	• initial eligibility and placements	10
	• dismissal from ESE	3
	• temporary assignment	3
	• ineligible for ESE	3
	• pre-K transition from Part C to Part B	3
	• limited English proficient – eligible as a student with a disability	3
	• parentally placed private school students	3
	• surrogate parents	<u>3</u>
	Total	31

The results of the surveys are included as appendix C.

Reporting of Information

Findings based on data generated through record reviews; focus group interviews; individual interviews; case studies; classroom visits; parent surveys; and, the review of district forms are summarized in the reporting tables that follow. This report summarizes the information provided by the district regarding strategies implemented through the continuous improvement process, as well as findings of the monitoring team.

In accordance with the Department’s agreement with the U.S. Department of Education, Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP), additional areas addressed during all monitoring visits include the following:

- the provision of counseling as a related service
- the communication needs of students with disabilities not eligible for programs for students who are speech or language impaired
- school to post-school transition

In addition, information related to services provided to ESE students in charter schools and services for gifted students are reported.

To the extent possible, this report focuses on systemic issues rather than on isolated instances of noncompliance or need for improvement. In accordance with established Bureau monitoring procedures, a finding of a systemic violation will be made if evidence of such a violation is found in 25% or more of the pertinent data sources. Depending on the nature of the findings a district may be required to develop a system improvement plan (SIP) to address identified issues or may be required to incorporate specific activities into its CIPs.

Effective implementation of the continuous improvement process requires that the results of interventions or activities regularly be measured and evaluated, that the plan be revised accordingly, and that decisions be data-driven. Beginning June 30, 2003, each school district has been required to submit semi-annual reports of progress on the activities conducted in association with its CIPs. The status reports should describe the activities conducted during that reporting period and report on their outcomes; at least once per year the district must include outcome data in its report.

Based on the data gathered by the monitoring team, Leon County School District is not required to develop a system improvement plan. However, it is required to incorporate and implement strategies that address findings of noncompliance identified in *Monitoring Reporting Table 2: Compliance Reviews* in the development of its continuous improvement plan(s). Those areas are related to: notice of transition as a purpose of an IEP team meeting; implementation of EPs for gifted students; and, matrix of services documents.

Due to the lack of substantive information included in, and consistently overdue submission of, Leon County's status reports, Bureau staff have been unable to determine the extent to which the interventions and strategies identified in the CIPs were implemented and/or evaluated. Therefore, as noted in Bureau correspondence to Mr. Spisso dated October 14, 2005, the district is directed to consult with designated Bureau staff to develop a new CIP for students with disabilities. Information gleaned through the monitoring visit should be utilized to develop strategies and establish benchmarks and timelines. The due date for that revision originally was established as November 30, 2005; as a result of the Bureau's delay in releasing the final monitoring report until January 2006, that due date has been extended to February 28, 2006.

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

Leon County School District Continuous Improvement Monitoring

Monitoring Reporting Table 1: Continuous Improvement Plans

The table below includes information provided by the district on the activities conducted and outcomes achieved thus far through the continuous improvement process. In addition, information gleaned through the Bureau's monitoring activities regarding the district's implementation of these plans is provided.

Continuous Improvement Activities	Verification/Progress	Recommendations																					
Students with Disabilities: Disproportionality																							
<p>In developing its CIP for students with disabilities, Leon County incorporated its resolution agreement with the Office for Civil Rights (OCR) resulting from OCR's compliance visit to the district in 1997. During this visit OCR focused on the policies and/or procedures which may contribute to the placement of a disproportionate number of African American children in the special program for students who are educable mentally handicapped (EMH). In the agreement, the district committed to the following:</p> <p><i>Referral and Intervention</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure that appropriate interventions (length to be determined by the schools' intervention assistance teams) have been proven ineffective before a student is referred for evaluation. • Development of an annual assessment to 	<p><i>Percentage of EMH students who are African American:</i></p> <p>2001-02 Baseline: 81.4%</p> <p>2004-05 Goal: 69.2%</p> <p>2004-05 Rate: 81.1%</p> <p><i>Student Membership by Racial/Ethnic Group (2004-05):</i></p> <table style="margin-left: auto; margin-right: auto;"> <thead> <tr> <th></th> <th style="text-align: center;">All Students</th> <th style="text-align: center;">EMH</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>White:</td> <td style="text-align: center;">52%</td> <td style="text-align: center;">17%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Black:</td> <td style="text-align: center;">40%</td> <td style="text-align: center;">81%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Hispanic:</td> <td style="text-align: center;">3%</td> <td style="text-align: center;"><1%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Asian/PI:</td> <td style="text-align: center;">2%</td> <td style="text-align: center;"><1%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Am. Ind.:</td> <td style="text-align: center;"><1%</td> <td style="text-align: center;">0%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Multi:</td> <td style="text-align: center;">2%</td> <td style="text-align: center;"><1%</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>		All Students	EMH	White:	52%	17%	Black:	40%	81%	Hispanic:	3%	<1%	Asian/PI:	2%	<1%	Am. Ind.:	<1%	0%	Multi:	2%	<1%	<p>It is recommended that the district incorporate the following in its continuous improvement plan:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reconvene the special task force to review all EMH records to ensure that the staffing teams follow State and district approved policies, procedures and practices. • Require two tests of cognitive functioning for transfer students. • Review random sample of initial placement records of EMH students annually.
	All Students	EMH																					
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Continuous Improvement Activities	Verification/Progress	Recommendations																												
<p>monitor the consistency of the referral and intervention process.</p> <p><i>Evaluation and Placement</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strict adherence to procedures for the eligibility and placement of disabled students as required by Florida State Board of Education Rules 6A-6.03011 through 6A-6.03411, FAC, and the district's Policies and Procedures for the Provision of Specially Designed Instruction and Related Services for Exceptional Students (SP&P). • Work cooperatively with the Florida Department of Education. • Appoint a task force to study the evaluation/reevaluation procedures and instruments. • Develop a policy and procedure for the administration of a second measure of intellectual functioning for students scoring 70 or below on the initial measure. • Require a second IQ assessment when a score below 70 is obtained by a student of an overrepresented population, prior to determining eligibility for the EMH program. • Consider the use of additional achievement tests when evaluating six and seven year olds. <p><i>Least Restrictive Environment</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure strict adherence to the district's policy 	<p><i>Number of students brought to Intervention Assistance Team:</i></p> <p>2001-02: 2716 2004-05: 2631</p> <p><i>Number of students referred for formal evaluation:</i></p> <p>2001-02: 641 2004-05: 592</p> <p><i>Separate class placement rate for EMH students (Survey 9):</i></p> <table border="1" data-bbox="863 743 1476 1040"> <thead> <tr> <th></th> <th>District</th> <th>Enrlmt. Grp.</th> <th>State</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>1999-2000:</td> <td>51%</td> <td>60%</td> <td>61%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2000-01:</td> <td>55%</td> <td>61%</td> <td>61%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2001-02:</td> <td>77%</td> <td>61%</td> <td>62%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2002-03:</td> <td>77%</td> <td>62%</td> <td>61%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2003-04:</td> <td>78%</td> <td>64%</td> <td>62%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2004-05:</td> <td>74%</td> <td>62%</td> <td>57%</td> </tr> </tbody> </table> <p>Interviews, targeted record reviews, case studies, and observations were conducted to verify the activities reported by the district. There is evidence that the policies and procedures established by the district are not adhered to consistently.</p> <p>Concerns were noted in ten of the 29 EMH initial eligibility records that were reviewed.</p>		District	Enrlmt. Grp.	State	1999-2000:	51%	60%	61%	2000-01:	55%	61%	61%	2001-02:	77%	61%	62%	2002-03:	77%	62%	61%	2003-04:	78%	64%	62%	2004-05:	74%	62%	57%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide annual staff development and training on district policies, procedures, and practices; • Revise the IEP form to include <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • an expanded list of factors leading to removal of a student from the general education environment, or • a narrative explanation of the need for removal from the general education setting, based on the individual strengths, needs, skills and behaviors of the student.
	District	Enrlmt. Grp.	State																											
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Continuous Improvement Activities	Verification/Progress	Recommendations
<p>on least restrictive environment (LRE)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Placement in an ESE class will be considered only when it is demonstrated that education in the regular environment cannot be achieved satisfactorily with supplementary resources and services. – Placement at the district’s center school will only occur when less restrictive placements have proven to be ineffective. <p><i>Oversight/Monitoring</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide training to all school based teachers and administrators on the policies, practices, and procedures developed pursuant the agreement with OCR. • Establish an advisory board to review, on an on-going basis, the programs, procedures, and policies of the district’s special education programs. • Collect and review eligibility data annually; identify and take action on schools with over-identification of minority students in EMH programs. <p>Using the methods identified in the OCR agreement, Leon County established a goal in its CIP for students with disabilities to decrease the overrepresentation of African Americans identified as EMH five percent per year from the baseline data reported in 2001-02.</p>	<p>Concerns involved the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Student(s) found eligible EMH when psychological report recommends caution when interpreting results, single test of intellectual functioning administered, and/or split results on measures of intellectual functioning. • Behavioral concerns indicated in the record; evidence of interventions not included in the referral packet. • Reevaluations that address academic achievement but not intellectual functioning or adaptive behavior. • Student(s) found eligible for EMH with adaptive behavior scores in the moderate range. <p>An additional 51 records of EMH students were reviewed for placement decisions. For many the explanation of the need for removal from the general education setting was inadequate.</p>	

Continuous Improvement Activities	Verification/Progress	Recommendations																																										
Gifted Students: Performance on the General Statewide Assessment																																												
<p>In developing its CIP for gifted students the district reviewed the results from the 2002 FCAT and determined that gifted students in middle and high school who participated in the gifted program (i.e., were enrolled in gifted classes) had overall higher scores on the FCAT than those gifted students who did not participate in the program. Based on this information, the district set a goal to increase FCAT scores of gifted students by increasing the rate of participation of middle and high school students in the gifted program. Data from the Fall 2002 enrollment was established as the baseline. Normal Curve Equivalent scores (NCE) from the FCAT are used for comparison purposes. The strategies implemented included the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work with school-level administrators of middle and high schools to increase the number of gifted course offerings by five percent annually. • Work with school-level administrators of middle and high schools to encourage teachers to seek gifted endorsement. • Encourage participation in gifted courses by providing a candy bar to middle and high school students who enrolled in at least one gifted class. 	<p>Course Offerings:</p> <table border="1" data-bbox="867 402 1467 570"> <thead> <tr> <th></th> <th>Baseline 2002-03</th> <th>Goal 2004-05</th> <th>Rate 2004-05</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Middle School:</td> <td>75</td> <td>86</td> <td>52</td> </tr> <tr> <td>High School:</td> <td>125</td> <td>144</td> <td>153</td> </tr> </tbody> </table> <p>Number of Gifted Students Enrolled in Gifted Courses (i.e., Participating):</p> <table border="1" data-bbox="867 708 1467 876"> <thead> <tr> <th></th> <th>Baseline 2002-03</th> <th>Rate 2004-05</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Middle School:</td> <td>520 (95%)</td> <td>488 (89%)</td> </tr> <tr> <td>High School:</td> <td>532 (71%)</td> <td>532 (60%)</td> </tr> </tbody> </table> <p>FCAT NCE Averages:</p> <table border="1" data-bbox="867 976 1467 1328"> <thead> <tr> <th></th> <th>Baseline 2002-03</th> <th>NCE Avg. 2004-05</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td colspan="3">Reading:</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Participating:</td> <td>80.5</td> <td>81.9</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Non-Participating:</td> <td>70.3</td> <td>74.4</td> </tr> <tr> <td colspan="3">Math:</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Participating:</td> <td>89.1</td> <td>90.6</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Non-Participating:</td> <td>78.6</td> <td>86.7</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>		Baseline 2002-03	Goal 2004-05	Rate 2004-05	Middle School:	75	86	52	High School:	125	144	153		Baseline 2002-03	Rate 2004-05	Middle School:	520 (95%)	488 (89%)	High School:	532 (71%)	532 (60%)		Baseline 2002-03	NCE Avg. 2004-05	Reading:			Participating:	80.5	81.9	Non-Participating:	70.3	74.4	Math:			Participating:	89.1	90.6	Non-Participating:	78.6	86.7	<p>A review of the district's racial/ethnic breakdown indicates that 40% of the student population is African American and 8% of the gifted students are African American.</p> <p>It is recommended that the district revise its continuous improvement plan to target disproportionate representation of minority students in the gifted program.</p> <p>If the decision is made to continue to address FCAT performance of gifted students, additional strategies must be developed that more directly impact instruction in areas assessed by the FCAT (e.g., reading; math; science).</p>
	Baseline 2002-03	Goal 2004-05	Rate 2004-05																																									
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Participating:	89.1	90.6																																										
Non-Participating:	78.6	86.7																																										

Continuous Improvement Activities	Verification/Progress	Recommendations
	<p>Verification of the activities conducted by the district was obtained through interviews, record reviews, observations, and the case study process. Staff reported that the district has had little success in this area; while the number of course offerings at the high school level has increased, the number at the middle school level has decreased. In addition, they reported that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Non-participating gifted students showed greater improvement in FCAT scores than those participating in the gifted program. • The number of students eligible for the gifted program has decreased from 2,254 in 2002-03, to 1,959 in 2004-05. • The primary focus of the district’s gifted program is through enrichment activities provided at the Academic Resource Center (ARC) or in the students’ home school. • The increase in the number of pre-International Baccalaureate (IB) courses available at the middle school and the decrease in the number of “highly qualified” teachers might account for the decrease in student participation in the district’s gifted programs. 	

Leon County School District Continuous Improvement Monitoring

Monitoring Reporting Table 2: Compliance Reviews

The table below includes findings from the Bureau’s review of district procedures related to the provision of services to exceptional education students. The results are presented topically, and the related regulatory citations are included (see appendix D). The topics represent selected processes and procedures targeted by the Bureau (e.g., transition from school to post school living; counseling as a related service).

Standard/Citation	Findings	Supporting Evidence	Concerns
Counseling Services			
34 CFR §300.24 Related services. Rule 6A-6.03016(4) (d), FAC, Special Programs for Students Who Are Emotionally Handicapped	No findings of noncompliance in this area.		Some school- and district-based ESE personnel were not aware of the process to follow if an IEP team were to determine that a given student required counseling as a related service, and believed that parents might be asked to pay for such services if they were to be provided by an outside agency.
Communication Services			
34 CFR §300.346(a)(2) (iv) Development, review,	No findings of noncompliance in this		

Standard/Citation	Findings	Supporting Evidence	Concerns
<p>and revision of the IEP.</p> <p>Rule 6A-6.03028(6), FAC, Development of Individual Educational Plans for Students with Disabilities</p>	<p>area.</p>		
School to Post-School Transition Services			
<p>34 CFR §300.344(b) IEP team.</p> <p>Rule 6A-6.03028(3)-(4), FAC, Development of Individual Educational Plans for Exceptional Students</p>	<p>Transition is not included on IEP team meeting notice for all students ages 14 and older.</p> <p>Representatives of agencies are not invited to the IEP team meetings for all students ages 16 and over when appropriate.</p>	<p><i>Records:</i></p> <p>Transition was not included as a purpose on the meeting notices for three of 11 IEP meetings (27%) for students ages 14 and older.</p> <p>Two of three transition IEPs (66%) for students who appeared to have a current need for agency participation did not have agencies invited to the IEP meeting.</p>	<p>All of the students who participated in the focus group discussions reported that they had not been informed of the FCAT waiver as an option if they were unable to achieve a passing score on the test.</p>
Gifted Services			
<p>Section 1003.57, F.S. Exceptional Student Instruction</p> <p>Section 1003.01(3)(a), F.S. Definitions.</p> <p>Rule 6A-6.030191(5)(a), FAC, Development of Educational Plans for</p>	<p>EPs for gifted students at Rickards H.S. who do not participate in the IB program are not being implemented.</p> <p>EPs for gifted students at Belle Vue M.S. who do not attend ARC are not</p>	<p><i>Records:</i></p> <p>Five of five gifted students at Rickards H.S. who were not participating in the IB program or attending ARC, had EPs that were not being implemented.</p> <p>Two of four students at Belle Vue M.S. who do not attend ARC have EPs that are not being implemented.</p>	<p>There are limited gifted services available for students who do not participate in the enrichment program through ARC.</p> <p>There are limited core academic classes for</p>

Standard/Citation	Findings	Supporting Evidence	Concerns
Exceptional Students Who Are Gifted	being implemented.	<i>Interviews:</i> Three of four (75%) teachers of the gifted reported that parents discourage their children from participating in ARC because attending this program results in the student missing core content class work for which they remain responsible.	students who are gifted.
Charter Schools			
34 CFR §300.241(a) Treatment of charter schools and their students. 34 CFR §300.312(a) Children with disabilities in public charter schools.	No findings of noncompliance in this area.		
Matrix of Services			
S. 1011.62(1)(e), F.S. Funding model for exceptional student education programs.	Five matrix of services documents require correction due to inaccurate reporting; this represents a systemic finding.	<i>Records:</i> Five of nine IEPs/matrix of services documents for students reported at the 254 level were not reported accurately.	
Student Record Reviews – IEPs; EPs; Special Categories			
34 CFR §300.340-300.350 Individualized Educational Programs	One IEP was not current at the time of review and during the most recent	188 IEPs were reviewed, in part or in whole. 34 EPs were reviewed, in part or in whole.	The checklist used to explain the extent to which students are removed from

Standard/Citation	Findings	Supporting Evidence	Concerns
<p>Rule 6A-6.03028, FAC, Development of Individual Educational Plans for Exceptional Students.</p> <p>Rule 6A-6.030281, FAC, Development of Services Plans for Students with Disabilities Enrolled in Private Schools by Their Parents and Provided with Specially Designed Instruction by the Local School Board.</p> <p>Rule 6A-6.030191, FAC, Development of Educational Plans for Exceptional Students Who Are Gifted.</p> <p>Rule 6A-6.0331, FAC, Identification and Determination of Eligibility of Exceptional Students for Specially Designed Instruction.</p>	<p>FTE reporting period, resulting in a funding adjustment and the requirement to reconvene an IEP team.</p> <p>For two IEPs the majority of the annual goals were not measurable, resulting in the requirement to reconvene IEP teams.</p> <p>For one IEP there were findings of noncompliance related to the present level of educational performance, goals, objectives or benchmarks, and/or services that resulted in the requirement to reconvene the IEP team.</p>	<p>31 special category records were reviewed. A detailed description of the record reviews was provided to the district via electronic mail on December 8, 2005 and in a letter dated December 21, 2005; the results are included in more detail in this report as appendix E.</p>	<p>the general education setting does not allow for sufficient information to be provided (i.e., some options represent noncompliant justification; the same options are used to justify a wide range of placements for students with widely different needs and behaviors.</p> <p>In two cases there was unreasonable delay in the time from the signing of consent for testing or reevaluation, and the eligibility staffing, ranging from 8 to 18 months.</p>

Standard/Citation	Findings	Supporting Evidence	Concerns
6A-6.0334, FAC, Temporary Assignment of Transferring Exceptional Students.			
District Forms			
34 CFR §300.503 Prior written notice by the public agency; content of notice. 34 CFR §300.347 Content of the IEP Rule 6A-6.03028, FAC, Development of Individual Educational Plans for Exceptional Students	Twenty forms require revisions to meet compliance.	A detailed description of the forms review was provided to the district in a letter dated October 11, 2005.	

Promising Practices, Recommendations, and Technical Assistance

Promising Practices

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

- While the district did not meet its goal of having the racial/ethnic distribution of students identified as EMH more reflective of the racial/ethnic distribution of the district's population as a whole, Leon County should be commended for its efforts that rendered a decrease in the number of students referred for formal testing.
- Strong administrations at elementary schools visited support inclusive programs and provide extensive opportunities for intensive instruction and remediation.
- Students at Rickards H.S. reported receiving extensive support from vocational programs such as Leon's Intensive Training for Employment (LITE) and Diversified Cooperative Training (DCT).

Recommendations

Recommendations have been proposed for the district to consider when developing the revised continuous improvement plans and determining strategies that are most likely to effect change. Recommendations related directly to the district's continuous improvement plans were included in Reporting Table 1 and are not repeated here. This list is not all-inclusive, and is intended only as a starting point for discussion among the parties responsible for the development of the plans.

- Provide training and/or technical assistance to IEP team members regarding the district's established procedures for accessing services that may not be readily available (e.g., counseling as a related service).
- Provide training and/or technical assistance to IEP team participants regarding placement decisions for students with disabilities, with a focus on removing the student from the general education setting only when the team has identified student-specific behaviors or skill levels that cannot be supported in the general classroom.
- Provide training and/or technical assistance to IEP teams to ensure that information regarding the FCAT waiver process is provided to families during IEP team meetings at which diploma options are addressed.
- Target strategies for ensuring that all gifted students are provided with appropriate services based on their needs beyond the general curriculum.

Technical Assistance

A partial listing of technical assistance resources also is provided. This information may be of assistance in the development and/or implementation of the system improvement plan. The following are some of the resources available through the Florida Department of

Education. If there are additional topics or areas of concern that are not included, please contact the Bureau for assistance.

Student Support Services Project

Website: <http://sss.usf.edu>

The project purpose is to provide technical assistance, training and resources to Florida school districts and state agencies in matters related to student support (school psychology, social work, nursing, counseling, and school-to-work).

Florida's Positive Behavioral Supports Project

<http://flpbs.fmhi.usf.edu/>

This project is designed to support teachers, administrators, related services personnel, family members, and outside agency personnel in building district-wide capacity to address challenging behavior exhibited by students in regular and special education programs. It provides training and technical assistance for districts, schools, and individual teams in all levels of positive behavior support (individual, classroom and school-wide).

Project CENTRAL

Website: <http://reach.ucf.edu/~CENTRAL/>

This comprehensive, statewide project is designed to identify and disseminate information about resources, training, and research related to current and emerging effective instructional practices. The ultimate goals are to provide information leading to appropriate training, products, and other resources that provide benefits and appropriate outcomes for all students, including students with disabilities.

Bureau of Exceptional Education and Student Services

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

**ESE Program Administration and
Quality Assurance - Monitoring**
(850) 245-0476

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**Special Programs Information,
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Speech/Language

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Gifted

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Appendix A:

LEA Profile



FLORIDA DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
BUREAU OF EXCEPTIONAL EDUCATION AND STUDENT SERVICES

2005 LEA PROFILE

JOHN WINN, COMMISSIONER

DISTRICT:	LEON	PK-12 POPULATION:	31,878
ENROLLMENT GROUP:	20,000 TO 40,000	PERCENT DISABLED:	19%
		PERCENT GIFTED:	6%

INTRODUCTION

The LEA profile is intended to provide districts with a tool for use in planning for systemic improvement. The 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, their enrollment group (districts of comparable size), and the state. Where appropriate and available, comparative data for general education students are included.

Data presented as indicators of educational benefit (*Section One*)

- Standard diploma rates for students with disabilities receiving standard diplomas through meeting all graduation requirements, GED Exit Option, and FCAT waivers
- Dropout rates
- Post-school outcome data
- Third grade promotion and retention, including good cause promotions

Note: FCAT participation and performance data formerly included in the LEA profile will be published separately in Fall 2005.

Data presented as indicators of educational environment (*Section Two*)

- Regular class, resource room, and separate class placement, ages 6-21
- Early childhood setting or home, part-time early childhood/part-time early childhood special education setting and early childhood special education setting, ages 3-5
- Discipline rates

Data presented as indicators of prevalence (*Section Three*)

- Student membership by race/ethnicity
- Gifted membership by free/reduced lunch and limited English proficiency (LEP) status
- Student membership in selected disabilities by race/ethnicity
- Selected disabilities as a percentage of all disabilities and as a percentage of total PK-12 population

LEA PROFILE 2005

Three of the indicators included in the profile, graduation rate, dropout rate, and regular class placement, are also used in the selection of districts for focused monitoring. Indicators describing the prevalence and separate class placement of students identified as educable mentally handicapped (EMH) are included to correspond with provisions of the Bureau's partnership agreement with the Office for Civil Rights.

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 through the Florida Education and Training Placement Information Program (FETPIP).

DISTRICTS IN LEON'S ENROLLMENT GROUP:

ALACHUA, BAY, CLAY, HERNANDO, LAKE, LEON, OKALOOSA, SANTA ROSA, ST. JOHNS, ST. LUCIE



SECTION ONE: 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 indicators of consumer satisfaction. This section of the profile provides data on indicators of student progression, school completion, and post-school outcomes.

STANDARD DIPLOMA STUDENTS MEETING ALL GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS:

The number of students with disabilities graduating with a standard diploma (withdrawal code W06) by earning required credits, maintaining required GPA and passing FCAT divided by the total number of students with disabilities who completed their education (withdrawal codes W06-W10, W27, WGD, WFW, WFT) as reported in end of year (survey 5). The resulting percentages are reported for the three-year period from **2001-02** through **2003-04**.

	2001-02	2002-03	2003-04
Leon	58%	56%	49%
Enrollment Group	55%	58%	52%
State	48%	45%	42%

STANDARD DIPLOMA THROUGH GED EXIT OPTION:

The number of students with disabilities in a GED Exit Option Model who passed the GED Tests and the FCAT or HSCT and were awarded a standard high school diploma (withdrawal code W10) divided by the total number of students with disabilities who completed their education (withdrawal codes W06-W10, W27, WGD, WFW, WFT) as reported in end of year (survey 5). The resulting percentages are reported for the three-year period from **2001-02** through **2003-04**.

	2001-02	2002-03	2003-04
Leon	3%	2%	2%
Enrollment Group	<1%	<1%	1%
State	1%	1%	1%

STANDARD DIPLOMA THROUGH FCAT WAIVER:

The number of students with disabilities graduating with a standard diploma through the FCAT waiver (withdrawal code WFW) divided by the total number of students with disabilities who completed their education (withdrawal codes W06-W10, W27, WGD, WFW, WFT) as reported in end of year (survey 5). The resulting percentages are reported for **2002-03** and **2003-04**.

	2002-03	2003-04
Leon	0%	5%
Enrollment Group	5%	8%
State	9%	14%

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) as reported in end of year (survey 5). The resulting percentages are reported for students with disabilities, gifted students, all PK-12 students, students identified as EH/SED, and students identified as SLD for the years **2001-02** through **2003-04**.

	Students with Disabilities			Gifted Students			All Students		
	2001-02	2002-03	2003-04	2001-02	2002-03	2003-04	2001-02	2002-03	2003-04
Leon	4%	3%	5%	<1%	<1%	<1%	3%	3%	3%
Enrollment Group	4%	4%	4%	<1%	<1%	<1%	3%	3%	3%
State	5%	4%	5%	<1%	<1%	<1%	3%	3%	3%

	EH/SED			SLD		
	2001-02	2002-03	2003-04	2001-02	2002-03	2003-04
Leon	6%	8%	8%	3%	3%	5%
Enrollment Group	6%	7%	6%	4%	4%	4%
State	7%	7%	7%	5%	4%	5%

POSTSCHOOL OUTCOME DATA:

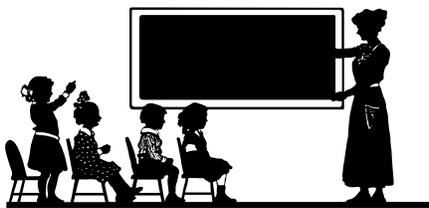
The Florida Education and Training Placement Information Program (FETPIP) is an interagency data collection system that obtains follow-up data on former students. The most recent FETPIP data available reports on students who exited Florida public schools during the **2002-03** school year. The table below displays percent of students with disabilities and students identified as gifted exiting school in 2002-03 who were found employed between October and December 2003 or in continuing education (enrolled for the fall or preliminary winter/spring semester) in 2003.

	Students with Disabilities		Gifted Students	
	Employed	Cont. Ed.	Employed	Cont. Ed.
Leon	48%	35%	38%	73%
Enrollment Group	51%	24%	40%	73%
State	44%	20%	37%	72%

THIRD GRADE PROMOTION AND RETENTION RATE:

The number of third grade students promoted, promoted with cause, and retained divided by the total year enrollment as reported in end of year (survey 5). The percent of students promoted with cause is a subset of total promoted. Total enrollment is the count of all students who attended school at any time during the school year. The results are reported for third grade students with disabilities and all third grade students for **2003-04**.

	2003-04					
	Students with Disabilities			All Students		
	Promoted	Promoted with Cause	Retained	Promoted	Promoted with Cause	Retained
Leon	87%	23%	13%	91%	7%	9%
Enrollment Group	86%	21%	14%	92%	8%	8%
State	82%	30%	18%	89%	11%	11%



SECTION TWO: EDUCATIONAL ENVIRONMENT

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

REGULAR CLASS, RESOURCE ROOM AND SEPARATE CLASS PLACEMENT, AGES 6-21:

The number of students with disabilities ages 6-21 in regular class, resource room, and separate class placement divided by the total number of students with disabilities ages 6-21 reported in December (survey 9). Regular class includes students who spend 80 percent or more of their school week with nondisabled peers. Resource room includes students spending between 40 and 80 percent of their school week with nondisabled peers. Separate class includes students spending less than 40 percent of their week with nondisabled peers. The resulting percentages are reported for the three years from **2002-03** through **2004-05**.

	Regular Class			Resource Room			Separate Class		
	2002-03	2003-04	2004-05	2002-03	2003-04	2004-05	2002-03	2003-04	2004-05
Leon	58%	58%	59%	16%	16%	16%	21%	21%	20%
Enrollment Group	55%	56%	58%	23%	22%	21%	18%	18%	16%
State	48%	50%	55%	26%	24%	21%	22%	22%	20%

EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION SETTINGS, AGES 3-5:

The number of students with disabilities ages 3-5 who are served in early childhood settings, part-time early childhood and part-time early childhood special education settings, and early childhood special education settings divided by the total number of students with disabilities ages 3-5 reported in December (survey 9). Students in early childhood settings receive all (100%) of their special education and related services in educational programs designed primarily for children without disabilities or in their home. Students in part-time early childhood and part-time early childhood special education settings receive special education and related services in multiple settings. Students in early childhood special education settings receive all (100%) of their special education and related services in educational programs designed primarily for children with disabilities housed in regular school buildings or other community-based settings. The resulting percentages are reported for the three years from **2002-03** through **2004-05**.

	Early Childhood Setting or Home			Part-Time Early Childhood/ Part-Time Early Childhood Special Education Setting			Early Childhood Special Education Setting		
	2002-03	2003-04	2004-05	2002-03	2003-04	2004-05	2002-03	2003-04	2004-05
Leon	9%	11%	12%	90%	87%	87%	1%	1%	<1%
Enrollment Group	9%	8%	6%	64%	60%	59%	25%	29%	32%
State	7%	7%	7%	57%	57%	56%	31%	31%	33%

SEPARATE CLASS PLACEMENT OF EMH STUDENTS, AGES 6-21:

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 December (survey 9). The resulting percentages are reported for three years from **2002-03** through **2004-05**.

	2002-03	2003-04	2004-05
Leon	77%	78%	74%
Enrollment Group	62%	64%	62%
State	61%	62%	57%

DISCIPLINE RATES:

The number of students who served in-school or out-of-school suspensions, were expelled, or moved to alternative placement at any time during the school year divided by the total year enrollment as reported in end of year (survey 5). The resulting percentages are reported for students with disabilities and nondisabled students for **2003-04**.

		2003-04							
		In-School Suspensions		Out-of-School Suspensions		Expulsions		Alternative Placement*	
		Students with Disabilities	Nondisabled Students						
Leon		4%	4%	9%	6%	0%	0%	0%	0%
Enrollment Group		10%	7%	14%	7%	<1%	<1%	<1%	<1%
State		14%	9%	15%	7%	<1%	<1%	<1%	<1%

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



SECTION THREE: PREVALENCE

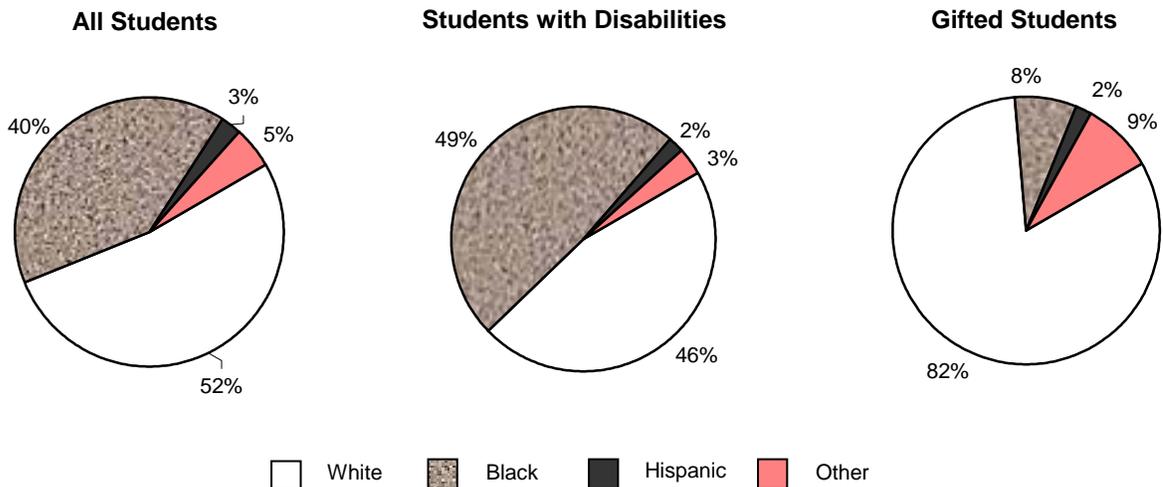
Prevalence refers to the proportion of the PK-12 population identified as exceptional at any given point in time. This section of the profile provides prevalence data by demographic characteristics.

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 2004** (survey 2). Statewide, there is a larger percentage of black students in the disabled population than in the total PK-12 population (28 percent vs. 24 percent) and a smaller percentage of black students in the gifted population (10 percent vs. 24 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	49%	50%	63%	52%	46%	82%
Black	24%	28%	10%	40%	49%	8%
Hispanic	23%	19%	20%	3%	2%	2%
Asian/Pacific Islander	2%	<1%	4%	2%	<1%	6%
Am Ind/Alaskan Native	<1%	<1%	<1%	<1%	<1%	<1%
Multiracial	3%	2%	3%	2%	2%	2%

District Membership by Race/Ethnicity



FREE/REDUCED LUNCH AND LEP:

The percent of all students and all gifted students in the district and the state on free/reduced lunch. The percent of all students and all gifted students in the district and in the state who are identified as limited English proficient (LEP). These percentages are based on data reported in **October 2004** (survey 2).

	State		District	
	All Students	Gifted Students	All Students	Gifted Students
Free/Reduced Lunch	46%	22%	37%	3%
LEP	11%	3%	2%	<1%

SELECTED DISABILITIES BY RACIAL/ETHNIC CATEGORY:

Racial/ethnic data for all students as well as students with a primary disability of specific learning disabled (SLD), emotionally handicapped or severely emotionally disturbed (EH/SED), and educable mentally handicapped (EMH) are presented below. The data are presented for the state and the district as reported in **October 2004** (survey 2).

	All Students		SLD		EH/SED		EMH	
	State	District	State	District	State	District	State	District
White	49%	52%	51%	60%	47%	39%	32%	17%
Black	24%	40%	24%	34%	39%	58%	51%	81%
Hispanic	23%	3%	22%	3%	12%	1%	14%	<1%
Asian/Pacific Islander	2%	2%	<1%	<1%	<1%	<1%	<1%	<1%
Am Ind/Alaskan Native	<1%	<1%	<1%	<1%	<1%	0%	<1%	0%
Multiracial	3%	2%	2%	2%	2%	1%	1%	<1%

SELECTED DISABILITIES AS PERCENT OF DISABLED AND PK-12 POPULATIONS:

The percentage of the total disabled population and the total population identified as SLD, EH/SED, EMH, and speech impaired (SI) for the district and the state. Statewide, seven percent of the total population is identified as SLD and 46 percent of all students with disabilities are SLD. The data are presented for the district and state as reported in **October 2004** (survey 2).

	All Students		All Disabled	
	State	District	State	District
SLD	7%	5%	46%	26%
EH/SED	1%	<1%	9%	5%
EMH	1%	1%	7%	7%
SI	2%	4%	14%	19%



John Winn, Commissioner

Appendix B:
ESE Monitoring Team Members

**Florida Department of Education
Bureau of Exceptional Education and Student Services
2005 Continuous Improvement Monitoring
Leon County School District**

ESE Monitoring Team Members

Department of Education Staff

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

Angela Nathaniel, Program Specialist, Team Leader
April Katine, Program Specialist
Barbara McAnelly, Program Specialist
Denise Taylor, Program Specialist

Peer Reviewers and Contracted Staff

Claudia Leary, Miami-Dade County Public Schools
Marcia MacKenzie, Pinellas County School District
Joanne Rosen, Miami-Dade County Public Schools
Angie Vaughan, Okaloosa County School District

Appendix C:
Survey Results

**Florida Department of Education
Bureau of Exceptional Education and Student Services
2005 Continuous Improvement Monitoring
Leon County School District**

Parent Survey Report: Students with Disabilities

Responding to the need to increase the involvement of parents and families of exceptional education students in evaluating the educational services provided to their children, the Florida Department of Education, Bureau Exceptional Education and Student Services, contracted with the University of Miami to develop and administer a parent survey as part of the Bureau's district monitoring activities.

The parent survey was sent to parents of the 5,729 students with disabilities for whom complete addresses were provided by the district. A total of 618 parents (PK, n = 0; K-5, n = 94; 6-8, n = 48; 9-12, n = 59), representing 11% of the sample, returned the survey. Surveys from 326 families were returned as undeliverable, representing 6% of the sample. Parents represented the following students with disabilities: educable mentally handicapped, trainable mentally handicapped, orthopedically impaired, speech impaired, language impaired, deaf or hard of hearing, visually impaired, emotionally handicapped, specific learning disabled, profoundly mentally handicapped, dual-sensory impaired, autistic, developmentally delayed, and other health impaired.

**% Very Strongly Agree,
Strongly Agree,
Agree combined**

Overall, I am satisfied with:

- | | |
|---|----|
| • the amount of time my child spends with general education students. | 87 |
| • the way I am treated by school personnel. | 87 |
| • the level of knowledge and experience of school personnel. | 83 |
| • the exceptional education services my child receives. | 81 |
| • the how quickly services are implemented following an IEP (Individual Educational Plan) decision. | 81 |
| • the effect of exceptional student education on my child's self-esteem. | 80 |
| • the way special education teachers and general education teachers work together. | 79 |
| • my child's academic progress. | 77 |

My child:

- | | |
|---|----|
| • has friends at school. | 92 |
| • is learning skills that will be useful later in life. | 87 |
| • spends most of the school day involved in productive activities. | 85 |
| • is happy at school. | 85 |
| • receives all the special education and related services on his/her IEP. | 81 |

**% Very Strongly Agree,
Strongly Agree,
Agree combined**

At my child's IEP meetings we have talked about:

- all of my child's needs. 86
- whether my child needed speech/language services. 81
- ways that my child could spend time with students in general education classes. 77
- whether my child should get accommodations (special testing conditions), for example, extra time. 77
- * which diploma my child may receive. 77
- whether my child would take the FCAT (Florida Comprehensive Assessment Test). 75
- * my child's goals after high school. 70
- whether my child needed services beyond the regular school year. 68
- whether my child needed physical and/or occupational therapy. 66
- * the requirements for different diplomas. 65
- whether my child needed transportation. 64
- the specific skills my child needs to work on in preparation for the FCAT. 64
- * the transition services my child needs to achieve his/her goals. 64
- whether my child needed psychological counseling services. 56

My child's special education teachers:

- expect my child to succeed. 91
- set appropriate goals for my child. 89
- encourage students to ask for help if they need it. 89
- are available to speak with me. 88
- give students with disabilities extra time or different assignments, if needed. 86
- individualized instruction for my child. 82
- give homework that meets my child's needs. 80
- call me or send me notes about my child. 80

My child's general education teachers:

- expect my child to succeed. 86
- are available to speak with me. 84
- set appropriate goals for my child. 82
- encourage students to ask for help if they need it. 80
- give homework that meets my child's needs. 76
- call me or send me notes about my child. 76
- give students with disabilities extra time or different assignments, if needed. 76
- individualized instruction for my child. 64

*These questions were answered by parents of students grades 8 and above.

**% Very Strongly Agree,
Strongly Agree,
Agree combined**

My child's school:

- encourages me to participate in my child's education. 85
- makes sure I understand my child's IEP and the services my child will receive. 85
- sends me information written in a way I understand. 84
- encourages acceptance of students with disabilities. 84
- handles discipline problems appropriately. 82
- wants to hear my ideas. 80
- does all it can to keep students from dropping out of school. 80
- involves students with disabilities in clubs, sports, or other activities. 79
- offers students with disabilities the classes they need to graduate with a standard diploma. 79
- addresses my child's individual needs. 77
- explains what I can do if I want to make changes to my child's IEP. 75
- * offers a variety of vocational courses, such as computers and business technology. 75
- informs me about all of the services available to my child. 73
- provides students with disabilities updated books and materials. 73
- sends me information about activities and workshops for parents. 72
- * informed me, beginning when my child turned 14, that one purpose of the IEP meeting was to discuss a plan for my child's transition out of school. 65
- * provides information to students about education and jobs after high school. 63

Parent Participation

- I have attended my child's IEP meetings. 96
- I meet with my child's teachers to discuss my child's needs and progress. 93
- I am comfortable talking about my child with school staff. 92
- I participate in school activities with my child. 85
- My input is considered in the development of my child's IEP. 82
- I have heard about the Florida Diagnostic and Learning Resources System ("FDLRS") and the services they provide to families of children. 44
- I attend meetings of the PTA/PTO. 40
- I attend meetings of organizations for parents of students with disabilities. 39
- I have used parent support services in my area. 37
- I attend School Advisory Committee meetings concerning school improvement. 31

*These questions were answered by parents of students grades 8 and above.

**Florida Department of Education
Bureau of Exceptional Education and Student Services
2005 Continuous Improvement Monitoring
Leon County School District**

Parent Survey Report: Gifted Students

Responding to the need to increase the involvement of parents and families of exceptional education students in evaluating the educational services provided to their children, the Florida Department of Education, Bureau of Exceptional Education and Student Services contracted with the University of Miami to develop and administer a parent survey as part of the Bureau's monitoring activities.

The parent survey was sent to parents of the 1,827 students identified as gifted for whom complete addresses were provided by the district. A total of 496 parents (KG-5, n = 61; 6-8, n = 50; 9 - 12, n = 23), representing 27% of the sample, returned the survey. Surveys from 9 families were returned as undeliverable, representing 0% of the sample.

	%YES
Overall, I am satisfied with:	
• my child's academic progress.	92
• gifted teachers' subject area knowledge.	91
• the effect of gifted services on my child's self-esteem.	89
• general education teachers' subject area knowledge.	89
• gifted teachers' expertise in teaching students identified as gifted.	87
• the gifted services my child receives.	81
• how quickly services were implemented following an initial request for evaluation.	72
• general education teachers' expertise in teaching students identified as gifted.	71
In general education classes, my child:	
• has friends at school.	95
• is learning skills that will be useful later on in life.	92
• is usually happy at school.	86
• has his/her social and emotional needs met at school.	85
• has creative outlets at school.	81
• is academically challenged at school.	64
In gifted classes, my child:	
• has friends at school	98
• is learning skills that will be useful later on in life.	94
• is usually happy at school.	93
• has his/her social and emotional needs met at school.	91
• has creative outlets at school.	90
• is academically challenged at school.	89

%YES

My child's general education teachers:

- expect appropriate behavior. 97
- are available to speak with me. 92
- provide coursework that includes representation of diverse ethnic, racial, and other groups. 90
- have access to adequate instructional materials, including technology. 88
- set appropriate goals for my child. 79
- give homework that meets my child's needs. 71
- relate coursework to students' future educational and professional pursuits. 71
- call me or send me notes about my child. 59

My child's gifted teachers:

- expect appropriate behavior. 99
- set appropriate goals for my child. 90
- are available to speak with me. 90
- have access to adequate instructional materials, including technology. 90
- provide coursework that includes representation of diverse ethnic, racial, and other groups. 89
- relate coursework to students' future educational and professional pursuits. 79
- give homework that meets my child's needs. 75
- call me or send me notes about my child. 57

My child's home school:

- treats me with respect. 94
- sends me information written in a way I understand. 92
- handles discipline problems appropriately. 89
- encourages me to participate in my child's education. 84
- provides students identified as gifted with appropriate books and materials. 80
- wants to hear my ideas. 74
- sends me information about activities and workshops for parents. 71
- addresses my child's individual needs. 69
- makes sure I understand my child's EP or IEP. 67
- informs me about all of the services available to my child. 64
- involves me in developing my child's Educational Plan (EP or IEP). 62
- implements my ideas. 59
- explains what I can do if I want to make changes to my child's EP or IEP. 51

%YES

My child's 2nd school:

- handles discipline problems appropriately. 96
- treats me with respect. 94
- sends me information written in a way I understand. 91
- encourages me to participate in my child's education. 89
- provides students identified as gifted with appropriate books and materials. 89
- sends me information about activities and workshops for parents. 87
- wants to hear my ideas. 81
- addresses my child's individual needs. 76
- informs me about all of the services available to my child. 69
- implements my ideas. 66
- makes sure I understand my child's EP or IEP. 52
- involves me in developing my child's Educational Plan (EP or IEP). 44
- explains what I can do if I want to make changes to my child's EP or IEP. 39

Students identified as gifted:

- are provided with information about options for education after high school. 85
- have the option of taking a variety of vocational courses. 77
- are provided with the opportunity to participate in externships or mentorships. 68
- are provided with career counseling. 62

Parent Participation

- I participate in school activities with my child. 89
- I have attended one or more meetings about my child during this school year. 80
- I am a member of the PTA/PTO. 45
- I attend School Advisory Committee meetings concerning school improvement. 18
- I have used parent support services in my area. 12
- I belong to an organization for parents of students identified as gifted. 8

Appendix D:
Regulatory Citations

**Florida Department of Education
Bureau of Exceptional Education and Student Services
2005 Continuous Improvement Monitoring
Leon County School District**

Regulatory Citations

Requirements related to exceptional student education are found in the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, its implementing regulations in Title 34 of the Code of Federal Regulations, Florida statutes, and the Florida State Board of Education rules. The following legal provisions apply to the issues referenced in this report:

Related to Counseling as Related Service

34 CFR 300.24 (a) Related services states “As used in this part, the term *related services* means transportation and such development, corrective, and other supportive services as are required to assist a child with a disability to benefit from special education, and includes speech-language pathology audiology services, psychological services, physical and occupational therapy, recreation, early identification and assessment of disabilities in children, counseling services...”

Rule 6.03016 (4), FAC, Special Programs for Students Who Are Emotionally Handicapped states “Criteria for eligibility for programs for severely emotionally disturbed... (d) Provides extensive support services specifically designed for severely emotionally disturbed students. These services include but are not limited to: 1. individual or group counseling, 2. parent counseling or education, and 3. consultation from mental health, medical or other professionals.

Related to the Communication Needs of Students with Disabilities

34 CFR 300.346 (a) Development, review, and revision of IEP states “(1) in developing each child’s IEP, the IEP team shall consider... (2) Consideration of special factors. The IEP team shall consider... (iv) The communication needs of the child, and in the case of a child who is deaf or hard of hearing, consider the child’s language and communication needs, opportunities for direct communications with peers, and professional personnel in the child’s language and communication mode, academic level, and full range of needs, including opportunities for direct instruction in the child’s language and communication mode.”

34 CFR §300.347(a) (2)(i)(ii), Content of the IEP A statement of measurable annual goals, including short-term objectives, related to – (i) Meeting the needs of the child that result from the child’s disability to enable the child to be involved in and progress in the general curriculum (i.e. the same curriculum as for nondisabled children), or for preschool children, as appropriate, to participate in appropriate activities; and (ii) Meeting each of the child’s other educational needs that result from the child’s disability.”

Rule 6A-6.03028 (6), FAC, Development of Individual Educational Plans for Students with Disabilities states “ The IEP team shall consider the following in IEP development, review, and

revision: (g) The communication needs of the student, and in the case of a student who is deaf or hard of hearing, the student’s language and communication needs, opportunities for direct communications with peers and professional personnel in the student’s language and communication mode, academic level, and full range of needs, including opportunities for direct instruction in the student’s language and communication mode.

Related to Transition from School to Post-school Living

34 CFR 300.344 (b), IEP Team states “(1) Under paragraph (a) (7) of this section, the public agency shall invite a student with a disability of any age to attend his or her IEP meeting if a purpose of the meeting will be the consideration of – (3) (i) In implementing the requirements of § 300.347 (b) (2), the public agency also shall invite a representative of any other agency that is likely to be responsible for providing or paying for transition services.”

Rule 6A.6.03028 (3)(b)(2), FAC, Development of Individual Educational Plans for Students with Disabilities “For Students with a disability, beginning at age 16 (or younger if determined appropriate by the IEP team), the notice must indicate that a purpose of the meeting is the consideration of needed transition services for the student as required in paragraph (7)(i) and (j) of this rule, indicate that the school district will invite the student, and indicate any other agency that will be invited to send a representative.”

Rule 6A.6.03028 (4), FAC, Development of Individual Educational Plans for Students with Disabilities states “The IEP team, with a reasonable number of participants, shall include: (i) To implement the requirements of paragraph (7) (j) of this rule, the school district shall invite a representative of any other agency that may be responsible for providing or paying for transition services, when the purpose of the IEP meeting is to consider transition services. If an agency invited to send a representative to a meeting does not do so, the school district shall take other steps to obtain the participation of the agency in the planning of any transition services.”

Related to Gifted Students

Section 1003.01(3)(a), F.S., Definitions, defines exceptional student as “...any student who has been determined eligible for a special program in accordance with rules of the State Board of Education. The term includes students who are gifted and students with disabilities...”

Section 1003.57, F.S., Exceptional Student Education, describes the district school board’s obligation to provide for an appropriate program of special education for exceptional students.

Related to Exceptional Educational Students Enrolled in Charter Schools

34 CFR 300.312 (a) Children with disabilities in public charter schools states “Children with disabilities who attend public charter schools and their parents retain all rights under this part.”

34 CFR 300.241 (a) (b), Treatment of charter schools and their students states “(a) The LEA must have on file with the SEA information to demonstrate that in carrying out this part with respect to charter schools that are public schools of the LEA, the LEA will serve children with

disabilities attending those schools in the same manner as it serves children with disabilities in its other schools; and (b) Provide funds under Part B of the Act to those schools in the same manner as it provides those funds to its other schools.”

Related to the Matrix of Services Document

Section 1011.62(1) (c) (e), F.S., Funds for operations of schools, states that “Cost factors based on desired relative cost differences between the following program shall be established in the annual General Appropriations Act. The Commissioner of Education shall specify a matrix of services and intensity levels to be used by districts in the determination of the two weighted cost factors for exceptional students with the highest levels of need...and (e) 1.a. The funding model uses basic, at-risk, support levels IV and V for exceptional students and career Florida Education Finance Program cost factors, and a guaranteed allocation for exceptional student education programs. Exceptional education cost factors are determined by using a matrix of services to document the services that each exceptional student will receive...and 1.b. In order to generate funds using one of the two weighted cost factors, a matrix of services must be completed at the time of the student’s initial placement into an exceptional student education program and at least once every 3 years by personnel who have received approved training...”

Related to the Individual Educational Plans/Educational Plans/Special Categories

Links to the full text of the following IDEA Regulations and State Board of Education Administrative Rules related to Exceptional Education are available on the Bureau website at www.firn.edu/doe/commhome/linkhome.htm

34 CFR 300.340-300.350 describe the requirements related to IEPs for students with disabilities, including: §300.340, definitions related to IEPs; §300.341, responsibility of SEA and other public agencies for IEPs; §300.342, when IEPs must be in effect; §300.343, IEP meetings; §300.344, IEP team; §300.345, parent participation; §300.346, development, review, and revision of IEPs; §300.347, content of IEPs; §300.348, agency responsibilities for transition services; §300.349, private school placements by public agencies; and, §300.350, IEP accountability.

Rule 6A-6.03028, FAC, Development of Individual Educational Plans for Exceptional Students, states that “An Individual Educational Plan (IEP) or an Individual Family Support Plan (IFSP) must be developed, reviewed, and revised for each eligible child with a disability served by a school district or other state agency that provides special education and related services either directly, by contract, or through other arrangements, in accordance with this rule...” The rule includes requirements related to: (1) the role of parents; (2) definitions; (3) parent participation for students with disabilities; (4) IEP team participants; (5) timelines; (6) considerations in IEP development, review, and revision for students with disabilities; (7) contents of the IEP for students with disabilities; (8) transition services for students beginning at age sixteen (or younger, if determined appropriate by the IEP team); (9) transition of children with disabilities from the infants and toddlers early intervention program to prekindergarten programs that provide specially designed instruction and related services operated by the school district; (10) review and revision of the IEP; (11) IEP implementation and accountability; and,

(12) students with disabilities placed in private schools or community facilities through contractual arrangements by the school district.

Rule 6A-6.030191, FAC, Development of Educational Plans for Exceptional Students Who Are Gifted, states that “Educational Plans (EPs) are developed for students identified solely as gifted. Parents are partners with schools and school district personnel in developing, reviewing, and revising the educational plan (EP) for their child. Procedures for the development of the EPs for exceptional students who are gifted, including procedures for parent involvement, shall be set forth in each district’s Policies and Procedures for the Provision of Specially Designed Instruction and Related Services to Exceptional Students document and shall be consistent with the following requirements:...” The rule includes requirements related to: (1) the role of parents; (2) parent participation; (3) EP team participants; (4) contents of the EPs; (5) considerations in EP development; (6) timelines; and, (7) EP implementation.

Rule 6A-6.030281, FAC, Development of Services Plans for Students with Disabilities Enrolled in Private School by their Parents and Provided with Specially Designed Instruction and Related Services by the Local School Board, states that “The provision of specially designed instruction and related services to eligible students with disabilities enrolled in private schools by their parents shall be consistent with the requirements of paragraph (3)(n) of Rule 6A-6.03411, FAC, and as described in the district’s Policies and Procedures for the Provision of Specially Designed Instruction and Related Services for Exceptional Students document...”

Rule 6A-6.0331, FAC, Identification and Determination of Eligibility of Exceptional Students for Specially Designed Instruction, states that “The state’s goal is to provide full educational opportunity to all students with disabilities ages three (3) through twenty-one (21). Local school boards have the responsibility to ensure that students suspected of having a disability or being gifted are identified, evaluated, and provided appropriate specially designed instruction and related services if it is determined that the student meets the eligibility criteria specified in Rules 6A-6.03011 through 6A-6.03023 and 6A-6.03027...”

Rule 6A-6.0334, FAC, Temporary Assignment of Transferring Exceptional Students, states that “(1) Transferring exceptional student. A transferring exceptional student is one who was previously enrolled as an exceptional student in another Florida public school or private school or agency program or an out-of-state public or private school or agency program and who is enrolling in a Florida school district or in an educational program...”

Related to Forms

Links to the full text of the following IDEA Regulations and State Board of Education Administrative Rules related to IEPs are available on the Bureau website at www.firn.edu/doe/commhome/linkhome.htm

34 CFR §300.347 Content of IEP “The content for each child with a disability must include....”

34 CFR §300.503 Prior Notice By the Public Agency; Content of Notice “(a) Notice. (1) Written notice that meets the requirements of paragraph (b) of this section must be given to the parents of a child with a disability a reasonable time before the public agency -- ...”

Rule 6A-6.03028(7), FAC, Development of Individual Educational Plans for Exceptional Students, Contents of the IEP for students with disabilities. Each district, in collaboration with the student’s parents, shall develop an IEP for each student with a disability.”

Rule 6A-6.03028(3) (b), FAC, Development of Individual Educational Plans for Exceptional Students, “A written notice to the parent must indicate the purpose, time and location of the meeting, and who, by title or position, will be attending...”

Appendix E:
Student Record Reviews

**Florida Department of Education
Bureau of Exceptional Education and Student Services
2005 Continuous Improvement Monitoring
Leon County School District**

Student Record Reviews

Thirty-two IEPs and ten EPs, randomly selected from the population of exceptional students, were reviewed prior to the on-site visit. In order to be considered a systemic finding, a specific component of the IEP or EP must be found to be noncompliant in 25% or more of the records reviewed. For Leon County that represents at least eight IEPs and at least three EPs. Student specific corrective actions (e.g., funding adjustments; reconvening of the IEP teams) are required for some types of noncompliance, while others may require planning and implementation of targeted staff training and/or oversight of identified procedures. There were four systemic findings of noncompliance regarding the 32 IEPs. The systemic findings are as follows:

- Lack of benchmarks including timeframes for completion (27)
- Lack of measurable goals (13)
- Lack of statement identifying how parents will be informed of progress (14)
- Lack of documentation report of progress was provided (11)

Individual or non-systemic findings were noted in an additional 23 areas.

There were no findings of noncompliance for the IEPs reviewed prior to the on-site visit that would result in a fund adjustment. For two of the 32 IEPs more than 50% of the goals were not measurable, and IEP teams were required to reconvene to address this finding.

In addition to the IEPs reviewed prior to the monitoring visit, targeted elements of additional records were reviewed on-site. During that review an IEP was not current and resulted in a fund adjustment. The district was notified of the specific students requiring reconvened IEP meeting in a letter dated December 22, 2005, and will submit documentation of the revised IEPs within the allotted timeline.

There were seven systemic findings of noncompliance regarding the ten EPs reviewed prior to the monitoring visit. Systemic findings were found in the following area:

- Interpreter of instructional implications of testing not present at EP meeting (10)
- General education teacher not present at EP meeting (10)
- Lack of goals (10)
- Lack of specially designed instruction (10)
- Lack of statement indicating how parents will be informed of progress (10)
- LEA representative not present at the EP meeting (8)
- EP was not reviewed and revised within the timeframe specified (3)

Individual or non-systemic findings were noted in four areas.

Nine matrix of services documents for student reported at the 254 or 255 funding level were reviewed. Any services claimed on the matrix must be documented on the IEP and in evidence in the classroom. Of the nine records reviewed, five were found to be inaccurately reported. The district must submit an amendment of its data through the Automated Student Information System database for that student.

In summary, 32 IEPs and ten EPs were reviewed for compliance prior to the on-site visit. An additional 156 records were reviewed on site through the case study process and to target specific elements. There was one findings of noncompliance that would require a fund adjustment. Four IEP teams were required to reconvene. Nine matrix of services documents for students reported at the 254 or 255 levels were reviewed and five were found to be inaccurately reported. Additional information, including identification of the specific student records in question, has been provided to the district under separate cover.

Review of Special Category Records and Procedures

In addition to the IEP and EP reviews described above, Bureau staff reviewed a total of 31 special category records and procedures, representing the following:

- ten initial eligibility and placements in a special program
- three dismissals from exceptional student education
- three temporary assignment to exceptional student education
- three students found ineligible for exceptional student education
- three pre kindergarten students who have transitioned from Part C to Part B
- three limited English proficient eligible for programs for students with disabilities
- three parentally place private school students
- three students for whom a surrogate parent has been assigned

There were no findings of noncompliance related to the 31 special category records reviewed.

Appendix F:
Glossary of Acronyms

**Florida Department of Education
Bureau of Exceptional Education and Student Services
2005 Continuous Improvement Monitoring
Leon County School District**

Glossary of Acronyms

ARC	Academic Resource Center
Bureau	Bureau of Exceptional Education and Student Services
CFR	Code of Federal Regulations
CIP	Continuous Improvement Plan
DCT	Diversified Cooperative Training
DJJ	Department of Juvenile Justice
DOE	Department of Education
EH	Emotionally Handicapped
EMH	Educable Mentally Handicapped
EP	Educational Plan
ESE	Exceptional Student Education
F.S.	Florida Statutes
FAC	Florida Administrative Code
FAPE	Free Appropriate Public Education
FCAT	Florida Comprehensive Assessment Test
FDLRS	Florida Diagnostic Learning and Resource System
FTE	Full-Time Equivalent
GED	General Educational Development diploma
IB	International Baccalaureate
IDEA 2004	Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act of 2004
IEP	Individual Educational Plan (for students with disabilities)
K	Kindergarten
LEA	Local Educational Agency
LITE	Leon's Intensive Training for Employment
LRE	Least Restrictive Environment
NCE	Normal Curve Equivalent
OCR	Office for Civil Rights
OJT	On-the-Job Training
OSEP	Office of Special Education Programs (USDOE)
PreK	Pre-kindergarten
SED	Severely Emotionally Disturbed
SIP	System Improvement Plan
SLD	Specific Learning Disability
SP	Services Plan
SP&P	Policies and Procedures for the Provision of Specially Designed Instruction and Related Services for Exceptional Students